

# THE **PALGRAVE** ENCYCLOPEDIA OF **IMPERIALISM &** **ANTI-IMPERIALISM**



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**VOLUME I**



**THE PALGRAVE ENCYCLOPEDIA  
OF  
IMPERIALISM AND ANTI-IMPERIALISM**



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ENCYCLOPEDIA  
OF  
IMPERIALISM AND  
ANTI-IMPERIALISM**

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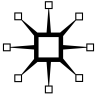
and

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*Independent author and scholar*

**VOLUME I**

palgrave  
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First published 2016 by  
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

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ISBN 978-1-349-57691-3 ISBN 978-0-230-39278-6 (eBook)  
DOI 10.1057/9780230392786

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

Typeset by MPS Limited, Chennai, India.

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## Preface

The *Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism* presents prominent themes, epochal events, theoretical explanations, and historical accounts of imperialism from the beginnings of modernity and the capitalist world system in the 16th century to the present day. Important scientific and scholarly interpretations of imperialism have in the last twenty years reshaped the way intellectuals analyse and map human history. The present work takes these innovations a step further, offering a body of comparative research that both challenges and enhances our understanding of the world we live in.

Starting from a shared commitment to internationalism and social justice, we have taken care to include essays that elucidate the historical and contemporary centrality of imperialism to all aspects of society. In doing so, we have attempted to present imperialism from a range of perspectives. As such, we do not agree with all of the interpretations or conclusions reached by all of the authors whose work appears herein. Indeed, we differ profoundly with some of the assertions made, the most questionable of which tend to reflect typical ideological prejudices of imperialist society. Nonetheless, we believe that a glaring inattention to the transfiguring effects of imperialism on the political structures, economic institutions, cultures and psychologies of both imperialist and oppressed nations can be found across the political spectrum. We consider this oversight a major obstacle to the understanding and progressive transformation of society and hope that the *Encyclopedia* contributes to its overcoming.

While post-colonial studies has from the 1970s onward described the perseverance of forms of cultural domination, clearly an important marker of imperialist influence, critical geopolitical and economic analysis is absent in much of the research. At the same time, whereas formal imperialism has largely been abandoned (though not completely, as the examples of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine show), free-market globalisation has stimulated a new era of neo-colonial imperialism, reinforcing divisions in wealth within nations and across borders. Given a renewed popular and academic interest in the subject, attendant to its increasingly obvious real-world import, a comprehensive collection on imperialism is an invaluable resource

to scholars and students of the humanities and the social sciences. Yet whereas imperialism is an indispensable element of contemporary political analysis and scholarly investigation, a primary academic reference work on the subject has up to now been sorely lacking. As well as its academic relevance, imperialism is of profound concern to anyone interested in international history, politics, sociology and economics. The *Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism* was conceived and designed to fill this gap for scholars and students across academic disciplines and beyond the confines of the university.

In its broadest definition, imperialism is the military, political, legal and/or economic control of one people's territory by another so that the subject territory is made to relinquish resources, labour and produce for little or no compensation. Almost all societies have been subject to various forms of imperialism at one time or another, transforming their established political order and socioeconomic activities, prohibiting old customs and imposing new ones, dislocating inhabitants from their communities and in some instances settling and occupying territories afresh. In the process, imperialism has imposed national, racial, ethnic, and class domination on disparate populations. This work examines how imperialism has impacted societies in the Third World, (i.e. the former colonies of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean) as well as how it has shaped social relations and popular perceptions in the First-World countries of Europe, North America, and Japan. It describes imperialism's shifting mechanisms of international wealth transfer and reveals how super-profits derived from super-exploitation, accumulation by dispossession, and debt usury (none of which can be treated in isolation from the others) have come to form the very taproot of the global profit system.

'Imperialism' is a term that is politically charged. For some, it signifies the glory of Empire, the march of progress, and the triumph of civilisation. In recent years there has been a dramatic surge in pro-Imperial discourse, epitomised in Britain by the work of scholars and commentators such as Niall Ferguson, Robert Kaplan, Andrew Roberts, William Dalrymple, Daniel Kruger, Keith Windschuttle, and Dennis Prager. In the 1990s, US political scientist Samuel Huntington famously decried the inherent

barbarism of all non-Western cultures in his *The Clash of Civilizations* and found an eager mainstream audience in the context of the so-called War on Terror and the discourse of 'humanitarian interventionism'. Meanwhile, the state and corporate media monopolies dominating public discourse around the world present phenomena associated with ongoing imperialist machinations and processes in a consistently and universally benign light, except where a rival might be held culpable.

This volume does not attempt any exhaustive account of the human toll of imperialism; that would require dozens of thick volumes to cover the spectrum in any detail. It is important to state, however, that the development and maintenance of industrial capitalism was made possible, *inter alia*, by the plunder of Indian gold and silver from the Americas, the wholesale theft of Indian land by force of arms and the resultant 50–100 million deaths from war, overwork, overcrowding, economic ruin, starvation, malnourishment and related diseases; by the slave trade (1500–1869) which resulted in the deaths of perhaps 20 million Africans, the loss of up to 100 million Africans from their homeland and hundreds of years of agonising toil, wanton mistreatment and early death for them; by the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland between 1649 and 1650 that resulted in approximately 618,000 deaths as well as the colonial exploitation that led to the Great Famine of 1845–52 resulting in 1 million deaths and 1 million emigrants; by Britain's plunder of India that resulted in about 29 million deaths from famine between 1877 and 1902; by Belgium's colonisation of the Congo which between 1880 and 1920 resulted in at least 10 million deaths through starvation and slaughter; by Japan's colonial wars leading to perhaps 30 million deaths; by the killing of half-a-million Iraqi children under five years old who died between 1991 and 1998 from sanctions imposed by the US and UK; and by investors' ongoing dispossession of the land of the world's poorest peoples which results in needless hunger, preventable disease and curable disease leading to the unnecessary deaths of 100 million children every decade. Added to these figures must be those deaths occurring during the First World War (37 million) and Second World War (at least 50 million), wars instigated by imperialist rivals as a means of each securing preferential trade

agreements, tariff barriers, trade routes, protected markets for investments and manufactures, and sources of raw materials. Leaving aside excess deaths caused by economic dependence on foreign monopolies, we may also consider imperialism as responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of people in interventions by the major imperialist powers (the USA, especially) all over the Third World since 1945.

In light of the above, we believe that it is impossible to properly understand imperialism without reference to the struggle against it. Anti-imperialism took shape in the West with mass opposition and national liberation struggle leading to the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian, German, Ottoman, and Russian Empires following World War I. Its appeal grew considerably with the impact of the Russian and Chinese revolutions and the subsequent erosion of the British and French empires in the aftermath of World War II. In the English-speaking metropolises, the struggles of Black Americans and Irish, as well as the struggles of the Palestinians in the 1960s and 1970s popularised anti-imperialist resistance still further. With the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc and the imposition of neoliberal regimes everywhere, the struggle between East and West has shifted primarily to that between North and South, exposing the abject divisions of income and opportunity within the world system. We present here a range of biographies and movement studies that exemplify the rich and ongoing tradition of national liberation theories and practices.

By highlighting the centrality of imperialism to present and historical social realities, the *Encyclopedia* provides a multifaceted corrective to the myopic (inter)nationalism espoused in the global North by both the political right and its ostensible foes on the left. Undoubtedly, the class interests of the labour aristocracy have been reflected in the analyses and propaganda of the European and North American left for which imperialism is too often understood either as a historical or cultural throwback or as benefiting only (some) capitalists or a narrow upper stratum of workers in specific sectors of the economy. Under capitalism, however, the privileges of the metropolitan workforce relative to the proletariat proper (exploited, value-creating wage-earners) are afforded only by imperialism and can, therefore, only be maintained or extended by the same means. Ultimately, this



ensures that the pursuit of short-term economic advancement by what is thus constituted as a mass labour aristocracy must entail open or tacit compromise with capital. Those within the upper echelons of the global working class who aim to determine their destiny free of capitalist diktat must advocate the abolition of global wage scaling, the *sine qua non* of imperialism, even in the certain knowledge that this will mean a lengthy and considerable reduction in their compatriots' purchasing power.

*The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism* is divided into seven sections: Biographies; Country Analysis; Culture and the Arts; History; Movements and Ideologies; Political Economy; and Themes and Concepts. It provides a comprehensive examination and overview of its subject, covering many of the most significant social, cultural, political, and economic aspects of the imperialist project. Essays chronicle the ways in which imperialist domination has unfolded, tracing its roots,

goals, tactics, influence and outcomes over time and space. We have not, unfortunately, been able to include all of the biographies that we would have liked to (for example, of such anti-imperialists as Jose Maria Sison, George Padmore, Bhagat Singh, George Habash, Hassan Nasrallah, Gerry Adams, Michael Collins, Sitting Bull, Robert Mugabe, Daniel Ortega, Fidel Castro, Muammar Gadaffi, Rajani Palme Dutt, Lin Biao, Enver Hoxha, Abimael Guzmán, Charu Majumdar and Subhas Chandra Bose, amongst others), or essays on all subjects relating to imperialism. We encourage readers to use this resource as a spur for further investigation. Nonetheless, we are confident that *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism* is the most comprehensive scholarly examination of the subject to date.

We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed editing it.

Immanuel Ness, New York  
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**Mother Tongue** is a research-led curatorial project formed in 2009 by **Tiffany Boyle** and **Jessica Carden**. The project concerns post-colonialism, language, heritage, ethnicity, whiteness, indigenosity, migration, movement, sexuality, and technology. They are currently both undertaking individual PhDs: Boyle at Birkbeck, University of London; and Carden at TrAIN: Transnational

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# BIOGRAPHIES



## Achebe, Chinua (1930–2013)

Chinua Achebe, born Albert Chinualumogu Achebe in Ogidi in eastern Nigeria on 16 November 1930, was a writer, novelist, poet, and critic. Achebe's father Isaiah Okafo Achebe was baptised by the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society and took on missionary teaching. His mother Janet Iloegbunam Achebe belonged to the blacksmith community of Umuike village in Awka. Achebe excelled at school and won a scholarship for higher studies. He graduated in English Literature in 1953 from the University College in Ibadan.

After a short span of teaching at the Merchants of Light School at Oba, Achebe joined the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation in 1954. He was subsequently elevated to the position of director of external broadcasting in 1961, attained 'the Voice of Nigeria' position, and served the corporation until the 1966 Igbo massacre in western and northern Nigeria. During the Nigeria-Biafra war (1967–70), Achebe served the Biafran diplomatic service and undertook extensive trips abroad to speak on behalf of the Biafran cause. At the end of the war in 1970, he joined the University of Nigeria at Nsukka and then held a number of teaching positions at universities in the US and Canada.

Achebe was the recipient of many honorary degrees from universities in the US, Canada, England, Scotland, and Nigeria. He was awarded the Order of the Federal Republic, the Nigerian National Merit Award, the Commonwealth Poetry Prize (1974), the Lotus Award for Afro-Asian Writers (1975), the Champion Medal (1996), the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade (2002), the Man Booker International Prize (2007), and the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize (2010). He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, London (1981) and an Honorary Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1983) and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2002). In 1998 he was appointed as the prestigious McMillan Stewart Lecturer at Harvard University.

Achebe was the author of five novels: *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). This compendium of work maps the transition of Nigeria

from colonial to neo-colonial rule. Achebe's radical departure from the colonialist historical narratives made crucial differences in representing Nigerian society and character. In *Reading Chinua Achebe: Language and Ideology in Fiction* (1991), Simon Gikandi aptly says:

there is in all of Achebe's novels a fundamental link between the idea of the nation, the concept of a national culture, and the quest for an African narrative. Fanon's famous dictum that the liberation of the nation is 'that material keystone which makes the building of a culture possible' finds its parallel in Achebe's desire to liberate the African mind from the colonial complex and the 'crisis of the soul' which it triggers in the colonized. (Gikandi 1991: 7)

Regarded by many as the father of the modern African novel, Achebe was induced to write his novels as counter-narratives to Eurocentric discourses, which denigrated Africa. He pointed out how European mythology had constructed Africa, and worked to provide a counter-discourse that took part in the reconstruction of the African self. Achebe imagined a pre-independence national community with shared history as both progressive and useful for writing. In 'The Novelist as Teacher', he wrote:

Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse – to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement .... For no thinking African can escape the pain of the wound in our soul .... I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past – with all its imperfections – was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them. (Achebe 1975: 71–72)

Achebe's resentment at the European representations of Africans in literature incited him to write his maiden and classic novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Written during the same period in which Frantz Fanon was formulating his ideas, the novel delineates a critical study of the Igbo village, Umuofia. In the story, the protagonist Okonkwo lives during the colonisation of Nigeria, struggles with the

legacy of his father, a shiftless debtor, as well as grapples with the complications which arise with the visit of white missionaries to his village of Umuofia. Okonkwo, the tragic but flawed protagonist, resists the onslaught of colonial culture. Achebe was keen to remind his readers that European colonialism is not entirely responsible for all the turmoil in Umuofia. Wole Soyinka described the novel as ‘the first novel in English which spoke from the interior of an African character, rather than portraying him as exotic, as the white man would see him’ (Jaggi 2000: 6–7). The novel explores the cultural conflict and encounters between Christian doctrine and Igbo traditions, and resists the racist images of Africa as depicted in such literary works as Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and Joyce Cary’s *Mister Johnson*. In an interview with Lewis Nkosi in *African Writers Talking*, Achebe spoke vociferously against the racial portrayal of Nigerian character by Cary in *Mister Johnson*. Achebe declared that:

one of the things that set me thinking was Joyce Cary’s novel, set in Nigeria, *Mister Johnson*, which was praised so much, and it was clear to me that it was a most superficial picture of – not only of the country – but even of the Nigerian character, and so I thought if this was famous, then perhaps someone ought to try and look at it from the inside. (quoted in Pieterse and Duerden 1972: 4)

As an anti-colonial novel, *Things Fall Apart* narrates the story of a society which has been irretrievably changed by the colonial power and culture. The scene in which Okonkwo’s son Nwoye is alienated by the sacrifice of his foster brother is reminiscent of the biblical story of Abraham’s willingness to obey his god’s command to slay his son. Through these allusions, Achebe’s novel engages with the Eurocentric representations of Africans as barbaric, marginal, and lacking coherence or speech. There are scenes in which the narrator promotes one perspective and simultaneously develops the negative side of that point of view. This double perspective surfaces in the language that Achebe adapts in the novel. For instance, there is a brilliant description of the missionary Mr Smith’s attitude: ‘He saw things as black and white. And black was evil. He saw the world as a battlefield in which the children of light were locked in mortal

conflict with the sons of darkness’ (Achebe 1994/1958: 164).

Achebe’s second novel *No Longer at Ease* explores the dilemma faced by young Nigerians in contemporary Nigeria. Obi, the protagonist, is the grandson of Okonkwo, the main character of *Things Fall Apart*. After attaining university education in England, Obi comes back to the newly independent Nigeria with the hope that he will rise by becoming an important part of the leadership. However, he is trapped between divergently pulling forces of tradition and modernity. This dilemma becomes apparent when he falls in love with a girl of the despised *osu* caste and faces stiff resistance from his orthodox family.

*Arrow of God*, published in 1964, narrates the interaction of Igbo tradition with European Christianity. Ezeulu, the chief priest of Ulu, is taken aback by the British intervention in the region and encourages his son to learn the secret behind the power of the foreigners. The message conveyed through Umuaro’s political conflict with Okperi, the cultural conflict with the white man, and the religious conflict with the Church is that one should abide by the laws of the society that one belongs to. In the novel, the coloniser despises the culture of the colonised. Mr Winterbottom summons Ezeulu, and when the latter fails to comply, he is detained in prison. The novel reaches its climax when the quest for power transforms into the quest for revenge.

*A Man of the People* (1966) is an acerbic satire on an un-named, African, post-colonial state. The protagonist Odili Samalau is seduced by the power and rhetoric of the corrupt minister of culture named Nanga. This seduction appears as a central motif for Nigerian politics, as various groups of voters in the region are symbolised by Nanga’s loyal wife Elsie, his city mistress, and Edna, the young rural girl he is tempted to make his second wife. Finally, Odili courts and gets Edna, but at a substantial cost. One crucial problem that Achebe focuses upon in the novel is the search of a language that can be an authentic and appropriate mode of expression. Throughout the novel, Odili narrates the story and gives clichéd justifications for his shifting political allegiance; by doing so, he simultaneously enables the reader to discern his own unreliability as a narrator. The novel ends with a military coup, which prefigured an actual coup in Nigeria a few months after the

publication of the novel, triggering the bloody massacre of Igbos in northern Nigeria.

Achebe's fifth novel *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) has a strong resemblance to the contemporary socio-political setup of Nigeria. There are reflections of *The Trouble with Nigeria* in the novel. This is a polyvocal text in which there are multiple narrators. The novel is about a coup in the fictional West African nation of Kangan, where Sam, a Sandhurst-trained military officer, has become president. His friends Ikem Osodi and Chris Oriko die while opposing the savage abuse of power. A military coup annihilates everything and eliminates Sam and Beatrice Okoh, an Honours graduate, a senior official in the ministry of finance, and girlfriend of Chris. As the narrator of this complex novel, she becomes a leader as well as representative of a group of women who envision an optimistic future for Nigeria.

In 1983, upon the death of Mallan Aminu Kano, Achebe became deputy national president of the People's Redemption Party and wrote a booklet *The Trouble with Nigeria* in which he gave his analysis of the failure of Nigeria leadership (Achebe 2010). As the director of Heinemann Educational Books in Nigeria, Achebe promoted many African authors by encouraging them to write creatively. In 1984 he founded *Uwa ndi Igbo*, a significant bilingual magazine for Igbo studies.

Edward Said argues that if non-European peoples are to be represented with justice it must be in a narrative in which they may themselves be the agents. Then they will appear as the creators of their own universe. Achebe, in his writings, draws heavily upon the Igbo oral tradition. By interspersing folk tales in his narrative, Achebe illuminates the community values in the form and content of his storytelling. For instance, in *Things Fall Apart* he dwells upon the interdependency of masculine and feminine by bringing the tale of earth and sky into the fabric of the novel. Similarly, the singing of folk songs and ceremonial dancing in *Things Fall Apart* are the sum total of the oral Igbo tradition. Achebe sprinkles proverbs throughout the narrative and with this technique he throws light upon the rural Igbo tradition.

Achebe's writings constitute interpretative spaces and critique of the post-colonial aesthetic. His works evince his ability to reverse the status of colonial language as

a tool of colonial ideology to the language as a medium of new forms of expression. Achebe's choice of writing in the English language was due to his desire to write back to the empire. By altering the idiom, usage, and syntax of the English language, he transforms the language into African style. In 2007, when Chinua Achebe became the second writer to be awarded the international Man Booker Prize, the distinguished novelist Nadine Gordimer commented that he had attained 'what one of his characters brilliantly defines as the writer's purpose: "a new found utterance" for the capture of life's complexity. This fiction is an original synthesis of the psychological novel, the Joycean stream of consciousness, the post-modern breaking of sequence. He is a joy and an illumination to read' (Jaggi 2000: 7) On Achebe's 70th birthday in 2000, Wole Soyinka said: 'Achebe never hesitates to lay blame for the woes of the African continent squarely where it belongs' (quoted in Nare 2005: 149).

Bruce King in his *Introduction to Nigerian Literature* sums up Achebe's achievement as a Nigerian writer in the following words:

It could be argued that the real tradition of Nigerian literature begins with Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958). It begins a tradition not only because its influence can be detected on Nigerian novelists, such as T.M. Aluko, but also because it was the first solid achievement upon which others could build. Achebe was the first Nigerian writer to successfully transmute the conventions of the novel, a European art form, into African literature. His craftsmanship can be seen in the way he creates a totally Nigerian structure for his fiction. (King 1972: 3).

King rightly said that Achebe had a sense of irony and was especially excellent at satire. He compared Achebe to the 19th-century English novelists, such as George Eliot and Thomas Hardy, in presenting a detached and tragic universe in which exceptional individuals are crushed by the larger cultural forces. Fondly called the 'grandfather of Nigerian literature', Achebe died after a short illness on 21 March 2013 in Boston. At his death, *The New York Times* described him in his obituary as 'one of Africa's most widely read novelists and one of the continent's towering men of letters'.

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## Samir Amin (1931–)

Samir Amin stands out as perhaps the greatest and most influential African Marxist theorist of the 20th century. In this essay, I will try to evaluate Samir Amin's contributions to the understanding of and struggle against imperialism. To this end I propose that Amin made two major contributions to Marxism. Firstly, he undermined what can be characterised as the linear interpretation of Marxism which sees human history as necessarily passing through five definite stages of production, a theory which Amin saw as the product of a Eurocentric Marxism. Secondly, Amin contributed to the broad tradition of dependency theory and, in particular, the theory of unequal exchange in order to explain the way in which imperialism operates under conditions of world trade.

While this essay is primarily oriented towards the major theoretical contributions of Samir Amin, as a biographical essay it will also touch on some of the experiences that appear to have shaped his political thought so as to try and

get a grasp of the man behind the theory. In the concluding part of the essay, I will provide an overview of the political demands to which Samir Amin feels the radical left should pay attention in the 21st century.

### The life of Samir Amin

Born in 1931, Samir Amin spent his formative years in Cairo, then a British colony. He studied within the French education system in Egypt before studying at the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris in France, obtaining a diploma in political science in 1952. He then studied at the Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques, where he obtained his PhD in 1957. During his time in France, Amin became involved with the French Communist Party and developed networks in various communist and anti-colonial groups, in particular through the National Union of French Students.

Amin, along with the rest of the anti-colonial student movement in France, generally supported national liberation movements in the Third World, a position that led them into tension with the French Communist Party. It was this experience that led him towards Maoism, and Amin himself would note that 'from 1957 to 1960 I almost fully shared the positions of the Chinese Communist Party, whereas after 1980 I had a more critical view of the Chinese openings to capitalism' (2014a: 1). Amin would later drift from this position, developing a critique of the limits of Maoism based on the experience of the defeat of socialism in China (Amin 2014a: 4).

Amin's early professional experience involved working as part of Egypt's planning agency immediately after the end of British colonisation. Simultaneously he worked underground for the Egyptian Communist Party. As President Gamal Abdel Nasser stepped up the persecution of communists in Egypt, Amin was forced to leave his homeland (Amin 2014b: 6). After staying in France for some time working for the department of economic and financial studies, Amin shunned a First-World existence in favour of giving service to the newly independent government of Mali as part of the ministry of planning (Amin 2014b: 6–7).

Amin's experience in Mali would help to shape his theoretical work, in particular the noted obsession of the government with a plan to 'close the gap' with the West, a policy objective which led Mali (and as he would

later argue, other countries) to pursuit a ruthless growth-oriented policy at the expense of both political and social democracy (Amin 2014b). Against this, Amin's position amounted to the argument that it is impossible to 'catch up' with the West through integration in the global capitalist economy. Amin and the rest of the dependency school argued that the basic structure of the global political economy had been established along imperialist lines. Accordingly, the more integrated a newly independent or otherwise Third-World country became with global capitalism, the worse off it would be.

By 1963, Amin had taken up a position with the United Nations' Institut Africain de Développement Économique et de Planification (IDEP), where he worked along with part-time academic roles in universities in both France and Senegal (Amin 2014b: 8). In 1970, Amin became superintendent of the IDEP; this position allowed him to launch various non-governmental organisations, the most memorable of which would be the Third World Forum, an organisation devoted to the development and promotion of policy alternatives in which Amin plays a leading role to this day.

### Amin's theoretical work

Samir Amin has written over 30 books in both English and French, alongside numerous articles. Within such a short biographical essay it is impossible to even scratch the surface of the work of such a prolific writer. Despite this, I will attempt to introduce the reader to what I believe to be some of Amin's key theoretical contributions. In summary these are the rejection of a stagiest view of history; the promotion of an unequal-exchange or dependency perspective of political economy; and an analysis of monopoly capitalism in the 20th and 21st centuries. I will provide a basic introduction to Amin's contributions to each of these areas in turn.

### The tributary mode of production and a rejection of stageism

One of the central tendencies of Amin's thought was the rejection of stageist theories of development, whether liberal or Marxist. The majority of Marxism after Marx has remained committed to the idea that every society must strictly pass through the same stages of development experienced by

Europe. One of Amin's main contributions was to debunk this conclusion, and one of the important ways in which he did this was through the development of his concept of the 'tributary mode of production'.

Amin posed a number of difficult questions for orthodox understandings of Marxism, such as why certain countries like China developed far earlier than those in Europe, but did not develop a capitalist mode of production until it was brought on exogenously by imperialist intervention. The conclusion reached by Amin is that there are five basic modes of production which have defined the majority of human history, namely the following (Amin 1974: 57–58):

- 1 The 'primitive' community mode of production, the only one which antedates all the others;
- 2 The tribute-paying mode of production, juxtaposing the persistence of the village community and that of a social and political apparatus exploiting the latter in the form of exacting tribute. This tribute-paying mode of production is the most common and most general form characterising pre-capitalist class formation; I propose to distinguish between the early forms and the advanced forms, such as the feudal mode of production in which the village community loses the eminent domain of the land to the benefit of the feudal lords, the community persisting as a community of families;
- 3 The slave mode of production, which is a relatively rare form although widely scattered;
- 4 The simple petty-commodity mode of production, a frequent form but one which practically never constitutes the dominant mode of a social formation; and finally
- 5 The capitalist mode of production in its 'pure state'.

Contrary to many historical and contemporary Marxist and modernisation theory analyses, Amin argued that feudalism was a phenomenon specific to Europe, rather than being a universal stage of development. Importantly, Amin would argue that the majority of the Third World was not characterised by feudalism, but instead by his tributary mode of production.

For Amin, the primary difference between the tributary mode of production and the

capitalist mode of production is not the development of productive forces. Instead Amin argues that the primary difference lies in the way in which value is extracted. Amin argues that Marx's law of value applies under capitalism's generalised commodity production, and surplus value as such is generated. By contrast, under the tributary mode of production, 'tribute' is extracted using non-economic means. The historical conclusion to which this leads Amin flies in the face of the majority of criticisms of Marxism, the argument that it is an economic determinist theory. Contrary to this position, Amin argues that for the majority of human history the political has dominated the economic. Only under capitalism does the economic base begin to subvert (let alone determine) the political and cultural superstructure.

### ***The Law of Worldwide Value***

The basic argument advanced in Amin's *The Law of Worldwide Value* (2010) is that the division between the First World and Third World is the defining contradiction of global capitalism. Accordingly, the primary locus of struggle against global capitalism is in the Third World. Amin's *The Law of Worldwide Value* describes a system of unequal exchange whereby the imperialist countries are the beneficiaries of what he terms imperialist rent.

Amin's *The Law of Worldwide Value* serves as an important counterweight to what can be termed the 'globalisation thesis', the argument that globalisation has led to the free flow of capital, thus weakening the role of the nation state. For Amin, the state plays an important role in either restricting or promoting the mobility of labour, and utilising state power in service of local capitalist interests (Amin 2011). The end result of this process is a system of Third-World super-exploitation. Amin demonstrates that wage differentials between the First and Third Worlds are not completely explained by productivity but rather by the political and historical factors he describes.

Amin for the most part skirted the edge of the thorny question of what is variously referred to as either the 'labour aristocracy' or the 'majority exploiter' thesis, the argument that most First-World workers are actually net beneficiaries of the global capitalist system. Brolin (2006: 243) even

argues that the 'popularity of Samir Amin, who was a prominent participant in French debates, is largely explained not only by attempting to place unequal exchange in a perspective where productivity differences matter more, but also – so it is suggested – by the theoretical vagueness on this point, and by his drawing the politically correct conclusion. In line both with the "state capitalist" interpretation popular in France at the time, but more so the general dependency stance in France and elsewhere.' Amin's argument is largely limited to an observation that at the very minimum there is a significantly different rate of exploitation of labour between the First World and the Third World, and that this difference is one of the primary obstacles to unity between the working classes of the First World and the Third World. In place of Marx's 'workers of the world unite', Amin contends that the reality of the global class structure and its associated politics is far more complex (2010: 92–3).

The political conclusion drawn from the above, namely that there is only one imperialist world system of which all countries are part, is of great significance for the international struggle against capitalism. The key actors in this world system are the forces of international capital, but also importantly the 'triad' (the concerted state power of the US, the European Union, and Japan).

Within the imperialist world system, however, Amin is critical of a narrow reading of imperialism as if it were constituted purely at the economic level. In Amin's own words:

As if the world were fashioned purely by economic laws, expressions of the technical demands of the reproduction of capital. As if the state and politics, diplomacy and armies had disappeared from the scene! Imperialism is precisely the amalgamation of the requirements and laws for the reproduction of capital; the social, national and international alliances that underlie them; and the political strategies employed by these alliances. (1989: 141)

The culmination of Amin's political thought and analysis can be seen in the book *Capitalism in the Age of Globalization*. In this work he distils what he sees as the five major monopolies underpinning the world capitalist system, namely 'the monopoly

of technology generated by the military expenditures of the imperialist centres, the monopoly of access to natural resources, the monopoly over international communication and the media, and the monopoly over the means of mass destruction' (1997: 3). For Amin, the fight against global capitalism boils down to the fight against these five monopolies.

Following the global financial crisis of 2008, Amin published *The Implosion of Global Capitalism* (2013a), documenting the self-destruction of the capitalist system and the way in which this presents a unique opportunity to the political left. In this work, Amin issues a challenge to the radical left, asking for 'audacity' in its political demands. Specifically, Amin recommends the socialisation of the monopolies, the de-financialisation of the management of the economy, and the de-globalisation of international relations (2013a:136). I will briefly outline these demands as I believe that they represent examples of Amin's late-career thought; they are also important examples of his ongoing contribution to left politics in terms of not only critiquing the global capitalist system but also providing alternatives for which it is possible to fight.

For Amin, the socialisation of the monopolies involves far more than nationalisation. He is arguing for a complex political restructuring of the monopolies, not just their control by the state. Amin (2013a: 137) imagines 'Public institutions working within a legal framework that would set the mode of governance must replace the monopolies. These would be constituted of representatives of (1) farmers (the principal interests); (2) upstream units (manufacturers of inputs, banks) and downstream (food industry, retail chains); (3) consumers; (4) local authorities (interested in natural and social environments – schools, hospitals, urban planning and housing, transportation); and (5) the state (citizens).' At the early stages of Amin's socialism, we see a form of syndicalist political system where the monopolies created by global capitalism are brought under the control and management of democratically governed, representative interest groups.

A major exception to Amin's generally syndicalist approach to governance comes in his discussion of the banking system. Amin notes the conflict of interest between the banks and

the rest of the economy, even under conditions of nationalisation or socialisation. This is the result of what he terms the financialisation of the economic system, which he argues has occurred as a result of the past 40 years of neoliberal politics (2013a: 141). As a counter to this, Amin argues for de-financialisation in order to unpack this legacy. While he argues for a 'World without Wall Street' it is notable that Amin is nonetheless arguing for a form of market socialism:

In a world without Wall Street, the economy is still largely controlled by the 'market.' But these markets are for the first time truly transparent, regulated by democratic negotiation among genuine social partners (for the first time they are no longer adversaries as they are necessarily under capitalism). It is the financial 'market' – opaque by nature and subjected to the requirements of management for the benefit of the monopolies – that is abolished. (2013a: 142–143)

For Amin, definancialisation and the world without Wall Street amount to the end of an economic system geared to the maximisation of monopoly rents. In its place, he envisions that the 'state and markets [would be] regulated by the democratic negotiation of social partners' (2013a: 143).

The final component of Amin's political argument is one that he has advocated consistently throughout much of his theoretical work, that of 'delinking'. While the concept of delinking is often quick to be branded as autarky, Amin has always been at pains to argue that this is not the case. Instead, delinking really amounts to self-determination in development, or 'the reconstruction of a globalization based on negotiation, rather than submission to the exclusive interests of the imperialist monopolies' (ibid.).

It is in his argument about delinking that Amin not only makes the case for the most advanced development of his challenge to the radical left, but also lays out a basic narrative of 20th-century industrialisation. Amin argues that the response to dependency, where imperialist countries monopolised industry, was that 20th-century national liberation movements industrialised the Third World. Despite this, modern imperialism led by the triad of the US, European Union,

and Japan has monopolised Amin's big five monopolies, which remain the key obstacles to progress for the Third World.

In the late stage of his career, Amin has issued a call for audacity from the radical left. Rejecting compromise and social democracy in favour of the road to socialism, Amin has argued that it is 'necessary to propose strategies not "out of the crisis of capitalism," but "out of capitalism in crisis"' (2013a: 146). Amin suggests that the radical left can be the political vehicle for this transition, and that in particular a coalition between anti-monopoly coalitions in the First World and anti-comprador coalitions in the Third World can achieve this. Here we see Amin's reaffirmation of the potential of political forces in the First World to play a role in the end of global capitalism, a popular position within the radical left, but one that has yet to be proved effective.

The one major blot on Amin's record as an anti-imperialist comes in the form of his public position on the French intervention in Mali. Amin chose to support the French intervention against the Tuareg rebellion, largely because of his opposition to political Islam, which he describes as follows:

You need a good deal of naivety to believe that the political Islam of some – described on account of this as 'moderate' – would be soluble in democracy. There is of course a sharing out of chores between them and the 'Salafists' who they say exceed them with a false naivety by their fanatic, criminal and even terrorist excesses. But their project is the same – an archaic theocracy that by definition is the polar opposite of even minimal democracy. (Amin 2013b)

In the absence of the space to go deeply into Amin's analysis of the situation, it can be said that the basic terms of his conclusion are twofold. Firstly, Amin as we have seen is extremely hostile to all forms of political Islam. There are shades of the late Christopher Hitchens in this kind of late-career support of imperialism. Secondly, it can be seen that Amin felt France capable of breaking away from the 'triad' (the US, European Union, and Japan), the monopoly imperialist bloc, by providing an alternative pole. This turned out to be a fairly ill-conceived position, as the US was quick to praise

France for its intervention and keep it firmly within the 'triad' camp (Boerma 2013).

While it is possible to direct criticism at elements of his work, and in particular his late-career position on the French imperialist intervention in Mali, in the broad analysis this can probably be written off as an aberration, one that should not be seen at the expense of Amin's overall career. Samir Amin has proved to be a lifelong radical, a steadfast supporter of revolutionary socialism and of the rights of peoples to self-determination in both a political and an economic sense. A prolific writer and a tireless activist, Samir Amin has made a massive contribution to anti-imperialism.

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## Arafat, Yasser (Abu Ammar) (1929–2004) and the Palestine Liberation Organisation

Yasser Arafat, (Abu Ammar), affectionately known as El Khityar (the old man) lived from 1929–2004. He was at the heart of the Palestinian struggle and the uncontested leader of the revolution for four decades. The days following his death showed the man's immense popularity in Palestine and the world. Arafat was the embodiment of his people's cause; an iconic freedom fighter who actively led his people in their struggle to liberate their homeland. He was a major force in uniting his people under the umbrella of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and was devoted to the cause. He spent time with the fighters in the bases, the families in the refugee camps, the activists, and the militants. He lived as they did. His people saw him as the only member of the PLO leadership who was truly one of them. Moreover, the struggle of the PLO, under Arafat's leadership, had a huge global impact, particularly on the global South.

On January 1958, Yasser Arafat and nine other Palestinian activists set up the first cells of the Fatah movement in Kuwait, advocating armed struggle to liberate Palestine. On 17 March 1964, the first Palestinian delegation, comprising Yasser Arafat and Khalil Al-Wazir, arrived in China to confer with premier Chou-En-Lai in order to forge a relationship which would be vital to the future of the Palestinian struggle.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) recognised the Palestinian people as a nation in 1964 and the PLO as their only legitimate representative. More importantly, China's leadership refused to recognise the authority of Israel over Palestine. The PRC identified with the Palestinian guerrillas and provided them with military aid and training. The leadership in China recognised a common dynamic in the Palestinian struggle against capitalism and imperialism, and in their confrontation against US imperialism as represented by its advanced base 'Israel'. Consequently, on 1 January 1965, Al-Asifa ('The Storm'), the newly formed military-wing of Fatah, initiated its guerrilla raids against Israel with an unsuccessful

bombing of the national water carrier (which transfers water from the Sea of Galilee in the North to the highly populated Centre and arid South).

In the wake of the June 1967 War, Israel, assisted by the US, devastated the air forces of Egypt and Syria in large-scale, surprise, pre-emptive attacks. Israel occupied the Sinai peninsula, the Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. Arab masses were devastated by this second catastrophic defeat inflicted on them by Israel (also referred to as the 'Zionist entity' by Palestinians). On 24 December 1967, Ahmad Shuqayri resigned as chairman of the PLO and made way for the 'Fedayeen' organisations (Palestinian armed organisations). On 21 March 21 1968, the Israeli army attacked the 'Fedayeen' base at Karameh, Jordan. Despite heavy losses, the Palestinian fighters managed to counter the Israeli forces and destroy many of their attack tanks, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy troops and pushing them back to the west bank across the River Jordan.

### Vietnamisation of the Palestine struggle

Arafat, along with George Habash (leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP) were able to present the Arab nation with the victory at Karameh as the first victory against Israel since the earlier defeat. The official Arab armies were discredited. Arabs were yearning for a victory over the 'undefeatable' Israeli Army. Karameh represented a paradigm shift in the Palestinian armed groups. Arab men and women flocked to join the ranks of the Palestinian resistance in their thousands.

Arafat's Fatah movement interpreted this momentum as a mandate from the Palestinian resistance (Al-Muqawama Al-Filistiniyya) to assume leadership of the by now discredited PLO and its ineffective military wing the PLA (Palestine Liberation Army) in order to radicalise them and make them relevant to a new phase in the armed struggle. At the 5th Palestine National Council (PNC) session, held in Cairo, Arafat succeeded in fulfilling that mandate. The leadership of the resistance groups dominated the PLO's newly elected executive committee and Fatah leader Yasser Arafat was elected chairman of the Executive Committee.

Chairman Arafat started in earnest the task of transforming the PLO into an effective dynamic organisation capable of representing Palestine and of bringing the plight of its refugees, and the injustices inflicted on the Palestinian people under occupation, to the attention of the international community. The ‘Vietnamisation’ of the Palestinian struggle began as the Palestinian resistance groups, within a remodelled PLO, advocated the amalgamation of the Viet Cong’s ‘people’s war’ model for insurgency and Algerian FLN guerrilla warfare tactics for the liberation of Palestine from Zionist occupation.

### **Toward a secular democratic state**

In July 1968, Arafat succeed in garnering the support of all the factions of the Palestinian resistance movement to amend the Palestine National Council’s Charter, with a majority vote to stop the Arab regimes meddling in the PLO’s affairs. They summarised the PLO’s strategy and goals in the liberation of Palestine and the establishment of a secular, democratic state for Arabs and Jews in its liberated land. In November 1969, in Cairo, Arafat publicly secured the vital backing of Egypt’s revolutionary leader Nasser. Meanwhile, the radical new PLO leadership was receiving huge public support from the Arab masses and Arab revolutionary governments such as the FLN Government in Algeria, and the leftist Arab Socialist Ba’athist Governments in Syria and Iraq.

This concerted support was translated into military aid and training, financial aid and large numbers of volunteers joining the Palestinian resistance movement, thus beefing up the ranks across the spectrum of Arab resistance that included nationalists and socialists, as well as emergent Marxist-Leninist organisations such as the PFLP. The PFLP had a profound unifying impact on liberation movements worldwide. Its leader, George Habash, identified imperialism, led by the US, as humanity’s main enemy and characterised Israel as its advanced military base in Palestine.

### **Arafat invents a revolutionary theory**

PFLP ideology identified the Palestinians as victims of capitalism and, with other PLO factions and socialists within Fatah, represented

the Palestinian struggle as a fight against imperialism. Following the success of the FLN in Algeria, the Marxist-Leninist guerrillas in China, and of the Viet Cong, the Palestinian model became the people’s war. Many Palestinian fighters adopted the revolutionary ideologies of anti-imperialist Pan Arabism, Arab socialism, Soviet Marxist-Leninist ideology, or Maoists’ Marxist-Leninism. Arafat, however, wanted to widen the scope of Arab involvement in the revolution, unhindered by ideologies. He asserted: ‘We have just launched a non-ideological revolution; together we are going to invent a theory for it’.

This bold reasoning found great support among some cadres of the resistance movement, who perceived it as a way to preserve the local character and culture of the Palestinian struggle between the late 1960s and the 1980s. Arafat transformed the Palestinian national struggle into a diverse hub for an international campaign against imperialism. The PLO supported and influenced the anti-imperialist struggles of resistance movements globally, and for national liberation movements across the globe, Arafat became the de facto leader of the international liberation movement.

### **Black September**

British colonial power created Jordan (The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) essentially as a buffer state; a security belt to protect the future entity of ‘Israel’ from Arab attacks from its eastern border. The region’s imperialist sponsors (the British and the US) were therefore not impressed with local developments after the Israeli occupation of the West Bank (June 1967), which was under Jordanian control. Global news of the Fedayeen victory over Israel at Karameh was disturbing for the Western powers. The US accelerated and redoubled its efforts in rebuilding, equipping, and retraining the Jordanian army, which was ordered to provoke Palestinian fighters, to ambush their units and to eject them from Jordan. This created a previously unheard of Jordanian nationalism. Bedouin tribes in Jordan were manipulated into conflict with the PLO, under the regime’s slogan ‘Jordan for the Jordanians’, and to resolve the regime’s elite’s ‘contradiction of a state and a revolution’, in which ‘a revolution cannot coexist on the same territory within the kingdom’.

Following the PFLP's hijacking of three airliners (6 September 1970), the Jordanian Army attacked the Palestinian guerrillas throughout Jordan (16 September 1970), marking the beginning of a bloody confrontation between the highly trained, Western-supplied Jordanian Army and the paramilitary Palestinian groups. Jordan inflicted heavy defeat on the PLO groups, pushing them out of Jordan. The Palestinians headed north through Syria and on to Beirut.

In November 1974, Palestine witnessed the political implications of 1970's 'Black September', through Arafat's historical 'gun and the olive branch' speech to the UN General Assembly. The speech, in which Arafat made a peace offer from the PLO, appeared to be the unspoken recognition of the State of Israel. The PLO was given a UN observer status, as part of its new upgrade to the international status, with the codicil that the PLO must recognise the UN charter and its resolutions. Israel was recognised by a UN resolution. This was a high political price, demanding recognition of Israel's occupation of 72 per cent of Palestine, especially for the Palestine refugees, scattered in refugee camps or around the world as stateless people.

### **The Israeli 1982 war on the PLO**

After 1974, Israel aimed to weaken the PLO further and to impose new political realities with a series of incursions and invasions of Lebanon. On 6 June 1982, Israel took on the task of eliminating the PLO (after receiving the green light from US secretary of state Alexander Haig) by deploying its land, air, and naval resources until Beirut was besieged. Haig anticipated that 'the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) should smash the PLO's military capability, send its political leadership running for whatever safety they could find, and in the process destroy whatever of Hafez Assad's Syrian military got in the way. This would, he thought, gut Soviet influence in the Middle East' (Boykin 2002).

Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon did not succeed in destroying the PLO forces as planned, in spite of the political and logistical support Israel received. The Palestinian fighters fiercely fought the advanced Israeli army for 88 days, but to save Beirut and its residents from threat of total annihilation, the PLO accepted a US deal, brokered by Ronald Reagan's special presidential envoy

Philip Habib. The PLO leadership agreed to leave Lebanon, and the Palestinian guerrillas departed, with their weapons. This was not an ignominious retreat. The PLO had held their own against the 'undefeatable' army for 88 days and left Lebanon with their guns.

Arafat's analysis of the 1982 war on Lebanon revealed a steep decline in the official Arab system, and a widening of imperialist influences (if not yet a total domination of the region) that emerged during the war through the active involvements of the US, Britain, and France. On the other hand, the USSR was exposed as a fragile, declining superpower. This analysis led many within the PLO leadership to see a clearer picture of a waning Soviet Union ceding its spheres of influence in the region to Western powers. Furthermore, a political shift was emerging within the PLO, with huge implications for its position and political agenda.

The PLO's departure from Lebanon exposed Arafat and weakened the leadership. Having lost his last foothold in a bordering Arab state, Arafat understood that the only course open to him was political action. Immediately after leaving Beirut, he did the unthinkable; he stopped in Egypt to restore his relationship with the US's main man Husni Mubarak. Needing political support, Arafat and the PLO leadership were subjected to political designs of the wealthy and reactionary Arab regimes. Their interference influenced Arafat's decisions and PLO policy, which transformed to facilitate the Western-backed Arab regimes' proposals for a peaceful solution.

This political compromise caused conflict in Arafat's Fatah, and the PLO at large, leading to the gradual weakening of the PLO and the reduction of Arafat's influence over his people. Losing his grip over the PLO, he also lost his stature as *de facto* leader of the Arab liberation movement and his overall standing within the global liberation movement began to diminish as a result.

### **Arafat in the Intifada**

The eruption, on 9 December 1987, of the Intifada (a large-scale popular uprising), was the explosion of Palestinian frustration at living under repressive Israeli military occupation and it grabbed international headlines.

The Intifada shifted the centre of gravity of Palestinian political initiative from the

PLO leadership outside Occupied Palestine, to Occupied Palestine. The revolutionaries in Occupied Palestine began to form popular committees, consisting of local leadership drawn from the grass roots and including resistance factions, trade unionists, and students. The Intifada's activities were planned and co-ordinated largely by the new radical young leadership and represented a new generation of freedom fighters.

This deeply worried Arafat and his aides. The Intifada revealed the extent to which they were losing touch with their grass roots. Arafat rapidly designated his second in command Abu Jihad to co-ordinate with the active resistance factions to find a way to rein in those committees not part of the PLO factions. The PLO's main armed factions (Fatah, the PFLP, the DFLP – comprising the United National Leadership of the Uprising) commanded strong popular credibility and respect in Occupied Palestine. Using the umbrella of the UNLU (joined by the Communist Palestinian People's Party), the PLO successfully regained direct control over the Intifada.

People's committees channelled all necessary logistics and support to sustain the Intifada, and maintain Palestinian morale. Arafat drew international attention to the plight of the Palestinians, effectively engaging the financial support of wealthy Arab regimes in rebuilding destroyed homes and in supplying medical resources.

During the First Intifada, over 1,000 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces, including 237 children under the age of 17. Many tens of thousands more were injured. According to an estimate by the Swedish branch of Save the Children, as many as 29,900 children required medical treatment for injuries caused by beatings from Israeli soldiers during the first two years of the Intifada alone (Btselem n.d.). Approximately 120,000 Palestinians were imprisoned by Israel during the First Intifada.

The UNLU deployed effective civil disobedience and non-violent resistance tactics, which were inherited from the first phase of the 1936–39 'Arab revolt in Palestine' against the British. This first phase was directed primarily by the urban and elitist Higher Arab Committee (HAC) and was focused mainly on strikes and other forms of political protest (Norris 2008). The popular resistance employed rock throwing against the

occupation soldiers. The Israeli reaction was ruthless. Defence minister Yitzhak Rabin implemented the infamous 'broken bones' policy (Hass 2005), ordering his soldiers to break the limbs of any Palestinian caught hurling rocks at the occupation forces. The Israeli soldiers used brutal force to repress the unarmed Palestinian youth of the Intifada. This broad-based resistance drew unprecedented international attention to the situation facing Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

### Arrival of Muslim Brotherhood

Arafat sensed the ground shifting beneath the PLO. In 1987, Hamas was founded in Gaza, formed from the Palestinian branch of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. During the 1980s, the Israeli occupying authorities viewed Hamas as a counterbalance or alternative to the Marxists and the secular nationalists of the PLO. They implicitly supported its emergence, hoping that it would sow seeds of future feudalism among non-ideologically homogeneous armed Palestinian factions. Divide and conquer was a lesson learned from British imperialism, as in 1928 during the British occupation of Egypt. On this occasion, the British encouraged the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, rightly perceiving that its ideological existence would clash with the Egyptian nationalist movement.

### Arafat calls for an independent Palestine

The convening 19th Palestine National Council (PNC), from 12–15 November 1988, endorsed UN Security Council Resolution 242, linking it to the 'national right' of the Palestinian people. The PNC affirmed the PLO's determination to reach a comprehensive political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict based on the principles of international law, including all related UN resolutions and the resolutions of Arab summits; on 15 November, Arafat presented the delegates with The Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine. A few weeks later in Geneva (13 December), Arafat addressed the UN General Assembly, reaffirming the PLO's rejection of all kinds of terrorism, and inviting Israel to talk peace.

The Madrid Conference (30 October 1991) was co-sponsored by the Soviet Union and

the US. It was an early attempt by the international community to initiate a peace process through negotiations involving Israel, the Arab countries (including Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan), and the Palestinians. The PLO went to Madrid based on the principle of Land for Peace. Soon Arafat was encouraged by some of his aides to open a secret negotiating channel with Israel.

Subsequent justifications centred on the defeat of Arafat's major Arab supporter, Iraq, at the hands of the US-led Western coalition, and the vanishing of their international sponsor, the USSR, what led to the emergence of the US as the only world superpower.

There is another perspective, however, which is that, rather than supporting the delegation at Madrid, Arafat opened secret negotiating channels in Norway, fearing that the UNLU (along with their new partners in the Intifada, Hamas) would be diplomatically strengthened by the Madrid concessions. These secret negotiations led Israel and the PLO to sign the Declaration of Principles, giving the Palestinians partial control of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. On 1 July 1994, a triumphant Arafat returned to Palestine for the first time in 26 years. On 5 July 1994, he formed the Palestinian National Authority, tasked to run Palestinian affairs in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. And in December 1994, Arafat won the Nobel Peace Prize (along with Rabin and Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres), Arafat was elected president of the Palestinian National Authority in the first Palestinian elections on 20 January 1996.

### **The road to al-Aqsa Intifadas**

Arafat made a promise to the PLO Central Council, before the convening of the Camp David II summit: 'We are going to fight a harsh battle, which my comrades and I will fight in your name, and we shall not concede our rights. ... neither Arafat nor any other leader can concede our rights in Jerusalem, and the rights of the refugees that have been guaranteed by international legitimacy' (Arafat 2000).

The second Palestinian Intifada was, in many ways, similar to the second phase of the 1936–39 Arab revolt in Palestine, which violently targeted the British occupation forces. The British used collective punishment measures combined with brutal force against the Palestinians.

In 1999, Arafat agreed with DFLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh to aim for a united national position at the Israeli-PA final status talks. A month later, he welcomed Abu Ali Mustafa (PFLP's second-in-command) returning to Palestine after 32 years in exile. In July 2000, US president Bill Clinton convened Camp David II, with Arafat and Israeli PM Ehud Barak aiming to reach a final peace deal. But Arafat rejected the Israeli proposals on Jerusalem, stating that 'The Arab leader who would surrender Jerusalem is not born yet' (quoted in Jamal 2006). Arafat described the talks to me, among others, saying 'I felt I was held against my will or being kidnapped by Bill Clinton at some stage' (ibid.). After nine days, The White House declared the summit a failure.

On 28 September 2000, two months after the failure of the Camp David talks, Ariel Sharon, then leader of the Opposition, stormed the holy Haram al-Sharif and al-Aqsa compound in the company of 2,000 Israeli soldiers. Palestinians exploded in anger over Sharon's incursion, not forgetting that, at Camp David, Israel had (for the first time with US backing) explicitly claimed sovereignty over the sacred compound. The insult prompted Arafat to tell the Palestinian leadership, 'The Battle for Jerusalem, which began at Camp David, has just been transported here' (ibid.). Arafat predicted that the battle would be long and stated that Sharon's visit had been intended to provoke a military clash. Soon, Sharon arose to power and the military clash began.

Arafat never gave up his guerrilla persona, frequently emphasising his readiness to resume armed struggle if needed. Now had to be that point, in defence of Palestinian national rights and Jerusalem. While Sharon continued to escalate his military action against the Palestinians, Arafat continued to deny Israeli demands. And Israeli public relations (with the help of mainstream Western media), portrayed the ferocious Israeli attacks on the Palestinians as self-defence.

Israel was deploying F-15s and F-16s, helicopter gunships, navy gunships, tanks and heavy artillery in its assaults on Palestinian infrastructure and people, besieging most Palestinian towns and villages, and targeting refugee camps and homes. Palestinian paramilitary groups, in return, targeted any Israeli installation within reach, civil or military. Arafat merely restated his commitment to

the peace process and called for the resumption of negotiations where they had left off at Camp David and Taba. Sharon labelled all Palestinian forms of struggle for liberation terrorist attacks, and began an international campaign to de-legitimise the Palestinian national struggle.

Arafat spent the last three years of his life a prisoner in Ramalla, from December 2001 until he was allowed to leave for medical treatment in Paris, only days before his death. He remained confined to his headquarters at 'the Muqata', which was subjected to daily shelling by the besieging Israeli Army. Arafat believed that his treatment was a punishment for his refusal to betray his people at Camp David. He always pointed to the complicit silence of the international community, and the absence of any feasible demand to lift the Israeli siege or for the cessation of Israeli shelling of his headquarters. Arafat said: 'I know that the siege will be long and that I am paying the price for my refusal to surrender to American and Israeli demands at Camp David' (ibid.).

Yasser Arafat (Abu Ammar) or – El Khityar – was the embodiment of his people's cause, the iconic freedom fighter who actively led his people in their struggle to liberate their homeland. He helped protect his people's lives, culture, and identity from the blades of the Zionist's neo-colonial eraser, and he was a major force in uniting his people under the PLO. Under Arafat's leadership, the Palestinian people displayed immense pride in being Arab Palestinians. And he was the Arab leader who reminded imperialism that Jerusalem was not for sale.

Saeb Sha'ath

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## Baraka, Amiri (1934–2014)

I tried to defend myself. 'Look, why jump on me? I understand what you're saying. I'm in complete agreement with you. I'm a poet. ... what can I do? I write, that's all. I'm not even interested in politics.'

She jumped on me with both feet, as did a group of Mexican poets in Habana. She called me a 'cowardly bourgeois individualist'. The poets, or at least one young wild eyed Mexican poet, Jaime Shelly, almost left me in tears, stomping his foot on the floor, screaming: 'You want to cultivate your soul? In that ugliness you live in, you want to cultivate your soul? Well we've got millions of starving people to feed, and that moves me enough to make poems out of.' (Jones/Baraka, 'Cuba Libre', in *Home: Social Essays*, 2009: 57)

Amiri Baraka, formerly Everett LeRoi Jones, was born in Cuba, July 1960. It was in the heat of a 14-hour train journey, as it rolled through the fervour of the people's revolution, that Baraka came into being. Prior to a phone call he had received early that year, Baraka had been Leroi Jones, the poet. When Richard Gibson, an organiser with the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, rang to offer him a place on a trip to post-revolutionary Cuba, with 12 other black writers from the US, he had been fully ensconced in the role of the poet. Answering the phone drunk, in a Greenwich Village apartment, he was most likely surrounded by the likes of Diane di Prima, Allen

Ginsberg, and Joel Oppenheimer, the set he had assembled around his publishing ventures *Floating Bear* and *Yugen*. Even when he arrived at Idlewild Airport to join the delegation to Cuba, Baraka was still very much Leroi Jones, the beat poet, outwardly disinterested, but inwardly sizing up career opportunities, disappointed that the ‘name’ writers who were supposed to be in the travelling party (James Baldwin and Langston Hughes) had cancelled. Dismissing many of the others on the trip (aside from Robert Williams) as 1920s and 1930s ‘kinds of Negroes’ (Jones/Baraka 2009: 25), Jones was embodying the millieu he had set his sights on since dishonourable discharge from the Air Force: a certain mode of New York intellectuality.

In the essay ‘Cuba Libre’, Baraka gives an account of a series of increasingly intense conjunctural moments, which arose from the material contradictions between the ideal persona he had been trying to realise in the Village, and the material reality of the Castro-led revolution erupting all around him. These moments led him to fundamentally question the nature of the promising literary career he had begun to carve out for himself. Although the Bantuisation of his name did not take place until 1967, it was in Cuba that the shift from Jones to Baraka began.

Most assessments of Baraka’s career tend to focus on the regularity of his ideological, social, artistic, one could even say racial, transformations. Researchers ascribe the arrivals at bohemia, Black Cultural nationalism, and Third-World Marxism, to the sheer force of his individual will (Harris in Baraka 1990). In fact, these transitions were indicative of Baraka’s position at the intersection of various race and class lines. This unstable position allowed him to respond to the key social, political, and cultural questions of the moments in which he operated. The close scrutiny given to his shifting perspectives often leads to a fetishisation of the nature of those changes, and the way Baraka committed himself zealously to a modernist pursuit of the new. What is not given as much attention is that which remained constant for Baraka over the range and type of his actions. Those consistent features of Baraka’s career were put in place during that brief but almost over-stimulating trip to Cuba.

The combination of dysentery, dehydration, and elation Baraka experienced hiking

up in the searing heat of the Sierra Maestra to hear a two-hour Castro speech left two things engraved on his psyche. First, the undeniable potency of what he was encountering in Cuba meant he could never return to the status of ‘just’ being a poet:

the wild impression one gets from the country, is that it is being run by a group of young radical intellectuals, and the young men of Latin America are radical. Whether Marxist or not, it is a social radicalism that they want. No one speaks of compromise. The idea never occurred to them. (Jones/Baraka 2009: 52)

It was in Cuba that he came to the realisation it was possible for a poem, and a poet, to function as part of a revolutionary consciousness, to be utilised in the service of a mass intellectuality. The relative sanctuary afforded to the North American and European artist was the model Baraka had been seeking ever since he left the Air Force in 1957. Although he had, to some extent, found it, this model began to fall to pieces in free Cuba.

Secondly, the other gilded cage Baraka lived within, his American-ness, began to disintegrate in the Caribbean. Although he had access to a Du Boisian second sight, and could therefore comprehend the absurdity and limitation of the claims his country made for self-evident freedoms, Baraka still only understood his blackness in relation to the US. It took leaving the country, if only for a short time, to attune his senses to the series of anti-colonial revolutionary movements beyond those borders:

The young intellectual living in the United States inhabits an ugly void. He cannot use what is around him, neither can he revolt against it. Revolt against whom? Revolution in this country of ‘due process of law’ would be literally impossible..... That thin crust of a lie we cannot detect in our own thinking. That rotting of the mind which had enabled us to think about Hiroshima as if someone else had done it, or to believe vaguely that the ‘counter-revolution’ in Guatemala was an ‘internal affair.’ (Jones/Baraka 2009: 54)

In Cuba, the US became an entity which stretched far beyond Washington State, Maine and Texas, and he shared his blackness

with insurgents in Southern and Latin America, Africa and Asia:

We are old people. Even the vitality of our art is like bright flowers growing up through a rotting carcass.

But the Cubans and the other *new* peoples (in Asia, Africa, South America) don't need us, and we had better stay out of their way. (Jones/Baraka 2009: 78)

When conducting an overview of Baraka's career, it is vital a researcher acknowledges the antagonisms that occupied his actions and work. It is accurate to say that at various moments of his career, it was possible to label Baraka a chauvinist, misogynist, homophobe, anti-Semite, and egotist (Watts 2001). In many ways Baraka is toxic, but that does not mean he should be set aside. To do so would represent an act of grave irresponsibility, because all the inexcusable violence he sent out into the world, via his pen and voice, was inseparable from the deep commitment to transform himself into a revolutionary propaganda machine, one that saw no distinction between art and politics, and pointed its ammunition at the heart of US capital. This drive was first implanted in June 1960. For Baraka, after Cuba, the work became as serious as his life.

The commitment to producing art in the service of liberation, and framing the task of making revolution as one that had to imagine itself beyond the borders of the US, can be traced throughout his career after 1960. These were the two consistent lines running throughout his range of ideological shifts, and he adapted them to suit each 'problem space' out of which he was operating (Scott 2004: 4).

Baraka's new orientation revealed itself soon after his return from Cuba. The assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961 had a deep resonance with young black Americans, who were increasingly aligning themselves with liberation movements in the Third World. Lumumba, a charismatic and bold figure, offered a new model for black leadership in the US. Therefore, the suspected influence of the US government in the Congolese leader's murder, combined with the United Nations' refusal to intervene, became a source of rage. On 15 February 1961, a group of black men and women, wearing black armbands and veils, burst onto the floor of the UN Security Council meeting, leading to violence. Outside

there were larger protests organised, this time drawing equally blunt repressive responses from the New York Police Department. The chant that went up from the crowds was 'Congo Yes! Yankee No!', an echo of the slogan which could be heard on the streets of Havana: 'Cuba Si! Yanqui No!' (Woodard 1999). It is no surprise to learn that Baraka was in the mix on the day:

Patrice Lumumba was assassinated by the C.I.A to stop the newly freed Congolese people from nationalising Union Miniere and other Rockefeller properties. I found myself marching outside the U.N. in demonstrations, while others, mostly blacks, took off their shoes and threw them down in the gallery as the gallery guards were called in to toss the demonstrating blacks out. Sisters were bashing the guards in the head with their shoes and throwing shoes down in the gallery. Ralph Bunche said he was ashamed and scandalised by such niggerism, while we were scandalised and ashamed of his negro-ass tom antics. (Jones/Baraka 1984: 181)

The second assassination which served as a foundation for both the emerging Black Nationalist movement and Baraka's own political horizon was that of Malcolm X, on 21 February 1965. The murder of another towering Black leader (this time home-grown), who was forging a black politics which was decidedly militant and internationalist in outlook, was monumental for Baraka. It prompted him to leave Greenwich Village, shed the bohemian poet persona, and relocate uptown. In Harlem, Baraka went about the task of rethinking the role of black art as a determining factor in a mass black revolutionary movement.

His immediate response was to establish the Black Arts Repertory Theater School (BARTS) in 1965. The working experiment gathered musicians from the nascent black avant-garde, playwrights, poets, and cultural commentators. Their role was to both practise and teach, in order to develop black art which directly communicated to, and participated in, the struggles of the black community around the school. Although the project fell apart violently within the space of a year, BARTS became the touchstone for a flourishing nationwide Black Arts movement. Similar organisations quickly began to



establish themselves in black locales across several US cities (Smethurst 2005). Baraka soon learnt the lessons from the failures of BARTS, returning to Newark to set up the 'Spirit House', this time along more focused organisational lines.

Ideologically, during this period, Baraka put together a response to the question of black nationhood which adapted the forms of Third-World liberation represented by Castro and Lumumba. It was Malcolm X, though, who was the mimetic and strategic model for much of Baraka's early nationalist thought, due to the way X had been able to reposition black people in the US as a colonised population. The problem for the radicals who took up X's legacy was the question of land. The anti-colonial national liberation movements were built upon claims over stolen territory. Such an organisational lever was never truly on the table for black Americans (Dawson 2002).

Baraka's skill in the early flourishing of his nationalism was to improvise a politics of nationhood which did not require an attachment to a singular piece of territory. He was able to open up the forceful sentiment of anti-colonialism and make it applicable to the black nationalist movement in the US. The ideological focus shifted, under his influence, to collective consciousness and the geographical multiplicity of blackness in the US. Baraka pointed out that there were concentrated pockets of black populations locked within almost every major urban centre in America. With the right kind of organisational structures and strategic planning, these areas could be taken over and controlled by black people and become the basis for a mass black power base. But for such a plan to work as a national project, it needed to be contained within a collective consciousness which could bypass the fact that all of these black locales were relatively isolated within the physical terrain of the US:

Black Power is the Power first to be Black. It is better, in America, to be white. So we leave America, or we never go there. It could be twelve miles from New York City (or two miles) and it could be the black nation you found yourself in. That's where your self was, all the time. (Jones/Baraka 1968: 122)

Baraka was recasting a territorial issue into a metaphysical one. The concentrated pockets

of blackness may have been locked within major US cities, but psychically they existed beyond the US. Harlem and Watts were separated geographically, but they were unified by blackness. Consciousness was deployed to bridge the strategic gaps in the nation. The concept of territory was reorganised by Baraka so that the black nation was not a coherently singular site, yet it remained unified by its blackness: a one that was not a one. The thrust of Third-World liberation and the historical specificity of slavery in the US came together through Baraka's politics of national consciousness, which sought to refigure black as a country (Jones/Baraka 2009).

At the turn of the decade there were a series of subtle changes in Baraka's politics. He took up a more formalised Pan-Africanism, and along with it shifted towards organised electoral politics. As a result, his framing of the nation question changed. All of these factors came together at the Congress of African Peoples, held in September 1970 at Atlanta, Georgia. The congress was designed to bring together a variety of black interest groups, ranging from radical community organisers to those within the Democratic Party structure, in order to assemble a coherent national black political agenda.

Whilst there were still significant strains of his earlier politics at work during this moment (such as an internationalist focus on developing a 'World African Party', and calls for a psychic, rather than physical, separation from America), it is the issue of land that fundamentally altered. Baraka made calls for the annexation of much of the former Confederate South, the eventual aim being a black plebiscite over secession from the US. Such a call was justified because of the degree to which black labour had been exploited in order to build the southern economy, and the region contained the largest concentration of black people over a wide geographical area. Baraka spent much of the 1970 congress pushing the line: 'If there is enough of you standing on it, you ought to claim it' (Baraka 1990: 101).

The hope for a 'World African Party' flourishing in the US soon began to fall apart, as did Baraka's investment in the politics it espoused. This was largely due to the actions of the professional black political class, whose members would, at best, only ever pay lip service to any revolutionary aims. It was in 1974 that, ideologically at least, Baraka found

his way back to Cuba, formally announcing his adherence to ‘Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung thought’ (Baraka 1990: 257). Whilst the move amplified the already operating internationalism that had been with him since 1960, what is noteworthy about this period is that despite Baraka’s fervour for scientific Marxism, his aesthetic commitments never wavered. The demands he made upon himself as a poet, after returning from Havana, never ceased. There was never a distinction drawn between his commitment to socialist revolution and black art. This was made evident in the 1979 poem ‘AM/TRAK’. It is customary to couch Baraka’s work in jazz, and especially John Coltrane, through the prism of his black cultural nationalism. Baraka’s furious examination of questions of blackness sits more comfortably with a set of ideas associated with the racial nature of Coltrane’s artistry. With ‘AM/TRAK’, Baraka retells the giant of modern music’s narrative, but turns the open secret of Coltrane’s music into one that was produced by, and offers an escape route from, the morass of exploitative capital:

From the endless sessions  
money lord hovers oer us  
capitalism beats our ass  
dope & juice wont change it  
Trane, blow, oh scream,  
yeh, anyway.

.....

And yet last night I played *Meditations*  
& it told me what to do  
Live you crazy mother  
fucker!  
Live!  
& organize  
yr shit  
as rightly  
burning!

(Baraka 1990: 270, 272)

To open this essay with the statement that Baraka was born in Cuba in 1960 was, of course, intended to provoke. But such a claim is built on the idea that familial and political genealogies are never quite one and the same thing. This sentiment applies to no one more appropriately than Amiri Baraka. Despite, or perhaps even because of, the zeal and brutality of his myriad ideological transformations, which have always left him exposed to scrutiny by more rigid ideologues, two questions appear to have consistently driven his public

life, ever since that 14-hour train journey to the Sierra Maestra: What does a revolutionary poem do, and how does a poet go about making that kind of revolution?

Dhanveer Singh Brar

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## Ben Bella, Ahmed (1918–2012)

From 1830 to 1962 Algeria was a French colony. The French occupation was marked by a long period of bloody conquest, and a mixture of disease and violence caused the indigenous population of Algiers to decline by a third between 1830 and 1872. Arab Algerians were discriminated against and were denied basic rights while hundreds of thousands of Europeans emigrated to Algeria. Under French colonialism two societies evolved in Algeria, a Muslim society based on a traditional economy and a European society which was heavily dependent on French capital and

markets but also relied on Muslim labour. The two societies had relations of extreme inequality. French authorities had introduced capitalist property relations in landholding in the late 19th century, and European settlers expropriated many hectares of land from native holders; by 1936 40 per cent of the land owned by indigenous people had been taken over. By 1960 the Muslim population had expanded from three million to about nine million. While some new farmland had been made available, Muslim farmers had been pushed into largely marginal areas, and with the French enforcement of property rights, farmers were unable to move freely, a situation which led to land exhaustion and diminished grazing. Native agriculture was heavily dependent on wheat, and it was difficult for farmers to break into the cultivation of more profitable crops such as cotton or wine grapes. As the Muslim population grew it became impossible for peasants to grow enough food to support the population. Destitution forced people to move into the cities, and there were famines throughout the first half of the 20th century. Vast slums, referred to as 'bidonvilles', circled the larger cities, with those surrounding Algiers containing 150,000 people.

By 1954 there were about a million European settlers in Algeria, the vast majority of them living in cities. Three-quarters of Europeans worked in the liberal professions, trade, transport, and administration or as skilled workers and could be regarded as middle class. Their average income in 1960 was about the same as in metropolitan France. The Native Code denied the vast majority of Muslims basic civil rights and French citizenship. Muslims could in theory opt to live under the French Civil Code and be granted citizenship rights, but this could mean severing ties with their own community and was in practice discouraged by the French authorities. The provision of education was highly unequal: as late as 1957 all European children were receiving an education but over 80 per cent of Muslim children had no schooling.

Settler politics in Algeria developed in a deeply authoritarian direction. Direct action, through civic organisations or ad hoc groups, was preferred to party politics or representative democracy. Authoritarian French leaders such as Pétain were popular. Before and after the Second World War the French governments made some attempts to improve

conditions for the native population, but any attempt to change the dominant role of the European settlers over Muslims was fiercely resisted.

Ahmed Ben Bella was born in Marnia, a small market town on the Algerian–Moroccan border, one of five sons of a farming family. There is some uncertainty about his date of birth: it has been suggested that his father changed the date originally given, 25 December 1918, to indicate that Ahmed was born in 1916 so that he could leave school early and work on the family farm. According to Robert Merle's transcribed biography (1967) Ben Bella grew up on a relatively poor farm of 70 acres with poor soil and no water supply, the family's main income coming from a small business that his father owned. His four brothers all died young: the oldest brother received wounds in the First World War of which he later died, the second died of disease at Marnia, the third went to work in France and disappeared in the evacuation of 1940, and the fourth was called up by the French army in 1939, but contracted tuberculosis and died in the same year. Bella also lost his father in that year.

Ahmed spent his early childhood in an environment where Arabs, Jews, and a small number of French mixed amicably. After receiving the certificate for completing primary school Ahmed attended a middle school nearby in Tlemcen, a town bigger than the village of his childhood. Here he first experienced the racism and harassment suffered by Muslim students. At one point he was threatened with expulsion after he talked back to a teacher who had insulted Islam. During this time Ahmed became active in sports, especially football, which was then one of the few activities where status depended on talent and performance rather than ethnicity. Despite this the sport was still segregated, with the Algerian team playing against the French settlers' team only once a year. At school Ahmed also became involved in Algerian nationalist politics. At 15 he joined the Union Nationaliste des Musulmans Nord-Africains, a nationalist organisation which appealed to Algerian youths in the Arab-speaking madrasa schools during the 1930s. In 1937 it became the Parti du Peuple Algérien (PPA).

In 1934 Ahmed sat the *brevet* examination required for entry into secondary school in the French education system, but did not pass. Rather than strain the finances of the

family friend with whom he was staying, he elected to return to the family farm in Marnia, where he helped with farm work, worked for an insurance company, and continued with sport. He also enlisted for military training; in 1937 he was called up for service in the French army and was posted to the 141st Alpine infantry regiment at Marseilles. This regiment included both French and Algerian conscripts, but its officers were all from metropolitan France. Ben Bella recalled being treated fairly; he took the non-commissioned officers' examination and passed with high marks, becoming a sergeant. Service in the French army may appear incongruous for someone attracted to Algerian nationalist politics, but Ben Bella stated that he felt military training was important and he was opposed to fascism.

Ben Bella was due to be released from the army in 1939, but this was deferred with the outbreak of the Second World War and he was posted to an anti-aircraft battery near Marseilles. He experienced the German Stuka bombing of that city in 1940; the men under his command, mostly young soldiers, abandoned their stations when the bombing began. Ben Bella then recruited a group of Corsican reservists, who were more reliable. He was awarded the Croix de Guerre for heroism in the attack. After his demobilisation in 1940 Ben Bella was invited to remain in Marseilles as a professional footballer. Although he was tempted he turned the offer down, concerned about worsening conditions in Algeria.

The defeat of France in 1940 brought appalling poverty to Algeria. The country experienced inflation, shortages of consumer goods, starvation, and typhus epidemics; Ben Bella's close friend and mentor Abdelkrim Baraka died of typhus, and in Marnia Ben Bella found one brother desperately ill and his father and another brother dead. He spent much of the early 1940s rebuilding the family farm, which had been abandoned. He also started a local football team. He resisted the anti-semitism of the French Vichy regime and gave protection to a Jewish player.

In 1943 Ben Bella was recalled to the French army and was posted to the 6th Algerian regiment at Tlemcen. Here he witnessed racial segregation and discrimination and became active in a campaign against segregation. He was next transferred to the 5th Moroccan infantry regiment, which was made up of

Moroccan professional soldiers and commanded by a Corsican. After a discussion with a commander Ben Bella agreed to discontinue agitation in order to continue the struggle against fascism. Despatched to Italy, Ben Bella's regiment fought at Naples in December 1943, relieving an American unit near Montano, and participated in the liberation of Rome, encountering members of the Italian resistance. It then fought the Germans at Siena. After this battle the unit was relieved and sent into the reserve in order to take part in the invasion of France. Ben Bella was sent to train recruits.

The Setif Uprising was a turning point in Ben Bella's life. On 8 May 1945, as Nazi Germany was officially surrendering, an anti-colonial march in Setif, a city 200 miles east of Algiers, turned violent and several dozen French settlers were killed. In retaliation European vigilantes and French troops killed between five and ten thousand civilians. This event had a traumatic and electrifying effect on Algerian troops returning home, and Ben Bella, shocked by the fierce repression at Setif, turned down an offer to stay in the French army on the grounds of needing to care for his mother and sisters.

At this time the Algerian electoral system was rigged in favour of the French community. One million Europeans elected two-thirds of the municipal councillors, who made up the *Premier Collège*, while ten million native Algerians elected the remaining one-third to the *Second Collège*. Upon returning to Algeria Ben Bella joined the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (MTLD), created in 1946 to replace the outlawed PPA and, like the previous organisation, promoting the full independence of Algeria. Ben Bella put his name on a list of candidates for the municipal council of Marnia and won a seat. At this time much of Algeria, including the area surrounding Marnia, was ravaged by typhus and starvation. The French socialist mayor of Marnia, Gerbaud, put Ben Bella in charge of food supplies and rationing, where he did exemplary work. In a political standoff with the *Premier Collège*, Ben Bella and other members of the *Second Collège*, in protest against being denied any meaningful authority, resigned en masse; Ben Bella was regarded as one of the ringleaders.

Ben Bella found, in a situation that appeared to have been set up by the local authorities that a family of squatters had

taken his family farm and house. The local *gendarmes* refused to help. Attempting to repossess his house, he wounded a squatter and was forced to flee, initially to Algiers, where he went underground in 1947.

In 1948 the MTLD lost all its seats, and in 1950 it was suppressed by the police. Losing public support, it split into various factions which pitted the more radical leadership against moderates favouring electoralism. During this crisis in the organisation, Ben Bella became leader of the Organisation Spéciale (OS), a semi-secret internal faction which was created to bypass what was regarded as the opportunism of the moderates. It was sharply opposed by other elements of the MTLD.

In 1949 Ben Bella was part of a group which planned a robbery of the post office in Oran. His involvement in this was discovered in the following year, and he was arrested in Algiers. Ben Bella and other members of the OS sought to turn their trial into a debate on French rule in Algeria, but this was opposed by the MTLD. He was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment at Blida. The MTLD sought to distance itself from the bank robbery, and it abolished the OS immediately after Ben Bella's arrest. Plans for escape by Ben Bella and his OS colleagues were sabotaged by the MTLD, but they managed to escape in 1952, using a file that had been hidden in a loaf of bread. Ben Bella went first to Tunisia, then secretly to Paris and in 1953 Egypt.

Egypt at this time was in the early stages of its nationalist revolution under Gamel Abdul Nasser. The Egyptian leaders had proposed a united north African liberation movement, which they would finance and presumably control. The OS leadership in Egypt turned this down, but Ben Bella nevertheless regarded himself as a Nasserist and an Arab nationalist; Egyptian support was important throughout the Algerian struggle. On meeting Nasser and other Egyptian leaders, Ben Bella felt sorrow at his inability to communicate in his Algerian dialect, at one point bursting into tears.

The FLN (National Liberation Front) was formed from mergers of the OS and several smaller groups at meetings in France, Algeria, and Switzerland and became officially known as the FLN on 10 October 1954. Ben Bella emerged as one of the leadership group of nine and continued to be based in Cairo until 1956 (Horne 1977: 79). Partly in reaction to a speech by the French premier Mendes France,

who, while recognising the French withdrawal from Indo-China, declared Algeria to be an 'irrevocable' part of France, it was agreed that a campaign of militant action would begin on 1 November. An FLN radio broadcast from Cairo called for the 'restoration of the Algerian state sovereign, democratic, and social, under the framework of Islam' (quoted in Horne 1977: 94–95). The FLN began attacks on military and civilian targets throughout Algeria on what became known as the 'Toussaint Rouge', or 'Red All Saints' Day', in November 1954. The November attacks are regarded as the beginning of the Algerian Revolution, or Algerian War of Independence. The purpose of the attacks was to rally the Algerian people with a show of resistance by a militant minority, further a polarisation within the Algerian nationalist movement, and provoke the government into finally dissolving the opportunistic MTLD. The latter goal was successfully achieved, with the French arresting the leadership of the organisation. At this time the FLN received some aid from Morocco, but the additional aid that it hoped for did not materialise. Later, aid from other Arab countries, especially Egypt, was important in the struggle.

By 1955, when the FLN moved into urban areas, it was apparent to the French that they faced a serious insurgency. A dramatic escalation in the war occurred with the Philippeville massacre in August of that year, in which the FLN and supporters killed 123 people, 71 of them French, including elderly women and babies. Before this time FLN's policy had been to attack only military and government targets, but the local commander of the Constantine region believed that an escalation was required. The French army and colonists carried out extensive massacres in retaliation, with, according to some accounts, 12,000 civilians being killed by the army, police, and settlers. The events at Philippeville also led to a hardening of attitude within the government and increased repression.

By 1956 the FLN was divided into two sections: the leadership operating in Algeria, known as the 'Intérieur', and the leadership in Tunisia and Morocco, known as the 'Extérieur'; Ben Bella was prominent in the latter group. In August and September of that year rifts appeared and the two groups began operating separately.

In 1956 Ben Bella was targeted in two assassination attempts. The first one was foiled when he refused to accept a package

delivered to his Cairo hotel by a taxi driver; as the taxi drove away a bomb exploded, killing the driver. Later that year a gunman entered his hotel room in Tripoli, Libya. In a brief struggle Ben Bella was wounded before the gunman escaped, to be killed later by guards at the Libyan border.

In 1955 and 1956 the FLN took part in indirect peace negotiations with the French government of Guy Mollet. In September 1956 a provisional peace agreement, arranged through intermediaries, appears to have been arrived at. To ratify the agreement before it could be made public Ben Bella and leaders of the *Extérieur* were to fly from Rabat to Tunis on a safe-conduct pass. In what became known as the ‘airplane coup’, Ben Bella’s DC3 was ordered by the French army to land in Algiers. The passengers were arrested and they were then held for the duration of the war.

In Algiers Ben Bella and the other *Extérieur* leaders were harshly interrogated by French officers. From there Ben Bella and his comrades were transferred to the Sante prison in France, where they remained for two and a half years; Ben Bella remembered this as the worst part of the six-year imprisonment. In 1959 De Gaulle had the prisoners transferred to the Isle of Aix, where conditions were much better. Ben Bella and his colleagues went on several hunger strikes for the right to be treated as political prisoners. During his imprisonment there was increasing agitation by French extremists against the prisoners. In May 1958 an apparent attempt by a rightist group to seize the prisoners was pushed back, and at one point Ben Bella and his colleagues had to be guarded by 200 mobile police. The leadership of the *Extérieur* group at large had formed the Provisional Government of the Republic of Algeria (GPRA) to co-ordinate international relations. While this was meant to be a temporary organisation Ben Bella became alarmed by reports of it evolving into a bureaucratic mandarinat, ignoring the needs of the civilian refugees and the *Intérieur* fighters. Ben Bella mentioned that he was worried about a ‘facile and corrupt regime’ taking power after independence (Merle 1967: 119).

In 1961 serious peace talks began, and in March 1962 the Évian Accords were signed by France and the GPRA at the French town of Évian-les-Bains. They granted sovereignty and self determination to Algeria but made

stipulations protecting French interests, including access to Algerian oil and protection for the European French community. Ben Bella initially opposed the Évian Accords because he felt they were too stringent, but he signed them after modifications were made, and an agreement was reached for the GPRA to summon a congress immediately after the ceasefire in order to decide the direction of the Algerian government.

On Ben Bella’s release from prison in 1962, De Gaulle wanted him to be flown to Rabat and delivered to King Hassan of Morocco, but having previously had a bad experience with the French in relation to a flight to Morocco, Ben Bella insisted on being flown to Switzerland. From there he went to Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya, where he was received as a hero. Rifts in the Algerian independence movement widened, however. Ben Bella felt that the Algerian Revolution was backsliding in a neo-colonialist direction caused by a lack of ideological direction. He sought to remedy this and to give a clear direction to independence. Meetings between the *Intérieur* and *Extérieur* factions were held in Tripoli, and a socialist programme for Algeria was agreed on, although Ben Bella felt that the apparent agreements were based more on cynicism. Shortly thereafter an opposing ‘Bureau Politique’ broke away from the GPRA. The rift approached outright war. At one point the GPRA attempted to have Ben Bella arrested in Tunis and began arresting his supporters in Algeria.

A period of chaos threatened. Remnants of the French Organisation de l’Armée Secrète (or Organisation Armée Secrète, OAS) remained strong in the Oran district, and it was feared that the OAS would attempt to set up a separate state. In addition *harkis* forces, native Algerians recruited by the French, were still in existence, and there was the possibility of them intervening in an open FLN split. Throughout Algeria local *willaya* forces, who often fought the French with little outside help, refused to cede their control over regions. The armed wing of the FLN, the Army of National Liberation (ALN), was divided into guerrilla units, which fought the French in Algeria and struggled for control of the expatriate community in France, and a component, based primarily in Morocco and Tunisia and with ties to the Berber communities, which more resembled a conventional army. The latter, led by Colonel Hourari

Boumediene, saw less combat than the guerrilla units in Algeria.

With the aid of Colonel Boumediene's forces Ben Bella was able to outmanoeuvre the GPRA and prevent what appeared to be a looming civil war. In July 1962 the ceasefire agreement with France was ratified in a popular referendum and the country became independent. Ben Bella entered Algeria through his home town of Marnia, marking a triumphal return. In 1963 he was elected premier of Algeria unopposed.

Upon independence Algeria faced huge problems. The educational system was in disarray, as the OAS had destroyed schools and burned the Algiers University library. Thousands of teachers had left their posts. The French army still occupied parts of the country while the emigration of most of the French population in 1962 had led to an economic collapse. Two million Algerians, a fifth of the population, were unemployed, and the cities were filled with starving people from the countryside. In this situation reorganising the agricultural sector was felt to be a priority. Agricultural policy was centralised and aid was promised from the socialist bloc. Some success was achieved, with an outstanding harvest in 1963.

In the conditions prevailing in a developing country like Algeria it was felt that a single party would best unify the various elements of society. Ben Bella outlawed the Communist Party, although he maintained respect for communist militants. He put much effort into reviving and developing the educational sector. The University of Algeria was reopened, and Ben Bella was proud of the fact that Algeria dedicated a quarter of its budget to education. In February 1963 the *Petits Cireurs* or 'Small Shiners' operation was begun, a massive programme to aid, educate, and organise the large orphan and destitute child population of the country.

After independence European interests still controlled much of the economy. Much agricultural land was still owned by big French or Algerian landowners, but in March 1963 most of these estates were nationalised when the ANL, now called the National Popular Army, simply marched on the big estates and gave land to peasant families. Many businesses in the cities were bought out cheaply by native Algerians, and it was feared that an exploitive Algerian business class would emerge in place of the French. Ben Bella, who was

influenced by the Trotskyist economist Ernest Mandel, initiated a system of worker self-management known as *autogestion* which was even stipulated in the Algerian constitution.

The results of the land reform and *autogestion* programmes were chaotic. Unrest and resentment against what were seen as Ben Bella's autocratic style grew. In May 1964 a bomb exploded in front of his official residence in Algiers. Unrest grew in the Kybilya region, and there was a revolt by the Sahara regional army. On 19 June 1965, Ben Bella was deposed in a coup led by his former ally Colonel Boumediene. He was held for eight months in an underground prison and then taken to a villa outside Algiers, where he was held under house arrest for 14 years. In 1971 he married Zohra Sellami, an Algerian journalist. The couple adopted two children.

Boumediene died in 1978 and restrictions on Ben Bella were eased in July 1979. In 1980 Ben Bella was allowed to leave Algeria for Switzerland, where he lived in Lausanne for ten years. Returning to Algeria in 1990, he re-entered politics and led the Movement for Democracy in Algeria, a moderate Islamist party that he had founded in exile in 1984 in the first round of Algeria's abortive 1991 elections. This party was banned in 1997. Ben Bella participated in negotiations to end the bitter Algerian civil war which had begun in 1991. At this time he advocated greater democracy in Algeria.

Ben Bella opposed the US war against Iraq of 2003 and was elected president of the International Campaign Against Aggression on Iraq. He was present when the 'Arab Spring' protests began in Algeria and the Arab world. He remained critical of the US's role in world affairs and of global capitalism. Although a lifelong religious Muslim he was critical of radical Islamists, believing that they misinterpreted Islam. Ben Bella died at his family home on 11 April 2012. The exact cause of death is unknown but is believed to have been respiratory illness.

In the 1970s and 1980s Algeria experienced an economic decline after a drop in the price of oil, which impacted on the working class and poor. After a military-backed government shut down an election in 1992 which the Islamic Salvation Front was expected to win, an action supported by France and NATO, a bitter civil war broke out in which over 200,000 people were killed. In 1999 Abdelaziz Bouteflika was elected

president, amid allegations of electoral fraud. According to Louisa Hanoune, the 2014 presidential candidate of the Algerian Workers' Party, the implementation of an International Monetary Fund structural adjustment plan led to the closing of hundreds of state-run companies and the loss of thousands of jobs, and the Association Agreement with the European Union has devastated agriculture and industry, as such programmes have done elsewhere in the developing world (*Socialist Organizer* 2014).

Kate Frey

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## Biko, Steve (1946–1977)

They had to kill him to prolong the life of apartheid.

(Nelson Mandela quoted in Somerville 2002)

It is both sad and timely to reflect that many of the leaders on whose vision and bravery anti-colonial movements are built do not live to see the fulfilment of their struggle. Stephen Bantu Biko is one of those leaders. A prodigiously talented thinker and speaker, his

life is a symbol of the sacrifices made when national liberation movements are confronted by the forces of history that seek to repress and subjugate them. But if his life is a symbol for sacrifice, then so too is it a symbol for the liberatory maxim articulated by Burkina Faso's late revolutionary president Thomas Sankara: 'While revolutionaries as individuals can be murdered, you cannot kill ideas' (Kasuka 2013: 294–295).

Steve Biko was born on 18 December 1946 in King William's Town, South Africa. King William's Town is situated in the Eastern Cape, which is home to the greater proportion of one of the country's largest population groups, the Xhosa people. Biko was a Xhosa, a status that he shared with fellow anti-apartheid icons Nelson Mandela, a Xhosa chief, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, whose father was Xhosa.

Yet his heritage also positions him in a more complex anti-colonial trajectory. The Eastern Cape was the ground on which were fought the Frontier Wars, a century-long period of battles between the Xhosa people and colonial settlers that began in 1779. It comprised nine separate wars, varying in brutality, and interspersed with oases of calm. Ultimately, the wars, which came at great cost to the indigenous population, culminated in the annexation of Xhosa lands and entrenchment of British colonial rule. Nonetheless, the anti-colonial tradition of the Xhosa people was firmly fixed both in the history of resistance in the Eastern Cape and in the psyche of the resistance movement that the Eastern Cape would go on to produce; including Biko, who has been described as a 'Xhosa prophet', albeit problematically, given that this is both an essentialist and messianic description (Mangcu 2014: 11). Xolela Mangcu, whose in-depth biography of Biko provides a brilliant conspectus of his politics and proliferates the process of correcting his relative absence from the public consciousness, tackles this problematisation: 'Steve Biko was as much a product of South Africa's multi-ethnic political heritage as he was a child of the Xhosa people of the Eastern Cape' (ibid.).

Biko lost his father at a young age and was raised by his mother, who worked as a domestic servant employed by white families in the town in which he and his three siblings grew up. It is difficult to envisage that the racist servitude to which his mother would have been subjected did not influence the political



ideology of the young Steve Biko during his early years.

In 1963 he joined Lovedale Institution where his older brother was also studying. After his brother was arrested and jailed for one year on suspicion of belonging to the military arm of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), a black nationalist political party, the police questioned Biko. Arrests such as this, Biko would go on to say, led to 'some kind of political emasculation of the black population', with the result being that blacks were discouraged from articulating their political and economic aspirations (Biko 1987: 143). Unshackling blacks from this mental and oral incarceration was an integral part of Biko's pioneering Black Consciousness ideology.

Following police questioning, Biko was not arrested but did find himself expelled from his school. His expulsion meant having to temporarily give up his studies, which he resumed when he joined a Roman Catholic boarding school. Close friendships with a nun and priest here paved the foundations for his later ideas on Black Theology.

After graduating from his boarding school, Biko won a scholarship to study medicine, which he pursued at the University of Natal, where he first became involved with student politics. It was also where the conclusions Biko had initially drawn from his brother's arrest were to become manifest.

Opposition from blacks to their treatment by the government at the time was diminishing, Biko felt, and their participation in the struggle was becoming increasingly marginalised by white-dominated organisations like the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). The cosmetic make-up of these organisations was unlikely to change given the significantly higher number of white students who were able to attend university in apartheid South Africa. Thus, these ostensibly multi-racial organisations paradoxically reproduced the racial inequalities in South African society and led Biko to notice a recurring pattern: 'Whites were in fact the main participants in our oppression and at the same time the main participants in the opposition to that oppression' (ibid.). Biko's disavowal of multi-racial organisations like NUSAS stemmed, then, from the recognition that such bodies represented not the interests of the black minority amongst their membership but the liberal white majority. They were representative of the existing structural forms

of race-privilege in such organisations, and the ordering of dissent in ways that were, in reality, ambivalent to the consciousness project Biko was trying to create. For blacks to advance their political struggle, they must first seize control of it.

Accordingly, in 1968, the golden year for political and social movements across the world, Biko led the founding of the South African Students' Organization (SASO). A structure had been put in place that would restore to blacks the inalienable right to commandeer their own fight against apartheid. SASO can be seen as the first formalisation of the Black Consciousness Movement in that it exalted the virtues of black solidarity and placed pride in blackness at the heart of the political spectrum. No longer did black students have to rely on white spokespersons to articulate their suffering, nor did they have to accept the structural stifling of their demands for equality. Blacks began to associate much more readily with each other, setting them on course for the psychological emancipation with which Black Consciousness is synonymous.

Here Biko engages with the sentiment of the Pan-Africanist pioneer of the 'Back to Africa' movement Marcus Garvey, whose hope was that blacks would 'emancipate ourselves from mental slavery because while others might free the body, none but ourselves can free the mind' – a political ideal popularised by Bob Marley's iconic *Redemption Song* (Garvey 1990: 791). In order for blacks to free their bodies for themselves, Black Consciousness demonstrates, they must first free their minds.

It would be wrong, if fathomable, to assume that Biko advocated total segregation. On the contrary, he recognised that the success of South Africa's anti-colonial movements would depend to a large extent on their ability to ultimately transcend ethnic boundaries. However, all movements are shaped by the conditions in which they are created and the political challenges they address. SASO's politics of distancing itself from existing establishment liberal white organisations was a necessary response to a climate in which blacks were made to feel inferior and whites, thus, correspondingly superior. Much more reflective of SASO's race politics and the Black Consciousness Movement as a whole was its welcoming right from the start of coloured and Indian activists, overcoming existing barriers in the process. As Biko's long-time friends Malusi and Thoko

Mpumlwana state, ‘Black Consciousness sought to unite the “non-whites” into a socio-political block recognized as “blacks”’ (Biko 1987: xxvi). In this way the Black Consciousness Movement helped not only to organise but to *define* ‘black’ as a broad coalition of the non-white oppressed, recognising it was not just Africans who suffered from unjust material conditions. The Black Consciousness Movement’s broader black solidarity also distinguished it from some of the narrower elements of both the PAC and the African National Congress (ANC).

As SASO expanded, its following diversified to incorporate a wider representation of blacks beyond the relatively educated university demographic. This drive was boosted by a practical outlook and applied language that focused on the needs of ordinary Africans, avoiding the trap of an aloof discourse disconnected from society at large that similar organizations had fallen victim to. This trajectory culminated in the creation by black communities in 1972 of the Black People’s Convention (BPC), which expressly excluded whites, and took Black Consciousness as its central philosophy. Black Consciousness extolled the virtues of blackness, including all aspects of its history and culture. In order to be able to do this, the Black Consciousness Movement argued, the black community had to rid itself of the palimpsestic remains of centuries of oppression, enslavement, and subjugation; such a process of psychological liberation could only be undertaken by black communities themselves. This is what distinguished the Black Consciousness Movement from the more compromising approach of Nelson Mandela, for example, who placed greater hope in multi-racial struggle.

The reach of Black Consciousness extended further still when Biko joined the Black Community Programmes (BCPs), which focused on the social and economic empowerment and independence of black communities. The BCPs established health centres, disseminated literature, supported the families of political prisoners, and built schools and crèches – all of which sought to improve the material welfare of blacks while increasing their self-reliance. This was in part driven by a belief that individual mental liberation could not be satisfactorily reached prior to changing circumstances.

Biko’s Black Consciousness Movement represented the convergence of these three

forementioned organisations: SASO was the radical student body that was instrumental in setting political direction; the BPC was the wider body in society that brought people together; and the BCPs were the self-help welfare arm. It was a holistic approach that reflected Biko’s understanding of society and the need for systemic change if emancipation were to be achieved. In an interview with a European journalist on his vision for an egalitarian society, Biko outlined the BPC’s road to meaningful change as ‘reorganizing the whole economic pattern and economic policies’, including the redistribution of wealth (Biko 1987: 149). Moreover, he had a prescient warning for his fellow activists: ‘If we have a mere change of face of those in governing positions what is likely to happen is that black people will continue to be poor, and you will see a few blacks filtering through into the so-called bourgeoisie’ (ibid.).

The effectiveness of Black Consciousness caused the apartheid establishment to be unnerved, and they instigated a crackdown on its members in the first half of the 1970s. Leaders of the movement were arrested, while Biko was initially confined to his hometown before being banned from further work with the BPC in the mid-1970s. By that point, however, he had spread the influence of Black Consciousness far and wide across South Africa. The increasing militancy of black communities, linked to this dispersion, found its sharpest expression in the Soweto Uprising of 1976. The principal spark for the protests was the Afrikaans Medium Decree of 1974, which made compulsory the use of Afrikaans as a medium for teaching in schools. The rebellion to this was a reflection of the increasing consciousness and determination of the young followers of the Black Consciousness Movement to assert their own history and identity.

Biko’s death came after a period of heightened harassment by the state. However, he remained defiant throughout and refused to cease his political organising, knowing that the movement for liberation was gathering pace. He was arrested and detained under the Terrorism Act in 1976 and again the following year. On 18 August 1977, while travelling with a comrade, he was stopped at a roadblock. The police did not recognise Biko, while his friend, Peter Jones, refused to reveal his identity – despite the dangers he knew this entailed. Sensing the danger his friend was

putting himself into, it was Biko who came forward and revealed himself to the officers. They promptly took Biko and Jones away to separate stations. Jones's bravery came at a cost of repeated beatings and torture; Biko's came at a greater cost. At the police station he was stripped naked and badly beaten, resulting in a brain haemorrhage on 6 September. Despite his rapidly deteriorating condition, he was kept in prison for days, before being driven – shackled and naked – to a prison hospital hundreds of kilometres away. He died in a prison cell in Pretoria on 12 September 1977. The apartheid government tried to suppress news of what had really happened to Biko – a brutal assassination at the hands of the state – but his murder resonated around the world and galvanised the fight for freedom.

Those who die fighting for freedom are never truly murdered, only martyred. That is not to romanticise their deaths but to exalt their lives, as it returns us to the maxim with which we began: states can kill individuals but not the effects of their ideas on the lives of others. The Black Consciousness that Biko represented lived on to the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa – an anti-colonial and anti-racist victory for which Stephen Bantu Biko will forever be remembered.

Biko's hope to bring together the BPC, ANC and PAC is evident in the collection of his writings *I Write What I Like*. He believed that a united front would create the most formidable challenge to apartheid. Mandela has suggested that it was in the run-up to a meeting with the then-leader of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, to progress this hope that Biko was killed. The prospect of that triumvirate forming a coalition against apartheid alarmed the apartheid government. It is that sentiment which lay behind Mandela's assertion in the epigraph to this chapter: in order for apartheid to live, Biko had to die. As an individual, his magnitude equalled that of the armoured apartheid nation he confronted; and so his murder equalled the creation of a martyr, his physical destruction, a stride towards the political destruction of the very state that carried it out.

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## Braithwaite, Chris (1885–1944)

The Barbadian agitator and organiser Chris Braithwaite, better known under his adopted pseudonym 'Chris Jones', was one of the leading black political radicals in 1930s Britain and, as a founding member and chair of the Colonial Seamen's Association (CSA), perhaps the critical lynchpin of an anti-colonial maritime network in and around the imperial metropolis of inter-war London. His talents as an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist activist came to the fore during the 1930s when he was briefly in and around the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), and then in militant Pan-Africanist organisations such as the International African Friends of Ethiopia (IAFE) and the International African Service Bureau (IASB) led by the outstanding black Trinidadian socialists George Padmore and C.L.R. James.

Born in the materially impoverished British Caribbean colony of Barbados, Braithwaite encountered 'the problem of the colour line' early in life, having found work as a seaman in the British merchant navy when still a teenager. Braithwaite's self-education and awakening consciousness of race took place while he 'sailed the seven seas'. As he later put it in a speech in 1941, while for 'forty years he has been a rolling stone in every part of the world ... he had yet to find a spot where under white domination elementary freedom is granted to the subject races' (*New Leader*, 23 August 1941, quoted in Høgsbjerg 2014: 62). After a few years' break from the sea, spent on land in Chicago in the US, Braithwaite returned

to serve with the British merchant navy during the First World War, when the recruitment of colonial seamen reached its height to fill the places left by recruitment of native seamen into the Royal Navy. After the war, Braithwaite moved to the 'black metropolis' of New York and found work for a period in a bar.

Many black Caribbean mariners settled in America, and some became leading politically radical militants in the American working-class movement, such as Ferdinand Smith, the Jamaican-born co-founder of the National Maritime Union, and the equally remarkable figure of Hugh Mulzac, born on Union Island in the Grenadines, who after travelling to New York from Barbados worked for a period as a ship captain on Marcus Garvey's Black Star Line. However, Braithwaite himself now undertook the 'voyage in' to imperial Britain, where he settled down in 1920s London working for the employers' Shipping Federation. Braithwaite's work, based in London's Docklands, home to many black seamen, was a highly responsible job, one usually reserved for whites only. As a Shipping Federation agent in 'the Pool', part of the River Thames where many ships came to dock, Braithwaite was charged with finding and supplying colonial seamen, engineers, stokers, and others, often at a few hours' notice. However, and quite remarkably given the relatively privileged job he had acquired, he was soon politically radicalised and immersed himself in the British working-class movement, becoming an activist in what became the National Union of Seamen (NUS) (see Padmore 1944).

In Britain, Braithwaite challenged the exploitative and oppressive experience of colonial seamen in the inter-war period, which saw state racism and the threat of deportation as well as a more informal racism which the shipowners encouraged and in which the NUS openly colluded. The NUS's collaboration with employers and state meant that black seamen required identification cards and had to join the union – despite its racism – in order to have any chance of employment (for more on this institutional racism see Tabili 1994). Braithwaite personally seems to have been better positioned to survive the dangers resulting from widespread racist state practices in shipping, including the threat of deportation under targeting of 'aliens', through his job and his relationship with and marriage to Edna Slack, a white woman originally from Derbyshire. The couple took up residence

in Stepney, in the East End of London and in close proximity to the West India docks, and would ultimately have six children.

In 1930, Chris Braithwaite would join the newly launched Seamen's Minority Movement (SMM), a rank-and-file grouping of militant seamen organised by the CPGB to lead a fightback against an attempt by shipowners to make seamen pay for perhaps the greatest economic crisis in the history of capitalism. Adopting a pseudonym, 'Chris Jones', to avoid victimisation by his employer, Braithwaite found that his experience as an NUS militant and the nature of his work made him an extremely important recruit for the SMM, and he was soon elected onto its central committee. Indeed as early as April 1930 'Chris Jones' was chairing the second meeting of the SMM 'Committee of Coloured Seamen', and by 1931 he had joined the CPGB itself (for discussion of Braithwaite's activism in this period see Sherwood 1996). As early as 1930, according to Stephen Howe, Braithwaite was regarded by one undercover police officer as 'the CP's most valuable contact among colonial seamen' (see the 'Secret Report on Communist Party Activities in Great Britain among Colonials' submitted to the Colonial Office by Superintendent E. Parket on 22 April 1930, quoted in Howe 1993: 186). As well as organising the distribution of such 'seditious' publications as the *Negro Worker*, he played an important role in launching the Negro Welfare Association (NWA) alongside his comrade and compatriot Arnold Ward and rallying solidarity with the Scottsboro Boys (see Adi 2009). By 1933, through his association with the NWA and his tireless campaigning, Braithwaite had also struck up a remarkable friendship with the radical Nancy Cunard, great-granddaughter of Sir Samuel Cunard, the founder of the famous shipping fleet, which refused to allow black seamen anywhere near the decks of its passenger liners until the 1950s. Cunard was then editing her monumental 800-page fusion of Pan-Africanism and communism, *Negro: An Anthology*, for publication in London. They would both serve together for a period on the NWA committee, and there is a famous picture taken of Braithwaite on a May Day demonstration in London in 1933 – just one of several photographs of 'Comrade Chris Jones' published in the *Negro Worker*, now edited by the Trinidadian revolutionary

George Padmore – and reprinted in Cunard's *Negro: An Anthology* (1934: 567).

However, the great 'zig zag' from ultra-left to right which characterised the Stalinised Communist International as it shifted from the catastrophist perspectives of 'class against class' to an attempt to build a deeply respectable 'Popular Front' against fascism and war, in the hope of enabling a diplomatic alliance of Britain, France and the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany, was to spell the end for organisations like the SMM and would ultimately end the involvement in international communism of many black radical activists like Chris Braithwaite. In 1933, as anti-imperialist agitation against the 'democracies' of Britain and France was increasingly sidelined, Braithwaite followed George Padmore's lead and resigned in protest from the Communist Party, though he remained supportive of organisations such as the NWA (see Høgsbjerg 2014: 43–44).

However, despite his relative political isolation, in July 1935 'Chris Jones' would emerge as the foremost tribune of black and Asian seamen opposing the new British Shipping Subsidy Act, which threatened the very presence of black colonial seamen on British ships (see Tabili 1994: 78, 82). Braithwaite took the initiative, with support from the League Against Imperialism and the NWA, to form a new organisation, the CSA. Impressively, from the very start the CSA embraced not only black colonial seamen, but also other Asian seamen, such as the Indian 'Lascars'. As the Indian communist seamen's organiser and future secretary of the group, Surat Alley, recalled, the CSA 'started at the time when Italian Fascism threat[ened to] attack Abyssinia [Ethiopia]. The Association was the expression of the discontent existing among the colonial seamen and its aim was to redress their grievances' (Sherwood 2004: 443).

Chris Braithwaite threw himself into building solidarity with the people of Ethiopia in the face of Mussolini's war plans. By August 1935, George Padmore had arrived in London from France, and was soon helping his friend and compatriot C.L.R. James organise what became the International African Friends of Ethiopia (IAFE). Braithwaite was a leading activist in this new Pan-African organisation, speaking out alongside the likes of Amy Ashwood Garvey, the Jamaican Pan-Africanist and first wife of Marcus Garvey, and the Kenyan nationalist Jomo Kenyatta of the

Kikuyu Central Association. Braithwaite was involved in mobilising his networks of colonial seamen to organise direct action to undermine the economy and trade of Italy and possibly even smuggle weapons to Ethiopia through the maritime industry (Quest 2009: 122).

Late November 1936 saw the first annual conference of the CSA in London. Braithwaite, who was elected chair, 'stressed the need of organisation as the one salvation of the colonial peoples'. The range of support for the organisation was unprecedented and historic, given the ethnic divisions and hierarchical racial stratifications of British shipping encompassing not only black seamen but also Indians, Arabs, and Chinese seamen – testament in part to the respect for Braithwaite's tireless work and dedication (Tabili 1994: 159). The CSA demanded removal of the 'disabilities' imposed on colonial seamen by 1935 Shipping Subsidy Act, which gave preference to white seamen, and also demanded that 'the seamen of the British Empire be given full democratic rights – the right to trade union organisation, freedom of speech and assembly'. This was a great advance on the 1920s, when there had been no solidarity articulated between the various colonial seamen, and there had been no demands particular to their conditions. Initially the CSA concentrated its efforts on the effects of the Shipping Subsidy Act, and by late 1937 the stringency of the application of the provisions of the Act were slackened, so some success could be recorded (Sherwood 2004: 443).

One CSA activist from early 1937 onwards, the West Indian Ras Makonnen, born George Thomas Nathaniel Griffith in British Guiana, has perhaps left historians the most vivid description of the work of the CSA. Makonnen described it as 'a welfare and propaganda grouping', and recalled that since 'we did not want a separate black union' for colonial seamen, part of the CSA's work involved trying to persuade west African seamen resident in Britain to join the NUS, despite all its appalling failings. He remembers that 'Chris's role ... was to act as a mouthpiece if there was any injustice that needed taking up ... he was looked on as a leader in the same way as some of the outstanding Irish dock leaders in New York' (Makonnen 1973: x, 129).

What might be called Braithwaite's 'class struggle Pan-Africanism' found expression and flourished not simply in his leadership of the

multi-ethnic CSA but in his key role as organising secretary for the new 'International African Service Bureau for the Defence of Africans and People of African Descent' (IASB), formed in May 1937. In solidarity with the heroic arc of labour revolts which swept the colonial British Caribbean – including his native Barbados – during the late 1930s, Braithwaite again repeatedly took to the podium of Trafalgar Square alongside the likes of James and Padmore. Ever since the turn to the 'Popular Front', Braithwaite, together with James and Padmore, also used to go to CPGB meetings to heckle and expose the communists' 'pretensions at being revolutionists' by raising awkward questions about British imperialism. As James remembered, they would speak about the struggles of French and British colonial subjects who now had been forgotten as Britain and France were declared grand 'peace-loving democracies' and bulwarks against fascism. 'While I would ask a question, and Padmore might say a word or two, it was Chris Jones who made a hell of a row.' 'Chris would get himself into a temper and explode and make a revolution at the back of the hall ... at the shortest notice, he could generate indignation at the crimes of imperialism and the betrayals of Stalinism as to shock into awed silence hundreds of British people in the audience' (Høgsbjerg 2014: 54).

Critically, the IASB attempted to help ideologically arm, build solidarity with, and develop networks with the colonial liberation struggles across the African diaspora. Braithwaite wrote a monthly column for the IASB journal, *International African Opinion*, entitled 'Seamen's Notes', and organised the distribution of this illegal 'seditious' publication into colonial Africa through his network of radical seamen. The contacts Braithwaite and others made in turn fed information and reports back to the IASB in London (for more on this see Quest 2009: 121–122). Despite the poverty and hardships of Blitz-hit London, Braithwaite kept up his political work for African emancipation throughout the Second World War until his sudden death from pneumonia on 9 September 1944, just over a year before the historic Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester.

In 1925, the long-serving president of the NUS, Joseph Havelock Wilson, had declared, 'I have always believed that British seamen have done more to discover and establish the British Empire, and to develop it. It will be the task of the same men of the sea to keep it' (Tabili

1994: 81). From the moment Chris Braithwaite arrived in Britain in the aftermath of the First World War until his death he refused such a 'task'. He instead fought against almost impossible odds and in the face of the most bitter racism for black and white unity and an alternative, anti-imperialist, and socialist vision for seamen both in Britain and internationally, based on struggle from below. As well as forming the CSA, he worked alongside the likes of Amy Ashwood Garvey, C.L.R. James, and George Padmore to form and build militant and political Pan-Africanist organisations such as the IAFE and the IASB. As the historian Winston James notes, the 1930s represented 'one of the most crucial decades in the history of black Britain' as it witnessed 'the birth and emergence of a number of new black organisations and a level of black activism that was unprecedented' James 2004: 363, 365–366).

From the mid-1930s, Chris Braithwaite, like George Padmore, had worked closely with the socialist Independent Labour Party (ILP), and both developed close links with ILP-supporting intellectuals around it, such as the writers Reginald Reynolds and Ethel Mannin. Both Reynolds (1956) and Mannin (1947) paid fine tributes to Braithwaite's oratory and activism after his passing. Padmore must have felt particularly moved by the passing of this older, dedicated militant, who must have in many ways represented his very ideal of a black 'organic intellectual' of the international working-class movement, and his obituary of his friend and comrade serves in many ways as a worthy tribute:

His death is a great loss to the cause of the colonial peoples as well as International Socialism, the finest ideals and traditions of which he upheld to the very end ... He never spared himself in rendering aid to the cause of the oppressed. Many were the working-class battles and campaigns in which he gave his best ... his memory will long remain as a symbol of the hopes and aspirations of his race. (Padmore 1944)

Christian Høgsbjerg

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## Cabral, Amílcar (1924–1973)

Amílcar Lopes Cabral was an African intellectual revolutionary trained in Portuguese Marxism, who made a significant contribution to the independence movement of Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde islands. In his monumental *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Robert J.C. Young says: 'From the perspective of African Socialism ... the greatest figure of those who were forced to resort to violence in order to achieve liberation was from neither a Francophone nor an Anglophone, but a Lusophone culture: Amílcar Cabral' (2003: 283). Born in Bafat, Guinea Bissau on 12 September 1924, Cabral attained his elementary education in Infante Don Henrique primary school in the town of Mindelo, Cape Verde. His father, Juvenal Cabral, was a mulatto from the Cape Verde islands. The people of Cape Verde archipelago, unlike those of Guinea Bissau, were mulattos whom the Portuguese assimilated with their hegemonic cultural practices.

Growing up under Portuguese colonialism, Cabral experienced at first hand the oppression of the common masses of Cape Verde. The colonial regime of Portugal's fascist dictator Antonio de Oliveira Salazar created a virtual hell for the working classes of Cape Verde. This was the time when the seeds of revolution started germinating in young Cabral. He assumed the name Labrac, and began his political activities of resistance during his school days. Cabral graduated from the University of Lisbon in 1950 as a colonial Agronomy engineer. During university days, he founded revolutionary student movements and proposed active resistance to the ruling dictatorship of Portugal. In Lisbon he met several African students from Mozambique and Angola and inculcated the ideas of Third-World nationalism in them. Among these students were: Agostinho Neto and Mario de Andrade, two of the future founders of the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), a guerrilla organisation which from 1956 onwards would fight for independence from Portugal; Vasco Cabral, who was later to join the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) and become the economic minister of Guinea-Bissau; Eduardo Mondlane, later leader of the Front for the Liberation

and Independence of Mozambique. These students established the Centre for African Studies (CAS) at the home of Alda Espirito Santo, a rich man from Sao Tome. CAS was a loose colloquium of students who conducted weekly seminars on African history and politics. These young Africans often meditated over the fact that while many colonial powers were anticipating the disintegration of their empires, the Portuguese were consolidating their hold over their African empire. By 1951, CAS came under the scanner of the Portuguese authorities. Fearing persecution at the hands of Portuguese security forces, Cabral and his associates disbanded the colloquium.

After the completion of his degree, Cabral returned to Africa in 1952 and became an iconic figure for the movements which sought liberation of the Portuguese colonies in Africa. Cabral joined the colonial Provincial Department of Agricultural and Forestry Services of Portuguese Guinea, and travelled extensively across the country. The pathetic condition of Guineans living under colonial rule kindled revolutionary thoughts in the mind of young Cabral. While serving the Agricultural and Forestry Service in Guinea-Bissau, he came into intimate contact with the local masses. He went to villages far and wide and made peaceful efforts to make the people aware of their exploitation at the hands of the coloniser. However, this incited the Portuguese administration of Guinea-Bissau, and Cabral was forced to leave his job. He went to Angola, joined the Movimento Popular Libertacao de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola or MPLA), and with the help of revolutionaries like Antonio Agostinho Neto, made this movement instrumental in the revolutionary practices within the country. Cabral's political concerns provoked the colonial administrators, and he was exiled to Portugal. He was given permission to visit his mother annually. It was the phase of an epistemological shift in the theory and praxis of young Cabral. He abandoned the peaceful path of liberation and looked upon armed struggle as the only hope for independence. On 19 September 1956, on one of two subsequent visits to Guinea, Cabral founded the Partido Africano da Independencia da Guine e Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, PAIGC). He led the guerrilla movement of PAIGC against the colonial

Portuguese government in Portuguese Guinea and Cape Verde. The goal of this conflict was to capture territory from the Portuguese. With the help of Kwame Nkrumah, Cabral set up training camps in Ghana and, besides training his lieutenants in guerrilla warfare, trained them in effective communication skills that would enable them to muster the support of Guinean tribal chiefs for PAIGC.

In 1960, Cabral attended the Second Conference of African Peoples in Tunis, and the same year during a visit to Canakry he established the party headquarters of PAIGC at the Guinean capital. For co-ordinating liberation struggle against the Portuguese empire in Africa, Cabral facilitated the formation of the Conference of Nationalist Organisations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP), a joint front comprising PAIGC, the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) and Angola's MPLA. Cabral actively started inculcating the revolutionary ideology in the minds of his followers, so that a violent struggle might be launched in the near future to liberate Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde archipelago from the Portuguese clutches. He established training camps in the Republic of Guinea and in Senegal, both of which had recently got freedom from France. The first PAIGC-led offensive against the Portuguese began in March 1962, and severely hit Praia, the capital of Cape Verde. However, PAIGC cadres were logistically inferior to the Portuguese military and this forced the PAIGC leadership to avoid a direct armed struggle on the Cape Verde Islands. Cabral suggested guerrilla warfare and on 23 January 1963 PAIGC forces clandestinely attacked the Portuguese formations at Trite fortress in the southern part of Guinea-Bissau. Cabral, as the secretary-general of PAIGC, was the guiding spirit behind the armed liberation struggle against the atrocious Portuguese colonial regime, and trounced vastly superior Portuguese forces supported by NATO, the US, Spain, and South Africa.

Cabral emphasised the role of culture in resisting the repressive forces of Portuguese colonialism and asserted that the psychological and social reconstruction of the colonised was the foundational premise for the armed struggle against the coloniser. Cabral believed that the national fight for liberation enabled the marginal human beings, who were dehumanised by colonialism, to recover their personalities as Africans. This regional assertion



was more than a mere local issue and in a broader perspective it was a challenge to Eurocentric theories. The PAIGC was a revolutionary movement firmly grounded in the social reality of Guinea. It was revolutionary precisely because its guiding framework was drawn from the indigenous circumstances. Cultural assertion and psychological reconstruction, for Cabral, were the processes integral to the cause and effect of the struggle for national liberation. Robert Young succinctly sums up the anti-imperialist oeuvre of Cabral in these words:

His work stands out for the ways in which he extends his analyses from the practicalities of the creation of resistance movements, to the military strategies involved, to the vanguard role of the party in the formation of anti-colonial unity, to the forms by which cultural identity and dignity – [as] essential components of the liberatory process – can be asserted. (285)

At the First Tricontinental Conference of the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, held in Havana in January 1966, Cabral delivered his lecture under the title of 'The Weapon of Theory' (1966). Rejecting the universalised model of the Bolshevik Revolution, Cabral emphasised that national and social liberation was the outcome of 'local and national elaboration ... essentially determined and formed by the historical reality of each people' (Cabral 1969: 74–75). Cabral had first-hand knowledge of the situation in Guinea-Bissau, which he had gained during broad agricultural research for the Forestry Department. This was the period when he assembled detailed information about the cultural and material life of various ethnic groups and their interpersonal relations within Guinea-Bissau, and a deep understanding of the ground realities faced by the peasantry, especially the land-tilling women. Cabral was deeply conscious of promoting an ideological apparatus for the liberation movements, oriented towards the dialectics of 'foundations and objectives of national liberation in relation to the social structure' (Cabral 1969: 75). Robert Young judiciously says in this context: 'It was to be Cabral himself who would formulate the fullest realization of a workable African socialism' (2003: 246). Political liberation, for Cabral, was incomplete if it didn't accompany

a severe setback to the 'imperialist domination on the social structure and historical processes of our peoples' (Cabral 1969: 81). His emphasis on culture as an essential tool of resistance to the foreign domination inspired future revolutionaries throughout the world.

Cabral accentuated the necessity of giving due consideration to the internal stratification of the colonised nations, where each class had different interests in relation to the metropole. This was because Cabral could envisage the tentacles of neo-colonialism looming large on the continent. The influence of Mao Zedong, Che Guevara and Fidel Castro is clearly visible in these words of Cabral: 'the principal aspect of national liberation struggle is the struggle against neo-colonialism' (83). Cabral's 'Weapon of Theory' is not just aimed at ending the colonial rule, but takes the end of foreign domination as the ultimate target. An independent nation, according to him, can either become a victim of neo-colonialism, or take a turn towards socialism. Cabral redefined the goal of revolution in his two-pronged agenda of defeating the colonial power and bringing a violent social revolution, which could be realised by giving equal emphasis to the material as well as social and cultural aspects of revolution. He differentiated liberation from independence and argued for the pursuit of liberation from neo-colonialism: 'the neo-colonial situation (in which the working classes and their allies struggle simultaneously against the imperialist bourgeoisie and the native ruling class) is not resolved by a nationalist solution; it demands the destruction of the capitalist structure implanted in the national territory by imperialism, and correctly postulates a socialist solution' (86). Complete liberation, according to Cabral, could only be achieved if national revolution cultivated the ground for a social revolution.

Cabral was of the firm belief that the petty bourgeoisie benefited from colonialism but were never completely incorporated into the colonial system, and because of this ambivalent position only a small fragment of this class was revolutionary. Trapped in the conflict between colonial culture and the colonised culture, the petty bourgeoisie had no coherent interest in carrying out the revolution. Cabral was conscious of this weakness:

In fact history has shown that whatever the role – sometimes important – played by

the individuals coming from the *petite bourgeoisie* in the process of a revolution, this class has never possessed political control. And it could never possess it, since political control (the state) is based on the economic capacity of ruling class, and in the conditions of colonial and neocolonial society this capacity is retained by two entities: imperialist capital and the native working class. (Chabal 1983: 176)

About the role of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie in the liberation struggle, Cabral echoed the words of Lenin by concluding that the ruling classes never voluntarily give up their power: ‘the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie must be capable of committing suicide as a class in order to be reborn as revolutionary workers, completely identified with the deepest aspirations of the people to which they belong’ (Cabral 1969: 89). He asserted that the fundamental step in the liberatory praxis of a nation was the recognition of the link between the colonised elites and the coloniser at the level of culture and acculturation. The hegemonic culture of the colonisers suppressed the ability of the colonised elites to construct an identity free from colonial determination.

Cabral felt that their people were at a specific historical stage, which was characterised by the backward conditions of their economy. He believed that the anti-colonial struggle was not only aimed at liberating the colonised people from the sufferings and miserable conditions of their lives, but also aimed at restoring the right of Africans to write and narrate their own history, which had been denied to them by the colonialists. In *Revolution in Guinea*, Cabral aptly says:

The colonialists usually say that it was they who brought us into history: today we show that this is not so. They made us leave history, our history, to follow them, right at the back, to follow the progress of their history. Today, in taking up arms to liberate ourselves, in following the example of other peoples who have taken up arms to liberate themselves, we want to return to our history, on our own feet, by our own means and through our own sacrifices. (63)

Laying stress on the education and indoctrination of his comrades, Cabral urged: ‘Oblige

every responsible and educated member of our Party to work daily for the improvement of their cultural formation’ (71). He equally emphasised the need to educate women, who could play a vital role in the liberation struggle. According to Cabral, the germ of the liberation struggle was encapsulated in the endurance and revival of culture, defined as ‘simultaneously the fruit of a people’s history and a determinant of history’ (Cabral 1974: 41–43). He claimed that people could reclaim their own history only through the optimum realisation of their own culture, which he considered an indispensable tool for the masses to confront the foreign domination. Cabral believed that liberation meant personal and active commitment. Basil Davidson aptly says in this context:

Liberation ... had to mean an active and personal commitment to a process – perhaps above all, in Cabral’s concept, a cultural process – for the advancement of which a mere sympathy or ‘support’ could never be enough. With whatever shortcomings, this commitment which Cabral asked of those who followed him was the central project of his discourse, the measure of his originality. (1989: 136)

Re-contextualising the Marxist discourse that history began with class struggle, Cabral argued that the driving force of history was dependent on the mode of production instead of on class struggle. The emphasis on the cultural-historical dimension of the liberation struggle forms the crux of his philosophical oeuvre. In contrast to the Marxist presumption that history began with class struggle and hence the peoples of Asia, Africa, and America were living beyond history before colonialism, Cabral appropriated the Althusserian model and developed a new inclusive historical model within a continued Marxist framework.

Cabral’s undogmatic left-oriented analyses of the ground realities of the colony has affinities with the Gramscian model of combining theoretical ingenuity and local knowledge with emphasis on culture in the nationalist struggle for emancipation. Throughout the period of the liberation struggle in South Africa, Cabral epitomised the hope of African people for recovery and restoration. The war of liberation led by Cabral in the Portuguese colonies of Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau ended

with the declaration of their independence by the Portuguese government in October 1974. Unfortunately, Cabral did not live to see independence, as he fell victim to a coup in 1973. He was assassinated by a corrupt former PAIGC comrade Kani Inocencio, on behalf of an opposing group that aimed at taking over the leadership of PAIGC. In death, Cabral was honoured at home and abroad. In 1973, the World Peace Council declared the annual Amílcar Cabral Award would be conferred on the individuals and groups who had shown exemplary courage in their struggle against colonialism and imperialism. Cape Verde's international airport was renamed The Amílcar Cabral International Airport. In 1979, a soccer tournament for the West African countries was renamed the Amílcar Cabral Cup. However, the best tribute echoes in a common saying in Guinea-Bissau 'Cabral ka muri' (Cabral is not dead), which invokes the spirit of struggle and sacrifice that Cabral resurrected.

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## Césaire, Aimé (1913–2008)

Born on 26 June 1913 into a modest family of Basse-Pointe, Martinique (then, a French colony), Aimé Césaire was a brilliant student at the Lycée Schoelcher, Fort de France. Leaving for Paris with a scholarship to attend the prestigious Lycée Louis le Grand in Paris, he met the future poet and Senegalese president Léopold Sédar Senghor who became his closest friend. In Paris, Césaire discovered that he was a 'Negro' (he confessed later that

until he left Martinique in 1931 he did not know what it meant to be black) and African. In 1934 Césaire founded with Senghor and Léon Gontran Damas the journal *L'Étudiant Noir* (Black student) and developed the concept of 'Negritude', embracing blackness and African-ness to counter a legacy of colonial self-hatred. In June 1935, Césaire entered the *Ecole Normale Supérieure* in Paris, where he studied American black writers, especially the poets of the Harlem Renaissance. He passed the *agrégation des lettres*, the national competitive examination that leads to a career in teaching. In 1937 he married Suzanne Rossi.

In 1939, the first version of *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (Notebook of a return to the native land) appeared in the journal *Volontés*. The poem was considerably revised before the definitive version in 1956.

As the Second World War began, Césaire and his wife returned to Martinique to take up teaching positions at Lycée Schoelcher. The colonial governor, Admiral Robert, was a staunch partisan of Vichy, and Césaire became increasingly critical of his regime. In 1941 he and Suzanne founded the journal *Tropiques* (Tropics). Césaire travelled to Haiti in 1944, which at the time was still the only independent black republic in the Americas, and he came back with, on the one hand, an admiration for the Haitian Revolution and the people and culture of Haiti, and on the other hand, a contempt for the Haitian elite which had betrayed the revolution.

Upon his return, he gave lectures on Haiti and was asked to run on the French Communist Party ticket for mayor of Fort-de-France and for the new French National Assembly. He won by a landslide in the election of 27 May 1945. Césaire would remain mayor of Fort-de-France for nearly 56 years, until 2001, and serve as a deputy in France's National Assembly until 1956 and again from 1958 until 1993.

Césaire was appointed in 1945 to defend in the National Assembly the proposal to abolish the colonial status of the four French colonies which had all experienced slavery: Guadeloupe, Guiana, Martinique, and Réunion. In his report, he drew up a severe indictment of their situation after 300 years of French colonisation. The four colonies became French departments on 19 March 1946.

Meanwhile, he continued to write, and published a collection of poetry, *Les Armes*

*miraculeuses* (Miraculous arms, 1946) and *Soleil cou-coupé* (Sun cut throat 1948). In 1947, Césaire was with Alioune Diop a confounder of *Présence africaine* (African presence), which evolved in the 1960s into a publishing house of the same name.

In 1956, Césaire participated in the First Congress of Negro Writers and Artists in Paris, broke with the French Communist Party, and turned to theatre. In 1958, at the First Congress of the Martinican Progressive Party, which he had created, he called for federalism.

While he performed his duties as an elected deputy and mayor, he continued to write. In 1959, he was at the Second Congress of Negro Writers and Artists in Rome. He wrote two more collections of poetry on Africa and the slave experience: *Ferremets* (Iron chains, 1960) and *Cadastre* (1961; translated, 1973).

In 1993, he retired from national political life but remained mayor of Fort de France until 2001. He died on 17 April 2008.

### Colonial racism and emancipation

As a student in Paris in the 1930s, Césaire had discovered that he was ‘Nègre’ (Negro). He rejected the French programme of assimilation, writing in 1939 that, ‘The Black youth wants to act and to create. It wants to have its own poets, its own authors who will tell its sorrows and hopes. The Black youth wants to contribute to universalism, to the humanization of humanity’ (*Nègreries*, cited in Ngal 1975: 75). But to reach that goal, blacks had to remain true to themselves. ‘*Negro I am, Negro I will remain*’, he declared as late as 2004. Being black and Antillean ‘is not about difference; it is not about degree of difference. It is about alterity and singularity’.

During his long political career, Césaire remained a staunch enemy of European colonialism and anti-black racism. In his plays, in his poems, in his essays, in his speeches and in his interventions in the National Assembly, he never ceased to indict colonialism for its violence and brutality, its destructive power and its contempt for non-European civilisations and cultures. He denounced colonial repression and supported anti-colonial insurrections and wars. As a member of the French Communist Party, he participated in peace congresses in the Soviet Union where he travelled widely. As a contemporary of the 1947 insurrection in Madagascar and of its savage

repression by French colonial troops, of the war in Indochina (1946–54), of the 1955 repression in Cameroon, of the crushing of revolts in Berlin (1953) and Budapest (1956), of the Cuban Revolution (1959), of the US war against Vietnam (1955–75) and of revolts in the French Antilles, Césaire demonstrated a constant interest in the worldwide struggle of peoples for emancipation.

To Césaire, the National Assembly was an agonistic space in which to deploy his attacks on a French republican government that was betraying its promises and violating human rights in its empire. He pointed to the deep shadow that colonial slavery, colonialism, and racism had cast over republican principles. He was sharp and direct in his interventions, pointing out French racism among its political representatives. In March 1946, as he was condemning the government’s policies of repression against the communists who had demonstrated against the colonial war in Indochina, he was insulted by Conservatives. He declared that the manoeuvres to shut him down were ‘manifestations of a racism unworthy of the Assembly’. In 1947, he loudly protested against the arrest and condemnation of Malagasy deputies. In 1949, he warned the minister of the interior: ‘In colonial countries, it is almost always the perception of injustice which determines the awakening of the colonized peoples’. During an exchange in 1950, he answered a colleague who had asked ‘What would you be without France?’ with the words ‘A man from whom you would not have tried to take away his freedom’; and to, ‘You should be very happy that we taught you to read!’ he said, ‘If I have learned to read, it is thank to the sacrifice of thousands and thousands of Martinicans who wanted their sons to be educated so that they would be able to defend them one day’ (Toumson and Henry-Valmore 1993: 112).

He often spoke against the inequalities between France and the Antilles, discussed the problem of Antillean identity and non-development of their economy, criticised a public education that ignored their social and cultural context, and mentioned the persistent question of their administrative status. In the 1960s, he called the French government’s encouragement of migration by thousands of young Antilleans to France a ‘genocide by substitution’. As late as 1980, 34 years after his speech against the colonial status of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guiana, and

Reunion, Césaire continued to protest against recurrent colonial privileges and to argue that France willingly maintained its overseas departments in a state of non-development and showed a continuous denial of their cultural identity. (The summaries of his interventions at the French National Assembly can be found at [<http://goo.gl/xTeqUo>].)

His criticism of colonialism was rooted in his own experience of inequalities, injustice, and racism in Martinique, and of the cultural mediocrity of colonial society. Overseas societies in their movement towards equality would come up sooner or later, he argued, against French politics of abstract universalism and denial of cultural identities; and they would have to decide the course of their own emancipation.

### The native land, slavery and colonialism

Césaire's poems, theatre, speeches, and essays all dealt with the experience of being black and colonised and of going through the difficult process of emancipation. In his texts, he explored what it meant to free oneself from a legacy of hatred, contempt, and barbarism in the name of the 'civilising mission'. He had observed how colonised people, 'those whom they inoculated with degeneracy' (Césaire 2001: 38), could become complacent about poverty, colonialism, and self-loathing. Decolonisation was thus first and foremost a process of getting rid of self-hatred produced by racism, of recovering dignity and pride in one's own past and of affirming the worth of all cultures and civilisations. But emancipation was full of obstacles and pitfalls, and in his plays he wrote about the tragedy of being in power, about the impatience the leader felt with the people, about the betrayals and the solitude of the leader.

'My mouth shall be the mouth of those calamities that have no mouth/my voice the freedom of those who break down/in the prison holes of despair', Césaire wrote in *Cahier d'un retours au pays natal*. He spoke for 'those without whom the earth would not be the earth', writing the history of the vanquished, of those made anonymous by colonial and post-colonial national narratives. Colonial slavery, the matrix of colonial and imperialist policies, had transformed Africans into 'Negroes', human beings with no memory, no pride, and no self-respect. Negroes

had to recover the glorious past of their ancestors and remind themselves that even in the slave ship they had remained 'standing and free'.

Colonial slavery had created the inhuman condition; post-slavery colonialism had expanded the system to the whole world. Césaire, however, wanted to be preserved 'from all hatred'. His goal was a new humanism, which he developed again in *Discourse on Colonialism*. Césaire made a connection between Nazism and European colonialism. The corollary of colonial despotism was Nazi warmongering. With colonialism, 'a poison has been distilled into the veins of Europe and, slowly, but surely, the continent proceeds toward savagery' (Césaire 2000: 36; originally published as *Discours sur le colonialisme* by *Présence Africaine*, 1955). Yet, what Europeans could not forgive Hitler was not the 'crime against man' but the 'crime against the white man, the humiliation of the white man' (*ibid.*).

*Discourse on Colonialism* was written in the midst of the Cold War when Césaire was still a member of the French Communist Party. He had written positively about Soviet society and had dedicated poems to French communists and to Soviet leaders. US imperialism was a threat to peace, and towards the end of *Discourse*, Césaire warned that it would surpass the barbarism of Western Europe which had nonetheless historically 'reached an incredible level' (2000: 47). 'The barbarism of the United States' would bring 'The modern barbarian. The American hour. Violence, excess, waste, mercantilism, bluff, conformism, stupidity, vulgarity, disorder' (76). 'This Empire' (the US) would be much more destructive than European colonialism. 'American domination – the only domination from which one never recovers. I mean from which one never recovers unscarred' (77).

The bourgeois class and the bourgeois nation state were the enemies of a new humanism and Césaire named in his conclusion the proletarian revolution as curing universal wrongs. Yet, he never forgot how deep colonial racism had contaminated European thought. His strategy was to put side-by-side quotes by infamous racist writers and by famous and revered humanist writers, all Western, to show how much both had been seduced by racial thinking. The European working class itself had more than often given its consent to the colonial

racialised order. Césaire called again for a new humanism that would go beyond racism, the desire to dominate in the name of ‘civilisation’ that would not seek to erase differences but rather to recognise cultural differences.

In 1956, Césaire resigned from the French Communist Party. In his letter to the general secretary Maurice Thorez with whom he has had good relations, he made reference to the revelations concerning Stalin’s crimes in Khrushchev’s famous ‘Secret Speech’. He wrote that ‘The dead, the tortured, the executed’ were ‘the kind of ghosts that one can ward off with a mechanical phrase’. The French Communists, however, had not been up to the task and had ‘shown reluctance to enter into the path of de-Stalinization’. His ‘position as a man of color’ had allowed him to observe the problems of the Communists and of the European left: ‘their inveterate assimilationism; their unconscious chauvinism; their fairly simplistic faith, which they share with bourgeois Europeans, in the omnilateral superiority of the West’. He hoped for an ‘African communism’ and for ‘a universal enriched by all that is particular, a universal enriched by every particular: the deepening and coexistence of all particulars (un universel riche de tout le particulier, riche de tous les particuliers, approfondissement et coexistence de tous les particuliers). European theories of emancipation lacked the capacity to understand the problems faced by black and Asian peoples. The struggle against imperialism was economic, political and cultural.

In his plays as well as in his book on Toussaint Louverture, Césaire raised questions about the difficulties of being in power in a post-colonial situation. He had witnessed the betrayal of the Haitian elite, he foresaw the control that colonial forces would exercise over the fate of the newly independent state, and he observed the fascination of post-colonial leaders for the practices of their white oppressors, and the rise of dictators and their reigns of terror.

## Independence

Césaire never fought for Martinique’s independence, explaining his position by his respect for the people’s will which had chosen to be integrated into the French Republic. Often asked how he could reconcile the scathing tone of his writings with his political

position, he answered that he accepted that hiatus and that, in his political life, he had to take into account the general context. His politics at home were driven by his wish to get rid of the legacies of racism and that poor people should get better education, better health, and better opportunities.

Though he testified at the 1962 trial of a young Martinican accused of having written ‘Martinique to the Martinicans!’ on the walls of the island, he thought that they were taking unnecessary risks; true, the 1946 law had failed to establish equality but ‘independence will mean chaos and poverty’. One should not underestimate the hold that successive French governments have put on overseas societies. Repressive policies coexisted with greater dependency on France. At the time of Césaire’s death in 2008, Martinique was still deeply dependent on France. An ageing society, it has a middle class of civil servants receiving higher salaries than they would in France (a remnant of the colonial past), from where all appointed posts and political leaders come, 40 per cent of its population is without a high-school diploma, 22 per cent live under the poverty level and more than 37 per cent are unemployed. For €367 million worth of exports there are €2.76 billion worth of imports from France.

Repeatedly tested about the 1946 integration, he explained that national consciousness had not still emerged in the French Antilles. It was understandable, he argued, that Antilleans had first sought to have their citizenship fully recognised and that, sooner or later, they would discover that their naïve belief in equality had been thwarted. In his preface to Daniel Guérin *Les Antilles décolonisées* (Decolonized Antilles, 1956), in which the author criticised the consequences of the 1946 law, Césaire argued that it had paradoxically awakened a sentiment of national consciousness. One had to acknowledge obstacles, he argued, among them the psychological dimension of the legacy of the slave trade and slavery. Before Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi, Césaire understood that the colonised’s psychological emancipation was fundamental in the process of decolonisation. He shared with other post Second World War writers of the European colonies an interest in the psychology of the colonised and the coloniser, both entangled in a murderous embrace.

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## Chomsky, Noam (b.1928) and Anti-Imperialism

In a recent article, Noam Chomsky notes of US foreign policy: 'Hegemonic power offers the opportunity to become a rogue state, freely defying international law and norms, while facing increased resistance abroad and contributing to its own decline through self-inflicted wounds' (2013a). Such a statement crystallises well Chomsky's critique of US foreign policy and self-defined 'exceptionalism' on the world stage; a critique he has had (but consistently developed and furthered) for more than 45 years.

Chomsky has remained a relentless critic of US foreign policy and the foremost role given to what he has called its 'Imperial Ambitions' in many decades of overthrowing democratically elected governments and overseeing their replacement by various (often extremely violent, indeed murderous) dictatorships, support for right-wing paramilitaries, embargoes and trade blockades on states it finds unfavourable, and outright military force against all others it has determined must be brought into line. Additionally, Chomsky excoriates the US's historical fondness for ignoring, or 'opting out' of, international law and treaties: perhaps observed most recently and notoriously in the 2003 invasion of Iraq,

similar in some ways to the first such invasion in 1991 by George Bush Sr and allies, but without the pretext of it being a response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The 2003 intervention was of course part of the so-called 'War on Terror' declared by then president George W. Bush. No link at all could be made between Al-Qaeda's attacks of 9/11 and Saddam Hussein, nor was any evidence of 'Weapons of Mass Destruction' found. However, the US and UK ignored the UN and all countries opposed to military intervention and invaded anyway, and as such, it can be seen as arguably the apotheosis of US exceptionalism, supported and endorsed by the UK prime minister Tony Blair: bilateralism truly coming into its own. The protracted conflagration of Iraq, in which at least 1 million civilian lives were lost during the Anglo-US occupation and civil war, and the further vast loss of life that followed, was supposed to have 'ended' with the withdrawal of US troops in December 2011; however, the suffering of the country continues. Following the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, there was the further black irony of the fact that the Islamist Mujahedeen and one of its most prominent guerrilla leaders Osama Bin Laden had received considerable US support in the 1980s war against the Soviet Union's invasion of that country.

Chomsky was and is an incisive critic of the war and its retrospective justification through erroneous 'proof' of the threat of Saddam Hussein's military capabilities; capabilities that were previously supported by the Pentagon and different Washington administrations. At the time of the invasion, Chomsky noted, 'The most powerful state in history has proclaimed that it intends to control the world by force, the dimension in which it reigns supreme' (2003). Indeed, the severity of the damage done to US and British standing in the international community cannot be underestimated, and the fact that millions of the citizens of both countries protested against invasion and occupation, but were completely ignored, bares distinct similarities to the US's intervention decades earlier in Vietnam, another imperial adventure Chomsky did not spare criticising. Vietnam set the precedent for future decades, in that the war displayed the US military machine's apparent disregard for international opinion, much less international law, something first properly observed through shocking images

of weapons not used or considered acceptable by other states against the civilian population: napalm searing human flesh and the defoliating Agent Orange doing the same to vegetation; all justified and explained as 'necessary' to vanquish the Việt Cộng enemy. The war in Vietnam met with monumental resistance in the US, and Chomsky noted at the time (1975) that it was not merely the Republican hawks Nixon and Kissinger who engaged in continuous bombing of the country and (not so) covert efforts to find local support on the ground, but also Democratic president Kennedy whose various military mobilisations earlier had 'involved US forces in counterinsurgency, bombing, and "population control"' (1975). Cambodia and Laos were to meet a similar fate. The 'necessity' of using weapons technologically developed to devastate life, and terrorise 'enemies' into submission at the time set the tone for further Cold War imperial machinations by the US and its Western allies; the US always being, however, the primary actor. Vietnam was 'an indescribable atrocity', Chomsky observed (*ibid.*).

The year 1973 is an appropriate one in which to pick up the further development of Cold War imperialism. It saw the CIA depose the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende in Chile, and install the murderous right-wing Pinochet dictatorship. The date of 11 September was not lost on critics 30 or so years later, and Chomsky was one of (if not the most) stringent of voices to remind the US public that another nation in South America also suffered appalling and brutal loss of life decades earlier courtesy of a lawless and fascist regime put in power by the US. The fact that the Allende Government had been democratically elected but, being perceived as 'too left-wing' by Washington, was seen as fit to remove, brought out in glaring contrast the contradictions of US foreign policy that Chomsky would underline in all his subsequent political work on the subject. Reflecting on those events 19 years later in a 1994 interview, Chomsky noted: 'They [the CIA] really pulled out the stops on this one. Later, when the military coup finally came [in September, 1973] and the government was overthrown (and thousands of people were being imprisoned, tortured and slaughtered) the economic aid which had been cancelled immediately began to flow again. As a reward for the military junta's achievement in reversing Chilean democracy,

the US gave massive support to the new government' (Chomsky 1994). To be sure, US imperialism was to be violently felt across Latin America throughout the 1970s and 1980s under the CIA's 'Operation Condor' programme to destabilise and remove any government it saw as 'left-wing', usually involving considerable support for right-wing and reactionary elements, while other arms of the US state saw to more practical matters such as arming and training them. Chomsky has always been among the many critics pointing out that support for state terror and death squads has been the repeated tactic of the CIA and military, with both Republican and Democrat administrations helping in their facilitation.

Focused on Latin America, Chomsky has remained a tireless critic of US imperialism, against Pinochet's Chile, and also offering incisive criticism of Argentina's military regimes. Argentina experienced a 'Dirty War' under the 'National Reorganisation Process' of successive military dictatorships beginning with Jorge Videla's, every bit as murderous as Pinochet's. Bolivia experienced something similar under Hugo Banzer, with of course strong support from Washington. Brazil found itself under military rule for a period of no less than 21 years (1964–85), beginning with Humberto de Alencar Castelo Branco, the typical 'strongman' preferred by Washington. Castelo Branco's successor Emilio Garrastazu Medici met with Nixon in 1971, and in a badly kept secret, discussed the removal of both Allende and Castro. (Cuba has been the Central American sore point for US imperialism, something else Chomsky has never tired of pointing out.)

The 1980s saw an escalation of Cold War hostilities, intensified by the presidency of Ronald Reagan and the election of the UK's Conservative prime minister Margaret Thatcher. Aggressive overtures were made toward the Soviet Union, and nuclear war (Mutually Assured Destruction [MAD]) seemed a very real possibility for at least the first half of the 1980s. US bases in the UK and Western Europe (notably West Germany) further increased tension, as did Reagan's 'Star Wars' missile programme and withdrawal from the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Reykjavik in Iceland in 1986.

As Chomsky observed looking back in 2013, 'Reagan waged a murderous assault on



Central America' (2013b). From Honduras to El Salvador and from Guatemala to Nicaragua, the US backed right-wing paramilitaries against both civilian populations and any political elements seen as 'left-wing'. Chomsky's ceaseless criticism of such cynical US realpolitik won many enemies as well as friends. In Guatemala, the genocidal dictatorship of Efraim Rios Montt, which massacred many tens of thousands of predominantly indigenous Mayans, received strong and enduring support from Reagan, who as Chomsky quotes in the same article, was unequivocal: 'My administration will do all it can to support his progressive efforts'. The regime's massacres 'were carried out with vigorous US support and participation. Among the standard Cold War pretexts was that Guatemala was a Russian "beach-head" in Latin America'. In Nicaragua, paramilitary 'Contras' were used to fight the Sandinista Government, which Washington viewed with special disdain, being happy to use lethal force against civilians the better to 'promote democracy'. Chomsky makes his point well when he quotes the Reagan State Department's Thomas Carothers, who freely admitted that Washington would only accept 'limited, top-down forms of democratic change that did not risk upsetting the traditional structures of power with which the United States has long been allied [in] quite undemocratic societies' (ibid.). What is most important, as Chomsky shows in his indictment of US imperial ambitions, is that US interests, as understood by a thoroughly instrumental 'realist' theory of international relations, should prevail; that is, geo-political hegemony should be sustained at all costs.

Such geo-political hegemony is of course felt presently by the US's application of 'extraordinary rendition' in removing those it suspects of involvement in terrorism to Guantanamo Bay's Camp Delta and Camp X Ray. The absolute legal limbo into which detainees are thrown for many years (being held without charge but subject to all sorts of interrogation methods widely seen as torture, such as 'waterboarding') is one of the favourite weapons wielded by the US, as the world's self-appointed policeman. The fact that the world's only superpower has sought to underwrite that power by recourse to actions condemned by the rest of the world and the UN, not to mention its own internal critics, can

be seen, as Chomsky notes, in the following terms:

Principles are valid only if they are universal. Reactions would be a bit different, needless to say, if Cuban Special Forces kidnapped the prominent terrorist Luis Posada Carriles in Miami, bringing him to Cuba for interrogation and trial in accordance with Cuban law. Such actions are restricted to rogue states. More accurately, to the one rogue state that is powerful enough to act with impunity: in recent years, to carry out aggression at will, to terrorize large regions of the world with drone attacks, and much else. (2013a)

Chomsky's anti-imperialism does not absolve a much smaller power's own imperial ambitions, since Israel is certainly a power in the Middle East, not just in its apartheid exclusion and subordination of the Palestinians within its own borders, but in bellicose posturing toward other countries in the Middle East, being well aware that it has the unstinting support of the US. The Israeli state exerts contempt toward the Arab population of the West Bank and Gaza that it seemingly believes cannot ever face serious opposition since it has the strength of the US behind it.

It can certainly be contended that the state of Israel has long found it hard to even acknowledge the existence of the Palestinians, finally ceding a limited amount of recognition, but continuing to maintain de facto apartheid with securitised and punitive measures: Israeli 'settler' settlements in the West Bank, the notorious 'wall', ID checks and Israel military checkpoints, military strikes against civilian homes in pursuit of 'terrorists' and the fact that the Arab population is vastly, and conspicuously unequal economically, politically, and socially. The fact that all of this is in very large part in contravention of international law, and is continuously pointed out as such by the UN and the rest of the international community, is largely ignored by the Israeli state, since whilst Israel sometimes has minor disagreements with the US (variable according to the different incumbent administrations in both countries), the strength of the relationship is never seriously in question, any more than is the country's own use of arbitrary and disproportionate force against its own displaced Arab population. Chomsky has been a tireless critic of

Israel and the US's unflinching support for it, as well as the continued non-status of the Palestinians: a 'Fateful Triangle' as he calls it. 'There are in fact two rogue states operating in the region, resorting to aggression and terror and violating international law at will: the United States and its Israeli client' (Chomsky 2013c).

Chomsky maintains that imperialism can be seen primarily in the foreign policy of the US, and largely irrespective of whether the president is Republican or Democrat. Obama's use of drone strikes on Pakistan (ostensibly targeting Islamist fighters, but often involving an extraordinarily high civilian death toll) being a contemporary example of that. The fact that imperialism remains something that can only be imposed by a superpower, and there remains only one of those, means US imperialism is really without comparison or equal. Its 'client state' of Israel, and former imperialist power the UK, act internationally (and at least in the case of the latter, some if not all of the time) with the supreme imperial might of the US state behind them. Anti-imperialism, of course, is the critique of imperial power, of imperialism, and Noam Chomsky remains one of its foremost practitioners.

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## Connolly, James (1868–1916)

Born in 1868 in Edinburgh of poor Irish parents, James Connolly is one of Ireland's most important and controversial historical figures. He is known as Ireland's foremost Marxist thinker and activist, the working-class leader who effected a union of socialist and nationalist forces in a radical anti-imperialist front. In 1896 he founded in Dublin the Irish Socialist Republican Party 'to muster all the forces of labour for a revolutionary reconstruction of society and the incidental destruction of the British Empire' (Connolly 1973: 167), and remained committed to that aim until his death. Financial difficulties forced him to emigrate to the US between 1903 and 1910 where he worked as an organiser for the Industrial Workers of the World (better known as the Wobblies). After his return to Ireland, he became the Belfast organiser of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union from 1911–13. He was deeply involved in the great Dublin lock-out of 1913 and had a key role in organising the Irish Citizen Army – a workers' defence force. He was an outspoken opponent of Irish involvement in the First World War. A convinced socialist revolutionary, Connolly was at the forefront of the struggle against the British Empire and allied with the revolutionary Irish nationalists to organise the 1916 Easter Rising. One of the signatories of the Proclamation of the Republic, he was appointed vice-president of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic and commandant-general of its army. Wounded in the Rising, he was shot in a chair by the British authorities on 12 May 1916. Throughout his life, Connolly was a prolific writer, and maintained a constant stream of books, pamphlets, articles, and speeches. His work is almost exclusively centred on Ireland, was elaborated largely

in isolation from the international socialist movement, and for that reason is not well known globally.

Connolly developed a number of innovative theoretical positions regarding the relationship between Marxism and anti-imperialism; positions heretical to both conventional forms of Irish nationalism and the form of socialism espoused by the Second International prevalent during his lifetime. He was among the first to combine the politics of anti-imperialist nationalism with international Marxism in the colonial arena. His fundamental teaching is that the struggle for national liberation from imperialism is not opposed to the struggle for socialism but an integral and necessary part of it. This is why: ‘The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour. They cannot be dis severed’ (Connolly 1988: 175). Why are the two interdependent?

To those who were purely nationalists, Connolly argued that an independent Ireland without socialism would simply find itself subject to English neo-colonial rule:

If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organization of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain. England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers ... Nationalism without Socialism ... is only recreancy. (Connolly 1987: 307)

In this respect, Connolly foreshadows and anticipates Fanon’s revolutionary anti-colonial nationalism and its critique of the limitations of a purely political nationalism.

If national liberation is meaningless without socialism, socialism is impossible in Ireland without national liberation. To socialists who opposed taking a stance on the national question, Connolly pointed out that it was inconsistent to be ‘opposed to oppression at all times’ but also ‘opposed to national revolt for national independence’. While Connolly understood why socialists could be suspicious of nationalism, he was insistent that the workers’ movement ‘must rest upon and draw its inspiration from the historical and actual conditions of the country in which it functions’ and opposed ‘abstract “internationalism” ... which has no relation to the real

internationalism of the Socialist movement’ (Connolly 1987: 369–370).

Connolly clearly understood that anti-imperialist nationalism and international Marxism were not identical but only complementary. He viewed the two not as separate stages, but as distinct aspects of the same process. Breaking the chains of empire and national liberation are a ‘first requisite’ (Connolly 1988: 175) for building a socialist society in Ireland. Although the fight for national freedom takes a logical priority, in that it represents an attack on the most immediate and most tangible manifestation of imperialism, it cannot be chronologically separated from the struggle for social liberation. To postpone the objective of socialism to a distinct ‘stage’ in the future invites a form of independence that is necessarily on the terms favouring vested interests.

Connolly is little acknowledged in the pantheons of post-colonial theory and subaltern history, but leading post-colonial theorist Robert Young argues that he should be rightfully given central importance within the history of anti-imperialism and its theoretical traditions:

Connolly was the first leader in a colonized nation to argue for the compatibility of nationalism and socialism, in doing so producing a position which would not only inspire Lenin and through him lead to the Third International, but which would subsequently become the defining characteristic of the triumphant tricontinental Marxism of the national liberation movements, including that of Fanon, but also that of Mao, Cabral and Guevara. This tricontinental Marxism, generally but misleadingly known as Marxist nationalism, could be better described, after Engels, as nationalist internationalism ... It was not a question of choice between nationalism and internationalism, but rather, as Fanon was also to argue, an anti-colonial nationalism within an internationalist framework of cross-cultural solidarity’. (Young 2001: 305)

James Connolly has also been acknowledged as one of the first Marxists to have developed an anti-imperialist form of historiography, in works such as *Labour in Irish History* (1910), to theorise the history of subaltern social groups. For David Lloyd, Connolly is among

the first to produce a critical rethinking of Marxism according to the specificity of colonial history and from the standpoint of the colonised, his work bearing a remarkable similarity conceptually and theoretically to the writings of Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui (Lloyd 2003: 357). The particularity of the Irish experience of colonisation required an understanding of the process of historical change different from those customarily found in conventional capitalist and Marxist teleologies of development. While nowhere near as theoretically sophisticated as that to be found in the contemporary scholarship that has appeared after the emergence of the South Asian Subaltern school of historiography, Connolly's work at the very least anticipates such projects:

Connolly's attempt to theorize (historical) materialism from the standpoint of the colonized represents a decisive moment in the genealogy of the critical theorization of colonization and decolonization throughout the world, as well as presenting a crucial gloss of how what now goes by the name of postcolonial theory might be understood within Ireland. (Dobbins 2000: 634)

Hostile critics like Stephen Howe object that Connolly:

played no role in the general debates of the international socialist movement before 1914, including those on imperialism; and there is no sign in his writings that he was even aware of the theories of imperialism developed by Rosa Luxemburg, Rudolf Hilferding, Nikolai Bukharin or, nearer to home, J.A. Hobson. Nor is there any indication that he ... was aware even of the existence of anticolonial nationalist thinkers outside Europe. (Howe 2000: 62)

Austen Morgan writes that, contrary to what is often claimed, 'Connolly's support for Irish statehood did not make him an advanced critic of imperialism in the late 1890s'. He traces just 12 references to overseas dependencies in Connolly's writings, almost all ephemeral. Morgan suggests that these 'did not breach a Eurocentric and indeed racist view of world politics ... The people of the "non-civilized" world are totally missing in Connolly's writings' (Morgan 1988: 37, 210). However,

Connolly's trenchant analyses such as 'The Coming Revolt in India' (1908), 'The Friends of Small Nationalities' (1914) or 'What is a Free Nation?' (1916) indicate that he was unusual in his time in seeing Irish politics within the context of the global panoply of British and European imperialism (Young 2001: 305). Connolly always argued that 'the movements of Ireland for freedom could not and cannot be divorced from the worldwide movements of the world's democracy' (Connolly 1973: 150). He anticipated later critical approaches in his insistence that Ireland should be regarded in relation to India, Egypt, and other regions of the British Empire due to a shared experience of imperialism. Connolly's 'In Praise of Empire' (1915), for example, claims the British Empire 'stifles the ancient culture of India, strangles in birth the new-born liberty of Egypt, smotheres in the blood of ten thousand women and children the republics of South Africa, betrays into the hands of Russian despotism the trusting nationalists of Persia, connives at the partition of China, and plans the partition of Ireland' (Connolly 1987: 84). In his article 'The Fighting Race' (1898), Connolly also held that the Irish were not simply victims of colonisation but might also profit from occasional complicity with imperialism through their participation in the British or American military.

Since his execution in a chair by a British firing squad in 1916, Connolly's legacy has been subject to intense disputes. These have revolved around whether he failed to understand rural Ireland or the political significance of its uneven industrialisation, to what extent he was a syndicalist who neglected to build the revolutionary party, whether he made too many concessions to Catholicism, or was right or wrong as a socialist to take part in the 1916 Easter Rising. But his ideas on the relation between anti-imperialist nationalism and international Marxism have been credited for arriving independently at the same conclusions as Lenin on the national question and the relation between the democratic and socialist revolution or prefiguring post-colonial theory.

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## De Beauvoir, Simone (1908–1986)

A prolific writer, Simone de Beauvoir published philosophy and literature that explored the nature of freedom, individual and social responsibility, and subjectivity. As a philosopher, she is best known for her magnum opus *The Second Sex*, which has become an iconic work of second-wave feminism. Although the reputation of Jean Paul Sartre had at one point surpassed her own as a thinker, recent scholarly interest in her work now recognises her significant and distinct contributions to philosophy and literature (Bergoffen 2004: 80). Some scholars have even speculated that it was her guidance that spurred Sartre's intellectual development. Nonetheless, her contributions to political theory and her lifelong activism have yet to be fully recognised. From her autobiographical account of her experience of the Nazi occupation of Paris to her campaign during the Algerian War on behalf of a young Algerian woman and activist, Djamilia Boupacha, the extent to which philosophy, literature, and politics were interconnected for her is clear. As Julien Murphy observes, the issues of colonialism and French imperialism took an especially prominent place in de Beauvoir's political activities and philosophical thought (Murphy 1995).

From an early age, de Beauvoir contested the conventions of her dour, middle-class upbringing. Her biographer, Deirdre Bair, writes that she had always 'equated reading with happiness' (Bair 1991: 65). She was part of the first

generation of French girls to take advantage of progressive reforms in higher education in early 20th-century France, which finally allowed them to train for a professional degree. At the Sorbonne, she met Sartre, and they would remain close friends until his death in 1980. Sartre's approach to existentialist ethics contended that the individual alone generates the meaning of the social world. According to his view, ethics was simply an orientation that the lone individual invents rather haphazardly in building meaningful relationships and intellectual projects. She was intrigued by the idea of radical freedom and the problem of nihilism that preoccupied the young Sartre, but would later criticise his view because of the extreme individualism it presupposed.

It was under the Nazi occupation of Paris that de Beauvoir came of age as a political thinker. Although she would later write novels and a drama about the French resistance and post-war French politics (e.g. *The Blood of Others*, *Who Shall Die?* and *The Mandarins*), the extent of her own participation in the resistance is unclear. Some have even suggested that she and her inner circle colluded with the German occupiers to further their careers and secure steady work (ch. 17). What is clear, however, is that her wartime experience marked her political awakening, motivating her to rethink her pre-war political and philosophical commitments, among which was – as a successful, middle-class French woman – her own relationship to French colonial subjects. She would later describe her wartime experience as throwing her for the first time into the world, forcing her to realise that she could no longer indulge in a life in which she her private and professional ambitions alone were central. Neither could she defend an existentialist philosophy in which meaning is constructed by lonely, anxiety-ridden individuals. She came to find meaning already abundant in the world around her.

In a 1965 interview in *The Paris Review*, de Beauvoir retrospectively describes her political awakening. She says that she realised that as a young woman she had been 'swindled'. She then went on to explain that being 'swindled' does not simply mean being tricked:

'I'm swindled' also implies something else – namely, that life has made me discover the world as it is, that is, a world of suffering and oppression, of undernourishment for the majority of people, things that I didn't

know when I was young and when I imagined that to discover the world was to discover something beautiful. In that respect, too, I was swindled by bourgeois culture, and that's why I don't want to contribute to the swindling of others and why I say that I was swindled, in short, so that others aren't swindled. It's really also a problem of a social kind. In short, I discovered the unhappiness of the world little by little, then more and more, and finally, above all, I felt it in connection with the Algerian war and when I traveled. (Gobeil 1965: 35)

Her gradual discovery of the unhappiness of the world is evident in her writing, through which one can trace an arc of moral and political development. Beginning with the musings on the purpose of human engagements that she had jotted down as a young philosophy student in the 1930s, her changing views on the relationship between morality and politics eventually led her to call vehemently on her fellow citizens to end the French occupation of North Africa in the 1950s and 1960s. She would also come to defend the right of colonial subjects to engage in violent revolt against their occupiers in the name of freedom and national self-determination.

Her first philosophical essay, 'Pyrrhus et Cineas' (1944), did not endorse such a radical political position, but it did contain the germ of an ethical framework that is consistent with the latter. In the essay, the tyrant Pyrrhus advisor, Cineas, ponders the purpose of endless imperial expansion. For, he concludes, at the closing of a day and of a life, one always ends up back where one started: in one's motherland, alone. She uses this dialogue to set the stage for a discussion about the purpose of undertaking any project whatsoever, given that human finitude is bound to render our projects unsuccessful or, at the very least, incomplete. She defends the importance of human endeavours in spite of their ultimate futility: our finitude is not an obstacle as much as a necessary condition for constructing meaning, since meaning is only possible for mere mortals, rather than gods and archangels. According to de Beauvoir, the latter could never feel the burden of responsibility for their choices because their lives extend into eternity. The capacity for freedom is distinctly human and thus necessarily an expression of human finitude, of the fact that

we have a past and a future and that our present will one day dissolve in the impalpable instance of our death.

The imperialist overtones of the essay were lost on the young philosopher, and she decidedly sides with the imperialist Pyrrhus, goading us on to undertake projects in spite of their ultimate futility, as Pyrrhus did when he invaded Macedonia, Rome, and Thessaly before returning to rest in his imperial courts. At this point, she does not provide a clear criterion for distinguishing 'meaningful' from 'meaningless' collective political projects, contending only that action is better than inaction. She simply stipulates the importance of throwing oneself into the social world and of action more generally. The essay nonetheless demonstrates a nascent political consciousness that recognises the importance of others in building a meaningful life: in order to construct a truly free life, one must involve others in it and ensure that they have the minimal autonomy necessary to pursue collective actions. That is to say, one must be attuned to the miseries and strivings of others.

In the essay, she also begins to ponder how a political community that can feasibly undertake collective action is constituted. A single life, after all, is not expansive enough to include everyone nor is it small enough to exclude everyone. All action throws one into the world and requires one to assume one's 'situation' – constitutive of a particular social identity and historical and geographic context. How to draw the bounds of political fellowship and to decide who warrants one's concern and who does not is a problem de Beauvoir poses in this early essay but leaves unsolved.

In 'Pyrrhus et Cineas', her concern about colonialism and French imperialism, though palpable, is still only implicit. After all, in drawing the boundaries of human fellowship, French citizens must judge whether or not French colonial subjects belong under the arc of their moral and political consciousness. It was not until the publication of *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1948) that she first clearly articulated a conception of freedom and subjectivity that is attuned to a social world marred by colonialism and imperialism. It is also here that she begins her lifelong philosophical engagement with Marxism and affirms her commitment to the universal humanism typical of communist and cosmopolitan political philosophies, though she was often a vocal

critic, and never a member, of the French Communist Party (PCF).

She definitively breaks with Sartre's conception of radical freedom in favour of a position that takes seriously material and political inequality. In his early work, Sartre had argued that insofar as human beings are conscious, they are free. The onus of choosing a path for one's self and building a meaningful life is equally shared by every self-conscious individual. '[R]elations of unequal power have no bearing on the autonomy of the subject. "The slave in chains is as free as his master because each is equally free to choose the meaning of his own situation." The question of material or political inequality between master and slave is simply irrelevant to their relation as two freedoms, as two absolute subjects' (Sartre, quoted in Kruks 1992: 96). She instead argues that our capacity to make meaningful choices is profoundly influenced by the social world and our relationships with others. One cannot establish radical freedom due to the mere fact that we are all equally self-conscious agents, since many of us suffer exploitation on account of our sex, gender, race, class, religion, and nationality. This is precisely the 'ambiguity' she identifies as the ineradicable feature of ethical life: we are neither wholly determined by our social context nor completely free of it. The social world necessarily mediates all our action and thought without wholly determining them.

In the spirit of Aristotle's virtue ethics, in *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir outlines the material conditions of freedom by arguing that women's liberation requires access to material and social 'props' (*choregia*). These props consist of access to viable, self-affirming work, quality education, public life, and state-subsidised day care and maternity leave. She also emphasised the importance of reproductive rights, lobbying for contraceptives and the right to abortion. Her emphasis on material and social goods is also representative of her commitment to Marxism. For de Beauvoir, true liberation necessitates a more egalitarian organisation of the basic structure of the social and economic world that would support the civil and political rights we gain.

For her, the essential feature of immorality is the treatment of human beings as mere objects; such treatment undermines the prospect of engaging with others on the basis of the mutual recognition of one another's

freedom. She uses several examples from the colonial context to illustrate this point. Colonial overseers often perpetuated atrocities according to a vision of empire that reduces colonial subjects to mere tools subordinate to the end of capital accumulation and the consolidation of power. 'Oppression tries to defend itself by its utility' (De Beauvoir 1976: 95). According to this logic, the free market must advance unhampered because of the promise of 'productivity'; colonisation exploits resources that would otherwise lie 'fallow,' thereby generating 'value'. Thus, in spite of all the violence visited upon colonised peoples, colonisers asserted that they were benefiting the latter.

She later develops her account of social and political distortion in *The Second Sex* to incorporate the phenomenon of 'Othering'. A 'sovereign consciousness' defines the identity and worth of another human being in terms of the negative features that he projects onto them, often delegating women and certain racial groups as the 'Other'. Given the apparent rationality, self-control, and strength of whites and men, women and people of colour are irrational, infantile, and weak. The Other is not perceived to even have the capacity for self-determination – they are a 'thing' for the sovereign consciousness to control, define, and exploit.

In her mature political and moral philosophy (*The Ethics of Ambiguity* and *The Second Sex*), she argues that the existence of anyone's oppression limits the freedom of all. She thus espouses the universal humanism that is characteristic of her particular brand of existentialism, which provides her with a conceptual apparatus for expressing solidarity with exploited peoples around the world, including colonial subjects and women of colour. For her, the ideal of reciprocal autonomy must be realised as a collective political project that spans the globe.

For her, the moral ideal is to recognise one another as sovereign subjects equally possessing autonomy and the capacity for self-determination. Although she has historically been associated with white bourgeois feminism, her characterisation and use of her own feminist philosophy galvanised her anti-imperialist activism, particularly on behalf of colonised women. She believed that the moral ideal of mutual reciprocity must be achieved between French citizens and France's colonial subjects. In *Force of Circumstances* she explicitly

links the oppression of women with colonisation, arguing that the same logic of domination operates in both contexts.

From the end of the Second World War, she made her home available to political refugees and other stateless peoples and dissidents emigrating from the so-called Third World (Bair 1991: 400). Arguably, the 1950s and 1960s were her most politically active period. She travelled extensively and lent her support to various political causes, meeting – among others – Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Mao Zedong, and Franz Fanon. She became actively involved in the liberation movements in North Africa, particularly Algeria.

Presided over by President Charles de Gaulle, the occupation of Algeria protected French business interests in the country, culminating in the Algerian War (1954–62), during which the French army tortured and killed innumerable Algerian citizens in an effort to put down the Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN), the socialist liberation army fighting to end French occupation in the country. Only a year before Algeria would finally win independence (1962), the violence spilled over to France. The Paris-based guerrilla army of the FLN called on Algerian citizens to protest against the military occupation of their homeland. In a show of solidarity, Algerian families crowded the streets. In her memoirs, she describes how, led by a former Nazi collaborator, Maurice Papon, French police massacred the protestors, throwing their mutilated and broken bodies in the River Seine or hanging them from the Bois de Boulogne in what would later be known as the Paris Massacre.

Along with other prominent French intellectuals, de Beauvoir signed the Manifesto 121 in support of Algerian independence, condemning the French military occupation of Algeria. As a feminist and supporter of the FLN, in 1960 she began to campaign on behalf of a young Algerian woman, Djamila Boupacha: an FLN member raped and tortured by French soldiers during the Algerian War (Murphy 1995). She collaborated with Gisèle Halimi, Boupacha's lawyer and a global advocate for women's rights, to raise awareness about Boupacha's case among the French public and the Western media. De Beauvoir and Halimi co-authored a book about Boupacha's ordeal (1962). They would later work together on various feminist causes, spearheading a campaign for the right to abortion and contraceptives in France in the 1970s.

De Beauvoir's anti-imperialist political action forced her and Sartre into hiding in the early 1960s. They became the targets of the right-wing nationalist militia Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS), which planted several bombs in their residences. She was undeterred and continued her activism. Moreover, she did not limit her criticism to French imperialism; she was a vocal critique of the Vietnam War and a member of the Russell Tribunal, which convened in 1967 to assess the consequences of the US's war crimes in Indochina.

In *The Mandarins*, de Beauvoir captures the post-Second World War sentiment of the French. Though many of the novel's political themes are now passé, the novel depicts the general ethos following the war: 'This peace [...] gave us back our lives without giving us back our reasons for living' (De Beauvoir 1987: 76). With the end of the Second World War, she developed a moral philosophy that posited the struggle for freedom as expressive of the very fibre of the human spirit, and, to a considerable extent, the struggle for freedom became her own reason for living.

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## Du Bois, W.E.B (1868–1963)

William Edward Burkhardt Du Bois (W.E.B. Du Bois) was born on 23 February 1868 in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. He completed a general undergraduate degree at Fisk University in 1888, before transferring to Harvard University and graduating cum laude with a bachelor's in Philosophy in 1890. He then obtained his PhD from Harvard in 1896 and completed his dissertation 'The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870' (1896) while a professor at Wilberforce University in Ohio. His achievements include founding the Niagara Movement, a group of prominent black intellectuals advocating the full enfranchisement of blacks through economic and educational justice, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He authored numerous books, studies and articles including the first large-scale sociological study of African Americans *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), a standard-setting text for sociology. Du Bois's earlier works were empirically based, social science-oriented studies that illuminated the plight of and the policies affecting African Americans in the US.

Du Bois's work became decidedly less positivist over time and increasingly critical of 'accommodationist' views, eventually culminating in a Marxist internationalist understanding of race relations and Euro-American global hegemony. He ascribed this intellectual shift to pivotal experiences while on the faculty at Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) from 1897–1910. Specifically, Du Bois cited an incident in which the severed knuckles of Sam Hose, a black victim of a white lynch mob, were displayed in an Atlanta store front, writing "Two considerations thereafter broke in upon my work and eventually

disrupted it: first, one could not be a calm, cool, and detached scientist while Negroes were lynched, murdered, and starved; and secondly, there was no such definite demand for scientific work of the sort I was doing' (2007: 34). His movement from positivist-based inquiry towards a multi-generic discourse composed of History, Psychology and Sociology paralleled his increasing sense that racism and imperialism were integrally implicated systems of exploitation based in both cultural and material conditions, a condition which could not be dissolved by objective inquiry alone but rather through intellectual activism and political, social, and economic mobilisation. By emphasising the structural and economic forces underlying a system of oppression based on race, Du Bois broke with the long-lasting and dominant tradition of liberal legalistic civil rights activism that had marked the black struggle in America, commenting that as an ideology 'it was not wrong so much as short sighted' (1940: 289).

Du Bois is best known for his analysis and critique of race in the US; however, he was also one of the first and most consistent and vocal critics of Euro-American imperialism. He preferred the terms 'semi-colonialism' and 'quasi-colonialism' to 'imperialism', 'deliberately using the term colonial in a much broader sense than is usually given it' (1988: 229). Expanding the definition of colonialism emphasised the sometimes subtle methods and indirect practices of continuing colonial rule by Western nations of newly independent former colonies that masked how the real relations of power had remained fundamentally unchanged. Decolonisation, then, was a ruse that hid the ongoing system of domination in which the global South remained in a subservient position to the global North. Du Bois believed that at the core of this system of global inequality was a racialised imperialism that buttressed the global economic and political systems of the 19th and early 20th centuries and originated with colonial slavery, American racism, and European chauvinism. As his interests became more global in orientation, so too did his race analysis, mirroring his political development, from liberalism to socialism and finally communism.

From his earlier work on slavery in America, Reconstruction and the plight of African-Americans in Philadelphia to his later pan-Africanist cultural nationalism and finally to an internationalist anti-imperialism,

Du Bois saw the enduring ‘race concept’ and the history of racialised slavery in America as the seed of ‘modern industrial imperialism,’ as well as a template and rationale for the colonisation and domination of native peoples and groups within what would become the US and those farther afield in the global South. His oft-quoted line from *The Souls of Black Folks* that ‘the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line ...’ (1903: 8) extended his analysis of slavery, Jim Crow segregation in the South, and the ‘race concept’ to include a worldwide economic, political, and cultural system that privileged white Euro-American interests at the expense of colonised and exploited peoples of colour. For Du Bois, the process that established and perpetuated slavery and racism in America was rooted in economic exploitation and accompanied by three distinct ideological phases. Ideologically, this system first emerged from ideas of European cultural superiority contrasting and hierarchising the civilised white to the ‘savage’, ‘primitive’ and/or ‘uncivilised’ non-European. Later, notions of a taxonomy and hierarchy of human groups based on putative biological differences that loosely correlated with skin colour (scientific racism) were developed to justify and rationalise slavery and colonialism. Finally, arguments of a social technological superiority (during decolonisation) served to justify the continuing exploitation and subjugation, both physical and psychological, of non-white peoples through paternalistic neo-colonial relations. This international racialised system of stratification, born in the slave-holding colonies of North America and exported around the globe with the expansion of capitalism and colonialism was based in the race concept.

In contrast to other prominent critics of racism, slavery, and imperialism of the time, Du Bois argued that both American slavery and modern imperialism were historically exceptional systems unlike earlier forms of slavery, forced unfree labour, and empire. Each was not only distinct in its geography and scope, as the modern form encompassed the globe and subjugated a majority of the world’s population either directly or indirectly, but also ideologically unprecedented as both systems were constructed upon pseudo-scientific notions of race, notions that infected the very people they oppressed through an internalised racist psychology he dubbed ‘double consciousness’. For instance, the systems of slavery present in

ancient Europe were legalistic and based upon social status not physical traits or biological difference. Even the intensive stratification of the medieval feudal system subjugated serfs through a complex social web based on fealty and property relations, not physical traits or race. And he argued, both ancient slavery and medieval serfdom were limited in geographic scope, and, in the case of slavery, duration. Hence, the American example of a global systemic, and therefore imperial, inherited and universal race-based stratification system resulted in the subjugation of entire peoples and lands. Du Bois argued this was nefariously novel since it employed a superficial rationality and pseudo-scientific schema that totalised the experience of oppression and exploitation to include both the mind and bodies of those subject to its force. His earlier understanding of imperialism, in which cultural discourses about the inferiority of non-Europeans figured more prominently than economic factors, prefigures more recent scholarship on neo-imperialism, neo-colonialism and post-colonialism while his later analysis tended toward an international class system based upon colonial racism. Yet, even as early as his 1898 dissertation, Du Bois understood American racism and slavery as institutions grounded in economic interests as well as a landed white southern aristocracy, writing ‘the development of Southern slavery has heretofore been viewed so exclusively from the social and ethical standpoint that we are apt to forget its close and indissoluble connection with the cotton market’ (1904: 152). For the time, this was a brilliant and radical departure from the standard moral condemnation of slavery.

As mentioned, Du Bois was one of the first thinkers to see imperialism operating even after post-Second World War decolonisation. He saw the global hierarchy of nation states as a parallel to the internal racial order of the US and Europe, as, for him, nations were racialised and placed into a strict hierarchy in which white America and Europe were at the top of the political, economic, and cultural order. Of course, he recognised that dominant states still operated directly within foreign lands, but Du Bois argued that they also increasingly operated indirectly through cultural and social domains. Rather than possessing colonies through direct occupation and force, he maintained that imperialism operated within spheres of political influence, frequently protecting the interests of

corporations acting with impunity on foreign territory. Hence, he deliberately employed a broad use of the term ‘colonial’ to explain uneven international relations. Further, these corporations deliberately manipulated cultures and governments for market expansion and control while exporting Western lifestyles, ideas, and values to solidify market control and subdue resistance. Du Bois, then, is one of the first critics of imperialism to argue that culture, in addition to politics and direct military might, is integral to imperialism. This profound insight forms the basis for later post-colonial critiques that see the role of culture as an important, if not the dominant facet of expanding, cloaking, and consolidating the control of foreign lands, peoples, and resources by Western powers.

While Du Bois in his early works emphasised the importance of culture as well as racism in the formation and extension of imperialism, he also insisted from his earliest work ‘The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade’ (1896, published 1904) that the fundamental roots of all forms of imperialism are economic. By his last and posthumously published *Autobiography* (1967), he concluded that while race and gender were important components of a complex web that supported and extended imperialism on all levels, class was the key underlying factor of imperialism. He thus ultimately embraced a Marxist understanding of imperialism, gender, and race, arguing that the global capitalist class dominated a world economic system in which overwhelmingly brown people and nations are exploited for profit. As he grew increasingly disenchanted with the possibility of reform within the US he gravitated towards the Soviet Union and openly sided with Stalin. Yet, to call Du Bois simply a Marxist is to miss one of his greatest contributions to social theory and social justice struggles: that race and class, while historically and categorically separate, had been blended into one seamless reality for most of humanity. Marx’s simple bipartite class division elided over the complex triangulation in which the capitalist elite and white working class exploited the coloured majority of mankind, going so far as to build the nation state upon this foundation. The US, he argued, based its self-characterisation, its self-understanding, and its actualisation upon an alliance between rich and working-class whites. In ‘The African Roots of War’ he wrote, ‘[The] white

workingman has been asked to share the spoils of exploiting “chinks and niggers”. It is no longer simply the merchant prince, or the aristocratic monopoly, or even the employing class that is exploiting the world: it is the nation; a new democratic nation composed of united capital and labor’ (1915: 709). Yet both these privileged categories (whiteness and wealth) are the product of the race concept. So, while Du Bois embraced the Soviet Union, he continually emphasised that the global proletariat was overwhelmingly non-white. Further, that the white working class in places such as the US and Europe shared in the ‘spoils’ of Third-World subjugation and exploitation and benefited from an omnipresent racial order.

Unlike Booker T. Washington, Du Bois saw the plight of African Americans in the US as part of a larger global system of race-based oppression that affected the ‘darker races of men, who make the vast majority of mankind’ (2007: 159). Du Bois maintained that culture was an important component of colonisation and imperialism as well as a mode of resistance and the path towards full emancipation, enfranchisement, and decolonisation. He championed the reconstruction of culture to produce ‘race pride’ and advocated ‘black awareness’ to counter the colonisation of culture and mind under slavery and colonialism. He proposed fostering a black elite, the ‘Talented Tenth’, along with mass agitation and protest in order to transform conditions affecting African Americans. Although a continuous theme in his work, the ‘Talented Tenth’ underwent lifelong revision. Du Bois originally described the concept as a vanguard of educated black elites who would lead the way out of oppression and poverty for all peoples through an enlightened moral order. Their ‘self-knowledge, self-realization and self-control’ would allow them to ‘guide the Mass away from the contamination and death of the Worst, in their own and other races’ (Du Bois 1948: 165). Some scholars have criticised Du Bois’s cultural nationalist vanguardism as accepting the disparaging premise that African Americans were the victims of a degenerate or stunted culture due to the history of slavery and oppression. But by the end of his life he had shifted his hope away from a black cultural elite to the ‘mostly’ brown and black working masses. He had become disillusioned with the Jeffersonian individualism of the black elite

who served their own self-interests before those of the black masses. The 'Talented Tenth' thus became the 'Guiding Hundredth,' as his original vision of an educated black vanguard leading all Americans out of ignorance, poverty, and oppression morphed into 'the great majority of men, the poverty-stricken and diseased [who] are the real workers of the world' (Du Bois 1944: par. 29). Nevertheless, again, Du Bois never abandoned the race concept entirely. Even in his Marxist reformulation of the Talented Tenth, he maintained that the colour line persisted, producing 'a complete separation of classes by race, cutting square across the economic layers' (Du Bois 1940: 205).

Clearly, then, Du Bois's understanding of imperialism was deeply intertwined with what he called 'the race concept' which 'guided, embittered, illuminated and enshrouded [my] life' (2007: 71) and which functioned on a material, social, political, and intrapsychic level. While always emphasising the economic dimensions of slavery, colonialism, and imperialism, he also highlighted the intrapsychic or personal effects of institutional and structural race and racism with his concept of the 'veil' and 'double consciousness'. The veil was both a metaphor for racism and the colour line and a referent to the physical, social, and psychological barriers and divisions produced by race. It serves as a marker for the psychosocial moment of recognition and of difference for blacks in a white-dominated society. Du Bois's concept of double consciousness first appeared in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Influenced by, but radically different from Hegel's master-and-slave dialectic, double consciousness is a condition that results from a system of racism that produced a split in perception in which the oppressed sees herself both through her own perspective and through the perspective of the oppressor. This causes a split in self-awareness and self-conception that Du Bois argued was antagonistic and contradictory, and that he maintained had produced a bifurcated and alienated identity for the victims of racism and colonialism. And yet this split of consciousness also endows the oppressed with 'second sight': the ability to perceive social reality, and therefore political and economic realities, from the perspective of both the oppressor and the oppressed. This duality of understanding is a burden as well as a type

of clairvoyance. The victim of racism intuitively understands the mechanism of race and its effects while the privileged remain entirely ignorant of the most powerful social force of the century.

Du Bois extended the logic of 'second sight' into his analyses of imperialism, connecting domestic and international revolts against slavery and colonialism to a Euro-American revolutionary tradition – one that situated the Haitian Revolution, abolitionism and Reconstruction, and the ongoing project of decolonisation as moments in the unfinished emancipatory project of the Enlightenment. In this sense, it is the 'second sight' of the oppressed that perceives the need for and demands equality and freedom, forcing Euro-American nations and peoples to realise their own historical processes. In this context, the Talented Tenth and the Guiding Hundredth are not merely a reconfigured elitism in the first case, and revolutionary mass in the second, but the assertion that reason and revolution always emerge out of oppression.

While condemning US imperialism, Du Bois also perceived a progressive and emancipatory potential for imperialism to spread democratic institutions and racial tolerance, particularly in contrast to European imperialism, a system he understood to be much more racially rigid and exploitative. At the same time, however, Du Bois understood that this democratic potential would be the product of a white US that dominated foreign markets and land in search of cheap labour because the internal domination of the white working class was unsustainable due to class conflict. In this way, Du Bois prefigures a contemporary understanding of First and Third World, neo-imperialism and globalisation. The colour line is both the problem and solution for America, as he believed that a first-world labour problem (labour shortages and resistance) generates racialised imperialism as a solution to the antagonism between the white working class and capitalist elite at home. This global racial division of labour then aligns whites in the First World as a group, collectively exploiting non-whites in the Third World. This global racial and class order does more than just support racism domestically and internationally, it stabilises and supports a class order as well preserving and protecting the domination, privilege, and power of a small white elite over and against a general underclass that is both white and non-white.

Racism forms a type of currency that is used to pacify an otherwise restive white underclass by doling out gifts of social prestige, psychological superiority, and material benefit. This international racialised division of labour operated in both Europe and the US with some differences:

Western Europe hopes that without essential alteration in its way of life an accommodation can be made between their demands and the upsurging of the lower classes and peoples. They see this chance in four ways: home labor appeased by elementary education and some political power; with higher wages paid out of profit from investment in foreign lands, which the home labor makes sure by fighting in world wars. (Du Bois 1967: 16)

The US on the one hand has an endless flow of immigrants who form the basis of a stratification system ostensibly predicated on achievement or ‘boot strap capitalism’. Du Bois tears down the façade of the American dream by pointing to the underlying basis of white assimilation and mobility: black oppression and exploitation. The potential and promised assimilation and mobility into the white elite is only possible against the backdrop of a permanent black underclass under a racialised capitalist system. Some 25 years later, sociologists would rediscover Du Bois’s profound insight into the racist foundation of the ‘melting pot’ (assimilation and social mobility), without ever giving him credit for it, and call it ‘segmented assimilation’. On the other hand, the American class and race system can also depend upon an ever-expanding global labour market, a ‘worldwide new proletariat of colored workers’ (Du Bois 1995: 542). These cheap non-US labourers require little in terms of compensation and even less in terms of social welfare (schools, housing, medicine, retirement, policing), enriching the capitalist class in the US to such a degree that with their historically unprecedented massive stockpiles of wealth they are able to undermine democratic institutions and bribe white workers as a racial mercenary class. The white working class are used as soldiers, sailors, and foremen to discipline and police and when necessary kill this ‘new proletariat’ of ‘colored workers’. American imperialism then is merely an extension of American racism and a means to

sustain a domestic class system as well as a global racialised division of labour.

Along with his observations that race and class are integral to imperialism, Du Bois mounts a feminist critique of imperialism as well. In *Darkwater* (1920) he argues that black and white women are marginalised groups and that their emancipation is part of the fulfilment of the Enlightenment’s promise of equality. Gender thus forms another node in the nexus of oppressive mechanisms that exploit the labour of the marginalised by a system of patriarchal, paternalistic capitalism that has its origins in American racial slavery and, he hoped, its future demise in the international class consciousness that would overcome racism and imperialism.

Du Bois’s complex and sweeping body of work defies simple categorisation: positivist social scientist, integrationist, cultural and economic separatist, anti-imperialist, and communist. Yet he pursued a consistent and clear intellectual project of emancipation, justice, and equality through his attempts to demystify, deconstruct, and resist the totalising and ubiquitous racist-imperialist world system. While his insights operated on multiple levels of analyses, fields of discourse, and planes of action, Du Bois always focused on the inequities produced by an economic system that originated with American racial slavery and that, by the end of his life, had come to dominate the globe. Like a good detective, he relentlessly pursued and documented all the working parts of a cancerous system of exploitation that inter-penetrates human social relations on every level and covers the globe. While never losing hope of fulfilling the Enlightenment’s promise of justice and equality, by the end of his life he felt the US was unredeemable. He was indicted as a spy by the US in 1951, something which, despite his acquittal, led to his total disillusionment with the country. He joined the Communist Party in 1961, renounced his US citizenship and decamped to Ghana where he died on 27 August 1963 on the eve of Martin Luther King’s march on Washington.

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## Eveli Hau'ofa (1939–2009)

Eveli Hau'ofa was a Tongan-Fijian activist, writer, and scholar. Born to Tongan missionaries in the Australian-administered Territory of Papua in 1939, he attended school in Papua, Tonga, and Fiji before entering the University of New England in Armidale, Australia. After a stint at McGill University in Montreal and in the West Indies, he returned to Australia to study social anthropology at the Australian National University in Canberra. His PhD thesis, directed by Marie Reay and Michael Young, was published in 1981 under the title *Mekeo: Inequality and Ambivalence in a Village Society*. After teaching at the University of Papua New Guinea, Hau'ofa became a research fellow at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Suva, Fiji. From 1978 to 1981, he was appointed deputy private secretary to His Majesty, Tupou IV, King of Tonga, in charge of keeping the palace records of Tonga. In 1981 he returned to

academic life and became the director of the newly created USP Rural Development Centre in Tonga. Hau'ofa returned to Fiji in 1983 to become head of the Department of Sociology at USP's main campus in Suva, teaching sociology and anthropology. In 1997, Hau'ofa became the founding director of the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture at the USP in Suva. A naturalised citizen of Fiji, he died in Suva in 2009.

Criss-crossing the Pacific in both life and work, Hau'ofa became one of its most prominent advocates. To many scholars of the Pacific, he is best known for his essay 'Our Sea of Islands', first published in 1993. In this much cited piece, Hau'ofa criticised the long and fraught history of outlanders belittling Pacific islands and their peoples and thus robbing them of control over their future. Stressing the power of Pacific traditions, Hau'ofa argued that there is 'a world of difference between viewing the Pacific as "islands in a far sea" and as "a sea of islands"'. Oceanians (Hau'ofa's preferred term) have long thought of themselves as ocean peoples whose shared home – the Pacific Ocean – connected them through ancestral myths, seafaring, and trade. It was only when 'continental men' from Europe and North America came to the Pacific that this interdependent 'sea of islands' came to be reduced to 'islands in a far sea'. The long-term effects of this symbolic (and often very material) violence on Oceania and its peoples, he noted, were still visible in contemporary debates about the political, economic, and environmental future of the region. For Hau'ofa, 'smallness is a state of mind' and needed to be overcome to achieve a more self-determined future for Oceania. He concluded his essay by proclaiming: 'We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces that we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed places, and from which we have recently liberated ourselves'. For him, decolonisation of Oceanian minds was far from complete with the achievement of political independence. Ultimately, the rebirth of Oceania would begin with the rediscovery of its rich communal past.

Hau'ofa's powerful call for solidarity and its lucid presentation in several speeches reverberated across the region. Many Pacific

islands had gained their formal independence between the 1960s and 1980s (from Western Samoa in 1962, Tonga and Fiji in 1970, to Vanuatu in 1980), but long-established political and economic dependencies were harder to leave behind. Economic advisors, non-governmental activists, and government officials from the West descended on the Pacific to help 'develop' the region. It was in this context that Hau'ofa's essay intervened with a powerful call for Oceanic solidarity based on a proud history of inter-island exchange. He repeated and refined his argument in other essays and soon matched his rhetoric with institution building. After complicated negotiations with university administrators and donors, the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture opened under his leadership at the USP in Suva in 1997. As the Centre's founding director, Hau'ofa became the mentor for a whole generation of aspiring young artists, writers, dancers, and musicians from all parts of Oceania.

Hau'ofa's involvement with the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture was the culmination of a lifetime spent in the productive spaces between academic research, political activism, and creative writing. To many Oceanians outside of the academy, he is best known for his satiric writing in verse, and both short and long prose. In his short story collection *Tales of the Tikongs* (1983), and his only novel *Kisses in the Nederends* (1987), he poked fun at the contradictions of contemporary life in the Pacific. From the Christian orthodoxy of his missionary parents to the myth of the 'lazy native' still persistent among many outlanders, Hau'ofa's narrative voice used comic allegory and biting self-irony as weapons in the fight against economic exploitation, political corruption, and individual irresponsibility. His satirical fiction drew on Tongan tall tales, which rely on humour and self-deprecation to critique individual and institutional misbehaviour. In his own words, Hau'ofa attempted 'to translate into writing the cadences of sounds produced in the islands by story-tellers, preachers, orators, people in supplication, people giving orders, arguing, quarrelling, gossiping and so forth' (Hau'ofa 2008: 108). He saw himself as a clown who liked to laugh a lot, and his creative writing brimmed with anarchical laughter about the absurdities of modernity in Oceania. In the opening story of *Tales*

of the *Tikongs*, for instance, Manu, our guide on the fantasy island of Tiko, challenges an old preacher by claiming: 'Our people work so hard on Sunday it takes a six-day rest to recover'. As proof, Manu tells the story of his great relative Sione Falesi, who prefers playing cards with his secretary instead of securing foreign aid for his island. In stories like these, as in Hau'ofa's more explicitly political non-fiction, 'truth comes in portions, some large, some small, but never whole' (Hau'ofa 1983: 7).

Hau'ofa's biography around the Pacific world – from his birthplace in Papua to his education in Australia to his chosen home in Fiji – informed his creative and political work between disciplines and identities. He persistently cultivated his status as an outsider – to academic circles, church communities, and the political and class establishment at large. Fluent in several Pacific languages (including New Guinea Pidgin, Tongan, and Fijian), he not only moved from island to island, but also from genre to genre. His creative writing began early in youth and continued to evolve in dialogue with more academic and political work. During his time in Tonga in the late 1970s, for example, Hau'ofa edited a bilingual literary magazine, *Faikara*, in collaboration with his long-time wife Barbara. Besides short stories and an autobiographical novel, he also wrote numerous poems about nature, colonialism, and belonging (many of which were first published in the groundbreaking literary magazine *Mana*). Like other writers from the Caribbean (such as Édouard Glissant), Hau'ofa saw a productive tension in fearlessly straddling genres and adopting different masks. And like other Oceanian writers of his generation (such as the Samoan author Albert Wendt), he combined a firm rootedness in his local environment with a cosmopolitan approach to the global challenges Oceanians confronted. Hau'ofa's attention to place and scale was visible from his anthropological thesis on the social relations of the Mekeo in Papua New Guinea to his later political speeches and essays on the need for an expansive Oceanian community.

Hau'ofa's historical and political diagnosis of the state of Oceania shone through in both his fiction and non-fiction. For him, three C's shaped the lives of people in Oceania, mostly for the worse: colonialism, Christianity, and capitalism. As he put it in

1984: 'To me the most unfortunate things that colonialism, Christianity, and international capitalism have given to the Pacific Islands have been, first, the transformation of hitherto self-sufficient, proudly independent people into wards of rich and powerful countries; and, second, as a consequence of forced dependence, the compulsion on people to compromise their integrity and use all manner of trickery in order to survive in an economic and political world over which they have no meaningful control' (Hau'ofa 2008: 106). According to Hau'ofa, the psychological damage done to Oceanians by colonial exploitation – political, economic, as well as spiritual – outlasted the end of formal colonial rule. As became particularly clear in his fiction, his sympathies lay with the underdogs who were trying to do the best with what was done to them. Much of his popularity in Oceania and beyond can be attributed to this heartfelt identification with the victims of Euro-American imperialism. As he acknowledged himself in an interview: 'For me, this capacity for laughter, for grabbing moments of joy in the midst of suffering, is one of the most attractive things about our islands' (2008: 139).

If Hau'ofa clearly differentiated between elitist and grassroots perspectives on the future of Oceania, he was acutely aware of (and uncomfortable with) his partial complicity in the former. After his return to Tonga in 1978, he found himself 'an Expert on more things than I care to enumerate' (Hau'ofa: 103). After all, he was one of only two residents in Tonga with a PhD. As evidence, he cited his study of overpopulation and environmental challenges in Tonga, *Our Crowded Islands* (1977), initially a 'ten-or-so-page paper ... miraculously transformed into a forty-page mini-picture book that instantly established me as an Expert on population problems and environment' (Hau'ofa 2008: 103). As adviser to the Tongan King, Hau'ofa certainly exerted considerable influence on top-level policy decisions, at least for a few years. As an academic and university administrator at the USP, he also helped shape the educational future of the region.

Hau'ofa's call for Oceanian unity against continuing Euro-American imperialism has not remained unchallenged. As the protracted struggles to establish educational and political institutions in Oceania have shown, forging unity across such a vast ocean remains a

formidable challenge. Some scholars have charged Hau'ofa with downplaying longstanding cultural, political, and economic differences and antagonisms among Oceanian islands and their peoples. Conflicts among Samoans, Tongans, and Fijians, for example, reach back as far as the distant genealogical past, but continue to inform present-day interactions, including those taking place far away from the islands themselves. Hau'ofa's vision of a powerful 'sea of islands', other critics objected, amounted to little more than 'postcolonial utopianism' and risked foundering on the shoals of self-interested *realpolitik*. Hau'ofa, for his part, treated such criticism with characteristic self-deprecation when he quipped: 'I have written very little in fact, and the little that I have written has had no impact on anyone or anything' (2008: 102). His self-betittlement revealed itself most clearly as the mask of a skilled artist when he wrote about the natural environment of the Pacific.

For Hau'ofa, the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean served as the basis for a common regional identity among Oceanians. In his essay 'The Ocean In Us' (1997), he returned to his earlier argument in 'Our Sea of Islands', founding his vision of Oceanian unity on the common inheritance of the sea: 'An identity that is grounded in something as vast as the sea should exercise our minds and rekindle in us the spirit that sent our ancestors to explore the oceanic unknown and make it their home, our home' (Hau'ofa 2008: 42). Reminding his audience of the courage of earlier generations, he called for solidarity among Oceanians to confront the challenges of an endangered natural environment that knows no post-colonial condition. Faced with rising water levels, deep-sea mining, and droughts, many Pacific Islanders bear the brunt of climate change and environmental exploitation mainly driven by the large and growing economies that encircle their ocean. Present developments, Hau'ofa made clear, have to be seen within the longer history of ecological imperialism in the Pacific. Then as now, the people living on the islands most affected by these environmental changes were rarely asked for their opinion. Against this reality of disempowerment, he proposed a radical return to the natural environment that surrounds Oceanic peoples. Echoing Derek Walcott's dictum that 'the sea is history', he captured his vision in the essay's last paragraph: 'The sea is the pathway to each other



and to everyone else, the sea is our endless saga, the sea is our most powerful metaphor, the ocean is in us' (2008: 58).

Oceania's natural environment played a central role in Hau'ofa's personal life as well. Upon his return to Fiji in the early 1980s, he bought a farm in the hills of Lami and enjoyed the relative quiet of the countryside just outside Suva. And when this exuberant spirit ceased his lifelong wanderings across Oceania in 2009, his body found its final resting place in the womb of the land he so loved.

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## Fanon, Frantz (1925–1961)

Frantz Fanon remains one of the most important theorists of anti-imperialism born in the 20th century. Widely read in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Americas, and Europe, his texts have been used in anti-colonial, black theory, anti-imperialist, feminist, cultural, post-colonial, and visual studies. He has been a reference for scholars, artists, filmmakers, and activists alike and his remarks, arguments, and analysis continue to resonate in communities around the world which are engaged in a struggle against exploitation and subjugation. Born Martinican but later thinking of himself as Algerian and trained as a psychiatrist, Fanon joined the Algerian National Front of Liberation and became an ardent advocate of emancipation from the colonial yoke.

Fanon was the first theorist to powerfully articulate the link between political and individual emancipation, between race and modernity, between psychic life and the political, between the look and subjectivity, between national revolution and its aftermath. Fanon engaged with issues that authors, singers, and poets such as Aimé Césaire, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Léon-Gontran Damas, or Rabindranath Tagore among many others had explored in their writings: the malaise of the colonised, his estrangement from his body and psyche,

his rage, his anger, his desire to live as 'a man among other men'. Yet Fanon did not impute all the failings of the national struggle or of the post-colonial state to the colonial regime. One cause was 'also the result of the intellectual laziness of the national middle class, of its spiritual penury, and of the profoundly cosmopolitan mould that its mind is set in', as he argued in *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon called for an active role for intellectuals, who 'must take part in action and throw himself body and soul into the national struggle', and for the people, since the 'collective building up of a destiny is the assumption of responsibility on the historical scale' (Fanon 1990: 152). Finally, Fanon clearly and forcefully rejected the idea of a nation based on ethnic identity, on a defined and fixed 'ethos'.

'Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its own mission, fulfill it, or betray it', Fanon wrote (1990: 166). His generation discovered its mission through its participation in the fight against Nazism and the struggle against racism and colonialism, through the *Négritude* movement, the emergence worldwide of new nation states born out of the defeat of European colonial empires, Bandung, and the African cultural and political emancipation movement. Yet Fanon foresaw many of the problems faced by decolonised countries, the consequences of the hegemony of asymmetric relations maintained by global capitalism and its racial element as well as the failures of the national bourgeoisie. His work challenges ahistorical approaches or the illusion of a natural order of things to explain failures by post-colonial nation states, and it is important for an understanding of the colonial roots of contemporary social realities.

Although *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) are his best-known texts and are widely translated, his articles written for *El Moudjahid* collected in *A Dying Colonialism* and *Toward the African Revolution* testified to Fanon's wide range of concerns, his attention to cultural difference, his understanding of the nature of violence, and his knowledge of the imperialistic project.

At the beginning of *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon wrote, 'I do not come with timeless truths' (1967: 7). This suggests a revolutionary programme open to difference, the unforeseen and unexpected, one that Fanon feared would not be followed by the

decolonised dominant classes and leadership of the future.

## Biography

Frantz Fanon, writer, psychiatrist, activist, was born on 20 July 1925 at Fort de France, Martinique, at the time a French colony. His parents, who were of mixed heritage, belonged to the urban middle class. His father, Félix Casimir Fanon, worked in the French customs service; Éléanore Médélice, his mother, was a shopkeeper. Fanon studied at the Lycée Schoelcher, where one of his teachers was the poet and writer Aimé Césaire, whose writing style and passionate denouncement of colonial racism had a major influence on Fanon. At 18, Fanon took part in agitation against the Vichy regime in Martinique and travelled to Dominica to join the Free French Army. Sent for military training to Algeria, he encountered racism and later became disillusioned with the cause of freeing Europe from Nazism. He wrote to his elder brother, Joby, that ‘Nothing there, nothing justifies this sudden decision to make myself the defender of a farmer’s interest when he himself doesn’t give a damn’ (Julien 1996). Wounded in battle in the winter of 1945, he was decorated with the Croix de Guerre. After two years of military service, he returned to Martinique, where he worked for Césaire’s election campaign.

Awarded a veteran’s scholarship in 1947, Fanon left Martinique for Paris, and then for the University of Lyons, where he enrolled at the faculty of medicine and read psychiatry. In 1952, he married Marie-Josèphe Dublé (known as Josie). They had a son, Olivier, that same year; a daughter, Mireille, had been born in 1948.

Fanon was an avid reader of post-war French philosophers – Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Merleau-Ponty – of journals such as *Présence africaine*, *Esprit*, or *Les temps modernes*, of African-American literature, of poetry and drama. He read the post-war psychiatrists and psychoanalysts who were highly critical of French psychiatry and of the branch of psychiatry developed in the French colonies.

Fanon obtained his diploma in 1953 and left for Algeria in the same year to lead a psychiatric ward at the hospital of Blida-Joinville. Travelling throughout Algeria, Fanon discovered the corruptive element

of the French civilising mission: anyone of European descent could exploit and brutalise the Algerians. He was appalled by the poverty of the Algerian population, by the racism and the plundering of resources. In November 1954, the war of national liberation started. Fanon was contacted by Algerian nationalists and agreed to treat their wounded soldiers in the hospital.

In 1956, Fanon was present at the First World Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Paris. In a speech, he criticised colonial racism and called for it to be ended through struggle. That same year, Fanon resigned from his post at Blida and went to Tunis. There he worked as a psychiatrist at the Clinique Manouba and in May 1957 became a spokesman for the Algerian National Front of Liberation; he wrote for its paper *El Moudjahid*, and acted as an ambassador for the Algerian cause with the newly independent African nations.

In 1961 in Rome, Fanon met Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre, whom he admired immensely. Fanon had already conceived the idea of writing a manifesto for the Third-World revolution, and he fervently discussed the idea with Sartre. In 1961, he started to write what would be his second seminal text, *The Wretched of the Earth*, and Sartre agreed to write the preface.

Fanon never saw his book in its final form. While visiting Ghana he was diagnosed with leukaemia, and he went to the Soviet Union for treatment. In October 1961, he was persuaded, despite his reluctance, to travel to Washington, DC, to receive treatment at the Bethesda Hospital, where he was admitted on 10 October. On 6 December 1961, Fanon died. His body was taken back to Tunisia and carried by soldiers of the Algerian National Front of Liberation for burial in Algeria following his wishes. Fanon was survived by his wife, son, and daughter.

## ‘Total liberation’

Fanon’s work proposed three interacting processes in the move towards total liberation: restitution of land, of rights, of customs, of culture, language, and history that had been ignored, denied, viewed with contempt by the colonial order; reparation, financial, economic, and psychic; and reinterpretation of the past, of ideas and ideals, made possible by rejecting the colonial images,

representations, and ideas that the colonised had assimilated. It was about starting anew, and this would be accomplished through revolution, a cleansing through its fire, the redemptive and cathartic fire of violence.

The recovery of land and rights went along with a psychic recovery. To Fanon, his work as a psychiatrist, which he pursued until the end of his life, was inseparable from his struggle for the end of imperialism. The recovery of land and political independence had to be accompanied by regaining the dignity and self-esteem which had been damaged by colonial racism.

When Fanon was pursuing his studies, psychiatry in France was slowly emerging from a rigid framework according to which madness was seen as a threat to society and patients were locked into cells, abandoned to their suffering. Though the debt of Fanon to Lacan has been widely discussed, the influence of the psychiatrist Francisco Tosquelles, a Spanish refugee who after the Second World War had become a leading theorist and practitioner of institutional psychiatry, was more important. A member of the Trotskyite Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista, or POUM (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification), Tosquelles had invented new ways of treating the trauma of Spanish republican soldiers and had looked at the psychic consequences of fascism. As an intern with Tosquelles, Fanon learned his methods, such as group therapy and non-hierarchical relations between nurses, doctors, and patients. For Tosquelles, the hospital had to be organised around the social reality of the patient, and workshops and group activities had to take place in common rooms in order to encourage all patients to participate. This school of institutional psychiatry was critical of the ways in which psychiatry had until that time been punitive and repressive, and it advocated a radical reassessment of the asylum, working to transform it into a convivial place and to encourage new relations between the therapist and the patient. The move was revolutionary and opened the way for new therapeutic methods. Fanon fully adopted this vision of institutional therapy and applied its insights to the study of the colonised's psyche and colonial racism as well as in Blida.

Although the theories and goals of psychiatry and psychoanalysis have been perceived by many anti-colonial revolutionaries as too Western to be useful (an opinion still widely

shared; the Marxist Cedric Robinson (1993: 82) has written that *Black Skin, White Masks* had a 'petit bourgeois stink'), Fanon found in them the tools to make sense of torments and sufferings that could not be solely assigned to the loss of land or civic rights. In the last chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth*, 'Colonial War and Mental Disorders', Fanon remarked: 'Because it is systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: "In reality, who am I?"' (Fanon 1990: 200). He inscribed the powerful and contradictory sentiments at work in the unconscious in the larger political, social, and cultural context of destruction, alienation, racism, and subjugation that European imperialism had brought to the world, and gave them meaning. However, 'Psychoanalysis is a pessimistic view of man. The care of the person must be thought as a deliberately optimistic choice against human reality' (Fanon 1967: 16); its insights could be useful but its full theory and practice could not. But if 'total liberation' should 'concern all sectors of the personality', it was important to free the colonised from the 'untruths implanted in his being', and psychiatry could help (Fanon 1990: 250). His analysis, which preceded two other influential studies of the psychology of the colonised, Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1957) and Ashis Nandy's *The Intimate Enemy* (1983), belongs to a long literary and philosophical tradition (to which he acknowledged his debt) that had explored colonial alienation. Fanon foresaw the insights of the theorists of anti-psychiatry, that madness is not disease but a story, the story of a situation and of the impossibility of being heard. He opened the way to a school of post-colonial psychiatry, critical of the Western racialised and gendered nomenclature of mental disorders yet concerned with the psychic dimension of human life and with social and political emancipation.

Discovering, as had so many before him, that he was a 'Negro' when he arrived in France, Fanon sought to deconstruct 'The Fact of Blackness' ('L'expérience vécue du Nègre', the title of chapter 5 of *Black Skin, White Masks*), the lived experience of being black and male in a society whose modernity had been founded on racism. Influenced by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, by

Jean-Paul Sartre, and by the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Fanon looked at the constitutive role of the 'look' as a site of power knowledge and at the fetishisation of skin colour. For decolonisation to occur, the issue of representation and subjectivity could not be dismissed.

Fanon insisted on the importance of listening to patients, to women, to peasants, to soldiers, to the oppressed, to all of those who had been put at the bottom of society. The psychiatrist had to remain attentive to potential misunderstanding which could bring to light the 'impossibility of finding a meeting ground in any colonial situation' (Fanon 1965: 125). Thus, in an article that has been widely discussed, 'Algeria Unveiled', Fanon made a powerful argument about women's emancipation in a colonial situation, arguing that the veil was 'a technique of camouflage, a means of struggle' (Fanon 1965: 35–67, at 61).

Looking at the long history of capitalism and at its intimate relation with colonialism, racism, and predation, Fanon argued that the 'total destruction of the colonial system' would mean getting rid of fear, of the 'fashion and of the images of the colonialists' (Fanon 1988: 105), taking risks, not being afraid of death, building transcontinental alliances, and being ready to constantly assess what was at stake. Echoing Aimé Césaire's opinion of a French left contaminated with colonial thinking – paternalism, racism, feeling of superiority, desire to guide – Fanon criticised a posture of conditional support, foreseeing the limits and pitfalls of the abstract discourse of human rights that disavows excesses and pleads for reconciliation in the hour of war. The left had to accomplish its own process of decolonisation and recognised that 'In a very concrete way, Europe has stuffed itself with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries: Latin American, China and Africa' and owed its 'renown to millions of deported slaves' (Fanon 1990: 81). Western democrats had to acknowledge that their social formations had been structured by colonial racism and the privileges and advantages that they had thereby acquired.

Fanon advocated violence as a cathartic process for the colonised and as an inevitable step towards emancipation. Revolutionary violence had a humanistic aim because it led to the creation of a society in which health could be gained, and it would never reach the level of colonial violence. Once this had

been accomplished, a new step would take place and the Third World would 'start a new history of Man [sic]' (Fanon 1990: 254). This would be accomplished by dropping the European model, which had failed to live up to its promises of progress, had justified crimes, and had legitimised slavery. There was no reason either to envy or to blame Europe; the objective was for humanity 'to advance a step farther' (ibid.).

The reading of Fanon's theory has been dynamic: his work is regularly assessed, criticised, read anew. His view of the colonial society and regime as monolithic and rigid has been challenged; his praise of violence as cathartic has been questioned; his celebration of the peasantry as the true revolutionary class and his suspicion of the proletariat and the urban classes have been shown to be problematic; the position of women in his theory has been criticised by black feminists. These critiques have spurred new defences of Fanon, creating a whole field of Fanonian studies and testifying to the continuing relevance of his texts.

Françoise Vergès

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## Federzoni, Luigi (1878–1967)

Luigi Federzoni was an important Italian cultural and political figure in the first half of the 20th century. He was founder of the Nationalist Party and a leading member of the Fascist Party. He served as Fascism's first

colonial minister from 1922 to 1924 and from 1926 to 1928. Afterwards, he mobilised institutional support for colonialism and shaped a nationalist imperial discourse that survived Fascism.

Born in Bologna in 1878, a generation after Italian unification, he belonged to a family that had solidified its place among the provincial elite in Reggio Emilia through his father's connection to the poet Giosuè Carducci. His father, a specialist in Dante Alighieri, had been among Carducci's first students at the University of Bologna. Luigi was among the last. Luigi gained privileged access through his father to Carducci's circle, which included professors at the University of Bologna, national literary and artistic figures, and many former students who had swelled the ranks of Italy's intelligentsia and political classes.

As a university student bent on becoming a famous writer in his own right, Federzoni fell under the sway of Alfredo Oriani, a colourful local figure who championed the cause of colonialism after the disastrous Italian defeats of Dogali (1887) and Adua (1896). Federzoni participated in the tail end of the Florentine nationalist revival, becoming a close disciple of the nationalist and imperialist writer Enrico Corradini. Unsuccessful as a novelist, Federzoni tried art criticism before settling on a career in journalism. In 1910, together with Corradini and others, he founded the Italian Nationalist Association (ANI). Owing in great part to Federzoni's leadership, the ANI's leaders transformed the group from a cultural association bent on revitalising national self-esteem into a doctrinaire, neo-conservative political party bent on expansion in the Mediterranean and the defeat of liberalism and socialism at home.

As an editor of both the ANI's official organ, *L'idea nazionale*, and the important Roman daily *Il giornale d'Italia*, in the period leading up to the First World War, Federzoni developed imperial memes that were later central to the Fascist worldview. He argued that imperialism was both a political programme and a cultural way of being. The one required the other. He insisted that acting and thinking imperialistically was an essential part of what it meant to be Italian (*italianità*) even as most members of the political classes, including Benito Mussolini, then a socialist, had turned their backs on imperialism. Federzoni's conception of the term drew on his neo-classical formation under Carducci,

his informal schooling in imperialism under Oriani, his friendship with Corradini, and his reading of the nationalist writer Giuseppe Mazzini. Federzoni argued that imperialism signified both a reclaiming of Italy's classical heritage and a point of departure for the Risorgimento. To this he added a strong dose of social Darwinism, arguing that only imperialism could enable the national organism to capitalise on its most valuable natural resources – the fertility of its people. For him, uncolonised spaces in Africa were simply voids for Italians to fill. Italy's historic mission was to supplant indigenous populations with its own, thus creating a modern *mare nostrum*. His conception of imperialism is also remarkable for the manner in which he united colonial aspirations in Africa with irredentism – an older political movement aimed at annexing the so-called unredeemed lands from Austria-Hungary, where Italian speakers lived outside the borders of unified Italy. Federzoni's imperialist designs, however, did not stop with the *terra irredenta*. He envisaged Italian hegemony over Albania, Greece, Switzerland, Corsica, and Malta.

Italy's leading political figure in the early 20th century, Giovanni Giolitti, unwittingly contributed to Federzoni's political success when he provoked war with the Ottoman Empire (1911–12). The war marked a fundamental shift in Italian politics. Most Catholics had been estranged from national politics up to that point. They now enthusiastically supported the war, and even the Vatican gave its tacit blessing. In contrast, the Italian socialists and most radicals, republicans, and democrats actively opposed it. Thus, unlike Italy's colonial ventures in East Africa in the 19th century, imperialism in the 20th century bridged the gulf between the church and the state and derailed efforts by left-leaning liberals like Giolitti to narrow the gap between liberals and the democratic and socialist left.

Federzoni was the first politician to exploit this shift successfully for political gain. As a war correspondent for *L'idea nazionale* and *Il giornale d'Italia*, he conflated the war for Libya with a concurrent battle over the extension of the suffrage. He painted the democrats as un-Italian men who hid behind pacifism, humanitarianism, and respect for indigenous African populations abroad in order to derail Italy's historic mission of bringing civilisation to Africa and asserting Italy's standing as a Great Power. During the war, when a scandal

broke in the army that involved Freemasons, a group associated with the political left, Federzoni conducted a survey of leading intellectual, political, and military leaders about the place of Freemasonry in modern society. He published the responses in *Il giornale d'Italia*. They overwhelmingly portrayed the Masons as a foreign group associated with the Ottoman Young Turks on the one hand and with radical, republican, and socialist advocates of atheism, divorce, and democracy on the other. Federzoni's prominence spread as newspapers picked up the story. A few months later, he ran successfully for parliament against an incumbent Socialist deputy and a centre-left candidate. Imperialism played an important role in the election. Federzoni attacked his opponents as un-Italian enemies of imperialism. He demanded a more active imperialist policy that took the Italo-Turkish War as a starting point for further expansion. Many on the right who were dissatisfied with the leftward drift of the political classes under Giolitti were attracted by Federzoni's blending of nationalism and imperialism as the basis for an anti-socialist, anti-democratic, and anti-liberal alliance of forward-looking conservatives and Catholics.

After volunteering in the First World War, Federzoni ran successfully for re-election and encouraged the nascent Fascist Party to align itself with the Nationalist political platform, which was still aimed at expansion in the Balkans and Africa. As Mussolini's movement gained ground and drifted rightwards, Fascism found a valuable ally in Federzoni. Once Mussolini renounced his anticlericalism and his opposition to the monarchy, the Nationalists were ready to back Mussolini. Federzoni's support earned him the post as colonial minister in Mussolini's first cabinet. In 1923, the Nationalist and Fascist parties merged into a single party, with the Fascists adopting the Nationalist Party's ideology as its own.

Federzoni's tenure as colonial minister was divided into two periods: 1922–24 and 1926–28. The intervening period coincided with the Matteotti Crisis, when Federzoni took charge of the interior ministry from Mussolini and shored up Fascism. As colonial minister, Federzoni was markedly more ambitious than his liberal predecessors. He continued their efforts to reassert control over the coastal regions of Libya, which had been weakened during the First World War. But he also sought

ascendency over the interior, which meant the abrogation of previous agreements with the Senussi Muslim confraternity. This policy strengthened the insurgency against Italian domination. In response, Federzoni demanded the same harsh treatment that his predecessor had used. In 1928, when Federzoni resigned, owing to a political realignment in the government, the Senussi had not yet been defeated. His successors would intensify Italian efforts, utilising new methods, including the establishment of concentration camps.

Federzoni advocated a more effective exploitation of Italy's colonies by supporting public-private ventures aimed at increasing the importation of colonial agricultural goods to Italy and the exportation of Italian settlers to the colonies. At the same time, he applied the same heavy hand in the colonies to tame Fascist *squadristo* as interior minister. He also created an important precedent for later racial policies by forbidding *fasci*, or local fascist groups, in the colonies to admit indigenous people. Federzoni rejected the idea that indigenous people could become Italian, an idea he dismissed as the French form of colonialism. Instead, he saw himself implementing a British form of colonialism predicated on the separation of the races.

Federzoni believed that the creation of a culture of imperialism was an important facet of his duties as colonial minister. He intended that the production and consumption of cultural life connected to imperialism – art, music, theatre, architecture, the humanities, the social sciences, and the pure sciences – should serve as a matrix for the creation of the Fascist 'new man' and as proof of the racial vigour of modern Italians. He created an annual celebration dedicated to colonialism and used his network of friends to speak to local audiences about the essential imperialist nature of being Italian. He sent artists to the colonies to re-imagine the world according to an imperialist gaze and sponsored exhibitions to awaken the middle classes to their role as imperialists.

Federzoni's tenure as colonial minister was also marked by two important administrative innovations. In December 1922, he created the Consiglio Superiore Coloniale (Superior Colonial Council) to serve in an advisory capacity on colonial matters for the state. He also oversaw the drafting of the *Legge organica per l'amministrazione della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica*, or Organic Law (26 June 1927), which

defined citizenship in Libya and established a new administrative and legal basis for colonial rule there. It created separate legal standings for Italians and indigenous Jewish and Muslim populations, giving the Jews a more favourable standing owing to his belief that they had in them the seeds of *italianità* for having served as agents of Italian culture and civilisation under Muslim rule. The Organic Law also strengthened the governor's powers and paralleled the decidedly authoritarian trend in the metropole.

After 1928, Federzoni continued to play an important role in propounding a culture of imperialism. As president of the Istituto Coloniale Fascista (Fascist Colonial Institute; 1928–37) and the Istituto Fascista dell'Africa Italiana (Fascist Institute of Italian Africa; 1937–43) he strengthened his position as a gatekeeper to governmental largesse, publishing opportunities, and the professoriate for those in the younger generation in academic fields that could be linked, even tangentially, to colonialism. As director of Italy's premier scholarly journal, the *Nuova antologia* (1929–43), he made imperialism a leading topic by opening its columns to explorers, geographers, historians, linguists, theorists, and colonial administrators. As president of the Italian Senate (1929–39), he took a keen interest in imperialism and made sure that the Senate gave visible support for the Ethiopian War (1935–36) and the proclamation of the empire. When Mussolini appointed him president of the Royal Academy of Italy (1938), he again used his position to foster scholarship on imperialism, now emphasising Italian expansion in the Balkans. He dedicated significant parts of the academy's resources to expanding scholarship that emphasised ancient Roman and medieval Italian legacies in Albania and Yugoslavia, economic ties between the two sides of the Adriatic, and ethnic, linguistic, and historical studies that demonstrated enduring relationships between Italians on the one hand and Croats, Slovenes, Albanians, and Greeks on the other. In 1939 he had the academy's charter revised so that he could have the Albanian Franciscan Friar Giorgio Fishta appointed to it.

Federzoni wrote hundreds of articles and gave numerous speeches on imperialism. He also edited important works and wrote several studies of his own, including *L'Italia nell'Egeo* (Rome: Garzoni-Provenzano, 1913); *La Dalmazia che aspetta* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1915); *La politica economica in Eritrea* (Rome:

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After going into hiding in 1943 and seeking refuge in Portugal and Brazil after the war, Federzoni returned to Italy and connected with scholars with whom he had worked under Fascism. Many of them participated with him in recuperating Italy's imperial legacy by writing histories that glossed over any negative aspects of Italian efforts to dominate the Balkans, East Africa, and Libya and painted Italian efforts at colonialism as a benign exception to a malefic period in world history.

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## Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (1869–1948)

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi described as the man who shook the mighty British Empire with a pinch of salt, provokes political

controversy, ambivalence, and opposing judgements. He is revered as a political saint and reviled as a mascot of the bourgeoisie, hailed as a critical anti-imperialist and rejected as a betrayer of the peasants, celebrated as an apostle of non-violence and castigated as creating the Hindu–Muslim divide. Gandhi led and was considered to be the chief architect of one of the most effective anti-imperialist movements in the world – the movement to gain independence for India from the British Empire. On 14 and 15 August 1947, British India was partitioned into two countries – Pakistan and India. While he was completely determined to overthrow the British Empire, he himself argued that the goal was to attain perfect self-control (*swaraj*) rather than national control (*swatantra*) over the government of India. Thus his anti-imperial ideas were based on a sense of individual duty to the common good and local welfare, rather than control over the nation state granting rights to citizens.

This essay will examine Gandhi's imperialism and anti-imperialism in the context of his life and examine the changes in his political thought and practice. Beginning with three educational years in London (1888–91), going on to legal practice and adult life in South Africa (1893–1914) and on to middle age and political activism in India (1914–48), we shall examine the evolution of his thought historically. The growth of his nationalist and universalist ideas will be examined simultaneously with his ideas of empire.

### Early life

Gandhi grew up in two small principalities (Porbandar and Rajkot), overseen by the British resident but ruled by native princes in the south-west corner of present-day Gujarat state. He was educated at a 'modern' high school, but was an indifferent student. As a young student he admired British civilisation, seeing its mastery over India as a sign of its greatness. He believed that its masculinity and strength were to be emulated and adopted. However, even then the purpose was to overcome the humiliation of being of a subject race, at least according to his autobiography written from 1924–25 (English translation published 1927–29).

He was married at the age of 13 to Kasturbai, also 13, and their first child was born soon after the death of his father, when

he was 15. The child survived for only a few days. When Gandhi finished his schooling, he was advised and was himself taken with the idea of going to London to train as a barrister, so he could inherit his father's mantle of working in the Princely State of Porbandar. He was in London from 1888–91 and was called to the bar at the Middle Temple before he returned to India. He said in an interview published at the time that he saw London as the centre of civilisation (Hunt 1993: 6).

From London he returned briefly to India to look for work as a barrister, but not being able to establish himself at the bar in Bombay and finding that he couldn't find employment in his father's former position as prime minister (*Diwan*) in Porbandar or Rajkot state, he took up the offer to work in South Africa for a Durban-based Indian firm. He went to South Africa intending to stay for a year (1893), but ended up making his career there for the next 21 years.

### Critique of modern civilisation

In London and South Africa, Gandhi engaged deeply with critics of Western life and culture such as the theosophists, vegetarians, naturopaths and also Protestant Christian advocates. From them he reoriented his youthful fascination with British culture and civilisation to critique its basis and premises. Thus he began to question the basis of economic activity in self-interest and citizenship based on unquestioning obedience to authority. In spite of this growing conviction that Indian thought and spirituality were superior and to be valued, he felt that he belonged to the local society of London and Durban as a member of the wider imperial world of Britain. Gandhi's class bias towards the merchant Indians led him to aspire to equality with the whites and to distinguish them from both working-class Indians and the native African population. He realised also that Indian thought and understanding of truth had a lot to contribute to this wider world. At this time he was also in conversation with Raichand Mehta (later famous as Srimad Rajchandra), recognising the importance of Jain *anekantvad* or *syada-vada* – the recognition of multiple truths. He began developing his idea of duty and *dharma* as something more crucial in determining human action than a sense of rights whose sole purveyor was the state.

At the time, he looked on empire as a force for good. He said in his autobiography,



referring to 1896, 'Not that I was unaware of the defects in the British rule, but I thought that it was on the whole acceptable. In those days I believed that the British rule was on the whole beneficial to the ruled. ...colour prejudice ... I thought, quite contrary to British traditions, and I believed that it was only temporary and local' (Gandhi 1927: 400–401).

From the first days of his entry into the legal profession in South Africa, Gandhi had faced colour prejudice, and, with growing racial legislation in Transvaal, he – with the Natal Indian Congress and other organisations of colonial Indians there – actively began to petition the government to demand removal of disabilities being imposed by the newly independent Natal and Transvaal legislatures. Laws like the franchise to elect the legislature being framed to exclude Indians, the tax on labourers electing to remain in South Africa after indenture, and the restrictions on trading practices and locations were the issues he and the Natal Indian Congress engaged with in the period between 1893 and 1906. The methods of engagement were vigorous demonstrations and petitions and marches.

The basis of his demands was an appeal to imperial fairness and justice. In this argument, empire was considered to retain a possibility of justice. The ideology of empire was seen as providing for an empress who was so far away from the population that this figure was equidistant from all the local factions and thus would not favour any particular group. The empress would treat all her subjects equally in accordance with their own traditions and thus be the epitome of justice. Gandhi read this notion of empire as justice into Queen Victoria's often quoted 1858 Proclamation (Mukherjee 2010). According to him, writing in *Indian Opinion* on Empire Day celebrations, the Queen wrote to her prime minister that the Proclamation '... should breathe feelings of generosity, ... point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown ...'. Gandhi goes on to suggest that 'Expansion of trade and the acquisition of territory are not the only things true Imperialists aim at. There is a greater and a nobler ideal to work for: that of producing ... happy-hearted human creatures' (Gandhi, CWMG 1961: vol. 5, 326).

During this period, his critique of modern civilisation, initiated to some extent in

London, was going on apace. He had two years earlier, after a blinding revelation on reading John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, determined that he must alter his way of living and set up a new establishment where all could live on their own labour. Thus came the establishment of Phoenix Ashram (a place of communal living) outside Durban in (1904). This became the place where his journal *Indian Opinion* was produced, as well as where his family was settled and they could live in a self-sufficient manner.

Gandhi extended the critique which is directed at modern society by Ruskin, Tolstoy, Thoreau and others to demonstrate how the modern extractive civilisation is based not only on alienation of labour from produce but also based on the availability of cheap resources and external markets made available by the exercise of political control over other territories by industrial countries. The extension of the market destroys the craft and economic base of the other countries held in colonial subjection as well as in the home country. Thus he extends the critique of modern civilisation, making it also a critique of colonial economy. Indian nationalists like Dadabhai Naoroji, whose *Poverty and UnBritish Rule* (1901) and R.C. Dutt's *Economic History of India* (1905) were crucial in developing Gandhi's arguments regarding colonial economic extraction and the immiseration of Indian society under colonial economic relations.

As an imperial subject, he protested against those aspects of imperial rule that he saw as not living up to empire's ideals. Also, as an imperial subject, he felt compelled to perform the righteous duty of defending the empire to which he felt he belonged, by participating in imperial wars to the best of his ability – organising an ambulance corps in the Boer War (1900) and a stretcher-bearer corps during the Zulu Rebellion (April 1906), and, later on, a medical mission in London (1914).

### Changing tactics – development of *satyagraha*

From after the Zulu Rebellion, which Gandhi claimed was not a war but a manhunt, one senses a greater disaffection with government. The failure of repeated petitions and letters, even delegations to the colonial secretary in 1906, to achieve any let or hindrance to government's discriminatory practices

and policies led him to stronger actions, as in 1908's burning of the certificates of residence introduced to document and restrict future migration of Indians into Transvaal. It was in fighting these discriminatory laws against Indians by the local governments in Transvaal and Natal that he defined his politics of action as *satyagraha*. Initially called passive resistance following Thoreau and Tolstoy, Gandhi felt that the word suggested weakness (1927: 292). He therefore felt that a new name must be thought of for their specifically Indian practice. He announced a prize for coming up with a name for the movement in *Indian Opinion*. Maganlal, his nephew and manager of the paper, came up with the name *sadagraha*, and Gandhi reformed it to *satyagraha* (loosely translating as 'insistence on truth').

The year 1909 was another turning point in his ideology with the writing of his foundational text *Hind Swaraj* (Gandhi, 1997). With the failure of repeated petitions and letters from the *satyagraha* movement from 1906 onwards, as well as the ineffectiveness of a personal delegation he led in 1909 when the Union of South Africa was being negotiated in London, Gandhi's critique of imperial politics was becoming stronger. Already the *satyagraha* agitation was recognizing the higher law with which governments must also be held to account. In July 1909, in London, he also engaged with 'revolutionary' Indians – Madanlal Dhingra, Vinayak Savarkar and others. He was as much aghast at their ideas as impressed by their patriotism and fervour to 'do and die'. In response to this rejection of the petitionary delegation of Indians he led to London and the revolutionary will of the India House clique, he wrote in a furious ten days his most foundational critique of modern life and politics: *Hind Swaraj* (Sudharo in Gujarati and *Civilisation* in his English translation).

Back in South Africa, the period from 1909 onwards was one of intensive protest against the growing racialist legislation there against Indians. His crowning achievement was the long march of striking mine workers and indentured labour from the coast to Johannesburg, achieving a coalition of middle-class Indian merchants with Indian indentured labour to argue for better rights of residence and travel between the provinces of the newly constituted South Africa, the repeal of a tax on labourers and their families living

without indenture and the recognition of non-Christian marriages.

### Gandhi in India (1914–19)

Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1914. His reputation for fighting for the rights of Indians in South Africa had preceded him and he was welcomed as a hero by many in the Indian National Congress. Yet, his position as an outsider allowed him to take stock of the political situation in India by travelling around the country. He established his ashram in Ahmedabad (1915) and took up campaigns of local interest which helped him build his reputation as an activist who could mobilise popular support. His first campaigns were in Champaran district in the present state of Bihar (April 1917–March 1918), Kheda (March 1918), the Ahmedabad textile mill workers' strike (February–March 1918). In these movements he achieved much in terms of immediate relief – though not all the demands of the peasants or workers were met, nor did he succeed in establishing Gandhian practices amongst these peasants. Still, these campaigns were crucial in building up a reputation for Gandhi as a peasant and worker's leader. As analysed by subaltern scholars, Gandhi's language and goals and renunciative persona struck a chord with the peasant groups and he was immediately and widely adopted as a redemptive leader by these groups. However, their interpretations of his message were their own and often beyond what he was preaching (Amin 1994).

In early 1918, Gandhi still argued for serving the imperial war effort, advocating the recruitment of soldiers for the British Indian army to serve in the war. There is a sense here, as well as in his earlier support for imperial wars, that if Indians organised and did their duty by supporting the empire, the empire would fulfil its duty of providing for home rule and repealing unjust and exploitative aspects of its rule. As he said at his seditious trial in 1922, he had hoped that active support of the war would earn his compatriots equal rights in the Empire.

### Critique of imperialism

At the end of the war, the government announced new legal acts enshrining repressive war-time provisions in law (The Rowlatt Act, 1919). In response to this draconian

curtailing of civil liberties, Gandhi through the Indian National Congress made his first national call. He called for a general strike and this was taken up in different parts of the country with varying levels of enthusiasm. However, the biggest event of the Anti-Rowlatt Act demonstrations was the shooting of an unarmed gathering of hundreds of demonstrators at a walled garden in Amritsar – the Jallianwala Bag. This massacre and Gandhi's heading of the Congress inquiry into the events, as well as the government's acquittal of General Dyer who had ordered the shooting, became a turning point in Gandhi's relationship with empire. In February 1922 he wrote the piece which occasioned his trial for sedition: 'No empire intoxicated with the red wine of power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and this "British Empire", which is based upon the organized exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe'(Gandhi 1922a).

This statement came after two years of sustained agitation to demand the return of the Holy Lands to the Turkish Caliph (Khilafat agitation, 1920–22) and a refusal to co-operate with the government of India. As part of that non-co-operation, Gandhi encouraged lawyers to give up legal practice, doctors to give up medical practice, and students to give up government education. He also advocated the use of locally manufactured items, and bonfires of foreign produce, primarily cloth. In this period, he discovered the spinning wheel and adopted it as the symbol of his commitment to local self-reliance and disaffection with industry. It was also during non-co-operation that Gandhi developed a consistent vision of politics based on *panchayats* – a village-based system of government. He advocated *panchayats* for solving village problems, and they were used first in Champaran during the Indigo investigations.

This period of agitation after the war gave the basic outlines of Gandhi's anti-imperial position. It rested on his advocacy of local self-reliance and spiritual engagement. He advocated a bio-moral regimen to reorient individual commitment to politics. Thus he advocated bodily purity for the pure work of establishing just rule. The *swadeshi* (self-sufficiency) ideal was demonstrated through

the collection and burning of foreign cloth, as well as the emphasis on the questions of rural development, spinning, and the growth of self-sufficiency. His economic programme was now elaborated beyond the notion of commune and 'bread labour' to a conception of village-based growth of self-sufficiency.

The sedition trial and subsequent period (1922–29) was a period of constructive work and village development. Gandhi's constructive programme and his idea of trusteeship (i.e. ownership of capital/ property in trust for its use for national good) remained the basis from which he critiqued both imperial government and the national bourgeoisie. The critique thus mounted, and his toleration of multiple layers of gradual transformation and his insistence on spiritual and voluntary change permitted in effect continuation of the modern economy, working in favour of the bourgeois nationalists.

### Constitutional engagement

Despite the growing organised political movement by Indians, the British government announced a purely British group to constitute a commission (the Simon Commission) to review the Government of India Act coming up for this decennial exercise in 1929. The Simon Commission was boycotted and there was a split within the major political groups in India (the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League) which the government chose to reinforce but also amend by declaring a series of meetings in London for the principal parties chosen by the government. These round table discussions were first boycotted by the Congress, and they declared a renewed popular agitation to demand self-government.

This, the second major mass movement of the Gandhian agitation began with a declaration of the demand for full independence on 26 January 1930 followed by an announcement to disobey specific civil laws, primarily to break the salt law from March 1930. The programme of civil disobedience captured the popular imagination, filling the colonial jails and showing up the imperial government as the draconian and oppressive force it was. The movement was suspended after a year in late February 1931 following a pact between Viceroy Lord Irwin and Gandhi. In this pact, Gandhi agreed to several reforms of the law which benefited local industry, and he agreed

to travel to London to negotiate the terms of the new Act for the Government of India which would lay the constitutional basis of government. His participation at the Round Table Conference proved futile and there was no agreement with the other disputants for power sharing in the government. The Congress opposed the demand for separate communal electorates for the minority religious groups and for the Dalit or Depressed Class communities. In spite of this, the Government announced the Communal Award (August 1932).

From prison, Gandhi then announced a fast unto death to oppose specifically the provisions of the award for the depressed classes. Bhimrao Ambedkar (1891–1956) was at the time the chief advocate for separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. Gandhi ended his fast when there was an agreement with the various parties to have a system of joint electorates to elect selected Depressed Classes candidates to reserved seats for them in the provincial governments. These reserved seats were to guarantee political representation for these groups, however the candidates were voted for by all sections of the electorate, not only members of the Depressed Classes. This ‘agreement’ provoked Ambedkar to write his most trenchant critiques of the caste system, Gandhi and the Congress.

Thus, in the 1930s Gandhi engaged with the terms of constitutional forms of centralised government. However, throughout this process he remained dismayed by their structure and articulated this sense increasingly in the 1940s.. Gandhi clearly accepted political engagement in discussing the formation of the post-colonial state, yet he remained unconvinced by it. In his political discussion he based his democracy at the level of the village. His interpretation of *swaraj* – translated as Home Rule – was as much personal and individual as governmental.

He critiqued not only British power, but also state power, and his critique was mounted from the perspective not of state but of self. His ultimate freedom was not control over government but control of the self. In order to achieve this perfect control over the self, one needed not an excess of identification with the state or society, but an immersion of the self into the common good. Thus, not personal rights but collective duties were the watchwords of freedom and anti-imperial action.

Subsequent to this political compromise, Gandhi’s health was severely affected and he announced his retirement to Wardha, Seagaon, (later called Sevagram) where he established a new ashram. However, even from this distant rural location, he participated actively in Congress affairs, and was sought for advice regarding governmental policies as the Congress participated in elections in 1937 and formed nine provincial governments and ministries from 1937–39.

With the start of the Second World War and the conflict within the Congress between Gandhi and Subhash Chandra Bose, the Congress ministries resigned from power. The Peasant and Workers’ Parties and the Congress Socialists were also active in this period, organising and working with local peasants and workers. Nehru, set up the National Planning Committee of the Congress from 1938–39, and it began to operate to discuss the planned growth of the national economy.

Gandhi persuaded the Congress not to support the war effort, even though he recognised that the war against Fascism must be fought and he supported Britain in that effort. Yet he felt that India as a nation in bondage could not freely support the war effort. Thus he began the limited campaign of *individual satyagraha* whereby individual chosen candidates publicly declared their lack of support for the war effort and gave themselves up for arrest. Within two years, the Congress stepped up their opposition and declared self-government in 1942 with Gandhi calling for the British to Quit India. The movement was led by local Congress and non-Congress leaders as the Congress leaders were jailed within the very first days of the declaration on 8 August 1942. The Quit India movement was the last in the phase of Gandhian movements before independence.

### Imperialism and non-violence

Gandhi emphasised that this self-control and control over the government could not be achieved by violence but by acting according to one’s conviction of truth. One should always speak of it and convince the opponent not by opposition but by admitting that s/he too has an aspect of truth. Thus, no opponent was an enemy, but always the object of friendship. The power that Gandhi sought was the power of brotherhood rather than that of

brute force. This is what he called *ahimsa* or non-violence.

Yet Gandhi was not afraid of violence and in fact welcomed the encounter with violence which could demonstrate the active insistence on non-violence. He also felt that violence was better than compliance and cowardice. Thus, in 1944, he explained the violence of Congress members in the wake of the Quit India movement as the response to extreme oppression (Gandhi, CWMG, 1979 vol. 77: 141, 150).

### Gandhi's universalism

Gandhi projected a universal appeal from a particularly 'Indian' and anti-imperial political space. Yet there is no nativist genealogy to his anti-imperial traditions. His critique of modernity crucially drew on European and American thought. His colleagues were carefully drawn from multiple racial groups. The primary category by which he implemented his political praxis – both ideologically and in practice – was 'Truth'; an absolute Truth that could be known in multiple dialogic ways through multiple conversations; an absolute Truth that could be known imperfectly by a single human being and therefore always ready for amending and rethinking. As a consequence of this view of Truth, Gandhi was always ready to amend his ideas and change his mind about actions already undertaken and underway. This has been criticised by many, even in his own times as being inconsistent or being opportunistic.

This position on Truth and its multiplicity did not deprive Gandhi of a means to action, as his Truth was not relative. He accepted that there were certain things that were wrong and these needed to change. Not only that, every seeker of Truth was required to work to change as the insistence on Truth could not be passive, could not be without action against Untruth.

In examining the way Gandhi proposed action we have assessed here primarily aspects of his thought as they engaged with empire and generated an anti-imperial politics. He held, however, that all aspects of living and life could contribute to a considered anti-imperialism – the way the children were brought up, educated, food was eaten, clothes worn; how sexual activity, marriage, and work were practised.

Gandhi's leadership of this movement for political rights within and outside the empire

reflected his imperialism and anti-imperialism. He was a maker of political praxis. He thought and he wrote and he acted; and while aspects of his thought and action were criticised as betrayals of the ideals he professed of truth, non-violence, and justice, others have still found much in it that can apply to the contemporary situation, often finding it useful to continue to locate their critique in Gandhi. The post-colonial state is seen as inadequately overthrowing empire and continuing an exploitative/extractive relationship with its people. Yet a critique of Gandhi must recognise that the anti-imperialist position charted by him is not able to adequately address the concerns of various 'fragments' of the nation such as women, Dalits, and Muslims. Thus to understand the anti-imperial subject position, internal divisions within the imagined community must be examined. Gandhi was conscious of these differences. He wrote extensively about the role and position of women, Dalits, and Muslims. He saw all of them as having to devise their own politics on the basis of their own inspirations. Thus, he asked women to be the authors of their own emancipation. Gandhian women have progressed their own politics to build on his arguments as well as diverge from him. Dalits and Muslims have not used Gandhi in similar emancipatory ways on a wider scale, arguing that not only did he not address their concerns but he actively opposed those who did. Ambedkar was Gandhi's strongest critic from the position of the Depressed Classes or Dalits.

What was it that Gandhi achieved as an anti-imperialist? How did he rock an empire? Was he a nationalist? There are multiple answers to these questions based on the various perspectives and on a selection of Gandhi's writings and the particular period in his life. Gandhi was a notoriously prolific writer and all his writing has been preserved with great care. Thus we have 99 volumes of his collected writings published by the Indian government. Gandhi was context-sensitive as well as constantly evolving and adjusting his points of view; thus, many different views can find support in his writing. The critical trajectory of change in his thinking on imperialism was from a loyal imperialist seeking justice from empire in the best tradition of the Black Jacobins, to a universalist against empire, but not on the basis of an ethnic nationalism. He spoke from a particular place

of Hindu thought, but assumed that this personal space would be the same in truth value as other personal spaces, located in their own religious and cultural traditions.

#### Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to Rudolf C Heredia S.J. and Barin Mehta for comments and discussion while writing this essay.

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## Garvey, Marcus (1887–1940)

Born on 17 August 1887 in Saint Ann's Bay, Jamaica, Marcus Mosiah Garvey is remembered as the leader of among the largest mass black political movement of the 20th century. Garvey left school at 14, and in 1906 he moved to Kingston. Working as an apprentice under the guidance of his godfather, he read intensively, increased his skill in printing, organised youth meetings, published small newspapers, and took part in political debates and strike actions. Garvey left Jamaica in 1910 and travelled in various parts of Central America, founding newspapers in Costa Rica and Panama and criticising the imperialistic presence of the American United Fruit Company in the Caribbean. In the spring of 1912, after a brief return to Jamaica, he arrived in London in order to complete his informal education. He soon started writing for the *African Times and Orient Review*, a pioneering pan-African newspaper edited by the activist and actor Duse Mohamed Ali (1866–1945). Criticising the global frame of colonialism and denouncing worldwide discrimination, Garvey's articles were published alongside texts by leaders like Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois (1868–1963) from the US and Joseph Ephraim Casely-Hayford from Gold Coast, whose *Ethiopia Unbound* (1911) was a classic work read by Garvey and most of the leaders of the black nationalist movement in the early 20th century. During his years abroad, Garvey met various African seamen, traders, and activists, and he acquired

a holistic view of the conditions of black and working-class peoples. Visiting mainland Europe on the eve of the First World War, he also gained a critical knowledge of European nationalism.

Reading Booker T. Washington's autobiography, *Up from Slavery*, Garvey was inspired by the idea of gaining self-confidence and autonomy through skilled and professional work and became interested in founding a Jamaican educational establishment modelled on Washington's Tuskegee College in Alabama. Back in Kingston in July 1914, he wrote a letter to Washington asking for an invitation to visit Tuskegee. However, Washington died in 1915 before Garvey could plan his trip. Garvey also started to think about the foundation of a global solidarity movement which would gather Africans from across the Western world on the basis of their race or colour. On 1 August 1914, Garvey and Amy Ashwood, who would become his first wife five years later, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the African Communities League (UNIA-ACL). However, since Garvey left Jamaica in 1916, the first Jamaican branch of UNIA remained experimental.

### The early years of the UNIA-ACL

In 1916, Garvey arrived anonymously in the US for the purposes of visiting Tuskegee College in Alabama and paying tribute to his mentor. After the visit, while preaching and travelling in the Southern segregationist states, he radicalised his views on racial issues. The years 1916 and 1917 saw rising numbers of racial riots and attacks in the US, and the safety and living conditions of African Americans worsened in most of the Southern states and the Northern urban centres. In 1918, hoping to re-form the UNIA, Garvey set up home in the black neighbourhood of Harlem, New York. Within a few months, the UNIA opened several chapters, working as a welfare and social organisation, and Garvey bought the Harlem Liberty Hall building on 135th Street and Lenox Avenue to establish his international headquarters. An outstanding speaker and debater, famous for his irony and emphatic tone, Garvey became the best-known black leader and the greatest polarising figure in Harlem and the black world.

A large number of Garvey's disciples opened branches of the UNIA in the US and

the rest of the world, leading the movement to attract up to four million members in the early 1920s. With its militarily organised and disciplined African Legion and its Black Cross Nurses, the UNIA served as a response to the nationwide racial disturbances decades before the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. Thanks to Garvey's commitment to the 'Negro Race', the UNIA was also the first Afro-centric mass organisation calling for black economic empowerment and cultural independence, and promoting the return to Africa as a prerequisite for liberation and a better future. To set his projects in motion, Garvey founded a shipping line, the Black Star Line, to organise the resettlement of blacks in Africa and to promote international trade between African American, Caribbean, and African businessmen; its first boat was named after Booker T. Washington. Moving to the poor urban black areas but developing an anti-communist rhetoric, Garvey also encouraged the establishment of black factories and corporations, and the rise of a black capitalism. Restaurants, shops, barbers' shops, clubs, and factories were funded by or affiliated with the UNIA headquarters.

In August 1920, Liberty Hall hosted the International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World, which was attended by a crowd of 25,000 from more than 40 countries in the world. Some 2,000 delegates drafted the 'Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World'. They hailed the red, black, and green of the UNIA flag as colours of African unity, and they appointed a government which was headed later by Garvey, the self-proclaimed Provisional President of the future Republic of Africa. The impressive and colourful street parade, the pompous ceremonies and concerts, and the enthusiasm of UNIA followers hailing Garvey as a 'Negro Moses' provoked a range of criticism from Harlem radical militants who saw Garvey as a 'Black Napoleon'. His autocratic style of leadership caused defections in the ranks of the UNIA executive committee, including the departure of his wife Amy Ashwood in 1920. While Amy Ashwood kept her distance from Garvey and became involved in the global pan-African movement, Amy Jacques, Garvey's second wife, became his secretary and helped to secure the fame of the Jamaican leader. Amy Jacques later made a compilation of Garvey's letters, writings, and speeches which preceded Hill's edition

of the UNIA papers (see Garvey 1980 and Hill 1983–2006).

### **Tactical and ideological confrontations: Garvey and the globalisation of the UNIA-ACL**

Wearing his classic plumed hat, Garvey developed his own iconography. His sense of pride in being African developed in a very fertile environment. Revisiting Negro cultural history in a positive way, the Harlem Renaissance bloomed in the presence of the UNIA. Large numbers of artists, scholars, intellectuals, and celebrities, including those who supported DuBois against Garvey, were definitively engaged in the Garveyist goal of the redemption of the Negro race (Martin 1991). Mastering the media propaganda, ready to make an alliance with the racist Ku Klux Klan to impose the repatriation of African Americans in the national agenda, and using populist expressions to raise the sense of black pride, Garvey clearly represented a new generation of black leaders. However, despite his growing popularity among the masses, he became more and more isolated and was criticised by the black establishment for his ambiguous and undiplomatic opinions. Above all, his Back-to-Africa campaign made him a target. Garvey's typical rallying cry 'Africa for the Africans' was perceived as a threat to the Western colonial powers, which feared that his ideology of liberation was mobilising and uniting the black masses in Africa and the Americas.

The *Negro World*, the UNIA's weekly newspaper, was published in English, with some French and Spanish pages, from 1918 to 1933 and was widely disseminated across the globe by seamen, adventurers, and traders. Garvey's impact frightened the British colonial authorities. To oppose the Garveyist propaganda, they established the *British West Indian Review* and formally prevented the circulation of the *Negro World*, which was nevertheless sent from Sierra Leone to Kenya via southern Africa. Studying the circulation of the *Negro World* serves to highlight such subversive networks of communication; for instance, copies were sent from France to Dahomey by Kojo Tovelou Houenou, and were also circulating in the other French colonial territories.

In his tactics and ideology, Garvey had been deeply influenced by the Caribbean visionary thinker Edward W. Blyden

(1832–1912), who spent most of his life working for the repatriation of blacks in West Africa, mainly Liberia (Akpan 1973). Garvey shared Blyden's evocation of the great African civilisations of the past as times of plenty and splendour to be restored. By praising cultural nationalism, and by re-creating a political hierarchy with such titles as 'Duke of Niger' and 'Knight of the Nile' for his comrades in arms, Garvey captured the imagination of blacks as though they were a people and government in exile, waiting to return to their native land. This conquering position was problematic since Garvey had previously believed that Africans from the Western world should go back to Africa 'to assist in civilizing the backward tribes of Africa' (Garvey 1980: 38). Like Blyden, Garvey developed a symbiotic relationship with Africa, although the UNIA leader never visited the land of his ancestors. Sent in 1920 and 1924 to organise the resettlement in Liberia, the UNIA missions were prevented from buying the land by lobbying by the US Firestone Company and by the hostility of President King of Liberia and the French and British authorities regarding the implantation of a subversive movement next to their respective colonial possessions, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone. The UNIA's petitions to the League of Nations in 1922 and 1928, demanding that the German colonies in Africa be returned to native Africans as a sovereign black states, were also unsuccessful. As the Harlem-based UNIA organisation reached its highest phase in the early 1920s, thousand of branches followed individual trajectories worldwide, adapting the global themes of Garveyism to their own needs. The highly eclectic Garveyist movement interacted with several subversive African groups, and some UNIA emissaries and Garveyites played a role in anti-colonial politico-religious revolts in the Caribbean and in Africa; for example, strikes and social disturbances in the Huileries du Congo Belge corporation in Belgian Congo in 1921 were attributed to an alliance of African American Garveyist and communist tenants (see Lewis 1988). Some branches of the UNIA were opened in British West Africa, and Garveyism spread in the French-speaking colonies (Okonkwo 1980).

Indeed, in the US as in Africa, Garvey was opposed to DuBois, who served as the official US emissary in Liberia. The rivalry between the populist and grassroots UNIA



movement and the black middle-class and integrationist groups represented by W.E.B. DuBois and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) are well documented. Loaded with sarcasm and personal attacks, the rivalry between Garvey, the dark-skinned ‘Negro’, and DuBois, the light-skinned ‘mulatto’, saw harsh ideological confrontations over the concept of race and integration. While Garvey was calling for a black state in Africa or a separatist black state in the US, DuBois was advocating the end of segregation and racist legislation in order to assimilate blacks as full American citizens. However, some polemic and inadequate accounts may exaggerate the opposition between these two figures, who both promoted the improvement of living conditions for blacks. Colin Grant noted that ‘especially following his death, the story of Marcus Garvey was largely told from the perspective of his enemies’ (2008: xii). Later, the Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah put the UNIA colours and the Black Star on Ghana’s flag out of respect for Garvey. Malcolm X, whose father met Garvey during a UNIA meeting in Canada, was also deeply influenced by him; Campbell (1987) and Erskine (2005) highlight the Garveyist heritage in culture and politics, focusing on figures like Bob Marley and Walter Rodney.

### **Deportation, exile, and death: Garvey, fascism, and the Italo-Ethiopian war**

Garvey’s experience in the US was shortened by government harassment. In 1923, after reporting on UNIA activities for four years, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) under J. Edgar Hoover’s control decided to open an official case against Garvey. The UNIA leader was convicted of attempted fiscal fraud in running the Black Star Line, and he was sent in 1925 to the Atlanta penitentiary to serve a five-year prison sentence. Some UNIA militants petitioned on his behalf and, in November 1927 Garvey was released and immediately deported to Jamaica. Back in his native island, Garvey tried to re-form his movement at the 1929 UNIA Convention in Kingston; he also created *The Blackman*, an anti-colonial newspaper, which was regularly seized by the colonial authorities before publication was stopped two years later. Garvey tried in vain

to enter the Jamaican political arena, but he was defeated at the 1930 elections for the legislative council. While he was marginalised by the colonial system and the local elite, his political failure was counterbalanced by his exceptional influence on African cultural history in Jamaica. Before the French *Négritude* movement revised and took advantage of the stereotyped term ‘Negro’ in the 1930s, and decades before ‘Black is Beautiful’ became a self-emancipating ideal, Garvey issued repeated calls for the uplift of the Negro race, popularising the concept of mental emancipation from the psychological chains of racial inferiority (Cronon 1969). In the religious sphere, Garvey opposed the Christian Westernised representation of white as good and black as evil by asking black peoples to worship a black divinity and to enrol in the African Orthodox Church. His fervent Back-to-Africa statements were endorsed by the Rastafari movement. This socio-cultural and political movement was born in Jamaica in the early 1930s, as soon as the black masses heard that Ras Tafari had been crowned Emperor of Ethiopia under the name of Haile Selassie, in Addis Ababa in November 1930. From this moment onwards, Haile Selassie was deified and Marcus Garvey, the ‘Black Messiah’, acquired the status of a prophet in Rastafarian theology. Although he advocated a black theology of liberation, Garvey neither embraced the Rastafarian cult nor praised Haile Selassie; see Campbell (1987) and Erskine (2005).

In 1935 Garvey settled in London. When Italy invaded Ethiopia in October 1935, Garvey got a unique opportunity to assume the leadership of the black resistance. Ethiopia, the only African country that was never colonised, had inspired the UNIA’s ‘Universal Ethiopian Anthem’ and was defined as the focal point of repatriation. Despite having branches all over the Americas and Africa, in England, and even in Australia, the UNIA and Garvey failed to play a unifying role on the front line. Breaking with the cohesive pro-Ethiopia spirit which invigorated the pan-African united front, Garvey publicly expressed strong criticisms regarding of Haile Selassie’s exile and responsibility. Refusing to call for the liberation of Ethiopia on behalf of the UNIA, lacking the political understanding to analyse the global stakes of this war, and reporting with great awkwardness the similarities in propaganda

between the UNIA and the fascist regimes of Hitler and Mussolini, Garvey lost his audience and was discredited. Above all, some younger black Caribbean activists like C.L.R. James and George Padmore were taking stronger and more clearly articulated positions on the Italo-Ethiopian War, which was perceived as a crystallisation of racism, colonialism, and capitalism. Unable to embrace the black internationalist movement that had been born in solidarity with Ethiopia, Garvey became very unpopular and came to be seen as outdated. In 1937, Garvey made a tour of Canada for the eighth UNIA convention, and stopped off in Jamaica, where he made a last attempt to reform his movement, in vain. Finally, he went back to London, where he died in obscurity on 10 June 1940.

### Garvey's legacy

Garvey was declared Jamaica's first National Hero in 1964, and his remains were returned to Jamaica and buried in the Kingston National Park. Politically speaking, his pan-Negro ideology continues to impact African American and African nationalisms, and his transnational struggle calls into question the political and social boundaries in the history of the Caribbean. Although very few UNIA branches are still active today, the Garvey movement had a monumental influence on such groups as the Rastafarians, the Nation of Islam, the Ethiopian World Federation, and several African and Caribbean political parties. The Garveyist social environment was part of the background of many civil rights and Black Power activists (Sewell 1990). While his Back-to-Africa movement has lost ground despite the greater access to travel, his cultural legacy has kept growing. Some of the greatest reggae singers (Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Burning Spear) have helped to popularise his life beyond the boundaries of the black communities, giving him the status of a folk hero. Academic meetings have regularly discussed the enduring weight of his words and actions and his relevance today in pan-African, black, and African studies. Finally, his unifying statements 'One Aim, One God, One Destiny' and 'Africa for the Africans at home and abroad' still echo in the minds of black peoples who celebrate his birthday each 17 August.

Amzat Boukari-Yabara

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## Guevara, Ernesto 'Che' (1928–1967)

We all appreciate heroes whose actions and historical stature help enable us to recognise our potential as human beings and who give us the impetus to be better than we are – more courageous, more selfless, more committed to making the world a better place. This is especially true today when our world is on the verge of planetary catastrophe at the hands of a transnational capitalist class and its corporate clientele and a US-led imperialist order seemingly willing to forsake millions

of lives in favour of protecting its corporate interests through a shameful complicity with the brutality and aggressiveness required as the 'leader' of the 'free world' (Robinson 2008). Today, as we witness the world's only superpower using its divinely ordained pre-emptive power to 'democratise' rogue countries through the savagery of war, symbolically delousing its new immigrant populations from the south by highlighting their supposed cultural inferiority, and deploying surveillance and cyber capabilities to steal industry secrets and sabotage financial systems in order to advantage its domestic industry and spy on its own citizens and those from countries around the world, we can safely say that while democracy clearly has no historical present in the US, it could possibly have a future should a socialist alternative to capitalism be one day realised. Yet, this seems unlikely in today's historical juncture, in a world harrowed by war, famine, racism, and ecological destruction.

Any vestiges of social responsibility are trampled into dust by a world corporate media system that deploys its own 'heroes' – i.e., Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, Mark Zuckerberg, the Walton family – to ensure that the capitalist marketplace is venerated as the motor force of democracy. Humanity appears weak and puny in the face of the entrenched dominance of the capitalist mode of production and its billionaire heroes, and alerts us to the seemingly insuperable task of emerging victorious against any and all forces aligned with the interests of capital accumulation. As Peter McLaren (2010) notes:

In a world torn between the oppressed on the one side, and those who esuriently exploit them, on the other, there seems little hope today of a grand alternative for the wretched of the earth. They seem forever caught between the jaws of those scrupulously respectable people who offer them the slavery of wage labour and a lifetime of alienation in exchange for their labour power, and those who loathsomely criminalize their very existence, or feel justified to leave them to suffer whatever cruel fate the market has in store for them. (102–103)

The unmitigated lie that we are destined to be passive participants in history and unable to act in a world of necessity becomes evident

when we come to know and recognise the valiant self-fashioning of those who – despite being locked within the prison house of capitalism with its dislocation and disaggregation of person identity – create spaces of protagonistic agency that enable them to act with integrity, valour, and commitment toward a 'collective struggle' (Darder 2011). What we need is to learn of and from the heroes who stand among real men and women and who have made profound contributions in our lifetime precisely because of their humanity – because somehow conditions in and around their lives forced them to demand of themselves more than most of us dare to do. The real heroes of our world are those whose disquieting commitment to resisting the brutalisation of everyday life convinces us that we too can be revolutionaries – that in the substantive and aggregative nexus of our historical experiences, we all have the capacity for courage, for honouring others, and for revolutionary love.

Ernesto 'Che' Guevara was a man from whose storied legacy we can glimpse the possibilities of an authentic humanity, recognising at the same time that he was also one of the most important socialist revolutionaries of the 20th century and beyond. His accomplishments as an intellectual and a military commander continue to be felt in the hearts of those who knew him and among new generations who continue to discover him anew (Löwy 2007). His gift to his own generation and future generations was his refusal to give succour to despair, his diligent focus on the world-historical antagonisms of his day, the clarity he achieved in redressing social injustices of his time and his pedagogy of revolution that was based on a critical engagement of Marxist-Leninist theory and the philosophy of praxis he developed from the basis of such an engagement (Harris 1998). Through the words with which he agitated, incited, and persuaded men and women to fight for a socialist alternative, we witness the honesty, self-reflection, and integrity that he argued were necessary characteristics of the 'new [wo]man' and socialist revolutionary (Löwy 2007). His Guevarian pedagogy and socialist imaginary were not the product of some privileged access to his own internal reflection but came through a commitment to truth, a struggle for solidarity, a belief in the political efficacy of guerrilla warfare, and a search for a coherence between theory and practice,

a coherence that has informed various revolutions since and provides great insights into how we, as critical educators, can begin to attain proletarian hegemony through a pedagogy of love, revolution, and social justice.

### **A legacy of and for revolution**

Che is revered as an epic symbol of revolutionary heroism among disenfranchised communities across the globe and especially in his native América Latina. His extraordinary willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice of his life to liberate humanity, his unwavering commitment to his Guevarian (Marxist) pedagogy, and his courageous and unflinching affront to capitalism and US imperialism support the image of a knight from Arthurian legend, a secular Christ, or an avenging angel wielding a fiery sword promulgated and instructed by divine ordinance to slay the hydra-headed beast of US imperialism. For many of us on the left, he inspires and energises us to continue to fight for what we know is right and just, and instils a sense of solidarity and love that reminds us of our purpose.

Hundreds of books and articles have been written about Che, the man who, alongside Fidel Castro, spearheaded a socialist revolution that brought down the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba in 1959 and played a key role in various aspects of Cuba's transformation into communism. In 1965, he moved on to develop and support other socialist revolutions in Congo-Kinshasa and in Bolivia, where he was eventually captured and assassinated by the Bolivian army with CIA assistance. He was and continues to be a controversial figure, idolised by poor, indigenous, and otherwise brutalised communities worldwide and intensely hated not only by the transnational functionaries of the capitalist superstructure and the restrictive circle of the ruling class but also by those of the working class whose enduring embourgeoisement positions Che as a determinate threat to their upward mobility (McLaren 2000).

A man who grew up in the so called middle class with privilege and opportunity and became a physician, Che renounced what could have been a lucrative medical profession to bring an end to the unnecessary suffering of people caused by what he recognised not only as the unconscionable and gluttonous greed of the capitalist class but more importantly as the very system of capitalism

itself in which it was impossible to function humanely since it was powered by over-accumulation and the expropriation of surplus value from the poor in order to serve the interests of the rich. Those who have deeply studied his life, including his writings, whether divinising him as a revolutionary hierophant or misguided romantic adventurer, consistently point to a man who held a deep love for humanity and an abiding belief that human beings could and would change through the development of a socialist-humanist consciousness in both immanent and productive ways. He grasped keenly the full extent to which capital expands and encroaches upon every aspect of social life, including our social and political values and the ways in which we engage with each other and our world. He denounced capitalism and imperialism on the basis of the devastation and unfreedom it creates for the masses of exploited peoples and the inhumanity that it engenders in individuals and society. He argued that capitalism necessarily spawns inequality and creates human beings who are motivated by a stygian individualism that results in the negation of the essential qualities of humanity – love of and for our fellow human beings, responsibility for the well-being of all, honesty, creativity, voluntary labour, solidarity and a sense of community (Löwy 2007).

The obsessive focus on the self that characterises much of how we engage in the world, including our explanations for success and failure, is part and parcel of the totalising effect of capitalism that breeds a deep-seated survival of the fittest attitude that normalises poverty and other forms of human suffering. This individualism runs throughout all institutions under capitalism, including education, where the opportunity to learn is determined through competition for grades and scores as if these were not related to a host of other social factors and in particular poverty and the availability of material resources. It is considered a superior human quality to strive to be the best of the best and to leave others trailing behind. Given this capture of education by individualism, it is not surprising that people learn early on to see themselves not as part of a social group working collaboratively to achieve goals with the benefit of mutual support but in an antagonistic relationship to each other. Capitalism pits human beings against each other such

that 'man' becomes 'man's' worst enemy. A central aspect of Che's revolutionary goals was the transformation of (wo)man into human beings who, through the alchemy of critical consciousness, could transmute historical experiences of exploitation into a praxis of liberation by embodying the values of revolutionary socialism – values that could only be fully achieved outside of capital's value form. In other words, the problem was not only to rid the world of capitalists, but capital as a social relation. McLaren (2010) writes:

The fact that all Washington administrations are populated by a particularly venal cabal of career opportunists, theocratic sociopaths, anti-Enlightenment activists, pathological liars and vulpine opponents of democracy should in no way confound us into thinking that the problem of capitalism is rooted in acts of political malfeasance by clever but corrupted politicians. Such acts may be torturously accommodating to capital, and lead to impoverishment, bloodshed, repression, misery, and eventually to genocide and even to the obliteration of entire nations, but they are not the source of the problem. The problem itself can be traced to Marx's world-historical discovery: the alienated character of the very act of labouring and the exploitation that is a fundamental part of selling one's labour-power for a wage. (105)

Historical conditions set the stage for what came to be for Che a life of tremendous self-discipline, theoretical clarity, and revolutionary vision invoked through a profound love for humanity and a conviction that a society that callously exploited, bestowed cruelty, and created or accepted barbaric living conditions for any of its citizens needed to be radically transformed. Che suffered throughout his life from terrifying asthma attacks that may have sensitised him to people's suffering. Indeed, he worked in his youth with leper communities and was deeply affected by the way in which they were treated with disdain. He was an avid reader of the classics and many revolutionary texts from his early youth onwards. He was raised in a politicised household with parents who actively took part in dissident political activity. At the age of 23, he embarked on a journey with a close friend that took him through South America, where

he witnessed for himself the abject poverty, hunger, disease, drug addiction, and indignities impoverished peasants and workers experienced at the hands of those who seemed unable or unwilling to see or feel their suffering. His journaling throughout this time suggests that these experiences were deeply troubling to him and offered the opportunity for reflection that spawned both the desire and commitment to do something meaningful in his life. As Guevara (2004) wrote in his now famed *Motorcycle Diaries*:

The person who wrote these notes passed away the moment his feet touched Argentine soil again. The person who reorganizes and polishes them, me, is no longer, at least I am not the person I once was. All this wandering around 'our America with a capital A' has changed me more than I thought. (25–26)

The concerns and questions evidenced in these diaries ultimately developed into a revolutionary consciousness that involved a deep capacity for honest self-reflection and a Guevarian pedagogy that brought triumph to the Cuban Revolution and a strong belief that the only way to defeat US imperialism was with a united América Latina. This latter anti-imperialist and, particularly, anti-US position was solidified as he evidenced the overthrow of Guatemala's President Jacobo Arbenz with the assistance of the CIA in service to the interests of the United Fruit Company. It is believed that his vision of a united América Latina, was beginning to see fruition as he moved to support Bolivia's revolution and planned to follow thereafter with insurgencies into his native Argentina. Alas, as the US recognised that his enormous courage, his charm and gift of persuasion, and his brilliant socialist pedagogy were a daunting if not indomitable force to be reckoned with, the CIA hunted him down and put an end to his socialist internationalist agenda. He was captured in Bolivia in 1967 and summarily executed on the orders of the CIA (McLaren 2000).

A key moment in revolutionary history was the fateful meeting of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro in Mexico City when Fidel and his men were exiled from Cuba after serving two years in prison as a result of being captured during their first attack against the dictatorship of Batista in 1951 (Fidel's 26 July Movement in Cuba had only a narrow

base composed largely of middle-class intellectuals). After training in Mexico City, Che, Fidel, and other Cuban exiles boarded the *Granma* that took them to Cuba and so began the Cuban Revolution that toppled the Batista Government with a final victorious battle led by Che and peasant guerrilla forces at Santa Clara in 1959. This historic achievement and the years that followed serve as testament to Che's extraordinary bravery and commitment, and to the significance of a Guevarian pedagogy – a testament that lives on today despite an overwhelming campaign to domesticate Che into yet another superhuman hero of the market in an attempt to mystify his extraordinary but very real and human revolutionary accomplishments.

The commodification of Che's name and face – which are now plastered on coffee mugs and T-shirts and sold to consumers across the world, but especially in the US – is a strategic attempt to diminish Che's image as a revolutionary and attenuate the potential of his dialectical thinking in helping today's youth achieve critical consciousness. The iconisation of Che extracts his humanity and with it the socialist ideals that he embodied and that gave millions the hope for a socialist alternative. It serves to turn Che against himself as he becomes the commodified form that he rejected and against which he courageously fought. We recognise the marketisation of our heroes as strategies of hegemonic control but also note the contested spaces within which Che is made and iconised. As McLaren (2000) states elsewhere:

Even though there appears to be more of a willingness by rank-and-file North American commentators to de-reify Che as saint or sinner and to place him somewhere in between, we must remember that every encounter with that irrepressible force known as Che occurs in an occupied space. It is a space of reception dense with public signs and personal memories, a space de-limited by the discourses and 'ways of telling' that are most available to society, most overdetermined within society, and carrying the most currency within today's economy of ideas – especially in the public media. (7)

Yet people are not always duped by the anesthesiating impact of shopping mall politics. Che stands, among other human heroes

in history, to remind us that even within the totalising system of capital that aims to eclipse the virtues inherent in our existence, there are essential aspects to our humanity that remain, perhaps buried deep within the interstices of our self-and-social transformation, that can be nurtured, recovered, and brought forward to create new revolutionary heroes among us and in future generations until we can finally find ourselves in the moment of true victory, when humanity is vindicated from the treacherous workings of capital and its attendant antagonisms and we can move into the light of our secular salvation.

Indeed the extraordinary – some would say miraculous – reappearance of Che's body on 28 June 1997, near the airstrip where it had been discarded thirty years earlier, seems a prophetic reminder and admonition to the world that a martyr was made of Che to liberate humanity, such that we may find the fortitude to rise toward this most fearsome of goals, lest his execution be in vain (McLaren 2010).

### **A Guevarian pedagogy**

Che was a man devoted to the revolution, fully willing to make the ultimate sacrifice in order to free humanity from its enslavement to the chillingly individualistic and devouring monsters of capital. His readings of Marx, Lenin, and other revolutionary theorists began early in his youth but later became sources of study – to be analysed, critiqued, and built upon. A brilliant Marxist, Che believed wholeheartedly that revolution was the ultimate course in which the world was headed, that capitalism would suffocate humanity until the threat became too much to be endured at which time the people would rise up against it. However, he did not believe in uncritical idolatry or teleological accounts of historical victory over capitalism but rather argued that a revolutionary philosophy of praxis must be adapted to specific socio-historical contexts (McLaren 2000). As such, he recognised and denounced the enormous and growing power of US imperialism and its inextricable link to capital interests.

Che, however, was also a brilliant guerrilla warfare strategist who was not content to merely wait for conditions to be ripe for revolution. He argued that conditions for revolution could and should be accelerated to liberate the millions of people that at the time

faced poverty and other inhumanities. His Guevarian pedagogy involved the idea that revolution required a short period of preparation, to ensure sufficient support among the people, and then a hard strike against those who would support the state apparatus, specifically against the state military.

Although he believed that armed struggle was and should always be a last resort, he was convinced that a socialist revolution was synonymous with armed conflict, and that it must be thus since the capitalist class and the imperialist powers would never give up their presumed right to exploit under a mantra of false ideologies that serve their interests. According to Löwy (2007: 79), 'the principle of the inevitability of armed struggle was [for Che] derived precisely from the sociology of the revolution: because the revolution is socialist it can be victorious only through revolutionary war' (79).

For Che, a socialist revolution could only survive under conditions of profound love – a love that was deeper than the romantic version used to commodify feelings and to turn people into possessions under capitalism. In Che's now famous words:

Let me say, with the risk of appearing ridiculous, that the true revolutionary is guided by strong feelings of love. It is impossible to think of an authentic revolutionary without this quality. This is perhaps one of the greatest dramas of a leader; he must combine an impassioned spirit with a cold mind and make painful decisions without flinching one muscle. Our vanguard revolutionaries must idealize their love for the people, for the most sacred of causes, and make it one and indivisible. They cannot descend, with small doses of daily affection, to the places where ordinary men put their love into practice. (Anderson 1997: 636–637)

Che was a man of love and his love for humanity reached the ultimate crescendo as he transcended the presumed natural state of self-preservation engendered through capitalism and embraced a socialist consciousness that included a vision for something far greater than one individual's needs – the struggle for humanity's liberation. Thus, within this socialist framing, we can recognise his now famous words uttered proudly and unflinchingly moments before his

execution to reflect this revolutionary vision: 'Shoot, coward, you are only going to kill a man' (cited in Kunzle 1997).

And although these courageous words impel an image of an heroic being beyond what any mere mortal can presume to emulate, we learn that this was not an instinct held deep within him but something that was fostered during his youth when he was said to be a risk-taker – something that allowed him to push himself to the limits of what a young man could endure as he played rugby despite his life-threatening asthmatic condition. We see his vigilance of character enacted through self-reflection as he wrote during a battle in Cuba's Altos de Merino:

Upon arriving I found that the guards were already advancing. A little combat broke out in which we retreated very quickly. The position was bad and they were encircling us, but we put up little resistance. Personally, I noted something that I had never felt before: the need to live. That had better be corrected in the next opportunity. (cited in Anderson 1997: 327)

With this profound love and respect for humanity, Che was clear that a true revolutionary must necessarily harbour a deep hatred toward any who would destroy the opportunity to liberate humanity.

Hatred is an element of struggle; relentless hatred of the enemy that impels us over and beyond the natural limitations of man and transforms us into effective, violent, selective, and cold killing machines. Our soldiers must be thus; a people without hatred cannot vanquish a brutal enemy. (Guevara 1999)

And yet he showed profound empathy for his captured enemies and afforded them the dignity he perceived the right of every human being. Rooted firmly within the Latin American humanist tradition, for Che, the 'standard of dignity' to which all revolutionaries should adhere is reflected in the words of José Martí: 'A real man should feel on his own cheek the blow inflicted on any other man's' (cited in Löwy 2007: 24).

Those who wish to discredit his name and destroy his legacy of bravery that was built upon his love take a righteous moralising position that his statements and actions

regarding armed struggle reflect a dark and murderous side. These capitalist moralists who direct massacres without bloodying their own hands suggest that love and hate as claimed by Che are contradictory. Löwy (2007) argues otherwise:

To hold life in profound respect and to be ready to take up arms and, if need be, to kill, is contradictory only in the eyes of Christian or pacifist humanism. For revolutionary humanism, for Che, the people's war is the necessary answer, the only possible answer, of the exploited and oppressed to the crimes and the institutionalized violence of the oppressors ... (24)

Zizek (2008) talks about the ultimate cause of violence as the fear of the neighbour. But he also describes what he calls 'divine violence'. He sees divine violence as an infusion of justice beyond the law. It is extra-moral but not immoral. It is not a divine licence to kill. It is divine only in a subjective sense, in the eye of the beholder, or in the mind of the person enacting such violence. It is Walter Benjamin's Angel of History looking forward as he/she moves backwards, slaying the masters of progress, restoring the balance to the history of the world. It is a violence that refuses a deeper meaning; it is the logic of rage, a refusal to normalise crimes against humanity, either by reconciliation or revenge; it is, in other words, a refusal to compromise with injustice. Zizek describes divine violence as pure power over all of life for the sake of the living, it is a type of sign that the world is unjust. It is not the return of the repressed, or the underside of the authoritarian legal order. Nor is it the intervention of some omnipotent God. Rather, it is the sign of the impotency of God. There is no objective criterion with which to judge divine violence. Zizek claims that Che's comments are united in Che's motto: *Hay que endurecerse sin perder jamas la ternura*. (One must endure [become hard, toughen oneself] without losing tenderness).

The legal monopoly of violence in capitalist society is embodied in the institutions of the state, or political society, and clearly the social forces that constitute state formations are not static but historically contingent. While it is clear that the state is both an instrument of coercion as well as the production of consent,

it is a matter of debate whether contemporary developments in civil society can result in an augmentation of state violence. Suffice it to say that, given his analyses of state formations, international relations and the political economy of his day, Che was committed to the inevitability of armed conflict in the struggle for socialism.

Che argued that fundamental to revolution was the making of the 'new (wo)man'. Not only was the development of characteristics and values among the people that would support the revolution essential to its success but it was also at the heart of the goals of a socialist revolution. Liberating humanity was not merely about redistribution of resources but about changing the ways in which human beings related to each other and to their world. This required a pedagogy of revolution – the critical understanding of what the revolution was ultimately about, beyond the initial desire for bringing justice and greater resources to the suffering masses.

Che was known to always carry books with him and to spend time reading them to the men who fought alongside him, often in addition to providing literacy instruction since many of the men who fought the Cuban Revolution were poor peasants who had never had the opportunity for schooling. In Che's words we hear a vision that can readily map into the ideas set forth a decade later by Paulo Freire (1970) in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and which spawned the Critical Pedagogy movement. Specifically, Che recognised that a revolutionary praxis would bring a socialist consciousness and would engender the unequivocal demand for justice and restore the necessary sense of agency to lead their struggle.

The first step to educate the people is to introduce them to the revolution. Never pretend you can help them conquer their rights by education alone, while they must endure a despotic government. First and foremost, teach them to conquer their rights and, as they gain representation in the government, they will learn whatever they are taught and much more: with no great effort they shall soon become the teachers, towering above the rest. (cited in Löwy 2007)

Through his words, we recognise, as McLaren (2000) notes, that he was not only



'a teacher of the revolution but a revolutionary teacher' who saw the emancipatory nature of teaching and rejected traditional teaching pedagogy that is characterised by oppressive teacher/student relations in which the teacher holds all the knowledge and doles it out at will while simultaneously discrediting the knowledge of the oppressed. We can see how this traditional teaching approach sustains the status quo as the oppressed are led to feel grateful for the opportunity to learn without the opportunity to question and transform the existing social relations that oppressed them in the first place. Che's revolutionary pedagogy was an affirmation to the ontologies and epistemologies of the workers and peasants to which only the oppressed are privy by virtue of their social and historical positioning. As Che indicated, in the tradition of Marx before him and Freire after him, a revolution must be a people's revolution, even though it may be initiated by a vanguard which fights not for them but whose actions ultimately should reflect the people's decisions.

The new (wo)man would be a product of a new society within which education would play a vital role. Socialism, Che believed, would engender individuals that were responsive to the needs of the whole group and who held a deep commitment to the development of humanity and the revolutionary cause. Socialism requires a different set of values, the value for social justice, for communal efforts, for sacrifice, for equally supporting others, for labour as a creative endeavour, and shared responsibility for those tasks that a society deems necessary but that no one really wants to do, a responsibility that helps individuals develop in community (Martí 1999).

His actions and personal testimonies about him reveal a man who did not stand above the rest but lived to the best of his ability through the values that he professed. He was said to hold enormously high expectations of others and to be even more demanding of himself. He lived, to the best of his ability, his Guevarian politics but he was quick to point out his own deficits as a socialist revolutionary, recognising the imprint of capital's seemingly intransigent stranglehold on every aspect of our lives. In Cuba, where an 82-foot statue of Che stands, marking his mausoleum in Santa Clara (often called 'the City of Che'), children are encouraged to be like el Che – to develop the characteristics that he

espoused and exemplified as a revolutionary (Martí 1999).

### **Che in the context of world capitalism**

Our current transnational capitalist world has reached a level of destruction unprecedented in the history of humanity. Famine, war, racism, sexism, hatred are all implicated to various degrees in the incessant necessity for capital accumulation underwritten by an imperialist creed that legitimises US exceptionalism and the quest for power beyond what the imagination can condone. William Robinson (2008) makes a clarion call for action as he relates the disastrous fate capital has procured:

The system of global capitalism that now engulfs the entire planet is in crisis. There is consensus among scientists that we are on the precipice of ecological holocaust, including the mass extinction of species; the impending collapse of agriculture in major producing areas; the meltdown of polar ice caps; the phenomena of global warming, and the contamination of the oceans, food stock, water supply, and air. Social inequalities have spiraled out of control, and the gap between the global rich and the global poor has never been as acute as it is in the early 21st century. Driven by the imperatives of over accumulation and transnational global control, global elites have increasingly turned to authoritarianism, militarisation, and war to sustain the system. Many political economists concur that a global economic collapse is possible, even probable. (vii–viii)

Indeed this is Marx's prophetic critique of capital restated in the context of today's crisis of capitalism; yet it is still uncertain if capitalism will bring about its own demise as a result of workers rising up in response to their destitute conditions.

The ideological marriage of democracy to capitalism that sustains the image of the US as a benevolent protector of the 'developing world' serves to conceal its treacherous dealings against any socialist alternative, even when this is the popular will of the people, in service to transnational capital. Evidence of US-sponsored massacres can be found across the globe, but particularly

in América Latina, which has served for centuries as a killing field for US profit and power. Indeed, the massacres of greed and hatred can be traced to the infamously historic year of 1492, when a colonial power matrix was instituted that placed wealth and power in the hands of white, able-bodied, Christian men through a murderous war waged materially and ideologically against indigenous communities. According to decolonial theorists Ramon Grosfoguel, Enrique Dussel, Anibal Quijano, and others, the continual violence enacted upon the peoples of the global South is a founding aspect of Cartesian Western epistemology, instituted as the universal truth on the basis of the *ego cogito* (I think, therefore I am) that rises out of the historic and epistemic conditions of possibility developed through the *ego conquiero* (I conquer, therefore I am) and the link between the two is the *ego exterminus* (I exterminate you, therefore I am) (Grosfoguel 2013). The genocide perpetrated by Western imperialists on the indigenous populations of the New World and African slave populations of the Middle Passage was followed by epistemicide – the demonisation and disappearance of indigenous knowledges that accompanied the expansion of the US settler-colonial state. Today we search for the wisdom of the autochthonous societies of our lost ancestors – the Arawaks, the Caribes, the Chibchas of the Antillean coastline, the Tapuyas, the Arucanos, the Incas, the Patagones, and countless other tribes massacred, tortured and enslaved by the European invaders.

Che was far ahead of his time in his understandings of the social conditions in América Latina. His conviction that only a united Latin America could emerge victorious against US imperialism seems prophetic in our age of financialisation, monetarism, hedge-fund hucksterism and fictitious capital. From his socio-historical and political location in the global South, Che's epistemology challenged and extended Marxist thought. For Che, imperialism was not an extension of capitalism as Marx would have it but intricately imbricated in its conditions of possibility. As Robinson (2008) explains, colonisation was the first of multiple stages in the development of capitalism that has continually expanded in subsequent waves to reach today's totalising formation. Che's revolutionary ontology was forged out of the

converging and worsening crises of capitalism, society, and civilisation, the dictatorship of ownership, first-hand experience of the coloniality of power (*patron de poder colonial*), the brute force US capitalists were able to wield through the military-industrial complex, and the privileged geopolitical positioning of the US and its proximity to Latin America that had correspondingly undermined the dignity and livelihood of countless populations throughout Las Américas. As he witnessed Cuba's professional class flee the country in droves after the victory of the revolution, he came to recognise that the bourgeoisie would rather sell their soul to the highest bidder, side with the imperialist ambitions of the US, and take refuge in the certainties of the past than give up their perceived right to lands in favour of agrarian reform.

Yet, at the time, the guerrilla warfare deployed by Fidel and Che and the promise of a future free from the jackboots of imperialism helped secure a socialist alternative for Cuba, and thus it was believed that the same victory could be realised by other national liberation movements. In today's transnational capitalism, the accumulation of wealth by the largest transnational corporations is based on the hyper-exploitation of the peoples of the 'developing' world, particularly exacerbated through the North American Free Trade Agreement. The concentration of the transnational capitalist class's wealth and power enables it to wield tremendous influence in national and international policy. Not surprisingly, it is fiercely opposed to large-scale socialist developments (such as Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution) that may upset the 'democratic' stability of the nations that procure their profits. A massive military industrial complex and a narco-terror war that has militarised the US-Mexican border serves to bolster US surveillance and intimidation of all Latin America in the service of transnational corporate interests (Monzó et al. 2014).

Yet even under this hyper-capitalist world order, Che's heroic legacy continues to inspire and hold promise for the marginalised communities of América Latina and to spur and inform new socialist movements. Revolutionary struggles that have come to bear Che's foundational signature include the Cuban Revolution, the Sandinista Revolution, the Zapatistas indigenous movement in Chiapas, Mexico, which is explicitly inspired

by Che's teachings, and the Bolivarian Revolution led by Hugo Chavez that began in 2007. However, these are small-scale movements in comparison to the large-scale socialist alternative that Che envisioned.

### **A Guevarian-informed critical pedagogy**

Although Che recognised, as Marx did, the totalising and self-reproducing aspects of capital, and although his vision of socialism transcended nationalised boundaries of identity (although not gender ones), he did not come to see the extent to which capitalism would persevere nor the magnitude of destruction and human suffering it would engender. Today's globalised world and the unyielding and supreme power of the US make localised guerrilla warfare politically unserviceable. While we support social movements in which the oppressed masses extol their collective power to fight for justice, emancipation, and freedom from oppression and exploitation in Latin America and across the world, we believe that a different type of war must be simultaneously waged within the imperialist powers themselves; an ideological war or, in Gramscian terms, a 'war of position'. This is a concerted epistemological challenge to US cultural hegemony, the ideological underpinnings that hold the capitalist system together. According to Gramsci, a war of position is a necessary precursor to a 'war of manoeuvre' in which social movements collectively attempt through a united front to topple the state apparatus. Che recognised this ideological war must be waged through education and the creation of the revolutionary consciousness in the new (wo) man. There is no blueprint available today for the road to socialism, only those with the courage to remake history using the insights gleaned from a very unreliable attempts to control the social production of labour power by the workers. As McLaren (2010) remarks:

The stages of liberation that were to follow lock-step from the contradiction between the forces and the relations of production – the accumulation of evolution powered by a law of dialectical development that would inevitably lead from the economic contradictions of capitalism to the establishment of a classless society under 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' –

did not follow in the wake of the quixotic predictions of the dogmatists (a condition into which a great many fundamentalist Marxisms fall), ensuring the final victory of socialism over the cut-throat capitalists, the end of alienated labour and the flourishing of human culture. What young radicals such as Che had discovered in the interim was that it was not history that should drive the revolution but the other way around – the peasants and the workers should direct their own fate, making economic decisions and deciding which share of production is to be assigned to accumulation and which share to consumption ... . But today, nearly forty years after Che's death, when the contradictions at the heart of the market economy are more exacerbated than they were in Che's day (even in the industrialized capitalism of Marx's day!), there are no completed socialist revolutions to serve as a living model for the world, only those that have been ceaselessly and violently interrupted, or those that, following in the intrepid footsteps of Simon Bolivar, are being tested in the barrios of Caracas or los alto-planos of Venezuela. (103)

A revolutionary critical pedagogy is a philosophy of praxis that interrogates the ideological conditions and contradictions that sustain societal structures as if such were natural or the best possible democratic options available. A host of institutionalised structures are in place in the US that serve to keep the masses of workers anesthetised to the suffering of others and duped into believing that our capitalist system is the best of all possible worlds, including the corporate media and our increasingly privatised school system. Normalised ideologies about human 'nature', including individualism and competition are so culturally embedded in the way society functions that people find it difficult to conceive within the lineaments of their technocratic rationality that individuals could thrive within a set of values that emphasise overcoming necessity for every person through collectivist cooperation. Closely associated with individualism are ideologies that serve to create and sustain discourses necessary for identity construction, such as those associated with race, class, gender, and sexuality. However, as important as identity construction has become in today's culture of

racism, homophobia, patriarchy and ableism, the formation of these identities is often used by the transnational capitalist class to divide workers against each other by administering a specific image of what it means to be 'American', and in doing so masking the role of capital as an 'equal opportunity' exploiter and effectively circumventing class struggle and the construction of protagonistic political agency.

A Guevarian informed revolutionary critical pedagogy re-inserts the values of freedom from necessity, provides spaces for self-and-social critique, encourages self-reflection and sacrifice for the good of humanity, promotes anti-racist, anti-sexist, and anti-homophobic curricula and pedagogical practices, and encourages an informed public to learn from and with those whose epistemologies are rooted in the histories and struggles of the global South. Within a Guevarian informed revolutionary pedagogy, education is not only freely available to all but carries with it a responsibility for each person to meet the needs of society's most aggrieved populations. Within such a framing, teachers are viewed as committed intellectuals who create the conditions of possibility for the development of a socialist consciousness so that they may actualise their own power and recognise this as an inherent human capacity, leading to a renewed sense of agency and the will to act toward the creation of a new sociality.

For the youth of our nations, Che offers an alternative to the individualistic and greed-based consumer logic to which they are socialised, and offers opportunities for students to create a protagonistic political agency. The feeling that we are powerless to change the world's suffering is not an accident – it is a strategic aspect of class relations. Hope is the first step that must be taken to enable us to act towards something bigger and better than the world we have constructed. In Joel Kovel's (1997) words:

Therefore capital must go if we are to survive as a civilization and, indeed, a species; and all partial measures and reforms should be taken in the spirit of bringing about capital's downfall. Nothing could seem more daunting than this, indeed in the current balance of forces, it seems inconceivable. Therefore the first job must be to conceive it as a possibility, and not

to succumb passively to the given situation. Capital expresses no law of nature; it has been the result of choice, and there is no essential reason to assume it cannot be un-chosen. Conceiving things this way is scarcely sufficient. But it is necessary, in both a moral and a practical sense. (14)

Far from being an ambivalent space that defies categorisation, love is a foundational element in a Guevarian informed revolutionary pedagogy. The media exalts a capitalist-based love in which people become the possession of others in the name of love. A revolutionary love is one that does not encounter state boundaries or colour lines and one that encourages freedom of spirit and a commitment to the well-being of others. It is a feeling that honours the dignity of human beings above all else. It is a love willing to sacrifice for humanity and its freedoms. It is a love that will spawn new revolutionary heroes in our lifetime and generations to come until we finally achieve the most fearsome of victories – a socialist alternative in which all of humanity can live and love freely.

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## Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969)

### Overview

Ho Chi Minh – also known as Nguyen Sinh Cung, Nguyen Tat Thanh, and Nguyen Ai Quoc – was the central figure in the Vietnamese struggle for national liberation in the 20th century. He was born in Nghe An province in central Vietnam on 19 May 1890. His father, who passed the Mandarin exams after three attempts but passed up the opportunity to be a royal bureaucrat, taught him the Chinese script. Forced to stop his formal schooling when he was accused of participating in a peasant strike, Ho signed on as a mess boy on a French ship and left Vietnam in 1911. As a mess boy, cook, and crew member on various vessels, he visited, among other places, New York, London, Paris, Algeria, Tunisia, and Senegal over the next few years. His first significant political act was presenting the ‘Petition of the Annamese Nation’ to the Versailles Peace Conference in Paris

in 1919. But by his own account, the transformative event in his life took place in 1920, when he came across Lenin’s ‘Theses on the National and Colonial Questions’. This touched off a remarkable career in the international communist movement. He was one of the founders of the French Communist Party, and he went on to serve in several countries, particularly in China, as an operative of the Third International that was set up to assist revolutionary struggles globally.

In 1930, he chaired the conference that unified the different Vietnamese communist organisations in Hong Kong. There followed a number of years where he was side-lined and assigned to Moscow, probably owing to differences with the then prevailing line of ‘Third Period Line’ of the International, which placed equal emphasis on opposing imperialism and carrying out the domestic class struggle. This line, Ho apparently felt, undermined the creation of the broad nationalist front that was needed to break French colonial rule.

With fascism on the rise in Europe, the Communist International abandoned the Third Period line in favour of a strategy of forming broad ‘Popular Fronts’. This paved the way for Ho’s return to Asia in 1939 and, in 1941, to Vietnam, where he chaired the Eighth Congress of the Indochinese Communist Party, which sought to create the broadest national united front against imperialism and fascism. From thereon his leadership of the revolution was undisputed.

In August 1945, the Communist Party launched a general insurrection to seize power, and on 2 September he read the country’s Declaration of Independence from French colonial rule in Hanoi’s Ba Dinh Square. Ho tried to negotiate France’s peaceful withdrawal from Vietnam, but when this failed, he led a nine-year struggle that culminated in the cataclysmic French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. At the Geneva Conference in 1954, Vietnam was temporarily partitioned into two zones that would be united after national elections two years later, which Ho was expected to win handily.

When the US went back on the agreement and set up the government of South Vietnam, 20 more years of warfare ensued, which ended with Washington’s total defeat in 1975. Ho did not, however, live to see final victory and the country’s reunification, passing away on 2 September 1969. But he never wavered

in his confidence that Vietnam would be unified. This defiant mood was captured in the statement he issued as the US stepped up its bombing and prepared to send more troops to Vietnam in 1966: ‘The US imperialists can send to this country 500,000 troops or more ... The war can go on for five years, ten years, twenty years or more. Hanoi, Haiphong, and a number of towns and enterprises can be destroyed. But the Vietnamese people are in no way frightened! Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. When the day of victory comes, we will rebuild our country and make it more beautiful and more magnificent’ (quoted in Vo Nguyen Giap 2011: 42).

### Legend

Ho Chi Minh was a legend in his time, and like all legends, he manifested a variety of personae to people who worked with him, met him, or studied him. To the Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev, Ho was a living ‘saint of communism’:

I have met many people in the course of my political career, but none has made such a particular impression on me. Believers often talk of the Apostles. Well, through his way of living and his influence over his peers, Ho Chi Minh was exactly comparable to these ‘holy apostles’. An apostle of the Revolution. I will never forget that gleam of purity and sincerity in his eyes. His sincerity was that of an incorruptible communist and his purity that of a man totally devoted to his cause, in his principles and in his actions. (quoted in Brocheux 2007: 144)

In contrast, for Sophie Quinn-Judge (author of the best study of Ho’s activities from 1919–41), although Ho was motivated ‘by sincere patriotism and a deep resentment of French imperialism’:

He was not some sort of communist holy man. He lived with women at various times, made compromises and infiltrated other nationalist parties. He was not always straightforward – in many situations he would have regarded it foolhardy to be honest about his political beliefs. The depth of his attachment to communism is difficult to gauge – the one thing

one can say is that he had little interest in dogma. The path he followed was often chosen from a range of options narrowed by events outside his control. (Quinn-Judge 2002: 256)

Ruth Fischer, a contemporary and colleague in the Communist International, offers yet another view, more nuanced than those of Khrushchev and Quinn-Judge:

Amid these seasoned revolutionaries and rigid intellectuals, he struck a delightful note of goodness and simplicity. He seemed to stand for mere common decency – though he was cleverer than he let on – and it was his well-earned good name which saved him from being caught up in internal conflicts. Also, he was temperamentally far more inclined strongly toward action than toward doctrinal debates. He was always an empiricist within the movement. But none of this detracted from his colleagues’ regard for him, and his prestige was considerable. (quoted in Lacouture 1968: 44)

### The man of action as writer

The man of action *par excellence*, Ho nevertheless did a lot of writing and thinking. He was, for instance, quite a skilled propagandist. His short piece on lynching, which he subtitled ‘A Little Known Aspect of American Civilisation’, written in 1924, has lost none of its immediacy and power over 80 years later, and a great part of the reason is his command of irony and sarcasm:

Imagine a furious horde. Fists clenched, eyes bloodshot, mouths foaming, yells, insults, curses .... This horde is transported with the wild delight of a crime to be committed without risk. They are armed with sticks, torches, revolvers, ropes, knives, scissors, vitriol, daggers, in a word with all that can be used to kill or wound.

Imagine in this human sea a flotsam of black flesh pushed about, beaten, trampled underfoot, torn, slashed, insulted, tossed hither and thither, bloodstained, dead ....

In a wave of hatred and bestiality, the lynchers drag the Black to a wood or to a public place. They tie him to a tree, pour

kerosene over him, cover him with inflammable material. While waiting for the fire to be kindled, they smash his teeth, one by one. Then they gouge out his eyes. Little tufts of crinkly hair are torn from his head, carrying away with them bits of skin, barring a bloody skull ....

‘Popular justice’ as they say over there, has been done. Calmed down, the crowds congratulate the organizers, then stream away slowly and cheerfully, as if after a feast, making appointments with one another for the next time.

While on the ground, stinking of fat and smoke, a black head, mutilated roasted, deformed, grins horribly and seems to ask the setting sun, ‘Is this civilization?’ (Ho 1969 [1929]: 20–21)

Though Ho wrote a lot, theoretical innovation was not his forte. This was something he readily admitted. In fact, Ho is rumoured to have said not without sarcasm, that he did not need to write since Mao Zedong had written all that needed to be written (Masina 1960: 18).<sup>1</sup>

So why read Ho? Well, not so much to encounter theoretical originality but to experience how a committed revolutionary with an agile mind sought to translate the concepts and ideas he was coming across as an international activist in Marxist-Leninist circles into the strategy, tactics, and organisation that would successfully liberate a colonised country in the first half of the 20th century, defeating in the process two empires: France and the United States. As we read him, we witness a creative collision of Marxism with colonial realities, resulting in the innovative modification of a paradigm of class and class conflict originating in Europe as it migrated to Asia.

### The young Ho

Ho came to political maturity in the turbulent era unleashed by the First World War. For almost a decade after 1911, the year he left Vietnam, he was mostly at sea as a ship’s cook or mess boy, visiting different parts of the world, including New York and London, before finally settling in Paris for a few years beginning in 1919. An activist for Vietnam’s freedom from the very beginning, he first drew attention while lobbying foreign delegations for Vietnam’s freedom during the Versailles Conference of 1919. Like many

other representatives of colonised nations, he was drawn to the gathering by President Woodrow Wilson’s promise of self-determination for subjugated nationalities.

The young Ho or Nguyen Ai Quoc, as he was known then, was not shy about expressing the primacy of the struggle against colonialism as a criterion in determining whom he would work with. At the historic Tours Congress where the French Socialist Party voted to join the triumphant Russian Bolsheviks’ Third International, Ho intervened on the floor, saying, ‘The Socialist Party must act effectively in favour of the oppressed natives .... We shall see in the Socialist Party’s joining the Third International the promise that from now on it will attach to the colonial questions the importance they deserve’.

What distinguished Ho from other nationalists and colonial revolutionaries, according to the noted French war correspondent Bernard Fall, was that while he was passionately committed to Vietnamese independence, he understood that Vietnam’s status as a colonial country was ‘typical of the whole colonial system’ (quoted in Fall 1967: vi). He felt a strong affinity with other peoples caught in the same web of systemic oppression and all his life he held the conviction that liberation had to be not only national but universal. His ‘Report on the National and Colonial Questions at the Fifth Congress of the Communist International’ (Text 13) was not only a comprehensive description of the system of French colonialism but an angry statement of solidarity with Arabs, Africans, and Pacific peoples who were under French rule. For Ho, the national question was intimately tied to the class question.

Ho’s worldview was shaped not only by his youthful experience as the son of an impoverished teacher who chose not to serve as a bureaucrat in France’s client kingdom, but also by his class status as a coloured person eking out a living for almost a decade as a messboy on ships plying international routes. There are few workplaces more international in their labour force than ocean-going vessels, and this experience of common hardship with co-workers of all colours could not have failed to be a factor in his embrace of Marxism.

### The encounter with Lenin

The key link to Ho’s socialist future was Lenin. Here it is worth quoting Ho’s

road-to-Damascus experience that he recounted in an essay entitled ‘The Path which Led to Leninism’ (Text 42):

What I wanted most to know – and what was not debated in the meetings – was: which International sided with the peoples of the colonial countries?

I raised this question – the most important for me – at a meeting. Some comrades answered: it was the Third, not the Second International. One gave me to read Lenin’s ‘Theses on the National and Colonial Questions’ printed in *L’Humanité*.

In those Theses, there were political terms that were difficult to understand. But by reading them again and again finally I was able to grasp the essential part. What emotion, enthusiasm, enlightenment, and confidence they communicated to me! I wept for joy. Sitting by myself in my room, I would shout as if I were addressing large crowds: ‘Dear martyr compatriots! This is what we need, this is our path to liberation!’

Lenin’s ‘Theses’ was probably the most significant document produced by the Third International. It was there that the Russian revolutionary leader made three key points that were to be central in the formulation of the strategies of the Vietnamese and other Asian communist parties later on. First, the ‘cornerstone of the Communist International’s national and colonial policy must be the uniting of the proletariat and working masses of all nations and countries in a joint revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the landowners and the bourgeoisie. Only such a union can guarantee the victory over capitalism without which it is impossible to suppress national inequality and oppression’ (Lenin, 1974: 279).

Second was the ‘necessity of supporting the peasant movement in backward countries against the landowners, against the possession of large estates, against all customs and remnants of feudalism, and of striving to give the peasant movement a revolutionary nature, bringing about a closer union between the West European Communist proletariat and the revolutionary movement of the peasants in the east, the colonies, and in the backward countries in general ...’ (ibid.).

Third, the immediate task with respect to the colonies and oppressed countries was to support the bourgeois democratic national movements in the colonies and backward countries – though this should be ‘only on the condition that the elements of the future proletarian parties ... should be grouped and educated in the knowledge of their special tasks – those of a struggle against the bourgeois democratic movement within their nation’ (1974: 282). The socialist revolution would come later.

These theses, which might seem non-controversial today, were of momentous significance when they were first articulated.

The first point addressed head-on the neglect of the colonial question which was, in fact, prevalent among European progressives in the inter-war period. During the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in 1925, a frustrated Ho carried Lenin’s argument one step further, affirming that, without decisively dealing with the colonial question, socialists could not expect successful revolution in the West.

You must excuse my frankness, but I cannot help but observe that the speeches by comrades from the mother countries give me the impression that they wish to kill a snake by stepping on its tail. You all know today the poison and life energy of the capitalist snake is concentrated more in the colonies than in the mother countries. ... Yet in our discussion of the revolution, you neglect to talk about the colonies. ... Why do you neglect the colonies, while capitalism uses them to support itself, defend itself, and fight you? (Ngyuen Ai Quoc 1974: 309)

The second point, on the revolutionary potential of the peasantry in the colonies, was also something that tended to be slighted. This was not simply because of the socialists’ preoccupation with the leading role of the European working class in the world revolution – which was still expected to be ignited in the developed capitalist countries. It was also because of classical Marxism’s disdain for the peasantry, as expressed in Marx’s comment about the ‘idioty of rural life’ and his comparing peasants to a ‘sack of potatoes’ in terms of their capacity for political organisation.

The third proposition was what most attracted Ho. It was also the idea that would elicit the most controversy in the history of the Communist International. This thesis



eventually came to be known as the ‘two-stage’ theory of revolution. It was, from one perspective, simply an effort to formalise the Russian revolutionary experience in 1917 – which began with the February democratic revolution and was followed by the October socialist revolution – to serve as a strategy for progressives in the ‘backward societies’, with one key modification being that the first stage would not only be a struggle for democratic rights but for national independence.

### Theoretical and political tensions

Lenin’s two-stage formulation became the foundation of Ho’s strategy for liberating Vietnam. Looking back at the development of the strategy almost 30 years after the founding of the Indochinese Communist Party, Ho recounted in his 1959 ‘Report on the Draft Amended Constitution’ (Text 40):

In Vietnam following World War I, the national bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie were unable to lead the movement for national liberation to success. The Vietnamese working class, in the light of the October Revolution, charted the course of the Vietnamese revolution. In 1930, the Indochinese Communist Party, the political party of the working class, was founded and showed that the Vietnamese revolution should go through two stages: the national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution.

The reality was, however, more complex. The two-stage theory, in fact, bedevilled the Third International and Communists in the East with several tactical controversies. One was how the revolutionary party would relate to its non-Communists allies, especially the ‘national bourgeoisie’ and pro-independence elements of the landlord class, during the struggle for independence. Another was what would be the main demands of the ‘national democratic’ stage, especially in regards to the land issue.

These were theoretical questions with great practical import, the resolution to which, Ho realised, would have a great bearing on the outcome of the revolution in the colonies. In his ‘Reports on Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina’ to the Executive Committee of the Communist International, Ho – writing then under the name of Nguyen Ai Quoc – asserted

that in Vietnam, ‘the class struggle does not occur in the same manner as in the West (cited in Song Thanh 2012: 103). ‘During the period when the Nghe-An Soviets were being organized, Ho’s attitude was somewhat ambiguous. While he most certainly did not approve of the action taken he took no steps to stop it. During a Thought Reform course in 1953, it was disclosed that Ho had voted against the solution calling for a peasant rising, but he was in a minority of one and submitted to the will of the majority. Whatever the truth there is no doubt that this was the first occasion on which Ho lost control of the movement under his charge’ (McAlister 1969: 94). ‘Nationalism’, he asserted, ‘was the great motivating force’ (ibid.). In another piece based on his lectures to Vietnamese cadres in Guangzhou, he wrote, ‘The workers and peasants are the masters of the revolution ... are its root ... while the students, the small traders and landowners, who are also heavily oppressed by the capitalists, even though not as heavily as the workers and peasants, are the revolutionary friends of the latter’ (cited in Song Thanh, 2012: 109). According to later interpreters such as Song Thanh, these comments indicated that Ho had early on placed the emphasis on a united front of classes against imperialism in the ‘bourgeois democratic revolution’, in contrast to the position that the domestic class struggle must be given equal priority: ‘Starting from the reality of a colonial country, he does not consider that these tasks must be necessarily carried out at the same time, in the same manner, but gives priority to the anti-imperialist task, for national liberation whereas the anti-feudal task, to distribute land to the tillers, will be realized gradually’ (2012: 113).

It was the Chinese cockpit that provided the grist for the mill for the different sides in the debate on strategy and tactics for the colonial and semi-colonial world. In China, application of the two-stage approach under the direction of the Comintern translated into the Chinese Communist Party’s support for the Nationalists or Kuomintang. This was not just a case of forming an alliance with the Kuomintang, but of helping to build the latter organisationally and militarily. The policy ended in a debacle in 1927, when Chiang Kai-Shek turned on the Communists and massacred large numbers of them.

Ho was working for the Comintern in Canton from 1924–27, so he was familiar

with the fatal dynamics of the Nationalist-Communist 'United Front'. By the time he was sent by the Comintern to Hong Kong to unify the Vietnamese Communist movement in 1930, the Third International had entered its notorious 'Third Period', where Communists directed the 'main blow' against the Social Democrats – labelled 'Social Fascists' – in the capitalist countries and abandoned united fronts with bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalists in favour of 'worker-peasant-soldier' governments in the colonies.

Ho was able to impose a fragile unity among the competing Vietnamese communist factions and establish the Indochinese Communist Party. But unification was based on an interpretation of the two-stage theory according to the radical Third Period line, which was in the ascendant during that period. Ho's 'Appeal Made on the Occasion of the Founding of the Indochinese Communist Party' (Text 15), dated February 18, 1930, also known as the 'Abridged Platform', called on the Vietnamese 'workers, peasants, soldiers, youth, school students' to: 'overthrow French imperialism and Vietnamese feudalism and reactionary bourgeoisie': 'make Indochina completely independent'; 'establish a worker-peasant-soldier government'; 'confiscate the banks and other enterprises belonging to the imperialists and put them under the control of the worker-peasant-soldier government'; and 'confiscate all the plantations and property belonging to the imperialists and Vietnamese reactionary bourgeoisie and distribute them to the poor peasants'.

Was this Ho speaking or was it the Comintern? Or had Ho temporarily been won over to the Third Period line? It seems that Ho was articulating the Comintern line while having serious reservations. Giap, for instance, pointed out that the 'Abridged Platform did not advocate the motto "land reforms and land to the tiller," which is the key task of the anti-feudal revolution' (Vo Nguyen Giap 2011: 7). Moreover, this passage advocating broad union appeared:

The Party must have frequent contact with the petty bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, the middle-peasants, the youths, members of the Tan Viet Party, etc. As for the rich farmers, small and middle-sized landowners and Vietnamese bourgeoisie who have not yet expressed anti-revolutionary

inclinations, we should try to neutralize and win them over, and take advantage of their position. (119)

These moderating elements, however, did not go unnoticed, and in October 1930, on orders from the Communist International, which passed a resolution nullifying the February programme of action authored by Ho and returning strictly to the simultaneous anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, and anti-capitalist line of the International. For Ho, this repudiation began almost eight years of marginalisation from the leadership of the Vietnamese Communist Party, most of which were spent in Moscow.

Nonetheless, Ho tried his best to prevent the Third Period line from completely wrecking the broad anti-imperialist front that he still saw as necessary (119–120). He opposed the peasant uprisings that the newly unified party instigated in the provinces of Nghe An and Ha Tinh in north-central Vietnam in 1931, and which saw the establishment of village soviets. Ho probably had a premonition that the Third Period line would lead to a disastrous policy in terms of political alliances. And it did. As John McAlister, Jr. (1969: 99) notes:

Perhaps the most fundamental mistake was that the Communist terrorism was almost exclusively directed at lower-echelon Vietnamese officials who were exercising authority for the French administration, rather than at the French themselves. ... The Communists attributed this misstep to the shortcomings of the Theses on the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution in Vietnam, adopted by the Indochinese Communist Party in October 1930. ... As one Vietnamese Communist critic has seen it, this program 'committed the error of advocating the overthrow of the national bourgeoisie at the same time as the French colonialists and indigenous feudalists. ... [For] this bourgeoisie had interests which were in conflict with the imperialists ... [and] they ought to have been drawn into the ranks of the bourgeois democratic republic and not systematically separated.'

Influenced by Lenin's careful – some would say opportunistic – policies on political alliances, Ho had a strong bias against excluding anyone solely on the basis of class origins,

and this would not be the last time he would vote against and criticise an exclusionist policy. Asked who were the Communists' allies and who were their enemies, Ho would probably have said, along with Lenin: That depends on conditions, time, and place.

### Creating a broad front

The Comintern shifted to 'Popular Front' politics in 1935 following Hitler's coming to power in Germany. With its championing of broad anti-fascist alliances, the new approach appealed more to Ho's instincts about the kind of tactics that would advance the independence struggle. His period of marginalisation ended and he returned to Asia and Vietnam, where he oversaw the articulation of the new party strategy for Vietnam. The key points of the new approach, contained in a report titled 'The Party's Line in the Period of the Democratic Front (1936–1939)' (Text 16), were:

1. For the time being the Party should not put forward too exacting demands (national independence, parliament, etc.). To do so is to play into the Japanese fascists' hands.

It should only claim democratic rights, freedom of organization, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press and freedom of speech, general amnesty for all political detainees, and freedom for the Party to engage in legal activity.

2. To reach this goal, the Party must strive to organize a broad Democratic National Front. This Front should embrace not only Indochinese but also progressive French people residing in Indochina, not only the toiling people but also the national bourgeoisie.
3. The Party must assume a tactful, flexible attitude towards the national bourgeoisie, strive to draw them into the Front and keep them there, urge them into action if possible, isolate them politically if necessary. At any rate, we should not leave them outside the Front, lest they fall into the hands of the reaction and strengthen it.

By the time the Second World War broke out, the conditions were in place for the Communists to lead Vietnam's independence struggle. Not only had their tough organising

enabled them to survive fierce French repression in the aftermath of the Nghe An and Ha Tinh soviets, but their only competition – the Vietnam Nationalist Party (VNQDD) – had been destroyed by the French. As in China, they now had an extraordinarily supple tactic – the Democratic National Front – to unite the nation against both the Japanese and the French colonial government that had submitted to Japanese control. Yet even as he invoked the patriotic feelings of all Vietnamese, Ho made it a point in his 'Letter from Abroad' (Text 17), to link the struggle for independence with the class revolution in the country and with the world revolution:

The hour has struck! Raise aloft the banner of insurrection and lead the people throughout the country to overthrow the Japanese and the French! The sacred call of the Fatherland is resounding in our ears; the ardent blood of our heroic predecessors is seething in our hearts! The fighting spirit of the people is mounting before our eyes! Let us unite and unify our action to overthrow the Japanese and the French.

The Vietnamese revolution will certainly triumph!

The world revolution will certainly triumph!

He was not a communist for nothing.

### The Leninist in action

Jean Lacouture, one of Ho's biographers, points to the strong influence on Ho of two Leninist ideas: the notion of the 'favourable moment' and the concept of the 'main adversary' (Lacouture 1968). Nowhere was his mastery of these two principles more in evidence than when he declared Vietnam's independence in 1945. The 'favourable moment' is akin to Louis Althusser's concept of an 'over-determined contradiction', a particular confluence of forces and circumstances that, if taken advantage of, rewards bold political action. Analysing the Russian Revolution as an 'over-determined contradiction', Althusser writes: 'Russia was overdue with its bourgeois revolution on the eve of its proletarian revolution; pregnant with two revolutions, it could not withhold the second even by delaying the first. This exceptional situation was

“insoluble” (for the ruling classes) and Lenin was correct to see in it the objective conditions of a Russian revolution, and to forge its subjective conditions, the means of a decisive assault on this weak link in the imperialist chain, in a Communist Party that was a chain without weak links’ (Althusser 1969: 87–128). Such was Lenin’s decision to seize power in October 1917. And such was Ho’s decision to launch a general insurrection and declare independence in August and September 1945, taking advantage of a conjuncture where the French had been disarmed by the Japanese, the Japanese themselves had just capitulated to the Allies, and the French had as yet no means of reclaiming the colony (Lacouture 1968: 100–101). It was, like Russia in 1917, a situation virtually inviting the Communists to step in. August and September 1945 saw an insurrectionary takeover, but a relatively bloodless one, with the Communists utilising to the maximum the legitimacy that they had gained from their leading role in the five-year anti-fascist struggle against the French colonial regime and its Japanese supervisors.

The crafting of the ‘Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam’ (Text 20) showed Ho’s command of the united front tactic – the main purpose of which was to isolate the ‘main adversary’ – not only at the national but at the global level. The key problem in 1945 was to prevent the Western imperial powers that had vanquished the Japanese from ganging up on the Vietnamese. Ho was very well aware that the US was an imperial power. But he was also conscious that Americans themselves had an anti-colonial tradition, and that this was a fly in the ointment in US post-war policy in Asia – one that made Washington very uncomfortable at being seen as supporting the restoration of French rule in Indochina, though the Free French Government in exile had been a wartime ally of the US.

The good relations established between the Communists and operatives of the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during the anti-Japanese campaign provided a base for Ho’s strategy. His invocation of the first lines of the US Declaration of Independence – ‘All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights; among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness’ – at the very beginning of Vietnam’s declaration of independence was a master stroke designed to deepen the rift between the mightiest global

power and a colonial power that had been severely weakened by the war.

The years from 1946–54 saw Ho at his peak as a leader. He negotiated an agreement with the French high commissioner Jean Sainteny that recognized Vietnam as a ‘Free State at the heart of the French Union’. It was a controversial deal, and to gain popular acceptance, Ho shared the complex rationale of his moves with a hostile audience at the municipal theatre in Hanoi:

We have actually been independent since August 1945 but so far no power has recognized our independence. The agreement with France opens the way to international recognition. It will lead us to an increasingly more solid international position, which is a great political achievement. There will only be fifteen thousand French troops and they will stay for five years. ... It is a show of political intelligence to negotiate rather than to fight. Why should we sacrifice fifty or one hundred thousand men when we can attain independence through negotiation, maybe within five years? ... I, Ho Chi Minh, have always led you on the path to freedom. You know that I would rather die than sell out my country. I swear to you that I did not sell you out. (quoted in Brocheux 2007: 116)

The speech turned the crowd around. It also, incidentally, revealed what Lacouture describes as Ho’s penchant for debate as a method for resolving issues: ‘[O]ne thing about Ho [that] is beyond dispute is his passionate desire to persuade people, his thoroughly democratic urge to win acceptance for measures by argument rather than compulsion (Lacouture 1968: 219).

Future events would show that Ho’s linking of the deal with Sainteny was a wise tactic, one which put the French on the defensive and cast a pall of illegitimacy over their breaking the deal and their subsequent war of reconquest. It was also an audacious military move that gave the Vietnamese, according to Ho in his ‘Political Report at the Second National Congress of the Viet Nam Workers’ Party (Text 30), ‘nearly one year of temporary peace [that gave] us time to build up our basic forces’.

### Ho and the people’s war

War is the pursuit of politics by other means. With no-one was this Clausewitzian dictum

truer than with Ho, who oscillated masterfully between negotiations and war, always keeping his eye on the ball, which was an independent Vietnam. By December 1946, with the collapse of negotiations with the French, it was back to war.

While General Vo Nguyen Giap is often credited as a military genius owing to the strategic and tactical brilliance with which he conducted the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, Ho's writings also reveal a comprehensive grasp of the principles of people's war. In his 'Appeal Issued after Six Months of Resistance' (Text 23), issued on 14 June 1947, Ho presciently outlined the course of the next seven years:

The enemy wants to win a quick victory. If the war drags on, he will suffer increasing losses and will be defeated.

That is why we use the strategy of a protracted war of resistance in order to develop our forces and gather more experience. We use guerrilla tactics to wear down the enemy forces until a general offensive wipes them out.

The enemy is like fire and we like water. Water will certainly get the better of fire.

Moreover, in the long war of resistance, each citizen is a combatant, each village a fortress. The twenty million Vietnamese are bound to cut to pieces the few scores of thousands of reactionary colonialists.

Discussions of warfare comprise much of Ho's writings after 1947. In them he continually reiterates the essentials of what he called the 'protracted war of resistance':

- The party must guide military strategy;
- Cling to the people because they are the source of strength of the army;
- The aim of guerrilla warfare is 'not to wage large-scale battles but to nibble at the enemy, harass him in such a way that he neither eat nor sleep in peace, to give him no respite, to wear him out physically and mentally, and finally to annihilate him' ('Instructions Given at a Conference on Guerrilla Warfare', Text 33)
- Guerrilla war is a necessary phase, but inevitably as the balance of forces shifts towards the people's side, the war

passes from the defensive to the phase of active contention to the 'general counteroffensive'. While it is possible to determine the major stages on the basis of the general situations ... it is not possible to separate one stage completely from the other, like slicing a cake. The length of each stage depends on the situation at home and in the world, and on the changes in the enemy's forces and in ours. ('Political Report at the Second National Congress of the Vietnam Workers' Party', Text 30)

The similarity of these prescriptions to Mao's theory of people's war is striking, but it is questionable whether Ho, or Giap for that matter, simply lifted them from Mao. The principles appear to have emerged largely from a process of experimentation and learning from mistakes in the monumental process of trial and error that was the Vietnamese Revolution.

This is not to say that some cross-fertilisation between the two roughly simultaneous people's wars did not take place, given Ho and other Vietnamese Communists' close contacts with the Chinese and, in Ho's case, direct participation in the Chinese Revolution at certain points in his revolutionary career

### The crucible of land reform

Even as the military struggle went on, the problems encountered in managing the different classes involved in a national independence struggle were not easily resolved, and, in a people's war, resolution of these issues had an impact on the military equation. Here, Ho's writings evince a tension between satisfying the demands of the peasantry, who constituted 90 per cent of the population, and neutralising the upper classes, particularly the landed class.

During the Japanese occupation and the first years against the French recolonisation, Ho and the party's policy was to postpone land reform and promote rent reduction, along with confiscation of land belonging to the French and pro-French Vietnamese (Text 30).

Rent reduction meant forcing landlords and rich peasants to reduce their rent to 20 per cent from 50 per cent, the operative principle being 'limiting the feudal landlords' exploitation of the peasants while at the same

time proceeding with changes in the property system so long as this measure does not impede the United National anti-Colonialist Front' (government directive cited in Brocheux 2007: 153).

With the final victory over the French at hand in 1953, the party decided to finally implement radical land redistribution. Brocheux suggests that it was a challenge from Stalin and the newly triumphant Chinese that prompted Ho to push land reform (145). This is unlikely given the centrality that he and his comrades had placed on agrarian reform as the 'main content' of the bourgeois democratic stage of the revolution. What is true though is that Ho felt that reform should be carefully planned and implemented owing to the complexity of the rural social structure. Indeed, early in his career as a Communist, he underscored the differences between the European countryside and Asian rural society:

[The] social conditions of small landlords with ten to one hundred *mu* are complex and unpredictable. With that amount of land, a peasant could end up being exploited, an exploiter, or neutral. ... [T]he class struggle does not take shape the way it does in the West. The workers lack consciousness, they are resigned and disorganized. ... In this way, if the peasants have next to nothing, the landlord does not have a great fortune either ... The one is resigned to his fate, the other moderate in his appetite. So the clash between their interests is softened. That is undeniable. (158–60)

While he was not directly involved in implementing it, it was Ho who laid out the strategic direction of the land reform programme in 1953 ('Report to the Third Session of the National Assembly', Text 34):

[T]he key problem remains unsolved: the peasant masses have no land or lack land. This affects the forces of the resistance and the production work of the peasants.

Only by carrying out land reform, giving land to the tillers, liberating the productive forces in the countryside from the yoke of the feudal landlord class can we do away with the poverty and backwardness and strongly mobilize the huge forces of the peasants in order to develop production

and push the war of resistance forward to complete victory.

But even as he laid out the strategy of radical land reform, Ho cautioned that the wiping out of feudalism must proceed 'step by step and with discrimination'. Specifically, this meant that 'in the course of land reform, we must apply different kinds of treatment to the landlords according to their individual political attitudes. This means that depending on individual cases we shall order confiscation or requisition with or without compensation, but not wholesale confiscation or wholesale requisition without compensation'.

These cautionary notes were, however, forgotten in the whirlwind that was visited on the countryside where land reform became, in many places, an organized *jacquerie*. Many abuses were committed and many people were killed – according to Bui Tin, more than 10,000 people were eliminated, 'most of them Party members or patriots who had supported the Revolution but were reasonably well off (Ruane 2000: 67). Ho then personally intervened to 'rectify' the campaign, which involved dismissing Truong Chinh – who was close to the Chinese, who had closely involved themselves in the process – from his post as secretary general. Ho led the process of party self-criticism, but left it to General Giap, a trusted favourite, to voice his opinions and issue the party's public criticism of itself at the 10th Congress of the Party Central Committee:

- (a) While carrying out their anti-feudal task, our cadres have under-estimated or, worse still, have denied all anti-imperialist achievements, and have separated the Land Reform and the Revolution. Worst of all, in some areas they have made the two mutually exclusive.
- (b) We have failed to realize the necessity of uniting with the middle-level peasants, and we should have concluded some form of alliance with the rich peasants, whom we have treated in the same manner as landlords.
- (c) We have attacked the land owning families indiscriminately, according no consideration to those who have served the Revolution and to those families with sons in the army. We showed no

indulgence towards landlords who participated in the resistance, treating their children in the same way as we treated the children of other landlords.

- (d) We made too many deviations and executed too many honest people. We attacked on too large a front and, seeing enemies everywhere, resorted to terror which became far too widespread.
- (e) Whilst carrying out our Land Reform programme we failed to respect the principles of freedom of faith and worship in many areas.
- (f) In regions inhabited by minority tribes we have attacked tribal chiefs too strongly, thus injuring, instead of respecting, local customs and manners.
- (g) When reorganizing the Party, we paid too much importance to the notion of social class instead of adhering firmly to the political qualifications alone. Instead of reorganizing education to be the first essential, we resorted exclusively to organizational measures such as disciplinary punishments, expulsion from the Party, executions, dissolution of Party branches and cells. Worse still, torture came to be regarded as a normal practice during Party reorganizations. (quoted in O'Neil 1969: 166–167)

Though he did not directly guide the land reform and thus could not be held directly accountable for the abuses that were committed, Ho was reproached for not intervening even when he was warned of grave cases of abuse, and for limiting himself to expressing concern (Bui Tin 1999: 28). Yet there is no doubt that the Chinese-style land reform contradicted Ho's previous emphasis on uniting rather than dividing, negotiation ahead of battle, education instead of bureaucratic or organizational measures, and rectifying people instead of turning them into pariahs.

### The Marxist as humanist

Like Mao, Ho had a moralistic streak. But, in his exhortatory essays, Ho adopted a very un-Maoist approach to revolutionary morality, refraining from characterising people he disagreed with in the party as class enemies or 'capitalist roaders', always urging unity

above momentary differences, always holding up the possibility of redemption and urging cadres to assist people who had fallen by the wayside. For instance, in 'To Practice Thrift and Oppose Embezzlement, Waste and Bureaucracy' (Text 32), Ho says:

There are people who are enthusiastic and faithful in struggle; they fear neither dangers, hardships, nor the enemy, thus they have served the revolution well; but as soon as they hold some authority, they grow arrogant and luxurious, indulge in embezzlement, waste, and unconscious bureaucracy, thus becoming guilty in the eyes of the revolution. We must save them, help them recover their revolutionary virtues. Others while pretending to serve the Fatherland and the people, indulge in embezzlement and waste and harm the Fatherland and the people. We must educate them, and lead them to the revolutionary path.

One of the most impressive things about Ho was his projection of a solid ethical core, the quality that, as noted earlier, led Khrushchev to characterise him as a 'communist saint' and Ruth Fischer, a colleague in the Third International, to say he stood out 'amid seasoned revolutionaries and rigid intellectuals' because he struck a 'delightful note of goodness and simplicity'. Ho's ethics derived from multiple sources, Marxism being only one, though the most important, of them. Confucianism was one important source. As Giap noted, 'The amount of Chinese culture which he absorbed in his childhood was so substantial and so deeply imprinted in his mind that he could compose poems in Chinese characters, as was the case of his famous poetry. Therefore, it's not surprising that in his speeches and writings, he did use Chinese concepts and quoted Confucian dictums to express more clearly his thoughts' (Vo Nguyen Giap 2011: 53).

When it came to ethics, there was a refreshing lack of dogmatism that marked his politics. One cannot, for instance, imagine the same expression of humanism coming from Mao:

The good side of Confucianism is self-improvement in personal ethics. The good point of Catholicism is benevolence. The good point of Marxism its dialectical

method. The good point of Sun Yat Sen doctrine is that it fits in with the conditions of Vietnam. Confucius, Christ, Marx, Sun Yat Sen shared common points, isn't that so? They are all in pursuit of happiness for mankind and welfare for the society. If they are still alive today and sit together, I believe they would live together in perfect harmony as close friends. I'm trying to be their humble student. (52)

There was an ascetic quality to Ho. This was manifested not only in his disciplined lifestyle, which included hard work and regular morning exercises, but most obviously in his celibacy. Ho, says Sophie Quinn-Judge, had relations with women, but no long-term ones. When asked about it, his explanation was very much like the Vatican's rationale for celibacy among priests, with the difference that he did not impose it on others:

When I was young and acted as an activist overseas, I was not too ugly to be loved by girls. Wherever I went, there was at least two or three girls attracted to me. Some even expressed wishes to become my companion .... However ... to realize my dream, I always had to work in secret. I thought that wedlock would restrict my work because if I had a wife and children, I could hardly hide myself. During the time I was staying in France, lots of French Communists advised me to get married. The same thing happened when I came back to China and met Zhou En-lai, Zhou De, and so on. I explained my reasons to them, and they understood. (quoted in Khanh Hong 2010: 91)

A sketch of Ho's personality would be incomplete without calling attention to a chivalrous quality that not only embraced women and friends but extended to enemies. Among the latter was General Raoul Salan, who accompanied Ho on his visit to France in 1946 in his unsuccessful bid to secure French recognition of Vietnamese independence. With war having resumed between the French and the Vietnamese, Ho learned that Salan had been appointed commander-in-chief of the French forces in Indochina and wrote him a letter which contained the following passage: 'We were good friends. Now circumstances beyond our control have transformed us into adversaries and I think that regrettable. On

my part, the sacred duty of a patriotic citizen obliges me to struggle for my homeland and my fellow-countrymen. On your part, your responsibility as a combatant also obliges you to do what your heart does not wish to .... Because we are obliged to fight each other, I hope you will prove to be a chivalrous combatant and gentlemanly adversary, waiting [for] the moment when we again become friends' (quoted in Song Thanh 2012: 528–529).

This affirmation of friendship that transcended national and ideological barriers even as Ho planned to fight to the death was rare, prompting a Vietnamese commentator to call the Ho–Salan relationship 'a struggle between genuine knights' (529).

### From fond uncle to stern father

What is interesting is that Ho's humanism and courtly behaviour coexisted with a steely determination to get what he wanted. There were times when he resorted to extreme measures, especially when he felt dialogue had become impossible with the Communists' competitors for the loyalties of the Vietnamese. As Lacouture (1968: 210) notes:

The fond uncle is quite capable of playing the heavy father when he wishes. In the North his firm hand was felt by the anti-communist nationalists (VNQDD). ... and the Catholics between September 1945 and July 1946. And in the South he dealt sternly with the Trotskyites and the Hoa Hao recalcitrant.

The standard story that is brought up to illustrate Ho's tough side is that he caused the arrest of the venerable Vietnamese nationalist Phan Boi Chau in order to rid himself of an attractive rival among Vietnamese political exiles in Canton in 1925. It must be pointed out, though, that some scholars, like Sophie Quinn-Judge (2002: 74–76), dispute Ho's role in Phan's arrest.

With the Trotskyites, he was vituperative in his language and was eager to show his loyalty to Stalin: 'With regard to the Trotskyites there can be no compromise, no concession. We must do everything possible to unmask them as agents of fascism and annihilate them politically' (Text 16). That such a strong statement could lead not just to political but to



physical elimination by Viet Minh partisans is not surprising. It is reported that the Viet Minh eliminated the Trotskyists by tying several of them together and throwing them into a river to drown. It is also said that in 1946, the Viet Minh ‘apprehended Nguyen Ta Thu Than, the most gifted Trotskyite leader and writer, at the train station in Quang Ngai, then took him to a sandy beach and put a bullet through his head’ (Moyar 2006: 18). Ho may not have been personally responsible for these deeds, but he cannot escape accountability for a harsh political line that encouraged such abuses.

### From national democracy to socialism

During his lifetime, Ho was dogged by the question of whether he was principally a nationalist or a communist. For his rivals in the nationalist movements in Vietnam, as well as for his enemies in Paris and Washington, he was the agent of world revolution, the man of the Communist International *par excellence*. For the Trotskyists, and for some of his rivals in the Indochinese Communist Party, he was either a petty bourgeois nationalist or was guilty of ‘nationalist deviation’. Stalin is said to have suspected him of unhealthy nationalist tendencies and dared him to enact the radical land reform to smoke him out (Brocheux 2007: 145).

The situation after the defeat of the French in 1954, however, showed Ho to be a faithful Leninist. Faithful, that is, to Lenin’s ‘Theses on the National and Colonial Question’, which contained the theory of a bourgeois democratic revolution followed by a socialist revolution that had had such a big impact on Ho in the early 1920s. With Vietnam divided into the sovereign North and the US-controlled South, Ho adapted the theory to the particular circumstances of the country:

[T]wo tasks confront the Vietnamese revolution at present: first, the construction of socialism in the North, and second, the completion of the national democratic revolution in the South. These tasks have a common aim: to strengthen peace and pave the way to reunification on the basis of independence and democracy. (Text 40)

The demands of socialist revolution and national independence were, in Leninist fashion, creatively reformulated to meet the

particular historical conjuncture, but there was no doubt that socialism in an independent nation was the strategic aim. Ho had been dead nearly six years by the time the country was rid of the Americans and reunified in March 1975. But, faithful to his Leninist vision, his followers immediately moved to declare the national bourgeois democratic revolution completed in the South and christened the whole country the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. For Ho, genuine nationalism meant working to bring about socialism to a nation state that would be part of an international order of independent socialist nation states.

### A Marxist pragmatist

Ho left no significant theoretical innovations, much less an integrated body of theory. This has of course not prevented some in the Vietnamese Communist Party from claiming that he left behind ‘Ho Chi Minh Thought’, which was described as a new development in Marxist-Leninist theory. Not surprisingly, this elicited a certain amount of scepticism since Vietnamese knew that Ho did not leave behind any body of theoretical writing (Quinn-Judge 2002: 256).

Where Ho did excel was in his ability to adapt abstract Leninist ideas to Vietnamese realities, developing a strategy and tactics of national revolution based on these, and creating an organisation, the Communist Party, to put this into effect. Perhaps his analytical approach was best articulated in the speech he gave inaugurating the first theoretical course of the Nguyen Ai Quoc School on 7 September 1957:

Reality is problems to be solved and contradictions lying within things. We are revolutionary cadres, our reality is problems to be solved that the revolution puts to us. Real life is immense. It covers the experience drawn from the work and thought of an individual, the Party’s policies and line, its historical experiences and issues at home and in the world. In the course of our study these are realities to be kept in touch with.

He continued:

Thanks to its ability in combining Marxism-Leninism with the actual situation of our country, our Party has scored

many successes in its work. However, the combination of Marxist-Leninist truth with the practice of the Vietnamese revolution was not complete and brought about many mistakes namely those committed in the land reform, readjustment of organization and economic construction. At present, in building socialism, although we have the rich experiences of brother countries, we cannot apply them mechanically because our country has its own peculiarities. Disregard for the peculiarities of one's nation while learning from the experiences of the brother countries is a serious mistake, is dogmatism. But under-emphasis on the role of national peculiarities and negation of the universal value of the great, basic experiences of the brother countries will lead to grave revisionist mistakes. (quoted in Woddis: 111–112)

Ideas do matter in history. And it was Ho's ability to translate revolutionary ideas into a pragmatic but inspiring programme, with a tough organisation to carry it out successfully, that made him exceptional.

### Ho and socialist construction

How useful Ho's ideas, especially those that have to do with 'constructing socialism', are today – as Vietnam seeks to break out of underdevelopment, and classical socialism has been discredited – is an interesting question.

During both the period of revolution and socialist construction in North Vietnam, Ho was always extremely sensitive to the state of agrarian class relations. One of the reasons for this was his vision of making agriculture the key sector of the economy, at least in the early stages of national development. 'If we want to develop industry and the economy generally speaking, we must take agriculture as the foundation. If we don't develop agriculture, we will have no basis for developing industry because agriculture supplies raw materials and food to industry and uses commodities made by industry' (quoted in Song Thanh 2012: 359). At another time, arguing against a colleague who advocated focusing resources on heavy industry to achieve rapid industrialisation, he is reported to have said, 'It is a subjective decision if we want to industrialize in great haste. Therefore, in economic planning, we must promote agriculture first,

then come handicrafts and light industry, and only afterwards comes heavy industry' (358).

Ho displayed the same sensitivity to class relations in the city, and for reasons that had to do not only with keeping the middle classes and entrepreneurs on the side of the revolution but national reconstruction. Had Ho been alive in the late 1970s, one can certainly see him having put a stop to the expropriation of shops and small factories belonging to the Sino-Vietnamese that triggered the flight of the 'boat people'. One can imagine him calling a retreat after the programme of accelerated socialist construction created tremendous dislocations in both the countryside and the cities in the late 1970s and early 1980s. But would he have gone so far as to support market reforms, the revival of the private sector, and the courting of foreign investors that have marked Vietnam's political economy in the last two decades? Given the strong streaks of pragmatism and humanism that he mixed with Marxism, one suspects that he would have, though he would probably not have endorsed one commentator's assertion that '[o]wing to the law of development, in society, there will be a part of the population that gets richer first, and other parts after, but the people's standard of living is higher and raised step by step' (354).

Vietnam has, in broad strokes, followed Deng's path of stimulating rapid capitalist development through integration into the global economy to achieve the prosperity that Ho felt was an essential pillar of socialism. It has achieved some success, becoming one of the world's top exporters of rice and coffee. Unfortunately, its post-1978 model of development has also reproduced the Chinese pattern of sharply rising income inequality. Though the country's Gini coefficient (the best measure of inequality) is low compared to other South-East Asian countries, it is rising. In 2013, the number of extremely wealthy people in Vietnam grew by 14.7 per cent, the second fastest rate in South East Asia after Thailand, leading the Communist Party chief Nguyen Phu Trong to warn: 'The rich-poor divide ... shows signs of getting worse'. Trong added that the gap existed even inside the Party. 'Some Party members have gotten richer so quickly, leading a lavish life that is miles away from that of the workers' (Thanh Nien News 2013).

How would Ho have reacted to this situation were he alive? It is hard to imagine such a

development not worrying him, or his not taking steps to reverse it. But much like the country's current leaders, he would have been hard put to contain a process where the very mechanism chosen as the route to prosperity – rapid capitalist development – spawns the conditions which create the sharp inequalities pushing the country farther and farther away from its avowed goal of achieving socialism.

Walden Bello

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## James, C.L.R. (1901–1989)

The black Trinidadian historian and writer Cyril Lionel Robert James was one of the most eloquent and critical anti-imperialist figures of the 20th century. It is easier, as James noted at one point in *The Black Jacobins* (1938), his masterful history of the Haitian Revolution, 'to find decency, gratitude, justice, and humanity in a cage of starving tigers than in the councils of imperialism' (James 2001: 229). *The Black Jacobins* analysed the transformation of colonised Saint-Domingue into the world's first independent black republic outside Africa from 1791 to 1804, and its publication on the eve of decolonisation established James as 'a thinker who posed questions about "postcoloniality" well before his contemporaries realized that all empires must fall' (Scott McLemee, dustjacket of Worcester 1996). As well as writing a classic of revolutionary anti-colonialist literature, James was also a leading militant Pan-Africanist activist, novelist, playwright, sports writer, literary critic, and penetrating commentator on cultural matters. Perhaps above all, James was a creative and original revolutionary Marxist theorist who felt towards the end of his life that his 'greatest contributions' had been 'to clarify and extend the heritage of Marx and Lenin' and 'to explain and expand the idea of what constitutes the new society' (Buhle 1986: 164).

C.L.R. James was born on 4 January 1901 in Trinidad, a tiny Caribbean island then languishing as a 'Crown colony' in

the economic backwaters of the British Empire, essentially ruled by a governor appointed by the monarch on the advice of the secretary of state for the colonies. His parents, Robert and Ida Elizabeth James, were black and lower middle class, and both their fathers had worked their way up from almost nothing as immigrants from Barbados. On his father's side, James's grandfather succeeded as a pan boiler on one of Trinidad's huge sugar estates (a post traditionally reserved by the white owners for other whites) and so into the nascent emerging black middle class of Trinidad after the abolition of colonial slavery in the 1830s. His struggle enabled his son Robert James to escape a life of manual labour on the sugar estates and become a respected teacher, and later headmaster. Possessing only 'cultural capital,' the James family invested this in the only place they could, preparing their son C.L.R. to sit the entrance examination for the island's elite school, Queen's Royal College (QRC). C.L.R. James was an uncommonly gifted boy and, aged just nine, became the youngest boy ever to win the necessary exhibition. Yet expectations that he would graduate from QRC with a scholarship to go abroad and study for a profession in medicine or law were to be dashed. James clearly could have chosen such a route had he wanted to, but his interest was increasingly distracted by life outside the classroom. Instead of paying full attention to Oxbridge-educated teachers of Latin and Greek, James indulged his love for the game of cricket and for reading English literature.

After he left QRC in 1918, all the contradictions of British colonial rule – the hypocrisy, tyranny, and injustice – dawned on James. His public school education had trained him to lead men forward for 'King and Country', but when James tried to do just this by enlisting with an army officers' regiment in 1918, he was blocked on account of being black. When a mass nationalist movement took off in the mid-1920s around Captain Cipriani, a charismatic workers' leader who often declared himself 'the champion of the barefooted man', James – now teaching English and history back at QRC – took notice. 'My hitherto vague idea of freedom crystallised around a political commitment: we should be free to govern ourselves' (James 1969: 119). James, a writer of implicitly anti-colonialist short stories about life in the poor 'barrack yards'

of Trinidad's capital Port of Spain for short-lived local magazines such as *Trinidad* and *The Beacon*, became a supporter of Cipriani's social-democratic Trinidad Workingmen's Association (TWA). James's first published book would be a political biography, *The Life of Captain Cipriani* (1932), in which he passionately, and with his characteristic devastating wit, exposed the lie behind the dictatorial British colonial authorities' line of 'self government when fit for it', showing how the growth of the TWA demonstrated beyond doubt that Trinidadians were manifestly ready for 'self government'. As James later noted, 'the basic constituent of my political activity and outlook' was first set out in 'the "human" aspect' of *Minty Alley* (1936), a novel he wrote in 1928 about the working people of one 'barrack-yard' he stayed with that summer (Grimshaw 1991: 94).

In 1932, James made the 'voyage in' to imperial Britain, and after a brief stay in London he stayed in the Lancashire cotton textile town of Nelson with the family of his friend and compatriot, the legendary cricketer Learie Constantine. James's ten months in Nelson would be 'ten months that shook James's world': he did not only witness the devastating effects of the collapse of the Lancashire cotton industry, but also saw, alongside mass poverty, a working-class community of resistance proudly fighting back. In Nelson, James was also inspired by reading the *History of the Russian Revolution* of Leon Trotsky (1879–1940), and he began independently to politically orientate himself towards revolutionary Marxism, joining the tiny Trotskyist movement in 1934 after witnessing the rise of fascism across Europe on the back of mass unemployment created by the worst crisis in the history of capitalism. The rise of Hitler onto the world stage proclaiming himself the saviour of the Aryan race meant that James now defiantly also adopted a more radical, transnational identification with other black people (and their culture) – breaking from his earlier ingrained identification with 'imperial Britishness' as a British colonial subject and evolving from a campaigner for 'West Indian self-government' into a militant Pan-Africanist.

James, having by now moved from Nelson down to London – and having secured a prestigious job reporting cricket for the *Manchester Guardian* alongside Neville Cardus – was soon to establish his reputation on the

wider British left as a leading anti-colonial activist. In 1935, James – by now a member of the Trotskyist ‘Marxist Group’ inside the Independent Labour Party (ILP) – played a critical role in the organization of opposition to fascist Italy’s barbaric war against the people of Ethiopia, co-founding and chairing the International African Friends of Ethiopia (IAFE) alongside Amy Ashwood Garvey, former wife of the famous Jamaican Pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey. In time-honoured fashion, Mussolini had in 1935 declared his criminal invasion and occupation of a sovereign nation ‘a war of civilization and liberation’, even a war ‘of the poor, of the disinherited, of the proletariat!’ (quoted in Padmore 1972: 153). James cut through what he called ‘the mountain of lies and nonsense’ which surrounded Mussolini’s war, lies which had confused even sections of the left in Britain, damning the role of not just fascist Italy but European imperialism in Africa more generally in a series of outstanding articles in the ILP’s paper, the *New Leader*, and in fiery speeches up and down the country. James challenged the idea that the League of Nations, dominated by the Great Powers of Britain and France who had carved up most of Africa between them already, would act decisively to defend the people of Ethiopia from Mussolini, and argued that to call for action by the league, ‘to come within the orbit of Imperialist politics is to be debilitated by the stench, to be drowned in the morass of lies and hypocrisy’. Instead of demanding league sanctions on fascist Italy, James urged an alternative strategy of ‘workers’ sanctions’: international industrial action to stop Mussolini’s war machine:

Workers of Britain, peasants and workers of Africa, get closer together for this and for other fights ... Now, as always, let us stand for independent organisation and independent action. We have to break our own chains. Who is the fool that expects our gaolers to break them? (‘Is This Worth a War? The League’s Scheme to Rob Abyssinia of its Independence’, *New Leader*, 4 October 1935, quoted in James 1984: 16)

Alongside his political campaigning and cricket reporting, since arriving in Britain, James had also made time to research the Haitian Revolution, regularly visiting archives

in Paris, and in 1934 he had turned his research into a remarkable anti-imperialist play focusing on Haiti’s revolutionary leader Toussaint Louverture. In 1936, James’s *Toussaint Louverture: The Story of the Only Successful Slave Revolt in History* was staged at London’s Westminster Theatre, with the American singer and actor Paul Robeson in the title role; this was the first time black professional actors had starred on the British stage in a play by a black playwright (and the only time Robeson ever starred in a play by a black playwright). James had by now been re-united in London with his boyhood friend from Trinidad, George Padmore, a former leading figure in the Communist International who in 1933 had broken away in protest at the Soviet Union’s apparent betrayal of the anti-colonial liberation struggle. In 1937 James had helped Padmore found the militant Pan-Africanist International African Service Bureau (IASB) in London together with other figures including Amy Ashwood Garvey, Jomo Kenyatta, Ras T. Makonnen, Chris Braithwaite, and I.T.A. Wallace-Johnson. James edited the IASB publications *Africa and the World* and *International African Opinion* and wrote a path-breaking short history of revolutionary ‘black internationalism’, *A History of Negro Revolt* (1938).

This little work was however destined forever to be overshadowed by James’s magisterial *The Black Jacobins*, another work written with African resistance to European colonialism in mind. James demonstrated how the Marxist theory of permanent revolution illuminated not just anti-colonial struggles in the age of socialist revolution, but also the anti-slavery liberation struggle in the age of ‘bourgeois-democratic’ revolution, with the Haitian Revolution intrinsically intertwined with the great French Revolution throughout. In the process of recovering one of the great world-historic revolutions, James revolutionised scholarly understanding of Atlantic slavery and abolition, intellectually demolishing much-cherished British nationalist mythology as created by ‘Tory historians, regius professors and sentimentalist’ and other ‘professional white-washers’ of the historical record. *The Black Jacobins* did not simply restore slave ‘agency’ but insisted that the self-activity of the enslaved themselves was central to the story of emancipation from slavery.

James’s thrilling and dramatic demonstration of how ‘the transformation of slaves, trembling in hundreds before a single white

man, into a people able to organize themselves and defeat the most powerful European nations of their day' represented 'one of the great epics of revolutionary struggle and achievement', was written to ideologically arm colonial liberation struggles (James 2001: xviii, 11, 15). As George Padmore noted in his review:

[C.L.R. James] has combined with great skill history and biography without sacrificing one to the other. Mr. James is a real historian, with the sensitive mind of the scholar and an excellent literary style ... *The Black Jacobins* is a fascinating story, brilliantly told, and should be an inspiration to Africans and other colonial peoples still struggling for their freedom from the yoke of white imperialism. ('Toussaint, The Black Liberator', *The People*, 12 and 19 November, 1938, quoted in Høgsbjerg 2014: 196–197)

*The Black Jacobins* also contained an outstanding materialist analysis of capitalism and slavery – one that would influence James's former student, friend, compatriot, and fellow historian Eric Williams (1911–81) – and also of the dynamics of race and class in a colonial situation. 'The race question is subsidiary to the class question in politics, and to think of imperialism in terms of race is disastrous. But to neglect the racial factor as merely incidental is an error only less grave than to make it fundamental.' At the close, James noted, 'imperialism vaunts its exploitation of the wealth of Africa for the benefit of civilization. In reality, from the very nature of its system of production for profit it strangles the real wealth of the continent – the creative capacity of the African people.' Yet 'the blacks of Africa are more advanced, nearer ready than were the slaves of San Domingo ... the imperialists envisage an eternity of African exploitation: the African is backward, ignorant ... they dream dreams' (James 2001: 230, 303–304).

In the 1930s, James had also played a critical role as the intellectual driving force of British Trotskyism, editing the journal *Fight* and writing *World Revolution, 1917–1936* (1937), a pioneering anti-Stalinist account of 'the rise and fall of the Communist International'. In late 1938, James embarked on what was meant to be a six-month speaking tour of the US for the American Trotskyist movement, but he ended up staying in

America for the next 15 years. In April 1939, James spent a week with Leon Trotsky himself in order to discuss the strategy and tactics of black liberation struggles in the US. James's radical and original attempt to solve what was then known as 'the Negro question', developed after actively organising among striking black sharecroppers in south-eastern Missouri and carrying out wider anti-war agitation, would in the 1960s influence important groups in America such as the League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

After Trotsky's murder in 1940, James under the pseudonym 'J.R. Johnson', alongside Raya Dunayevskaya ('Freddie Forest') and Grace Lee Boggs, formed the 'Johnson–Forest Tendency' within American Trotskyism in order to attempt to deal with the profound crisis the movement was now thrown into. The tendency made a highly original attempt to make, as James wrote in 1948 in *Notes on Dialectics*, a 'leap from the heights of Leninism' through breaking with 'orthodox Trotskyism' and returning to the writings of Hegel, Marx, and Lenin in order to face up to the new realities after the Second World War (James 1980: 150). James refused to treat Trotsky's writings of the late 1930s as sacrosanct but instead attempted to develop Marxist theory theoretically so that it could make sense of new realities. The Johnson–Forest Tendency's development of a theory of state capitalism to understand the Stalinist regimes enabled it, like the French group 'Socialisme ou Barbarie' around Cornelius Castoriadis and the Socialist Review Group around Tony Cliff in Britain, to preserve an orientation around Marx's central theoretical insight that the emancipation of the working class would be the conquest of the working class itself. The Tendency also attempted to 'Americanise' Marxism and Bolshevism, and James's wide-ranging writings on culture and society in this vein included *American Civilization* (1949–50) and *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways* (1953), a fascinating study of Herman Melville, the author of *Moby Dick*.

However, for all James's grasp of Marxism as a living, ever-evolving theory, the rising tide of McCarthyism at the height of the Cold War had inevitably damaging consequences, and in 1953, he was forced to return to Britain. The Johnson–Forest Tendency soon split and broke up, though its analysis of state capitalism was to be vindicated by

events such as the rebirth of Workers Councils in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. James's own lifelong anti-colonialism was also to be vindicated with the victories of national independence movements across Africa and the Caribbean, not least in Ghana under the leadership of Padmore's protégé Kwame Nkrumah (1909–72), and in Trinidad itself with the rise to power of the People's National Movement (PNM) led by Eric Williams. Yet, perhaps as a result of his objective political isolation as a revolutionary Marxist and perhaps as a result of his personal connection with the leaders of many national liberation movements, James now seemed to shift away from classical Leninist strategy and tactics to accommodate himself to the new situation of decolonisation – something Lenin had not foreseen as a possibility in his study *Imperialism*. In *World Revolution* (1937), James had approvingly quoted Lenin when he 'called for "determined war" against the attempt of all those quasi-Communist revolutionists to cloak the liberation movement in the backward countries with a Communist garb' (James 1993: 234). Yet now amid decolonisation, James refused to wage any such 'determined war' and indeed showed a disastrous misjudgement of many autocratic leaders of 'Pan-African Socialism', cloaking the likes of Nkrumah in a communist garb, only to then have to break bitterly from those he had previously declared anti-capitalist revolutionaries on a par with Lenin (see his speech praising Nkrumah in Accra, Ghana, in 1960, in James 1977: 164).

Aside from playing a leading role in achieving a significant symbolic victory in the appointment of Frank Worrell as the first black captain of the West Indian cricket team, James's return to Trinidad in 1958 to play his part in the movement towards independence was not a political success for him personally. As a supporter of Williams, James became secretary of the Federal Labour Party, the governing party of the embryonic West Indies Federation, and took on the editing of the PNM's weekly paper *The Nation*. By 1960 however, as James detailed in his book *Party Politics in the West Indies*, he had been forced to break with Williams as a result of the break-up of the West Indies Federation, and the latter's agreement to the retention of a US naval base at Chaguaramas and more general abandonment of non-alignment in favour of support for America in the context of the Cold

War. In 1960, James gave a lecture series on Marxism in Trinidad, lectures which seem to reveal a return to a more classical Leninist understanding of imperialism as a system after the dashing of his high hopes in Third-World nationalist movements. 'The passing of colonialism ... is a sign of the weakness of the capitalist bourgeois state ... nevertheless there is no question about it: the basic opposition to imperialism must come from the proletariat of the advanced countries' (James 1973: 90). The publication of these lectures – under the title *Modern Politics* – was banned in Trinidad, and James returned to England a few days before Trinidad's independence in 1962.

In 1963, James published his seminal semi-autobiographical cultural history of West Indian cricket, *Beyond a Boundary* (1963), another pioneering study of how the dynamics of race, class, and nation in the 'dramatic spectacle' of cricket played themselves out amid the rise, decline, and fall of the British Empire. In 1965, James made another attempt to intervene in Trinidadian politics, only to be briefly placed under house arrest by the increasingly autocratic Williams on his arrival. His attempt to then electorally challenge the hegemony of Williams's PNM through founding a new political party, the Workers' and Farmers' Party, was not successful. James now travelled widely between Britain, the US, Canada, and the Caribbean, lecturing, writing, and finding a new audience among a new generation of radicals both in the Caribbean and internationally, including the historian and activist Walter Rodney (1942–80). In the 1980s James moved to Brixton in London, where he lived in a room above the 'Race Today' collective, and, though confined in his movements, lived to see the eruption of Solidarity in Poland in 1980–81 and, just before his passing, the opening scenes of the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe. Such challenges to the Soviet empire for James served not only as a vindication of his revolutionary democratic perspective of 'socialism from below' but also as a reminder of an elementary, essential truth – one that James did so much to powerfully elucidate in all his work – that liberation from oppression and exploitation can come only from below, from the mass movements and struggles of the oppressed and exploited themselves.

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## Kenyatta, Jomo (c.1893–1978)

Jomo Kenyatta was one of the leading figures in Kenya's independence movement from Great Britain. He served as the country's first prime minister (1963–64) and president (1964–78). Both during his lifetime and after his death, Kenyatta has been criticised for increasing the political power of his native majority ethnic group or Gikuyu (see Kenyatta 1965: xix–xx; 1968a: 226–231; Lonsdale 1992). It was as a spokesperson for Kikuyu interests that Kenyatta first became politically engaged and began to oppose British colonial rule. As a student in Britain, he worked closely with Pan-African, African-American, Afro-Caribbean, and African intellectuals and activists. He wrote his thesis on the Kikuyu at the London School of Economics under the supervision of the famous Polish-born anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. This would later be published as *Facing Mount Kenya*, which remains an important work of African anthropology. During his time abroad, Kenyatta played an important role in the growth of Pan-Africanist politics as the leadership of the movement shifted from intellectuals among the African diaspora to Africans. As the head of state after Kenya's independence from Britain, Kenyatta invoked Pan-Africanism rhetorically, but did little to actively pursue Pan-Africanist policies. Initially, he worked to forge co-operation with neighbouring East African states. Internal challenges to his political authority led him to focus on consolidating power, silencing potential enemies, and turning Kenya into a single-party state.

### Early life and Kikuyu politics

Kenyatta was born Kamau wa Ngengi in the town of Gatundu in British East Africa.



Because of the absence of birth records, the precise year of his birth is unknown and is listed in various biographies between 1889 and 1894. His parents died while he was still a child. His grandfather, a Kikuyu medicine man, raised him. Kenyatta would later note that the education he received from his grandfather informed his discussion of Kikuyu rites in *Facing Mount Kenya*. The book's second chapter on land tenure is also particularly relevant to Kenyatta's biography because his entry into politics occurred in the context of the colonial restructuring of the Kikuyu agricultural economy. Colonial rule brought with it the creation of chiefs who would administer the African districts. Local councils had previously governed the Kikuyu. The introduction of chiefs was a colonial invention, which functioned both to help govern the population and to turn it into a cheap labour source for colonial officials and settlers. (A deeper account of the creation of the chiefs and the political and economic motivations can be found in Elkins 2005: 18–19; and a study of the effects of colonialism on agriculture and labour in colonial Kenya is Berman and Lonsdale 1992). It was against this setting that the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) was established by educated Kikuyu to rival the power of the chiefs and campaign for Kikuyu interests. Kenyatta, who had changed his name to Johnstone Kenyatta after converting to Christianity in 1914, joined the KCA in 1924. He was soon promoted to be its secretary and founded the organisation's monthly newspaper *Muigwithania* (Reconciler) in 1928.

Kenyatta first travelled to London in 1929 to lobby on behalf of the KCA. In that same year, a long-brewing political conflict over the issue of clitoridectomy would come to a head. In response to an effort by missionaries to ban the practice, the KCA leadership argued for the reconcilability of Christianity and traditional Kikuyu practices (the early years of the KCA are covered very well by Anderson, 2005, and Elkins, 2005). The issue helped the KCA to put the chiefs on the defensive because they relied on support from missionaries and the colonial government. Kenyatta echoed the KCA's official position and wrote articles on the subject in European publications. He would later revisit the issue and reiterate his defence of clitoridectomy in *Facing Mount Kenya*. After his second visit to Britain in 1931, he established his home there to further pursue his education, and his

active participation in KCA politics decreased. It was at this time that Kenyatta started to associate with the community of radical Afro-Caribbean and African students and intellectuals living in Britain. In particular, he was a member of the intellectual circle of the Trinidadian communist writer and labour activist George Padmore. Radical political affiliations brought him to Moscow in 1933 to study economics at the Comintern School. Kenyatta left Moscow in 1934 to return to London. In 1935, he enrolled in the London School of Economics to study social anthropology with Malinowski. He would publish his thesis under his new name Jomo (translated as 'Burning Spear') Kenyatta.

### Anthropology and anti-colonialism

In 1938, *Facing Mount Kenya* was published in Britain and included an introduction by Malinowski. Malinowski noted the significance of having a study written by an African with intimate knowledge of the social structure and practices of the Kikuyu. The book stands out for this reason as well as for offering an insight into Kikuyu society in the pre-colonial and colonial periods. In it, Kenyatta is particularly attentive to the ways colonial life transformed and, in his own lifetime, continued to transform the lives of the Kikuyu. Yet, in this respect, there is an unmistakable political undertone to the work. As has also already been indicated, Kenyatta's discussions of social hierarchy, land tenure, and rites, such as clitoridectomy, had a direct bearing on the debates that dominated Kikuyu political concerns and discourses. But several sections of the book are also distinguished by the contrasts Kenyatta draws between pre-colonial and colonial life. Perhaps one of the more striking sections is the oft-cited Kikuyu myth regarding the dispute between a man and an elephant. This tale, in which an elephant appropriates a man's hut from him, is clearly a criticism of European incursions on African lands and properties, the grander enterprise of colonialism, and the more specific land disputes between the Kikuyu, white settlers, and the chiefs serving colonial authorities (Kenyatta 1965: 48–52).

Kenyatta remained in Britain throughout the Second World War, working on a farm. The end of the War seemed to offer an opportunity for a renewed challenge to

colonialism. This prompted a group of Afro-Caribbean and African intellectuals, led by Padmore and Ghana's future head of state Kwame Nkrumah, to plan a meeting that would outline the demands and positions of colonised peoples in the aftermath of the war. The Fifth Pan-African Congress was held in Manchester on 15 October 1945 (see Cooper 2002: 58–59; Padmore 1947). It was framed as a successor to the four preceding congresses, the first of which had been organised by W.E.B. Du Bois in Paris in 1919. Du Bois played little role in the organisation of this event. Nevertheless, he attended and was given the title of President. This congress, however, was distinct from previous meetings insofar as Africans played a greater role in its planning and organisation. Though representatives came from other British colonies and protectorates, much of the discussion centred on African affairs. Further, despite claims on the part of the participants that they spoke on behalf of colonised peoples throughout the world, the attendees came entirely from British colonies. Kenyatta's own role in the planning and events of the meeting is difficult to gauge. It is interesting to note that, when compared to the strong anti-capitalist positions of the West African resolutions, the East African resolutions, which it is likely that Kenyatta played a large role in drafting, were altogether more moderate in tone and focused on particular grievances. Nevertheless, later in life, he would reflect proudly on his participation in the Congress, but gave little clear indication of his part in it (see Adi and Sherwood 1995: 165). According to Padmore, Kenyatta served as assistant secretary (Padmore 1971: 133).

### Return to Africa and independence

The long-term effects of Pan-Africanism on the larger movement for African independence remain in question. Kenyatta would assert that the ideology remained an important facet of his thought throughout his life (Kenyatta 1964: 32).

Yet, as Frederick Cooper has observed, there is little evidence that the Pan-African position advanced at the congress was of central importance for the subsequent politics of the participants (Cooper 2002: 59). When Kenyatta returned to the Colony and Protectorate of Kenya in 1946, the anti-colonial struggle there was already facing

its own distinct challenges. Kenyatta soon re-entered Kenyan politics. In 1947, he was elected president of the Kenyan African Union (KAU), which had been founded in 1942 and secured itself as the successor to the KCA. Under Kenyatta's leadership, the KAU formed itself into a powerful political party in the independence movement. By 1952, Kenyan anti-colonial activities took a more violent turn. A series of attacks by different groups, which the British summarily referred to as 'Mau Mau', were carried out against both the colonial authorities and white settlers (for an account of the 'Mau Mau' from the standpoint of a participant, see Barnett and Njama 1966). But the Mau Mau revolt also created deep rifts within Kikuyu society. British colonial policy had manufactured a society in which a number of Kikuyu benefited greatly from colonialism; for example, the chiefs and their supporters. The revolt prompted a violent campaign of suppression by the British with thousands of Mau Mau and suspected Mau Mau killed or imprisoned in camps (the major studies of this period are by Anderson 2005, and Elkins 2005).

Kenyatta tried to distance himself and the KAU from the revolt (Kenyatta 1952). The British declared a state of emergency and the Rebellion was used as a pretext for banning the KAU and arresting its leadership. Kenyatta was arrested in October 1952, imprisoned and detained until 1961. He was one of six Kenyan nationalist leaders – defended by the Labour politician and barrister D.N. Pritt – who were tried and known collectively as the Kapenguria Six. Although he was charged as a supporter of Mau Mau, there is little evidence linking him to the Rebellion. When the state of emergency was lifted in 1960, the KAU was renamed the Kenya African National Union (KANU) and re-emerged as a major political party. Kenyatta was elected president of the party during his detainment. Upon his release, he represented KANU at the 1961 and 1962 Lancaster Conferences in London to negotiate with British authorities the terms of Kenya's independence. Here, the KANU, which supported a unitary state, was opposed by the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), which campaigned for a federated state. The KANU won a majority of the seats in the Legislative Council in the 1963 election and Kenyatta was named prime minister. On 12 December 1964, Kenya declared its full

independence and Kenyatta became the country's first president. Soon after, he began to be referred to as 'Mzee' (Elder).

### Head of state

On 25 May 1963, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was formed and held its first meeting at Addis Ababa. The OAU's stated aim was to forge co-operation among the newly independent African states and to continue to press for the decolonisation of the remaining regions of Africa under either European or white African domination. But the meeting also served to indicate the future fault-lines in the continent's politics. Nkrumah appeared in the hope that this meeting would serve as a precursor to a federation of African states. His support came from more radical states, like Guinea, and many of the North African states, which formed the so-called Casablanca bloc. But Nkrumah was opposed by the Monrovia bloc, led by Senegal's Léopold Senghor, which sought closer ties to the newly formed French Community. Nkrumah's former ally Kenyatta also opposed his call for the immediate creation of a united states of Africa. Instead, Kenyatta allied himself with Tanzania's Julius Nyerere who advocated the gradual creation of a federation (Kenyatta discusses the one-year anniversary of the gathering in Kenyatta 1964: 33–45, and there is an extensive discussion of Kenyatta's handling of the legacy of the Mau Mau in relation to his efforts to unify the country in Branch 2009). Early on, Nyerere and Kenyatta entered into talks with Uganda's Milton Obote about the possibility of forming an East African regional federation. Increasingly, he was confronted by internal problems within Kenya and focused his attentions there.

Unlike many of his contemporaries in other newly independent African countries, Kenyatta did not oust the many European civil servants working in Kenya. Instead, Kenyatts gradually assumed the positions that had been held by Europeans. Kenyatta maintained much of the colonial infrastructure and retained close ties with Britain. As the West and Communist East wrestled over influence in Africa, Kenyatta remained staunchly pro-Western. In the wake of independence, Mau Mau left lingering hostilities, including among those Kikuyu who had participated in the rebellion and those who had supported

the British. Nationalism served as a means for unifying the country as well as a justification for disempowering tribal leaders (note discussion in Peterson, 2012:14–15). It was in the context of efforts to unite the recently independent country that Kenyatta used the slogan 'Harambee' ('Let's all pull together'). Kenyatta also faced foreign conflicts. Land disputes with neighbouring Somalia led to military confrontations between the two countries for which Kenyatta sought British military aid. Kenyatta's modernisation policies relied upon his efforts to win diplomatic support from Western countries and investment from Western companies. Although Kenyatta's policies might be understood as an effort to maintain a unified state in an unstable political climate, his politics took on an increasingly autocratic turn which favoured his political party and ethnic group. In 1964, the KADU, Kenya's major party of opposition, was dissolved and joined KANU.

After his re-election in 1966, Kenyatta changed the constitution to extend his powers, and established KANU as Kenya's only legal party. He and his political allies amassed an enormous fortune during his presidency. Political dissension within KANU became increasingly apparent. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Kenya's vice-president and a leading figure in both the KAU and KANU, became a public critic of Kenyatta's consolidation of power and, in 1966, resigned from Kenyatta's Government to form the Kenya People's Union (KPU) in opposition. Odinga was later arrested in 1969 after an argument with Kenyatta. His fall from power came as a relief to Kenyatta's Western supporters who viewed him as potentially too radical (for more on Kenyatta and Odinga, see Branch 2011: 56–65).

But a stroke in 1968 led to increasing worries about Kenyatta's health and, more importantly, who would succeed him. Kenyatta expressed hopes that it would be his second vice-president, Daniel arap Moi, who had formerly been a leader of KADU. At the same time, Kenyatta's erstwhile ally and minister of economic planning and development, Tom Mboya, had been building a strong political base for himself. Only in his early 30s, Mboya had already had an outstanding political career having worked with Nkrumah, briefly led his own political party, and been instrumental in establishing student exchange programmes with the United States. Though

Mboya could boast a base in growing urban regions as well as among members of Kenya's parliament, he had also marginalised the labour movement in his efforts to discredit Odinga (Branch 2011: 69–81). His attacks on Odinga gained Mboya strong support from the West. Mboya was assassinated on 5 July 1969. Though mourners at his funeral protested against Kenyatta's attendance and alleged that he had been responsible, no definitive evidence to this effect has emerged.

### Final years and legacy

The KPU was banned after Odinga's arrest in 1969. The left wing of KANU had joined the KPU and was ousted from power. KANU was the only party on the ballot in the 1970 and 1974 elections and Kenyatta was the only presidential candidate. Without any opposition parties, Kenyatta continued to consolidate power and played a direct role in most of the country's political affairs. Political power was solidified in the hands of the Kikuyu majority. Kenyatta often suspected Luo and Kalenjin peoples of seeking to overthrow him and worked to consolidate his Kikuyu base. During the final years of his life, an increasing number of associations were formed to advocate the rights of the smaller ethnic groups, such as the Luo, but any attempt to form political parties was blocked. Moi increasingly took on Kenyatta's responsibilities as the latter's health worsened. Kenyatta died on 22 August 1978. Moi succeeded him and retired from politics in 2002 amidst charges of corruption and human rights abuses.

Kenyatta was a pivotal figure among the first generation of African intellectuals who would later lead their countries to independence from Britain. Unlike many of Africa's first political leaders, he was an experienced and weathered political activist by the time he became a head of state, with anywhere from one to three decades' seniority. His scholarly training and the fact that he had already produced a study of major intellectual significance just as other future African leaders were first becoming politicised only serves to further distance his personality and biography from theirs. From this standpoint, Kenyatta's politics appear very different from those of his fellow leaders of independent African states. The political problems and concerns that shaped him were those of a distinct and earlier period of anti-colonial politics, which makes it

more difficult to bring him into dialogue with younger African politicians. As a politician, Kenyatta's career was marred by autocratic tendencies. He turned Kenya into a single-party state with power consolidated around himself. He barred any possible opposition groups from political participation ranging from tribal leaders to members of his own cabinet. He solidified the power of a Kikuyu elite, which had begun to emerge under colonialism and retains much power in the country today. His family continues to exert enormous political influence (for more on political corruption in Africa, see Bayart 2012). In this respect, the contemporary complexities of ethnic conflict in Kenya, taking both the form of physical violence and disputes at the ballot box, must be cast in the light of Kenyatta's legacy.

Though a man who flirted with left-wing politics in his youth, Kenyatta adopted increasingly conservative positions as Kenya's president. While Kenyatta has at times been labelled a Pan-Africanist or socialist, his biography does little to support such claims. It is perhaps more fruitful to understand him as a Kikuyu nationalist. Throughout his career, he remained concerned with Kikuyu political affairs above all. His politics might also be best understood by situating him in the context of colonial-era agrarian politics, which most directly affected the Kikuyu. His most significant intellectual work, *Facing Mount Kenya*, was largely a study of and political intervention in discussions about the effects of colonialism on the Kikuyu. It is, at the same time, impossible to ignore Kenyatta's essential role in the development and strengthening of a succession of political parties, beginning with the KCA and culminating with the KANU, which continually challenged colonial authority and guided Kenya to independence.

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## Kim Il Sung (1912–1994): Partisan from the Edges of Empire

When the first Comintern-affiliated communist party was established in Korea proper, in Seoul in April 1925, Kim Il Sung (Kim Ilsŏng) was 13 years old and living in China's Jilin Province, a part of north-eastern China historically known as Manchuria.

The Korean Communist Party did not last long. It disbanded in November 1928 after suppression by the Japanese imperial government, but it left an impressive legacy, many of its members holding leadership positions two decades later in the inaugural Korean Workers' Party (KWP) of Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). One member of that early communist party, Pak Hŏnyŏng, was the first secretary of KWP. Pak, a veteran revolutionary who had studied at the International Lenin School in Moscow (from 1929–31, when his friend Ho Chi Minh was also studying in the city), was also the minister of foreign affairs of the first DPRK cabinet. The young Kim Il Sung and the veteran Pak Hŏnyŏng were both comrades and rivals, and after the Korean War Pak was blamed for the failures of the conflict and put to death on Kim's orders. Kim was not part of Korea's early history of socialism, as Pak was, but he joined its surviving members as Korea's radical activities continued as an anti-imperial movement and eventually as a state-building project in the post-liberation period.

Kim Il Sung and his family had moved to Manchuria in 1919, to the village of Fusong in Jilin, so that the family could find more economic opportunities (a response common to many Koreans at the time). His father, Kim Hyŏngjik, a nationalist activist, continued to participate in the independence movement in Manchuria, where the chances of arrest by the colonial police were less than in Korea proper. Such a practice was common in the diverse struggle for independence from Japanese colonialism. Manchuria was a kind of frontier in East Asia, and it became an important location for activists to remobilise themselves, whether as intellectuals writing pamphlets or as partisans fighting in the mountains. The backgrounds of the people in the anti-imperial resistance in Manchuria were diverse. They were not just Koreans from Korea proper but also Chinese-Koreans, Soviet-Koreans, and of course the Chinese themselves. Their political ideologies too varied, from capitalist conservatism and socialist nationalism to Leninism and anarchism. They fought as comrades, and sometimes they fought each other. Kim's beginnings took place in this situation, at the edges of an empire. In many ways, the theme of *manoeuvring from the margins* continued throughout his life; as a guerrilla in Manchuria (1930s),

as a minority power in North Korea's early revolutionary government (1950s), as a leader of a young state situated between China and the Soviet Union (1960s and 1970s), and as an aging ruler of an isolated state-socialist country in East Asia (1990s).

Kim Il Sung was born on 15 April 1912, in South P'yŏngan Province's Taedong county, now part of Man'gyŏngdae district in the western part of the capital city Pyongyang (P'yŏngyang). Kim is the surname (written and spoken in East Asia as the first syllable of the whole name), and his family belongs to the Kim clan of the Chŏnju region in the south. His birth name is Sŏngju, which means 'to attain the essence'. He took on the nom de guerre Il-sŏng (officially spelled Il Sung, meaning 'to attain the light') in the early 1930s as he joined the partisan forces in Manchuria. His father, Hyŏngjik, held several occupations, including being a school-teacher, and from the time Kim was a young child, he was an activist in the independence movement. His mother, Kang Pansŏk, was a fellow activist and a devout member of a local Presbyterian Church, where her father was a deacon; her name means 'bedrock', and it is a Chinese-Korean transliteration of the biblical name Peter (which also means 'rock'). Many members of Kim's mother's family were serious Protestant Christians, and although there is no record of Kim being baptised, he was surely raised in a Christian household. In the missionary work of western believers in Asia, the monotheistic nature of Christianity sometimes transmuted into a sense of anti-monarchism and anti-imperialism, all in the name of the Christian deity. Kim's view of the modern world seems to have first come from his Christian upbringing.

Other than a few years of school back near Pyongyang in the mid-1920s, Manchuria was where Kim spent his young adulthood attending Chinese schools and learning to speak and read Chinese fluently. He first studied Marx and Lenin in middle school, in 1929, taught by a young Chinese teacher named Shang Yue, who later became a respected historian in China (Wada 1998: 41). Kim's initial experience in a radical movement was around this time as well, as he joined a youth communist association and was even arrested for engaging in anti-Japanese activities. Biographies of Kim published in North Korea tell the story that Kim, as a young teenager in

Manchuria, formed his first armed organisation called Down-With-Imperialism Union. Most scholars outside North Korea do not think this is true, but he seems to have joined an organisation founded by a militant radical named Ri Chongrak, an organization that sometimes went by the name Down-With-Imperialism Union. This organisation was disbanded by Japan in 1931. Soon after, Kim joined his first Comintern-affiliated party, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which at the time accepted many Korean socialists.

Japan began colonising Asia in the late 19th century, starting with Taiwan in April 1895 and annexing Korea in August 1910. In September 1931, Japan invaded China through Manchuria after a bomb exploded at a railway owned by Japan's South Manchuria Railway Company. Known as the Manchurian Incident, the bombing is known to have been staged by Japan to create a cause for military invasion. The entrance of the Japanese military into Manchuria further galvanised the Chinese and Korean nationalists and socialists in the area. Kim's guerrilla days began during this time as he, in the spring of 1932, joined the Chinese National Salvation Army based in Antu. Partly due to the difficulty of sustaining a unified communist party in colonial Korea, and partly due to the Comintern's 'one country, one party' directive of 1928, Korean independence fighters in Manchuria were largely absorbed by the Chinese Communist Party in the early 1930s. This is not to say that the Chinese communist leadership was in full control of Korean fighters, for in certain branches of CCP in Manchuria, especially among CCP's guerrilla units, Koreans were the majority of membership (Armstrong 2003: 29).

The international situation of anti-colonial forces in Manchuria was grounded in solidarity, but it was also one of mistrust and suspicion that, in 1933, erupted into a series of purges by the CCP. Suspecting pro-Japanese and anti-communist Koreans of having infiltrated the party, the CCP carried out a campaign to 'clean up' the Korean membership, arresting and expelling thousands and executing several hundred others. Kim himself was arrested in late 1933 but was absolved in early 1934. One major result of the purges was a reorganisation of the guerrilla forces in Manchuria, resulting in the formation of the North-East Anti-Japanese United Army (NEAJUA) in early 1934. Kim fought as a

member of NEAJUA from June 1934 until October 1939, when NEAJUA was defeated by imperial forces. At his height, under the authority of the CCP, he commanded a detachment of several hundred fighters, and in June 1937 he and his unit engaged in a battle at Poch'ŏnbo, a border town on the Korean side, against a Japanese police garrison. The Battle of Poch'ŏnbo later became the most famous battle of Kim's guerrilla days, although its actual military significance at the time was likely small. In late 1940, with NEAJUA crushed by Japan, Kim and his unit retreated into the Soviet Far East, a region where borders are shared between Korea, China, and Russia.

For the next year-and-a-half, they stayed at a Soviet military camp in Vorosilov (today's Ussuriysk), just north of Vladivostok. In August 1942, Kim and his partisans were called up to Vyatskoye near Khabarovsk and reorganised as part of the 88th Special Reconnaissance Brigade of the Soviet 25th Army. The commander of the brigade, which had about 600 soldiers, was Zhou Baozhong, a veteran Chinese leader of Manchurian partisans. Kim attained the rank of captain and commanded his own battalion of some 200 troops, of whom 60 were Korean (Seiler 1994: 33). The partisans of the 88th Brigade who remained loyal to Kim became the most important officials in the DPRK's beginnings, including Choe Yonggŏn, who became the commander of the Korean People's Army and the defence minister, and Kim Ch'aek, who became deputy prime minister and industry minister.

Kim's life in the Soviet military camp was one of both respite and restlessness. He had been a fighter living dangerously for more than ten years, but for the next five years he stayed within the Soviet Union without seeing battle. He studied, trained, and devoted himself to the Soviet Red Army. An important reason for the relative isolation of former Korean partisans was the Soviet-Japanese Non-Aggression Pact of April 1941, which kept the two countries from going to war until 8 August 1945, when the Soviet Union declared war on Japan. As guerrilla fighters in Manchuria, they had not been obliged to observe international treaties, but as soldiers in the Soviet army, albeit with greater resources and recognition, Kim and his fighters now had to manoeuvre within the legal boundaries of nation states.

Kim Il Sung's time in the Soviet Far East included having a family with his partner Kim Chŏngsuk. She was a fellow partisan, and they were married in September 1940. (This was Kim's second marriage. His first had been with another partisan named Han Sŏnghui, who had mistakenly been presumed dead after her arrest by the Japanese police. Kim reconnected with her years later.) Born in 1917 in North Hamgyŏng Province's Hoeryŏng, in north-east Korea, Chŏngsuk had joined Kim's NEAJUA unit in 1937 and is believed to have fought alongside him in many battles, including the Battle of Poch'ŏnbo. Their first child, a son, was born on 16 February 1942. He was named Yuri Irsenovich Kim. After the family's return to Korea in September 1945, Yuri was given a Korean name, Chŏngil (officially spelled Jong Il). Another son was born in the Soviet camp in 1944. He was called Alexander Irsenovich (Shura for short), and was later named in Korean as P'yŏngil. He died in the summer of 1947 in Pyongyang in a drowning accident.

The two children born in the Soviet military base were officially given Russian names, even following the custom of using their father's first name as their middle names (Kim's Russianised first name was Irsen). An interesting aspect of Kim's life during this time is that he perhaps did not envision returning to Korea, much less a socialist Korea, but rather saw his future as an officer in the Soviet Red Army (Lankov 2002: 57). The Kim family went on to have a daughter in liberated Korea, born in May 1946. She is Kyŏnghui, a party central committee member, a powerful politician in her own right, and the wife of Chang Sŏngt'aek, who was ordered to be executed by his nephew, Kim Jong Un (Kim Chŏngŭn), in December 2013. Chŏngsuk did not live to see North Korea for long: she died in September 1949 in childbirth, along with the child. Kim Chŏngsuk is memorialised in North Korea as a martyr and a heroine.

Kim married once more, in 1952, to Kim Sung Ae (Kim Sŏngae), his former secretary. They had a daughter in 1952 (Kyŏngjin) and subsequently had two sons. The elder son, Pyong Il (P'yŏngil), was born in 1954; he was named after the dead son from the previous marriage, who was, in turn, posthumously renamed Man'il. The second Pyong Il is the current DPRK ambassador to Poland. The

younger son, Yong Il (Yöngil), born in 1955, was also a diplomat. He died in Germany in 2000 from illness. The daughter Kyöngjin is a diplomat, too, and her husband, Kim Kwang Sop (Kim Kwangsöp), currently serves as the DPRK ambassador to Austria. Kim Il Sung is known to have had two more children with two other women: a son named Hyun (Hyön) in 1971 with Madame Chegal, Kim's former nurse, and a daughter named Paegyön with a woman named Kim Songjuk. Kim Hyun is thought to have been killed by Kim Jong Il in 2001. In his relatively long life, Kim married three times and, with four women, had three daughters and five sons.

The empire of Japan ended when it surrendered on 15 August 1945. The Second World War was also over. The final days of the empire were singularly tragic: enormous death and destruction that culminated with atomic bombs on Hiroshima, on 6 August, and Nagasaki, on 9 August. The colonies of the empire were free, but for the people of Korea, freedom was very brief. Colonialism was quickly replaced by another kind of occupation, by the US in the South and the Soviet Union in the North. Washington's proposal for the division of the Korean peninsula at the 38th parallel, on 10 August, was immediately accepted by Moscow, which, having declared war on Japan on 8 August, was already landing troops on the eastern coast of the Korean peninsula at the port cities of Unggi, Najin, and Ch'öngjin. Various native governing bodies freely emerged throughout the peninsula, but they now faced two powerful hegemonic entities growing more hostile toward each other. The occupation of Korea by the militaries of the US and the Soviet Union was a fiercely divisive issue among the Koreans. Left-wing nationalists opposed both sides; right-wing nationalists supported it from an anti-communist standpoint; and socialists and communists, including Kim Il Sung, tended to support it with the goal of a revolution on the entire peninsula. Korea's liberation in 1945 was thus simultaneously a moment of lamentation: freedom had come not through the efforts of Korean independence fighters; and the occupation divided the land for the first time in at least 500 years.

The Soviet occupation of North Korea began with the deployment of the 25th Red Army stationed in the Far East; it arrived in Pyongyang on 26 August. The Korean and Chinese partisans of the 88th Brigade were

initially left out of Moscow's plans, and they did not accompany the first wave of Soviet troops into Korea. Moscow understandably had more trust in the Moscow-trained Soviet-Koreans than in rebels such as Kim Il Sung, indicating that Kim was not a hand-picked puppet of Stalin. The Chinese and Korean guerrilla fighters of 88th Brigade thus independently prepared to return to their homelands. Kim Il Sung and 60 other Korean fighters formed the Korean Work Team at the end of August and left Soviet territory on 5 September 1945. During the time between the Work Team's formation and departure from Far East Russia, Kim travelled to Moscow and met Stalin, who then approved Kim's separate entrance (but not much more). After two weeks of travelling, on 19 September, Kim and his team of 60 partisans disembarked at Wönsan. Kim had returned home after two decades of life as a guerrilla fighter. He was 33 years old. The legend of Kim Il Sung was already in the making.

In the political terrain of Soviet-controlled North Korea, Kim's close group of Manchurian partisans was a minority, both in number and political strength. His group competed and collaborated with at least six other groups in the aftermath of liberation: the Chinese-Korean group from Yan'an who had participated in the Chinese revolution; the Soviet-Koreans dispatched by Moscow and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; the socialists and communists based in Seoul whose leadership, headed by Pak Hönyöng, had moved north; the communists from the northern part of Korea known as the Kapsan group; the powerful Korean Democratic Party led by the Christian nationalist Cho Mansik; and the populist Ch'öndogyo Young Friends Party formed by the activists who followed the native religion of Ch'öndogyo.

The Soviets governed through the Soviet Civil Administration (SCA), established on 3 October 1945. The SCA's role in North Korea's founding is the topic of much debate that continues today. One view, particularly from the right, is that the SCA was an extension of Stalin's imperialistic and totalitarian grip, placing a puppet government in the North with Kim as its figurehead. Another view, espoused by the DPRK, is that the SCA recognised Kim as the leader from the start, because he had the full support of peasants and workers. The actual situation was a bit of both. Moscow was indeed interested



in backing a pro-Soviet government in the northern part of Korea, but it was cautious of a full socialist revolution lest it should provoke the US into taking military action. As for personnel, the SCA had brought the Russian-speaking Soviet-Koreans, who were well educated and well trained in bureaucracy, but it also saw that popular support was an aspect it could not manufacture. The support of the people lay more with the nationalists, including Cho Mansik's Korean Democratic Party and the Ch'öndogyo Young Friends Party, than with elite socialists. Another player with growing popular support was Kim Il Sung, who embodied the ideas of patriotism, direct action, and social reform, while having connections with the Chinese and the Soviets. The objectives of SCA and the situation on the ground eventually elevated the socialist and communist leaders who had the support of the masses. One result was the weakening of the non-socialist Korean Democratic Party; Cho himself was placed under house arrest in January 1946 for opposing Soviet and US occupations of Korea. The SCA also placed advisors in the central government, especially on foreign affairs, and in provincial governments; but below the provincial level, the SCA did not seem to have much influence (Armstrong 2003: 54).

Kim Il Sung quickly gained the support of fellow socialists, the Soviets, and the ordinary people. In the first legislative organ, the North Korean Provisional People's Committee (NKPPC), founded on 8 February 1946, Kim was elected chairman. NKPPC was the coming together of representatives from political parties, social organisations, and local governments called people's committees. Functioning as North Korea's first law-making institution, the NKPPC ordered two major reforms that were revolutionary in scale. First was the land reform of March 1946. NKPPC confiscated land from Japanese landowners, large Korean landowners, and private institutions (such as Churches) and redistributed the properties for free to over 700,000 households, the majority of whom had never owned land before. The second reform was the nationalisation of industries beginning in August 1946. Over 1,000 industrial sites were nationalised within a year, from steel and mining to chemical and consumer goods. The SCA undoubtedly approved and advised these reforms, but the newly formed Korean leadership, led by Kim, was

the essential source of change, along with the ordinary people, who were willing to work with the new regime.

Kim's emergence in the political world occurred along with the gradual political ascent of his former partisan comrades. At the first congress of the Korean Workers' Party in August 1946 (then called the North Korean Workers' Party, as an ally to the South Korean Workers' Party), the central committee of 43 members had only four members from the Manchurian partisan group, with Kim as deputy chair (Sō 2005: 178). The dominant groups were the Soviet-Koreans, domestic communists, and the most numerous Chinese-Koreans. The number of Kim's group in the central committee increased with each party congress, while, except for the communists from northern Korea, the numbers from other groups decreased. At the fourth congress in September 1961, called the 'Congress of Victors,' Kim's group had placed 31 members in the 85-member central committee, with Kim as chair, while the Chinese-Korean group and Soviet-Korean group had three and one, respectively (Sō 2005: 796). Noteworthy in Kim's gathering of political power is that he was very capable of negotiating and compromising with various groups and linking actual progressive changes in people's livelihood with the nationalist ideals of his own group. This meant, at crucial moments, attributing failures to others and, with little due process, removing them from positions of authority, which usually meant sending them to the countryside. Executions in North Korea certainly happened, but they were symbolic events and far less in percentage than in China and the Soviet Union. This is not to downplay the violence of the Kim regime but to talk about its complexity in practice. As much as its 'purging' was extra-legal and arbitrary, the regime relied on the influence of exoneration and rehabilitation: within the authority of Kim Il Sung, anybody could be punished, and anybody could be forgiven. Such a practice of power fits with Žižek's interesting statement that socialist 'totalitarian' regimes were 'regimes of mercy' (2008: 676).

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in September 1948, three weeks after the Republic of Korea (ROK) was established in the South. The chance for a unified Korea was fading by late 1947, as the US-Soviet Joint Commission failed to

negotiate the terms for a single independent country. The ‘Korea Question’ was turned over to the United Nations, which established the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) in November 1947. One role of UNTCOK was to observe a nationwide election in Korea, but the UN-sponsored election was rejected by North Korea, forcing the election to be held only in the South, in May 1948. This election established a legislative body, which, in turn, elected a president, Rhee Syngman (Yi Sŭngman), and proclaimed the founding of ROK on 15 August 1948. North Korea saw ROK as an illegitimate entity and carried out its own election on 15 August 1948, establishing the legislative organ the Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA). The SPA declared the founding of the DPRK on 9 September 1948. Kim Il Sung became the prime minister of the cabinet, while the position of the chair of the SPA (a position of the head of state) went to Kim Tubong, a veteran soldier from the Chinese-Korean group. Kim himself did not become the head of the SPA until 1972, when the presidency system was implemented, at which point he became the president of the DPRK, a position he held until his death in 1994. In 1998, the DPRK abolished the presidency system, reinstated the cabinet system, and symbolically elevated Kim as the last and eternal president of the DPRK; a move not unlike the posthumous promotion of George Washington in 1976 as the highest-ranking military officer of the United States (for eternity).

From the moment of the formation of two separate nation states, each side loudly expressed the desire to unify the land, even if that meant a war. The ROK president Rhee Syngman spoke about the DPRK as a puppet state of the Soviet Union, and Kim publicly lamented that the US had set up a colony in the southern half and was exploiting the Korean people. Both sides built up the military and engaged in conflicts along the border. The Korean War, that is recognised by most of the world started on 15 June 1950, with an invasion by North Korea, and ended on 27 July 1953 with an armistice. What is less recognised is the situation leading up to the June clash: the guerrilla insurgencies in South Korea and nine months of border fighting that together resulted in thousands of casualties. While they envisioned different futures, Kim and Rhee during this time shared the manoeuvres of strengthening the military,

acquiring the support of powerful allies, and waiting for the right provocation to initiate attack (Cumings 1997: 251). The moment came earlier for North Korea when, first, the well-trained Korean soldiers who fought with the CCP in the Chinese revolution returned to ultimately form an army of over 100,000 soldiers and, second, Mao and Stalin decided to support North Korea when it launched an attack (China with a ‘volunteer’ army and the Soviet Union with weapons). The war that started in June 1950 was thus the most ambitious offensive (a tragic continuation) in the belligerent relationship between the two states since 1948.

Death, displacement, and destruction produced by the Korean War were a political opportunity seized by Kim Il Sung and his partisan group. Post-war economic reconstruction required a strong state, which could only follow a massive political consolidation. The removal of groups from positions of authority was, at the time, a justifiable act for the failures of the war. The purging lasted throughout the decade and involved a nationwide party membership renewal, public trials of rival groups, teach-ins at all branches and regions of the government, censorship of intellectuals, and repatriation of Soviet-Koreans back to the Soviet Union. It even lasted through the attempt to overthrow Kim in August 1956 by the Chinese-Korean and Soviet-Korean groups, an event known as the ‘August Factional Incident’. By the fourth party congress in September 1961, Kim and his partisan group (and their loyalists) had control in the cabinet, legislature, party, and military. The once diverse world of North Korea’s politics, which reflected the various actors in the resistance against Japanese imperialism, was reduced to Kim’s partisan group as the sole legitimate representation of the people.

The anti-imperial past of Kim Il Sung was a crucial factor in the shaping of his political authority. In the eye of North Korea’s party-state machinery, imperialism did not end in Asia with the dissolution of the Japanese empire. The new enemy was the US, and it had once again colonised the Korean people in the South and set up a military-capitalist outpost. North Korea had valid reasons for this outlook. First was South Korea’s export-oriented light manufacturing industry geared toward American and Japanese consumers. From the late 1960s, South Korea’s cities

became centres of exploitative factory work for millions of young women and men. They left their home towns for low-wage work that placed them in unhealthy and dangerous work settings with little legal or union protection. Another reason was the establishment of dozens of US military bases across South Korea after the signing of the Status of Forces of Agreement (SOFA) in 1953. The most notorious was the US Eighth Army's base in central Seoul, the same location in which imperial Japan had stationed its army for three decades. (After six decades, the Eighth Army is in the process of relocating to a base outside Seoul.) With SOFA came the twice-a-year joint military exercises between the US and South Korea that were live simulations of another war on the peninsula. North Korea's leadership sent out the message that it had defended itself in the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War, largely because of Kim's military strategy and his brotherly ties to Mao and Stalin. These two features originated from Kim's days as a guerrilla fighter in Manchuria, and as long as imperialism is a threat to North Korea, Kim would be the leader. Enemy making is a universal tool for the political unity of a nation, and the making of North Korea's new enemy in the US further fostered the people's trust in the Kim Il Sung regime.

Kim's rise within the DPRK officialdom accompanied the production of devotion toward him and the Manchurian partisans. The devotion toward a political leader is often called the 'cult of personality'. State-socialism from the Soviet Union to Vietnam suffered from the culture of glorifying leaders, and in no other place was it stronger than in North Korea. Filled with images of tearful adulation, dancing children, and large statues, the cult of personality is a quality that immediately seems bizarre and conjures up a sense of brainwashing. But it must be said that monarchies, national histories, and celebrity cultures everywhere also depend on personality worship, with their own ways of publicity, consumption, and socialization (or brainwashing). As bizarre as it may seem, the cult of personality is not a matter of absence or presence (because it is pervasive in our world) but a matter of degree. A major degree of difference in places like North Korea was the involvement of the education system. Kim Il Sung and his partisans were hyperbolised from early on, but a systematic production

of devotion began with the publication of *The Memoirs of Anti-Japanese Partisans* in June 1959. The book was read by the whole society, especially in schools. The others who also fought for independence were either portrayed as part of Kim's command or excluded from the new revolutionary history of North Korea. Beginning in 1972, around the time of the promulgation of his *chuch'e* ideology, the system of glorifying Kim placed him above all other revolutionaries, including Stalin, Mao, and even Marx. Kim's actual authority, however, was in decline, as his son Jong Il rose in the ranks and orchestrated his father's place in history. (In almost all cases, personality cult reaches its height when actual power diminishes.) Through literature, movies, songs, and textbooks, all that seemed decent about living in North Korea was attributed to Kim. On the one hand, it was a simple process of learning the rationale, from childhood, that Kim Il Sung was the ideological source of happiness and that its opposite was caused by the enemy: the US military and capitalism. On the other hand, the process of attribution had a strong effect on language and performance. Every person learned to speak and to act in a certain way according to the situation, not unlike etiquettes and manners in church or at a formal dinner. Publicly, the people of North Korea praised his life, wept about his sacrifices, and shook their fists at the US; but in private life, behind closed curtains, they lived a life beyond the rhetoric and performance. Kim's personality cult was produced at a great level and became a part of children's education, but, as with any belief, the actual hold varied among the people.

The attribution of Kim Il Sung to North Korea's progress was rooted in real economic growth. Between 1946 and 1960, North Korea claimed to have experienced a 2,000 per cent increase in industrial output, a 683 per cent increase in national income, and a 539 per cent rise in labour productivity (Central Statistical Board 1961: 22–28). These numbers are questionable, but given the low starting point, there is little doubt of a large absolute economic growth. Industrialisation (focused on heavy industries like steel, chemical, and mining) created hundreds of thousands of jobs and urbanised the country. The Three-Year Plan from 1954–56 had raised production back to pre-war levels, and the Five-Year Plan from 1957–60

completed the co-operativisation of agriculture and the nationalisation of all forms of production (finishing a year early in 1960). Modern industrial management of time, space, and wage took place in conjunction with mass campaigns, such as the famous Ch'ŏllima Movement that began in 1959. One important achievement in the process was the proletarianisation of the workforce, as farmers and private producers became wage-workers in the fully nationalised economy. Within a decade after the Korean War, North Korea had established the foundations for a state-led socialist economy. This meant the state would appropriate that total surplus created from production and decide how it would be utilised. The state also controlled distribution through its ration system, although small private plots were allowed in the countryside. At least formally, the force of the market was removed from production, distribution, and consumption. By the late 1960s, North Korea was meeting the minimum need for food, housing, and clothing, while providing employment, medical care, and education for the entire population. Some regions were still poor, but until the 1980s, the people of North Korea on the whole fared better than their neighbours in the South.

In the setting of political unity and economic growth in the 1950s and 1960s, Kim Il Sung developed the idea of *chuch'e* (officially spelled *Juche*). As Kim's most defining thought, *Juche* is the guiding principle of North Korea's official sectors, including the party, the military, economic planning, and education. Although the word itself is a common one in East Asia, meaning 'subjectivity' and 'self-reliance', in North Korea it takes on the message that one's life is determined by oneself, and by extension, the progress of a nation state is determined by its people (Kim 2012: 72). The origin of *Juche* is considered to be Kim's speech in December 1955 titled 'On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing *Juche* in Our Ideological Project'. But theorisation did not happen until the early 1970s when Kim organised a group of scholars for the task, a group led by the philosopher Hwang Jang Yop (Hwang Changyŏp, 1923–2010) who went on to serve as chair of SPA's standing committee. (In February 1997, he became the highest ranking official to defect to South Korea, where he lived a second life as a vocal critic of Kim and the DPRK.) Two international events further

influenced the development of *Juche*. First was the diminishing foreign aid from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Economic independence, especially in consumer goods, was a growing necessity. And second was the Sino-Soviet Split of the 1960s during which North Korea criticised both states: the Soviet Union for being soft against capitalism (especially after the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962); and China for ignoring the situation of the people (with the Cultural Revolution of 1966) (Kim 2012: 76). *Juche* was thus a response to the changing international context of less foreign aid and growing antagonism between two socialist superpowers. At the same time, *Juche* was a positive manifestation, an expression of North Korea's success in post-war reconstruction and nationalised industrialisation.

The announcement of *Juche* to the public (especially the foreign public) in 1972 was a year-long event. It was written about in popular magazines. Kim Il Sung gave interviews to foreign newspapers, one of which was Japan's major daily *Mainichi Shinbun*. And throughout the 1970s, North Korea took out full-page advertisements in Western newspapers, including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Guardian*. As the world experienced the Vietnam War and uprisings in every region, Kim's *Juche* had a moment in the sun. Post-colonial developing countries saw North Korea's economic expansion as a model, and Kim's *Juche* was an empowering text for emerging regimes and radical organisations. One interesting case was the Black Panther Party in the US, whose leading member, Eldridge Cleaver, visited North Korea in 1969. Endorsing the *Juche* idea, Cleaver, in 1972, wrote the foreword to an English-language book on Kim's writings. '[T]he manuscript before me is one that must be read and understood by the American people above all', Cleaver wrote (Kim 1972: ix, emphasis in the original). For two decades, in the 1960s and 1970s, Kim's regime represented a successful alternative outside the domination of superpowers. Especially for those critical of liberal democracy, North Korea had achieved political and social unity, equal distribution of wealth, and independence from the hegemonic policies of the US, China, and the Soviet Union.

In the 1980s, while his national image grew more righteous and virtuous under the direction of his son, Kim Il Sung's international

reputation waned. This was the period of glasnost and perestroika in the Soviet Union; Deng Xiaoping's China embraced the market economy. The world increasingly viewed North Korea as an isolationist country with a failing economy. The economy had started to seriously weaken in the mid-1970s when trade among socialist countries slowed down and North Korea had to borrow from foreign banks flush with oil money (as did many other developing countries). North Korea defaulted the loan in 1980. Meanwhile, South Korea's economic growth overtook North Korea's and climbed at an astonishing rate. Like China's Deng Xiaoping, Kim Il Sung invited foreign capital investment into North Korea with the announcement of the Joint Venture Law in 1984. Initial investments came from companies originating in Japan, France, and Hong Kong, but foreign investment was not enough to offset the decline. The dissolution of state-socialism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union further devastated North Korea's economy. In the early 1990s, North Korea began to experience a dramatic decline in agricultural production, and with dwindling foreign aid and import of fuel, food shortages soon appeared as a major crisis. And as much as Juche was seen as an outcome of progress, it was perceived as the cause of misery. Kim was now viewed as a tyrant who had created a disastrous economy and indoctrinated the people to obey his words. He was indeed a tyrant who ruled with absolute power, and the Juche ideology had turned him into a guiding light of the masses. But what needs to be juxtaposed is that: first, almost all post-colonial states have remained poor for complex reasons; and, second, ideological control of a people is never complete. Ideology, including Juche, is largely about rhetoric and performance. Even under great oppression by the state, people create their own everyday life that is distanced from any complete ideological hold. The people of North Korea are no different.

The last days of Kim Il Sung are indelibly marked by the catastrophe of famine and the global portrayal of North Korea as a possible nuclear threat. He died from a heart attack on 8 July 1994 at the age of 82, probably knowing that the people of North Korea were beginning to die from hunger. That situation would continue until the end of the 1990s. The last efforts at trying to revive the

economy involved the strengthening of the nuclear programme and the selling of weapons on the international market. Kim Il Sung had initiated a nuclear programme in 1959 with assistance from the Soviet Union, and by the early 1990s the two countries were building a nuclear power plant on the east coast (Kotkin and Armstrong 2006: 119). When the joint project came to a halt due to financial reasons, North Korea turned to selling missiles and nuclear technology on the arms market, while accumulating plutonium independently. In the summer of 1994, North Korea tested ballistic missiles and rejected an inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Washington and Seoul considered using military strikes on North Korea's nuclear sites. But as the peninsula braced for another war, during what is now considered the first nuclear crisis, Kim Il Sung met with the former US president Jimmy Carter in June and negotiated a deal to stop the nuclear weapons programme and to work with a multinational consortium including South Korea, the United States, and Japan. Kim did not live to see the agreement, but at the end of his life he was shifting the course of his country. He was welcoming the partnership with governments that he had once vowed to destroy.

There exists a photo of Kim and Carter from that summer. They are on a boat and smiling. Kim looks like a gentle old man, not the ruthless politician who crushed his rival groups, not the tyrant vilified in post-war South Korea's anti-communist education system. Then again, Kim was not a singular character; no one who achieves greatness ever is, for better or worse. 'Rice is socialism', he frequently said. Socialism was a space in which he manoeuvred as an anti-imperialist, as a populist, and as a compromiser. But one aspect remains unbroken in Kim's life: power is constant movement, something he realised early on as a partisan in the mountains among more formidable forces.

Cheehyung Harrison Kim

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## Lenin (1870–1924) on Imperialism

Vladimir Ilich Lenin (1870–1924) was the greatest Marxist revolutionary and successful leader of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917. A great strategist and tactician of the first proletarian revolution of the twentieth century, Lenin was a true anti-imperialist who waged an unrelenting revolutionary struggle against the global capitalist-imperialist system by first overthrowing the despotic Russian Empire and its semi-feudal/semi-capitalist system, and subsequently fought the internal and external reactionary enemies propped up by Western imperialism that attempted to dislodge the young proletarian state that had brought the working class to state power.

Writing on the eve of the Socialist Revolution in Russia, Lenin produced two important works that have become Marxist classics: *The State and Revolution* (1917) and *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916). Always understanding the political implications of his analyses of the capitalist state and the political economy of the highest stage of capitalism from the point of view of the working class, the class struggle, and the necessity of the overthrow of the global capitalist system, Lenin developed a keen interest in understanding the underlying class contradictions of capitalist expansion on a world scale that served as the basis for the rise of the working class against capital and the capitalist state on a worldwide basis. To understand the economic roots and political manifestations of the development and expansion of capitalist imperialism across the globe, Lenin studied both bourgeois and Marxist analyses of the highest stage of global capitalist expansion to understand its various dimensions and develop an appropriate strategy and tactics for a protracted class struggle against it. Thus, more than developing a scientific understanding of the inner workings of the capitalist-imperialist system, Lenin was interested in untangling these contradictions to develop the response necessary in the struggle against imperialism.

Clearly, acutely aware of the class contradictions of global capitalist expansion and of imperialism in general, Lenin was interested in understanding the inner logic and dynamics of the capitalist-imperialist system to generate the ultimate response to it that only the working class could provide through revolutionary class action. In fact, the global expansion of capital in spreading capitalist relations of production across the world was the catalyst that – through the exploitation of labor on a world scale – was preparing the material conditions for the rise of the working class on a worldwide scale. It is in this political context of the struggle against imperialism that Lenin took up the pen to write about the economic underpinnings and social-political implications of the global capitalist system in the age of imperialism.

Lenin's theory of imperialism is based on the Marxist analysis of the development and expansion of capitalism on a global scale from the late 19th to the early 20th century. Benefiting from two other important works which he studied – John A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study*

(1905) and Rudolf Hilferding, *Finance Capital: A Study of the Latest Phase of Capitalist Development* (1910) – Lenin provided us with a concise analysis of the highest stage of capitalist development on a world scale.

Lenin's theory of imperialism centres essentially around the five fundamental features of capitalism at the turn of the 20th century:

1. The concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies that play a decisive role in economic life.
2. Bank capital has merged with industrial capital and created, on the basis of this, 'finance capital', a financial oligarchy.
3. The export of commodities acquires exceptional importance.
4. International monopolist capitalist combines form and share the world among themselves.
5. The territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed.

The beginning point of Lenin's analysis of imperialism is his conception of the dynamics of modern capitalism: the concentration and monopolisation of production: 'The enormous growth of industry and the remarkably rapid concentration of production in ever larger enterprises are one of the most characteristic features of capitalism ... . [A]t a certain stage of its development, concentration itself, as it were, leads straight to monopoly, for a score or so of giant enterprises can easily arrive at an agreement' to monopolise the market ([1917] 1975, 642, 643). He argued that 'This transformation of competition into monopoly is one of the most important – if not the most important – phenomena of modern capitalist economy' (643). Referring to Marx's *Capital* (1967/1867), Lenin pointed out that 'by a theoretical and historical analysis of capitalism [Marx] proved that free competition gives rise to the concentration of production, which, in turn, at a certain stage of development, leads to monopoly' (645). 'Today', he added, 'monopoly has become a fact ... and that the rise of monopolies, as a result of the concentration of production is a general and fundamental law of the present stage of development of capitalism' (645). In outlining the dynamics of competitive capitalism developing into its special, monopoly stage (i.e., imperialism), Lenin noted that:

the principal stages in the history of monopolies are the following: (1) 1860–70, the highest stage, the apex of development of free competition; monopoly is in the barely discernible, embryonic stage; (2) After the crisis of 1873, a lengthy period of development of cartels; but they are still the exception. They are not yet durable. They are still a transitory phenomenon; (3) The boom at the end of the nineteenth century and the crisis of 1900–03. Cartels became one of the foundations of the whole of economic life. Capitalism has been transformed into imperialism. (646–647)

He observed that:

Cartels come to an agreement on the terms of sale, dates of payment, etc. They divide the markets among themselves. They fix the quantity of goods to be produced. They fix prices. They divide the profits among the various enterprises, etc. ... In order to prevent competition ... the monopolists even resort to various stratagems: they spread false rumors about the bad situation in their industry; anonymous warnings are published in the newspapers; lastly, they buy up 'outsiders' (those outside the syndicates) and pay them 'compensation'. (647, 651–652)

For Lenin, 'the real power and significance of modern monopolies' could not be understood unless one took 'into consideration the part played by the banks' ([1917] 1975, 653).

The principal and primary functions of banks is to serve as middlemen in the making of payments. ...

As banking develops and becomes concentrated in a small number of establishments, the banks grow from modest middlemen into powerful monopolies. ... This transformation of numerous modest middlemen into a handful of monopolists is one of the fundamental processes in the growth of capitalism into capitalist imperialism. (653)

After examining an enormous quantity of data, Lenin came to the following conclusions on the concentration of banking, especially in Germany, and the extent to which banks control the market and the significance of that control:

The small banks are being squeezed out by the big banks, of which only nine concentrate in their hands almost half the total deposits. ... The big enterprises, and the banks in particular, not only completely absorb the small ones, but also ‘annex’ them, subordinate them, bring them into their ‘own’ group or ‘concern’ (to use the technical term) by acquiring ‘holdings’ in their capital, by purchasing or exchanging shares, by a system of credits, etc., etc. ...

We see the rapid expansion of a close network of channels which cover the whole country, centralizing all capital and all revenues, transforming thousands and thousands of scattered economic enterprises into a single national capitalist, and then into a world capitalist economy. ...

[T]he concentration of capital and the growth of bank turnover are radically changing the significance of the banks. Scattered capitalists are transformed into a single collective capitalist. When carrying the current accounts of a few capitalists, a bank, as it were, transacts a purely technical and exclusively auxiliary operation. When, however, this operation grows to enormous dimensions we find that a handful of monopolists subordinate to their will all the operations, both commercial and industrial, of the whole of capitalist society; for they are enabled – by means of their banking connections, their current accounts and other financial operations – first, to ascertain exactly the financial position of the various capitalists, then to control them, to influence them by restricting or enlarging, facilitating or hindering credits, and finally entirely determine their fate. ...

Among the few banks which remain at the head of all capitalist economy as a result of the process of concentration, there is naturally to be observed an increasingly marked tendency towards monopolist agreements, towards a bank trust. ...

Again and again the final work in the development of banking is monopoly. ([1917] 1975, 654–662)

Lenin’s detailed study of the process of concentration and monopolisation of banking in the major capitalist countries at the

turn of the 20th century convinced him to conclude that ‘at all events, in all capitalist countries, notwithstanding all the differences in their banking laws, banks greatly intensify and accelerate the process of concentration of capital and the formation of monopolies’ ([1917] 1975, 658). Lenin then explained the ‘close connection between the banks and industry’. The monopolistic relationship between the banks and industrial capitalists is such that ‘the industrial capitalist becomes more completely dependent on the bank’ (662). To stress the existence of this mutual relationship and to outline the specific mechanisms through which such a relationship is established, Lenin pointed out that ‘a personal union, so to speak, is established between the banks and the biggest industrial and commercial enterprises, the merging of one with another through the acquisition of shares, through the appointment of bank directors to the Supervisory Boards (or Boards of Directors) of industrial and commercial enterprises, and vice versa’ (662).

All of these, then, signified to Lenin: (a) ‘the ever-growing merger of bank and industrial capital’; and (b) ‘the growth of the banks into institutions of a truly ‘universal character’ ([1917] 1975, 664). ‘Thus, the twentieth century marks the turning point from the old capitalism to the new, from the domination of capital in general to the domination of finance capital’ (666).

In his chapter on finance capital and the financial oligarchy, Lenin, by way of quoting Hilferding, clarified the underlying dynamics of ‘finance capital’. According to Hilferding, ‘bank capital, i.e., capital in money form, which is ... transformed into industrial capital’ can be called ‘finance capital’. In other words, ‘finance capital is capital controlled by banks and employed by industrialists’ (Hilferding, as quoted in Lenin [1917] 1975, 667). But, to Lenin, ‘this definition is incomplete insofar as it is silent on one extremely important fact’: ‘[T]he increase of concentration of production and of capital to such an extent that concentration is leading, and has led, to monopoly. ... The concentration of production; the monopolies arising therefrom; the merging or coalescence of the banks with industry – such is the history of the rise of finance capital and such is the content of that concept’ (667).

Lenin then described ‘how, under the general conditions of commodity production and



private property, the ‘business operations’ of capitalist monopolies inevitably lead to the domination of a financial oligarchy’ (667). And the ‘cornerstone’ of that domination is the ‘holding system.’ (As an example of this, Lenin mentioned the Deutsche Bank ‘group’ as ‘one of the biggest, if not the biggest, of the big banking groups.’) Quoting from the work of the German economist Hans Gidion Heymann, Lenin developed the following observations of the nature and structure of the ‘holding system’:

The head of the concern controls the principal company [literally: the ‘mother company’]; the latter reigns over the subsidiary companies [‘daughter companies’] which in their turn control still other subsidiaries [‘grandchild companies’], etc. In this way, it is possible with a comparatively small capital to dominate immense spheres of production. Indeed, if holding 50 percent of the capital is always sufficient to control a company, the head of the concern needs only one million to control eight million in the second subsidiaries. And if this ‘interlocking’ is extended, it is possible with one million to control sixteen million, thirty-two million, etc. (Heyman, as quoted in Lenin [1917] 1975, 668)

Basing his facts on bourgeois sources, such as Professor Liefman (an ‘apologist of imperialism and of finance capital’), Lenin argued that ‘it is sufficient to own 40 percent of the shares of a company in order to direct its affairs’ (668). The ‘holding system’, he added, ‘not only serves enormously to increase the power of the monopolists; it also enables them to resort with impunity to all sorts of shady and dirty tricks to cheat the public, for the directors of the ‘mother company’ are not legally responsible for the ‘daughter company’, which is supposed to be ‘independent’, and through the medium of which they can ‘pull off’ anything (669). And to illustrate his point, Lenin cites several examples from the publications of finance capital itself (e.g. *Die Bank*).

In short, finance capital:

concentrated in a few hands and exercising a virtual monopoly, exacts enormous and ever-increasing profits from the floating of companies, issue of stock, state loans, etc., strengthens the domination

of the financial oligarchy and levies tribute upon the whole of society for the benefit of monopolists . . . . The supremacy of finance capital over all other forms of capital means the predominance of the rentier and of the financial oligarchy; it means that a small number of financially ‘powerful’ states stand out among all the rest. (Lenin [1917] 1975, 672, 677)

And these states, made up of ‘the richest capitalist countries’ (Great Britain, the US, France, and Germany), together ‘own 479,000,000,000 francs, that is, nearly 80 percent of the world’s finance capital’ (678). ‘In one way or another’, Lenin added, ‘nearly the whole of the rest of the world is more or less the debtor to and tributary of these international banker countries, these four ‘pillars’ of world finance capital’ (678).

The obvious international implications of world finance capital led Lenin to examine next the part which the export of capital plays in creating the international network of dependence and connections of finance capital. He argued that, unlike under conditions of competition when the principal characteristic of capitalism is the export of *goods*, under the rule of monopolies, it is the export of *capital*:

On the threshold of the twentieth century we see the formation of a new type of monopoly: firstly, monopolist associations of capitalists in all capitalistically developed countries; secondly, the monopolist position of a few very rich countries, in which the accumulation of capital has reached gigantic proportions. An enormous ‘surplus of capital’ has arisen in the advanced countries.

... As long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will be utilized not for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline of profits for the capitalists, but for the purpose of increasing profits by exporting capital abroad to the backward countries. In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap. The export of capital is made possible by a number of backward countries having already been drawn into world capitalist intercourse; main railways

have either been or are being built in those countries, elementary conditions for industrial development have been created, etc. The need to export capital arises from the fact that in a few countries capitalism has become ‘override’ and (owing to the backward state of agriculture and the poverty of the masses) capital cannot find a field for ‘profitable’ investment. ...

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. ([1917] 1975, 679, 681)

An important channel through which capital is exported to the peripheral countries is international loans. Quoting from an article in *Die Bank*, Lenin pointed out that, in making these loans, the capital-exporting countries are nearly always able to obtain ‘advantages’: ‘In these international transactions the creditor nearly always manages to secure some extra benefit: a favorable clause in a commercial treaty, a coaling station, a contract, a harbor, a fat concession, or an order for guns’ ([1917] 1975, 681). “The most usual thing” in this financial transaction is to stipulate that part of the loan that is granted shall be spent on purchases in the creditor country, particularly on orders for war materials, or for ships, etc. ...The export of capital thus becomes a means for encouraging the export of commodities’ (681). All these observations led Lenin to conclude that ‘the capital-exporting countries have divided the world among themselves in the figurative sense of the term. But finance capital has led to the actual division of the world’ (683).

Lenin argued that the economic division of the world among capitalist combines is the inherent outcome of the development of capitalism into its highest stage: monopoly capital.

Monopolist capitalist combines, cartels, syndicates and trusts first divided the home market among themselves and obtained more or less complete possession of the industry of their own country. But under capitalism the home market is inevitably bound up with the foreign

market. Capitalism long ago created a world market. As the export of capital increased, and as the foreign and colonial connections and ‘spheres of influence’ of the big monopolist combines expanded in all ways, things ‘naturally’ gravitated towards an international agreement among these combines, and towards the formation of international cartels.

This is a new stage of world concentration of capital and production, incomparably higher than the preceding stages. ([1917] 1975, 683)

To illustrate how this ‘supermonopoly’ develops, Lenin examined the electric industry, which, he said, is ‘highly typical of the latest technical achievements and is most typical of capitalism at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries’ ([1917] 1975, 683). Drawing attention to the monopolisation of this sector of global industrial capital, he noted that ‘this industry has developed most in the two leaders of the new capitalist countries, the United States and Germany’ (683). After examining the process of a series of mergers in the global electrical industry from 1900–12, ‘two electrical “great powers” were formed’:

[I]n 1907, the German and American trust concluded an agreement by which they divided the world between them. Competition between them ceased. The American General Electric Company (G.E.C.) ‘got’ the United States and Canada. The German General Electric Company (A.E.G.) ‘got’ Germany, Austria, Russia, Holland, Denmark, Switzerland, Turkey and the Balkans. Special agreements, naturally secret, were concluded regarding the penetration of ‘daughter companies’ into new branches of industry, into ‘new’ countries formally not yet allotted. The two trusts were to exchange inventions and experiments. (685)

But for Lenin, such agreements to divide the world are only temporary and do not ‘preclude redivision if the relation of forces changes as a result of uneven development, war, bankruptcy, etc.’ ([1917] 1975, 685). And to support his argument, he cited the fierce struggle for redivision then taking place in the international oil industry: a struggle between John D. Rockefeller’s Standard

Oil Company, and the big German banks, headed by the giant Deutsche Bank, for the controlling interests of the oil industry in Romania. ‘On the one hand, the Rockefeller “oil trust” wanted to lay its hands on everything; it formed a “daughter company” right in Holland, and bought up oil fields in the Dutch Indies, in order to strike at its principal enemy, the Anglo-Dutch Shell trust. On the other hand, the Deutsche Bank and the other German banks aimed at “retaining” Romania “for themselves” and at uniting her with Russia against Rockefeller’ (686).

The conclusion Lenin reached was thus inescapable: the division and redivision of the world is the result of a permanent struggle between two or more major capitalist powers, for this is the essence of the contradiction within international monopoly capital (imperialist rivalry):

The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. And they divide it ‘in proportion to capital’, ‘in proportion to strength’. ... But strength varies with the degree of economic and political development. In order to understand what is taking place, it is necessary to know what questions are settled by the changes in strength. ([1917] 1975, 689)

Moreover, ‘the epoch of the latest stage of capitalism shows us that certain relations between capitalist combines grow up, based on the economic division of the world; while parallel to and in connection with it, certain relations grow up between political alliances, between states, on the basis of the territorial division of the world, of the struggle for colonies, of the “struggle for spheres of influence”’ (689–690).

Thus, the characteristic feature of the epoch of the international expansion of monopoly capital, Lenin argued, is the final and definitive partition of the world – final, in the sense that repartition in the future is possible only in the form of transferring territories from one ‘owner’ to another. This is so because ‘the colonial policy of the capitalist countries has completed the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet. For the first time the world is completely divided up’ ([1917] 1975, 690). Related to

this territorial division of the world, Lenin hinted at the existence of yet another motive force behind imperialism. He argued that as capitalism develops, the need for raw materials (essential for the continued reproduction of capital) increases, and this intensifies the competition between rival imperialist powers to acquire the sources of these raw materials throughout the world. This international rivalry in turn leads the imperialist countries to pursue imperial policies. This is summarised by Lenin in an important passage in *Imperialism*: ‘The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and the hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the whole world, the more desperate the struggle for the acquisition of colonies’ (695).

Thus, as the principal feature of imperialism is domination by giant monopolies of advanced capitalist countries, ‘these monopolies are most firmly established,’ argued Lenin, ‘when all the sources of raw materials are captured by one group. ... Colonial possession alone gives the monopolies complete guarantee against all contingencies in the struggle against competitors’ ([1917] 1975, 695).

Finally, with regard to colonial policy ‘in the epoch of capitalist imperialism’, Lenin observed that ‘finance capital and its foreign policy, which is the struggle of the great powers for the economic and political division of the world, give rise to a number of transitional forms of state dependence’ ([1917] 1975, 697). Typical of this epoch is not only the group of countries that own colonies, and the colonies themselves, ‘but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which politically are formally independent, but in fact, are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence’ (697). These relations of dependence between the dominant and dependent states ‘in the epoch of capitalist imperialism become a general system ... become links in the chain of operations of world finance capital’ (698).

There are two other important points that Lenin raised: the parasitism of imperialism and, its consequence, the bourgeoisification of certain segments among the workers in the imperialist countries. Lenin maintained that the ‘superexploitation’ of the colonies by the advanced capitalist countries has resulted in

the latter turning from ‘productive’ to ‘parasitic’ states:

Imperialism is an immense accumulation of money capital in a few countries .... Hence the extraordinary growth of a class, or rather, of a stratum of rentiers, i.e., people who live by ‘clipping coupons,’ who take no part in any enterprise whatever, whose profession is idleness. The export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the rentiers from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country that lives by exploiting the labour of several overseas countries and colonies. ...

Monopolies, oligarchy, the striving for domination, ... the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by a handful of the richest or most powerful nations – all these have given birth to those distinctive characteristics of imperialism which compel us to define it as parasitic or decaying capitalism. ([1917] 1975, 709–710)

Furthermore, the receipt of enormous monopoly profits by the imperialist bourgeoisie ‘makes it economically possible for them to bribe certain sections of the workers ... and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie of a given industry or given nation against all the others’ (728).

The underlying argument of Lenin’s analysis of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism is that imperialism is the *necessary* outcome of the development of capitalism:

Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development. ... Economically, the main thing in this process is the displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. ... Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system.

If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. (699–700)

Thus, in summarising the fundamental features of imperialism, Lenin concluded,

‘Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed’ ([1917] 1975, 700).

As we have seen from his analysis of the nature and contradictions of modern capitalist imperialism, Lenin concluded that imperialism today is a manifestation of the interests of the dominant capitalist class in a handful of advanced capitalist countries, and that it is especially beneficial to a section of the capitalist class engaged in overseas investment and finance, as well as to other sections of the bourgeoisie that are linked to it. He argued that economic gain, derived from the global operations of the big bourgeoisie (and the safeguarding of such operations on a world scale), constitutes the motive force of modern imperialism. Thus, the accumulation of capital and its appropriation by the capitalist class at the global level (through the mechanisms of the capitalist state, which this class controls) lies at the heart of the process of global capitalist expansion, hence of capitalist imperialism.

Examining the development of capitalism and its impact on countries around the world, Lenin stressed the domination of the export of capital over the export of goods in this period. His emphasis on the importance of the export of capital is crucial from the angle of its implications concerning the transformation of the relations of production in the periphery; that is, in the pre-capitalist and semi-capitalist regions of the world. With the export of capital, and the employment of wage-labour that this capital requires in the periphery, Lenin saw capitalism to have reached its highest and final stage when the inevitable conflict between exploiters (capitalists) and exploited (wage-labour) would result in a proletarian revolution by workers throughout the world as they rise up in arms against it (i.e. the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism by the politically organised international proletariat), a conclusion he reached in his book when he wrote, ‘Imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat ... on a worldwide scale’ ([1917] 1975, 640). Thus, in the end, it is this political outcome that is the result of

the global capitalist expansion that Lenin saw as the inevitable outcome of the contradictions of capitalist imperialism – an outcome effected by the working class on a global scale.

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## Louverture, Toussaint (c.1743–1803)

François Dominique Toussaint Louverture (c.1743–1803) was the heroic leading figure in the Haitian Revolution of 1791–1804, the only successful slave revolution in recorded history, and he remains an international inspiration, seen by many to be one of the greatest anti-imperialist fighters who ever lived. Toussaint was a military genius who led an army composed overwhelmingly of former enslaved Africans and people of African descent to victory after victory under the banner ‘Liberty or Death’ over the professional armies of France, Spain, and Britain, before paying the ultimate price himself for refusing

to compromise with imperial power at the expense of the maintenance of liberty for all. His imprisonment in a freezing cold cell in the Jura mountains inspired a sonnet by William Wordsworth in 1803 paying tribute to Toussaint as an immortal symbol of ‘man’s unconquerable mind’, meaning that ‘there’s not a breathing of the common wind that will forget thee’ (Bell 2008: 3, 294; For recent work on the Haitian Revolution see Dubois 2005 and Girard 2013a).

The diminutive black West Indian general certainly remains one of the African diaspora’s few globally recognisable revolutionary icons, arguably comparable in impact and influence to Malcolm X (1925–65). Building up and organising a disciplined rebel black slave army in the midst of a general uprising among the half a million African slaves in the French Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue, Toussaint was the critical figure who helped ensure that amid the French Revolution, the ideals of the Enlightenment, *liberté, égalité, and fraternité*, would be translated from rhetoric to become a material force without equal in the Atlantic world. Playing a critical role in the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean’s wealthiest colony and the founding of Haiti, the first independent black republic outside Africa and the second independent state in the Americas, Toussaint not only outwitted numerous generals of European imperial armies but was also one of the first to anticipate the threat of neo-colonialism in the context of post-colonial independence, as is evident in his constitutional and political tactics as well as his military manoeuvres.

‘I was born a slave, but nature gave me the soul of a free man’, Toussaint wrote in 1797 (Parkinson 1978: 37). It seems that Toussaint was born in the northern region of the French colony of Saint-Domingue around 1743, the eldest son of West Africans who had been captured and sold to European slave traders. Toussaint’s father, who took the name Hippolyte in Saint-Domingue, was the son of Gaou Guinou, a powerful local official of the Alladas in present-day Benin, and the respect other slaves had for him apparently meant that he received favourable treatment from the plantation owner of the Bréda sugar plantation at Haut-du-Cap (Girard and Donnadiou 2013: 44–47). Toussaint himself was spared the often brutally short existence awaiting those who laboured in the sugar cane fields

in one of the most intensive zones of capital accumulation in the Western world. Instead, picking up herbalist knowledge from his father, he worked as a house slave with livestock as a stable-lad, developing skills as a horse doctor.

Toussaint could speak his parents' Aja-Fon language alongside the customary French Creole, and unusually learned to read from his slave godfather. He was born early enough to be exposed to Jesuit missionaries, who introduced him to Catholicism and from who he picked up some Latin phrases, and he soon developed a basic command of French from his contacts with white society. At some time in his mid- to late 20s, between 1769 and 1772, he managed to move from slavery into the small free black community, the very lowest stratum of the free people of colour on Saint-Domingue, and became a small landowner – indeed briefly also a slave owner himself. Yet Toussaint Bréda, as he was then known, continued to live and work as a coachman for the Bréda estate's French manager Bayon de Libertat. Though in his additional role as a *commandeur* Toussaint was involved in directing the work of slaves on the plantation, his own family remained enslaved (Geggus 2007: 116–117, 132).

Toussaint's literacy, his Christianity, and the nature of his professional work appear to have ensured him a degree of social mobility across colonial Saint-Domingue, and a degree of trust among white society. He developed a liking for European culture, reading some ancient history (including Julius Caesar's *Commentaries*) and political philosophy (including the former slave-turned-Stoic Epictetus, Machiavelli, and the Enlightenment philosophe Abbé Raynal) (Bell 2008: 61; see also James 2001). The American Revolution – which saw the transition of a former colony to independence while keeping the institution of slavery intact – inspired many of the white master planter class of Saint-Domingue, and doubtless its impact would have also registered with Toussaint.

The outbreak of the French Revolution in Paris in 1789 threw white society in Saint-Domingue into chaos and civil war between royalists and republicans, and saw the island's free people of colour make their own bid for equality. Toussaint himself seems to have watched the fray from the wings, though

it seems he was at the Bois Caïman ceremony in August 1791, which was the catalyst for a hundred thousand of the island's half a million or so black slaves to launch their own insurrection and so join the wider revolt. By late 1791 Toussaint had joined a band of rebel slaves, becoming a doctor, a secretary, and then an influential advisor to the second most important slave leader, the former *commandeur* Georges Biassou (Bell 2008: 23–24, 33).

Toussaint's background as a free black and his relationship with at least some of the white colonial elite perhaps help us to understand why he was initially willing to act in late 1791 and early 1792 to try and help secure a negotiated settlement between the leaders of the slave rebellion and the white planter class. However, the rebels' proposed offer, which guaranteed peace in return for an amnesty for a tiny minority of rebel leaders, the abolition of the whip, and one extra free day per week for the slaves on the plantations – was bluntly rebuffed by the white planters. Yet despite not agitating and taking a stand for 'general liberty' and the full abolition of slavery straight away, Toussaint personally rejected the opportunity to take up the offer that was made by the colonial authorities for an amnesty for free people of colour after the National Assembly in France voted to abolish racial discrimination in April 1792. Rather than defect to the white planters and play his part in the counter-insurgency operations then under way, Toussaint steadily now emerged as a critically important military leader of the black rebel slave army, itself now in alliance with the Spanish Empire, training up his own group of disciplined followers in the art of war – particularly guerrilla war (Geggus 2007: 119–121). From around mid-1792, Toussaint seems to have moved to a position of support for 'general liberty' based on the principle of natural human rights (Bell 2008: 43).

On 29 August 1793, Léger Félicité Sonthonax, the French commissioner in Saint-Domingue, recognising the *de facto* reality of abolition at the hands of the black slave army, formerly proclaimed the end of the slavery in the colony, hoping to win the black slave armies and its leaders like Toussaint away from the slave-owning Spanish Empire. The response of Toussaint – now casting off his old name and adopting the new name 'Louverture', meaning 'the opening' – was to openly declare his complete commitment to

abolition of slavery in a proclamation made the same day: 'I am Toussaint Louverture ... I want Liberty and Equality to reign in Saint Domingue' (Bell 2008; Geggus 2007: 121). This statement – and others from around this time discussing the need for general emancipation – challenged Sonthonax's claim to be the true apostle of liberty locally, and also distinguished Toussaint from other slave leaders such as Jean-François and Biassou, who had begun rounding up slaves for sale to the Spanish for their own personal ends.

On 4 February 1794, the Convention in revolutionary France – under the control of the Jacobins and with public detestation of racism, dubbed 'the aristocracy of the skin', rising in crescendo in France itself – voted not simply to ratify Sonthonax's emancipation proclamation but to abolish slavery throughout the French Empire (James 2001: 113–114). In May 1794, as news of this historic decree began to filter into Saint-Domingue, Toussaint made his famous yet still contested *volte-face* as he defected from the Spanish to join the French. Toussaint chose his moment well to enable his own troops to cause the maximum amount of damage to the Spanish and now also to a British invasion force, sent in 1793 to try and capture Port-au-Prince and other places in the south of the island. The British had the support of local white counter-revolutionary forces and the intention of ultimately claiming Saint-Domingue, the 'Pearl of the Antilles', for the British Empire and restoring the highly profitable business of slavery on the island. Toussaint's dramatic radical political shift from royalism to republicanism may have had ulterior and less noble motives, but as David Geggus notes, it was 'a decisive turning point in the Haitian Revolution ... Black militancy and the libertarian ideology of the French Revolution were now melded, and the cause of slave emancipation had found a leader of genius' (Geggus 2007: 123–124; see also Geggus 1982, 2002).

In his classic 1938 work *The Black Jacobins*, the Trinidadian Marxist historian C.L.R. James situated the Haitian Revolution within the wider age of bourgeois-democratic revolutions and showed how Toussaint's extraordinary career rose and fell with the wider revolutionary process in France during the 1790s. 'The great [French] revolution had propelled him out of his humble joys and obscure destiny, and the trumpets of its heroic period rang ever in his ears. In him, born a

slave and the leader of slaves, the concrete realization of liberty, equality and fraternity was the womb of ideas and springs of power, which overflowed their narrow environment and embraced the whole of the world' (James 2001: 215). As not only the quintessential 'black Jacobin', but also a French general, Toussaint over the next four years now inspired and led the black rebel slave army to stunning victories over first Spanish and then British imperial armies. As James noted, 'Toussaint had the advantage of liberty and equality, the slogans of the revolution. They were great weapons in an age of slaves, but weapons must be used, and he used them with a fencer's finesse and skill' (James 2001: 120).

In recognition of his outstanding achievements on the battlefield and his apparent unceasing loyalty to the appointed representatives of Revolutionary France in the colony, above all the aristocratic Governor Laveaux, Toussaint steadily rose in prominence from proconsul of the western province to deputy governor in 1796, and then the colony's commander-in-chief in 1797. Toussaint not only defeated European generals on the battlefield but also effectively sidelined a number of rival political figures in Saint-Domingue. After putting down attempts to overthrow Laveaux's authority, Toussaint cunningly removed Laveaux himself from the scene by suggesting his return to France in order to counter the growing pro-slavery lobby in Paris in 1796. He then successfully forced out Sonthonax, and when the French Directory sent General Hédouville in 1798 to try and limit Toussaint's growing power, Toussaint outmanoeuvred him as well, sending him back to France within six months (Geggus 2007: 125–126).

As Toussaint, more confident than ever, now boasted, 'remember that there is only one Toussaint L'Ouverture in San Domingo and that at his name everybody must tremble' (James 2001: 180). When the Haitian free coloured leader André Rigaud, whose armies occupied lands in the south, refused to tremble before Toussaint's power in the north and west, Toussaint waged a brutal war from 1799 to 1800 to ensure his hegemony, forcing Rigaud and his followers to flee to France. By mid-1800, Toussaint was unquestionably the dominating political figure in Saint-Domingue, recognised as its governor and indeed the self-declared 'first man in the Archipelago of the Antilles' (James 2001: 28). As an established statesman and

diplomat, Toussaint undertook a daringly independent foreign policy, for example making a trade and non-aggression treaty with Britain and America in 1798–99, and annexing Santo Domingo – then French territory – in January 1801, in order to deprive any future invading French army use of Santo Domingo's harbours (Geggus 2007: 129). Toussaint's antagonising of the French government in order to keep trading links with the slave-owning America and Britain, something which enabled him to stockpile munitions, would soon have costly consequences.

In terms of his domestic policies, following the defeat of the British, Toussaint attempted to rebuild towns and schools and develop a new anti-racist culture on Saint-Domingue. More controversially, he outlawed Vodou (though he himself may have personally continued to practise it secretly) and supported the re-introduction of the slave trade to guarantee a supply of labour. He also continued Sonthonax's scheme of imposed forced labour in order to try and revive the island's decimated plantation economy to its former prosperity. Toussaint needed a strong economy to support his standing army, which was essential to ensure adequate defence against the clear and ever-present danger of external intervention. However, his army was also used internally to force former slaves to work on plantations when they wished to found smallholdings of their own. The unpopularity of such a measure – and Toussaint's encouragement of white plantation owners to return to and reinvest in their former estates – led to resistance among black labourers, many of them women. In November 1801 a popular revolt from below in the north was blamed by Toussaint on his adopted nephew, the popular General Moïse, who had opposed the militarisation of agriculture. The revolt was bloodily repressed, and Moïse shot. To many former slaves, Toussaint seemed ever more remote, even a figurehead of a new emerging black landholding class of army officers. In 1801, Toussaint promulgated a bold constitution that concentrated all power in his hands and made him governor for life, with the right to choose his successor. While he ruled out formal independence from the French Empire, he attempted to move the colony towards greater autonomy from France through statehood as a sister republic within a wider 'commonwealth' (Geggus 2007: 127–129; see also Fick 2009: 186–188).

Such audacity on the part of a former slave would soon lead to Toussaint's downfall, given the steady rise of counter-revolutionary forces in France itself around another military strongman, Napoleon Bonaparte. In February 1802, the French invaded Saint-Domingue with ten thousand troops commanded by Bonaparte's brother-in-law General Leclerc. Toussaint, and some of his loyal generals like Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe, retreated to the mountains to conduct heroic and desperate bloody guerrilla warfare. 'In the midst of so many disasters and acts of violence I must not forget that I wear a sword', Toussaint declared amid this War of Independence (James 2001: 246). However, despite the fact that the black resistance was beginning to gain the upper hand over the elite professional French military troops, first Christophe in April 1802 and then Toussaint himself in May 1802 made peace, perhaps half believing Napoleonic propaganda about their claimed commitment to the principle of 'general liberty' and perhaps half fearing an unstoppable steady stream of French reinforcements, given the Peace of Amiens which France had recently concluded with Britain.

As the French army at their moment of victory began to be withered away by disease, Leclerc secured the agreement of both Dessalines – who had developed his own vision of full independence for Saint-Domingue which went beyond that of Toussaint – and Christophe that they would not launch a new uprising if the French now arrested Toussaint on the pretext that he was himself plotting a new rebellion. Toussaint – not realising he had been betrayed – agreed to meet with the French general Brunet in good faith in early June 1802, only to be arrested, kidnapped, and deported to France (Bell 2008: 258, 263–264). As Toussaint boarded the fateful ship to leave his homeland, he delivered a prescient warning to his French captors. 'In overthrowing me, you have cut down in San Domingo only the trunk of the tree of liberty. It will spring up again by the roots for they are numerous and deep' (James 2001: 271). Toussaint was right, for once it became clear that the French intended to restore slavery and the old racial order, many of their former collaborators deserted them and the War of Independence erupted once more with a vengeance. In the freezing cold prison at the Fort de Joux in the French Alps,



Toussaint wrote his ‘memoir’, addressed to Napoleon, to justify his public record as governor of Saint-Domingue and his plea for a court-martial so as to allow him the opportunity – like that given to any white French general – to defend himself. However, in April 1803, with Napoleon’s silence ever more deafening, Toussaint died, never living to hear that his life work would be vindicated in January 1804, when the violent struggle for Haitian independence would triumph at last, under the leadership of Dessalines and Christophe and in alliance with the formerly free people of colour (see also Girard 2013b; Nesbitt 2008).

Following James’s understanding of ‘black Jacobinism’, some parallels between Toussaint Louverture and Maximilien Robespierre (1758–1794) may be noted by way of conclusion. Like Robespierre, Toussaint was said to be personally ‘incorruptible’ and had a keen sharp intellect which marked him out from his contemporaries. Both were also autocratic figures, content to remain somewhat aloof from the revolutionary masses – and even turn and crush the left wings of their respective revolutionary movements, actions which ultimately contributed to their downfall. Yet if Toussaint might be remembered as ‘the black Robespierre’, his ‘blackness’ should not be forgotten, for the Haitian Revolution was in many senses an African revolution in a Caribbean setting. Toussaint was a ‘creolised’ figure, drawing strategically on the various traditions by which he was influenced – including Vodou – to shape and deliver his revolutionary project.

‘Men who serve their country well ... have powerful enemies ... I know I shall perish a victim of calumny’, Toussaint once noted (James 2001: 208). Despite a recent powerful portrayal of Toussaint’s life in the outstanding trilogy of novels by Madison Smartt Bell, what the late Haitian scholar Michel-Rolph Trouillot called the ‘silencing’ of Haiti’s ‘unthinkable’ rich revolutionary history in the discourse of Western imperial countries reminds us that there are some historic figures about whom those in power have found it best not to let people find out too much (Trouillot 1995: 73, 97). It is telling, for example, that there has been no Hollywood film directly about either Toussaint or the Haitian Revolution for over 60 years (since Lydia Bailey, 1952).

This said, Toussaint’s political legacy in Haiti and internationally across the black

diaspora was nonetheless to be profound, and is testified to by, for example, the fact that during the American Civil War, the company nickname of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, one of the first official units of African Americans, about a quarter of whom had been formerly enslaved, was ‘the Toussaint Guards’ (Clavin 2007: 91). In later periods – for instance the inter-war period amid the Harlem Renaissance, the US occupation of Haiti, and continuing European imperialist domination over Africa and the Caribbean – Toussaint once again became an inspiring symbol of revolutionary anti-imperialism and ‘Black Power’, invoked by figures as diverse as Marcus Garvey, C.L.R. James, Langston Hughes, Jacob Lawrence, Aimé Césaire, Pablo Neruda, and Sergei Eisenstein (for a useful survey of some of these representations see Forsdick 2006). Toussaint’s refusal to see freedom as a ‘gift’, but rather as something that has to be taken and won through struggle, gives his political thought continuing resonance amid the revolutionary processes unfolding in recent years across the Middle East and North Africa.

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## Lumumba, Patrice (1925–1961)

In Congo's southernmost province of Katanga, the first prime minister of an independent Congo, Patrice Lumumba, along with two of his comrades, was shot on 17 January 1961. Their assassination followed hours of horrific torture. A Belgian officer organised the firing squad; the three bodies were quickly buried, meters from where they had fallen. The following day, another Belgian officer dug up the bodies, cut them into pieces, and dissolved them in acid.

Lumumba was a self-educated nationalist leader. Born in 1925 in Congo's Kasai province, he was expelled from school and ran away to the regional capital of Stanleyville (Kisangani). By the time of his arrival in Stanleyville, a new colony was being promised. Industry was being developed and new

mining communities were established across the country. Copper was at the centre of the boom, being produced in huge quantities in the South and mined by the public-private giant Union Minière du Haut-Katanga (UMHK). The Belgian Congo was the source of vast profits for the colonial state and private businesses.

Arriving in Stanleyville in 1944, Lumumba quickly became a leading member of the *évolués* (literally meaning 'the evolved') in the city. This was a group of educated Congolese men who were trained to take part in the civilising mission of the Belgian state. They were given low-ranking jobs in the administration and groomed to regard themselves as champions of the 'Belgian Congo' community. Lumumba became a clerk in the Stanleyville post office.

For much of the 1950s, Lumumba's ideas did not stray from those held by the majority of the *évolués*. He was, effectively, an advocate of the colonial project. In June 1956 this began to change. Arrested and imprisoned unjustly for alleged embezzlement in his postal job, Lumumba started to criticise the 'motherland'. Released in September 1957, he decided to make his new life in the capital Leopoldville (today's Kinshasa). The city was a modern metropolis but still deeply segregated. Leopoldville became infected by the ideas of independence and political liberation.

By November 1958, Lumumba was elected to lead what became the principal party of national liberation, the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC). But Belgium was desperate to control the pace of radicalisation and sought to manipulate and divide the country's emerging political parties.

Other Western states were also eager to ensure that Congo's independence did not threaten their economic investments in the country. The US had been heavily involved in the region since the start of the 20th century. Ryan and Guggenheim, the US mining groups, had interests in the region. The US also had investments in the Union Minière du Haut-Katanga (Mining Union of Upper Katanga, UMHK).

### End of conciliation

Two events signalled the end of Lumumba's conciliatory politics. He was inspired by the independence of Ghana in 1957. The most

prominent black leader on the continent was Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah took a personal interest in the struggle of the MNC and became a comrade and confidante to Lumumba. The second was more important. On 4 January 1959, Leopoldville erupted in violence. A demonstration was crushed by the notoriously brutal Force Publique, the colonial army. Hundreds were killed. The belief that a long transition and common understanding could pave the way to Congolese independence was over.

Congolese society was transformed, and Lumumba threw himself into the tumult. By March 1959, the MNC had 58,000 members. Lumumba's militancy rose with the gathering radicalisation. Now he demanded independence without delay. But other members of the *évolués* saw their future in an alliance with the colonial power and later with the US.

The secret to Lumumba's leadership of the struggle for independence was his ability to respond to the radicalisation in Congolese society. This contrasted with other, more cautious, members of the Congolese *évolués*, who were prepared to accept the continuity, in new forms, of European influence. In April 1959, while in Belgium, Lumumba responded to a question about support for the party he now led among the Congolese masses – the process was inherently dialectical: 'the masses are a lot more revolutionary than us ... They do not always dare to express themselves in front of a police officer, or make their demands in front of an administrator but when we are with them it is the masses who push us, and who want to move more rapidly than us'. (Van Lierde 1972: 45).

Arrested, beaten, and imprisoned at the end of 1959, Lumumba was only released when negotiations were launched in Brussels in January 1960. In the negotiations he refused to allow the Congolese state to be divided up (with the country's wealth controlled by the provinces) as the Belgian rulers had hoped. Nor would the MNC accept the Belgian king as the head of state in an independent Congo. By the end of negotiations, a date had been set for independence: 30 June 1960. But Lumumba's radicalism had earned him the hatred of the Belgian elite. They decided to

undermine the MNC's efforts to win the May 1960 general election.

## Independence

However, the MNC emerged victorious in the election in May. Lumumba was now the undoubted leader of Congo's future. On the day of independence he reminded his audience of the struggle for freedom: 'For this independence of the Congo, even as it is celebrated today with Belgium, a friendly country with whom we deal as equal to equal, no Congolese worthy of the name will ever be able to forget that it was by fighting that it has been won'. Celebrations were quickly extinguished. In July, Belgium promoted the secession of the mineral-rich provinces Katanga and Kasai. These new 'states' were immediately recognised, armed, and supported by the old colonial power. Some *évolués* – using the language of ethnic divide and rule – helped provide an African veneer to these artificial breakaway provinces.

Lumumba attempted to mobilise his supporters. As the power he had just acquired began to slip away, he turned to the ranks of the MNC. But the forces against him were too great. Leading militants of the nationalist movement fell to bribes and co-option. Joseph Mobutu (the future dictator of the country, until then an ally and friend of Lumumba) was openly bribed by the US and persuaded to organise a coup d'état in September.

By October 1960 there were four operations underway to assassinate Lumumba. Western states openly called for his government to be removed. Lumumba fled the capital in November to reach his supporters in Stanleyville. Arrested days later, he knew that this probably meant death. Writing in prison to his wife, he said, 'History will one day have its say, but it will not be the history that Brussels, Paris, Washington, or the United Nations will teach, but that which they will teach in the countries emancipated from colonialism and its puppets' (cited in Zeilig 2008: 123).

## Books and debates

There has been little debate about responsibility for Lumumba's assassination since the publication of Ludo de Witte's *The Assassination of Lumumba*, which caused a parliamentary scandal in Belgium and an enquiry. De Witte's book is a superb exposé of the role

of the Belgian state in Lumumba's murder. Major studies include biographies written in the 1960s and 1970s; unfortunately, most are out of print and in French. This means that there is very little available on Lumumba's entire life for an English-speaking audience. Robin McKown's *Lumumba, a Biography* was notable at the time (it was published in 1969) for being a very sympathetic portrayal of Lumumba. Another much cited biography is Pierre de Vos's *Vie et mort de Lumumba*, published in 1961.

By far the best source of Lumumba's own writing is *Lumumba Speaks: The Speeches and Writings of Patrice Lumumba 1958–1961*, edited by his collaborator and comrade Jean Van Lierde. This collection is a translation from the French edition that appeared in 1963. It is a superb collection of Lumumba's speeches and an interview published with a critical introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre. Lumumba's only book came out in the year that he was assassinated under contentious circumstances. It was published in English in 1962 under the title *Congo, My Country*. This is a fascinating insight into Lumumba's ideas in 1956.

### Biographies

Robin McKown's *Lumumba, a Biography* (1969) is long out of print but can be bought on the Internet. Panaf Books's *Patrice Lumumba* (1973) was reprinted in 2002. These are valuable sources, but both are dated. McKown's book has a slightly patronising tone towards the Congolese, and the Panaf book is overloaded with occasionally tiresome political rhetoric.

### Novels and films

There are a number of novels that have fictionalised the period of Lumumba's assassination. Two of the most interesting are Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible* (1998). Although Lumumba only makes a short appearance in the book, it provides a powerful account of the hopes of the early nationalist movement in the Congo. Ronan Bennett's celebrated novel *The Catastrophist* (1999) takes the Congo crisis as the backdrop to an unusual love affair. The book is a powerful and largely sympathetic account of the crisis, but it makes the unfortunate error of asserting that Lumumba received money from an American agent. The novel reproduces Lumumba's final letter to his wife. Raoul

Peck's film *Lumumba* was released to critical acclaim in 2000 and has received numerous awards. It is a moving and historically accurate account of Lumumba's life from his time in Leopoldville to his assassination in 1961.

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## Luxemburg, Rosa (1871–1919)

Rosa Luxemburg was a Polish-Jewish socialist and anti-militarist. She had the unique ability to combine her theoretical engagement with fervent political practice. At the age of 15 she joined the Polish Proletariat Party. As a naturalised German she would later on in life become an educator and foremost representative of the left wing within the German Social-Democratic Party (SPD). Her political work against the First World War, and her writings on imperialism, war, and militarism remain a testimony to her dedication to the socialist and internationalist cause.

During her short life, not a year passed without military conflict. Her childhood in the 1880s took place against the backdrop of the new imperialism and the scramble for Africa. The Berlin Conference (also known as the Congo Conference) of 1884–85 heralded a new era for the German Empire as it emerged as an imperial power. Intense inter-state rivalry would follow shortly after. The Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and the Spanish-US War in 1898 would be followed by the British Boer War in South Africa (1899–1902) and the campaign of the European powers in China (1900). These wars aimed to consolidate European influence across the world. In the meantime, an ascendant working class was to pay the price for these military excursions. In response to the Russo-Japanese War (1904–07), Russian sailors mutinied; workers rebelled and set up what would come to be known as the first soviets (workers' councils) in one of the most 'under-developed' countries at the time. In the years to follow, tsarist Russia would invade Persia (1908) and France invade Morocco (1911). Meanwhile, the German Empire had fought the Herero Wars in South-West Africa; what is Namibia today. German troops repressed the revolt by selling prisoners to German businesses. To make matters worse, they set up concentration camps. One of these camps, Shark Island, would prefigure the Nazi concentration camps used to exterminate more than 10 million human beings.

In less than 30 years, the geo-political situation had been fundamentally transformed. Thus, it is no surprise that the colonial question was a high-priority item at the 1907 Socialist International Congress in Stuttgart. Speaking there, Rosa Luxemburg would argue that 'European antagonisms themselves no longer play their role simply on the European continent but in every corner of the world and on all oceans' (Luxemburg 1911a). She was to be proven right when the shooting of Franz Ferdinand of Austria triggered European inter-state rivalries that culminated in the First World War.

A few days into the war in 1914, the SPD, the largest Social-Democratic party in Europe, would vote for war credits. Luxemburg and her allies such as Karl Liebknecht, Clara Zetkin, Leo Jogiches, and others broke from the SPD to found the Spartakusbund (Spartacist League). They agitated and called demonstrations against the war. In Frankfurt,

Luxemburg called on thousands of conscript soldiers to conscientiously object and refuse orders. In 1915 she would be imprisoned for incitement against the German Empire; a continuous and regular occurrence but one that would not lessen her determination.

The Spartakusbund operated within the Independent Social-Democrats (USPD) until Luxemburg, her collaborators, and many radicalised workers founded the German Communist Party (KPD) in December 1918. At that time the German Empire was on the brink of revolution. Soldiers and workers' councils had taken hold all over the country and forced Kaiser Wilhelm II to step down.

The insurrection, known as the Spartacist Uprising, launched by workers in Berlin, would have devastating consequences and take the young Communist Party by surprise. On 15 January 1919, SPD chancellor Friedrich Ebert ordered the Freikorps militia to murder Rosa Luxemburg and her comrade Karl Liebknecht. Luxemburg was thrown into the Landwehrkanal where a memorial recalls her today.

Rosa Luxemburg's contribution to peace, democracy, and socialism amounts to no more than a memorial. Today more than ever her work informs those seeking to understand the faultlines of global capitalism. With her polemic against the revisionism of Eduard Bernstein *Reform and Revolution* (1900) she enhanced a rich Marxist tradition. The *Mass Strike* (1906), a treatise on the dynamics of the 1905 revolution in Russia, influences social-movement scholars, political scientists, and historians amongst others. In her famous essay 'Peace Utopias' (1911a) she argued that the SPD ought to make the 'question of militarism' the focus of its electoral campaigning and agitational work. In the article she condemns her internal party opponents Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky for being utopians. While the former believed that peace was attainable through more integration of the world markets, the latter contended that it was not in capitalists' interest to go to war. In other words, war is merely a policy error. For Luxemburg the issue is clear-cut: imperialism and war are inherent to capitalism. The 'proletarian revolution [is] the first and only step toward world peace' (Luxemburg 1911a). This set her at odds with most peace campaigners in her day as well as the majority of the SPD leadership. Only a few months later she began her article on the French invasion

of Morocco with these poetic yet frightening words: 'A dark imperialist cloud is hanging over the capitalist world' (Luxemburg 1911b). In the article she achieves two things. Firstly, she links the revolutionary upheavals in Mexico, Turkey, Egypt, and Persia to the imperialist dynamic emanating from the centre of the capitalist world by arguing that their integration into the world market as a resource of cheap labour power and unregulated markets creates the conditions for spontaneous uprisings against the tumultuous shift in the regime of accumulation. Her continued relevance can be seen in the political revolutions in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia in 2011; countries in bondage to international loans and foreign direct investments.

Secondly, but no less importantly, she foreshadows the central tenet in her theory of imperialism by arguing that the driving force of imperialism was capitalism's need for third parties (colonies) outside of capitalist society (cf. Day and Gaido 2013: 459). In other words, imperialism is economically rooted in capital's need to continuously expand. As workers' consumption lags behind the production of goods and commodities in the capitalist centre, so third countries provide a new market for the excess capacity of goods and commodities. By integrating these countries into the world market, the capitalist centre could avoid the trap of a crisis of reproduction. Whereas Luxemburg suggests an under-consumptionist reading of such a crisis of reproduction, other Marxist writers of the Second and Third International emphasised the capacity for over-production.

Her most important anti-war pamphlet *The Crisis of Social Democracy* or *Junius Brochure* (her pseudonym being Junius) would contain her most famous words: 'Socialism or Barbarism'.

In the meantime, Luxemburg the trained economist had written *The Accumulation of Capital* (2013/1913). The book's subtitle *Contribution to the Economic Explanation of Imperialism* provides the answer to what it dealt with. She attempted to understand how surplus value is realised in capitalist society and why capitalist economies expand territorially, spatially as well as enclosing new markets internally. The book aroused much debate following its publication. Neither the reformists nor the revolutionaries in the International Socialist movement were

satisfied. Otto Bauer criticised it at length. The Bolshevik leader Nikolai Bukharin called it a 'daring theoretical attempt' (Bukharin 1917/1915: ch. 5), but also dedicated an entire book against it. Published at a time when Lenin's and Luxemburg's relationship was at an all-time low, Lenin remarked: 'She has got into a shocking muddle. She has distorted Marx' (Lenin quoted in Le Blanc 2013). Even today there are ongoing debates within political economy and Marxism regarding her reading of *Capital* (vol. 2) (Dunayevskaya 1946; LeBlanc 2013). At the same time, there is renewed interest in its lessons on imperialism and the dynamics of capitalist dynamics (Bellofiore 2009; Bieler et al. 2013; Schmidt 2013). Bellofiore argues that the export of goods to the periphery necessarily facilitates an international loans system which creates a vicious cycle in the form of over-indebtedness, interest payments, and repayments (2009). On the other hand, Bieler et al. (2013) emphasise the political nature of Luxemburg's explanation of imperialism by drawing on the following quotation which states that 'imperialism is the political expression of the accumulation of capital' (Luxemburg 2003/1913: 426). In other words, imperialism also takes on non-military forms.

What was Luxemburg's theory of imperialism? Her starting point was Marx's defining characterisation of capitalist social relations: the antagonism between capitalists and workers. Under capitalism, workers sell their labour-power below the value of what they produce. In turn, the earned wage of the labourer is used to buy food, clothes, and shelter in order to reproduce oneself and other commodities available through the generalised system of commodity production. Luxemburg observes that (unlike feudal landlords, ancient slaveholders, or other ruling classes) the capitalist reinvests rather than consumes the surplus made from exploiting labourers. Thus, there are fewer commodities consumed than produced. In classical economic terms, demand is lower than supply. This divergence means that an economy will stagnate and ultimately grind to a halt unless capital discovers new ways to sell the excess products. According to Luxemburg, the imperialist dynamic begins at the nexus when capitalists are compelled to expand into non-capitalist areas which Luxemburg labels 'the peasant economy' or 'natural economy'. Markets, raw materials, and labour are sought

in this economic sphere. She writes that the ‘non-capitalist social environment ... absorbs the products of capitalism and supplies producer goods and labour power for capitalist production’ (Luxemburg 2013/1913: 347). Elsewhere she wrote: ‘Only the continuous and progressive disintegration of non-capitalist organisations makes accumulation of capital possible’ (416, 417). The childhood experience of Polish industrialisation, on the one hand, and the scramble for Africa outlined above, on the other hand, would have confirmed her thesis. Was she correct to criticise Marx for supposing capitalism’s universal character in her *The Accumulation of Capital* (328)?

For Luxemburg, imperialism was not a phenomenon of the ‘highest’ stage of capitalism, as Lenin had argued in 1917, but occurred at what Marx called the stage of primitive capitalist accumulation. In reaching this conclusion, she transcended a stage-ism by which capitalism only develops internally within states and then moves outwards and extends its influence once internal markets have matured. It manifests itself, for example, through land robbing or the enclosure of common land – phenomena common to neo-liberalism. As domestic markets age and capitalism matures, it is in these spheres that value is realised. Inspired by Luxemburg’s model, the Marxist geographer David Harvey calls this process ‘accumulation by dispossession’ (Harvey 2003: 145). According to Harvey, ‘accumulation by dispossession’ manifests itself through the following practices and policies: privatisation, financialisation, state redistributions to the private sector, and the management and manipulation of crises. In particular, the capitalist centre has imposed privatisation packages through structural adjustment programmes on countries in the global South. The same holds true for the management of crisis through the use of flexible interest rates exacerbating the dependency of the global South. In recent years, Harvey has used the same methodological framework to analyse this dynamic within the capitalist centre itself. Here, non-capital zones such as government-owned housing estates, public spaces, people on benefits, or even workers have been integrated into new forms of value extraction through the privatisation of publicly owned homes and spaces as well as their integration into the finance and credit system (Harvey

2012). These constitute new antagonisms vis-à-vis contradiction in the capitalist world-system. However, it is questionable whether these forms of exploitation have replaced capital–labour antagonism as the central contradiction within capitalism and whether this reconfigures the imperialist dynamic between countries of the global North and South which was at the heart of Luxemburg’s analysis.

Regardless of which position one adopts regarding her model of capitalist accumulation and imperialism, Luxemburg remains highly relevant to those studying the world economy and its processes of commodification and privatisation today. Spheres of life such as health, education, and our environment (formerly outside the control of the market) are now subject to the paradigms of profit and capitalist growth, displaying that the means of subordination and domination used on the peoples of the global South are in turn being used to dominate the centre’s own populations. In doing so, ‘Luxemburg does not confine capitalism’s “outside” to a territorial phenomenon’ (Bieler et al. 2013: 3) but includes new layers of the local populations which have been outside of this logic until recently. For example, the state employs this logic by dividing the poor into ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’, creating the need to enter the market in order to receive benefits such as food stamps, means testing etc. Yet, it can also explain geo-political developments. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, non-capitalist areas outside Europe and North America such as China have, and continue to be, integrated into the world market. Ingo Schmidt uses Rosa Luxemburg’s framework to analyse US hegemony (Schmidt 2010). The Kosovo War (1999), Afghanistan (2001), Iraq War (2003), Libya (2011), and Mali (2012) can be regarded as events where new territories are integrated into the process of capital accumulation.

Furthermore she observes how capital investments by countries of the centre create dependency on exports and loans. In *The Accumulation of Capital* Luxemburg describes how the British took over Egypt. Once it was unable to repay its outstanding debts on loans it was conquered and subjected to colonial rule. In many ways, this foreshadows the practices of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank today. The use of structural adjustment programmes,

international loans, bailouts and credits has created new markets to realise value. Further examples include free trade and export-processing zones in the global South. Internally, this happened through the expansion of consumption through loans to people who previously could not afford to buy a house. The fire sale of Greek or Portuguese state assets to French and German businesses to raise money to repay loans, or the currency speculation which facilitated the East-Asian economic crisis of 1997/1998, both highlight the use of policy tools to maintain financial and economic dominance and extract value from the oppressed classes in peripheral countries while the profits are amassed in the capitalist centres. Exemplified here is how privatisation is a tool of imperialist policy. All in all, Luxemburg's model is a useful means to understand the way in which capitalism, at all times, depends on 'non-capitalist social environments' (Luxemburg 2013/1913: 347).

She also deciphers the underlying imperialist logic inherent in infrastructure programmes such as railways (408). Whether it be the Berlin–Baghdad railway or the expansion of US tracks westwards, railway lines are synonymous with capitalist expansion. Today, infrastructure programmes such as football stadiums for FIFA World Cups in South Africa, Brazil, or Qatar mean the displacement of hundreds of thousands of shantytown dwellers and destruction of *favelas*. In Qatar, the use of migrant labour from Nepal is another example of how labour from non-capitalised zones is integrated into the world market, production, and circulation of capital; and serves as a resource of cheap labour in centres of accumulation. The now infamous Gezi Park in Istanbul, Turkey, was to be bulldozed and replaced with a shopping mall. There are countless other examples which underline the applicability of Luxemburg's theory.

Yet many Marxists attacked Rosa Luxemburg for this theory. Critics included the reformist Otto Bauer and the Bolshevik Nikolai Bukharin amongst others. Bauer argued that the reproduction schema did not lead to the kind of imbalances that Luxemburg based her theory on (Pannekoek 1934). On the other hand, Bukharin argued that capitalism did not necessarily have to expand to non-capitalised zones. Under no circumstances was capitalism dependent

on integrating peasants or craftsmen into the general system of commodity production. Furthermore, his account of imperialism differs from Luxemburg's insofar as war and imperialism are a by-product of the centralisation of capital (Bukharin 1915/1917). Like Rudolf Hilferding, he emphasised the increased inter-relatedness of finance and industrial capital. Raya Dunayevskaya writes: 'Methodically, however she did depart from Marxism in the analysis of the question of capital, and it was inevitable, therefore, that she arrives at false conclusions' (Dunayevskaya 1946). Others have criticised her for being an economic determinist; a label which many Marxists have been branded with. Ernest Mandel (1966) wrote: 'The fundamental weakness of Rosa Luxemburg's theory is that it is based simply on the capitalist class's need for markets to realise surplus value, and ignores the basic changes which have taken place in capitalist property and production'. But it was not only those Marxists from the Trotskyist tradition who were critical of Luxemburg's reproduction schemes and her analysis of imperialism.

In many ways the argument she advances in her reproduction scheme asserts underconsumption within capitalism as opposed to over-production. For example, her theoretical framework cannot account for the long boom of capitalism in the 1960s and the expansion of the welfare state which entailed large-scale decommodification. While she does concentrate on the lack of effective demand within capitalism and subsequent capitalist breakdown, Paul LeBlanc argues that she displays an 'anthropological sensitivity' like no other Marxist theoretician at that time. She acknowledges the fact that there are different cultures, types of society, and forms of social and economic organisation (cf. LeBlanc 2010: 163). Her sensitivity to the commodification of labour vis-à-vis the proletarianisation, the genocides, famines, and slave-trading stands out in her account, as the quotation below displays:

In Africa and in Asia, from the most northern regions to the southernmost point of South America and the South Seas, the remnants of old communistic social groups, of feudal society, of patriarchal systems, and of ancient handicraft production are destroyed and stamped



out by capitalism. Whole peoples are destroyed, ancient civilizations are levelled to the ground, and in their place profiteering in its most modern forms is being established. (quoted in LeBlanc 2010; Luxemburg 2013/1913: 325)

These descriptions display her sensitivity to the plight of the oppressed peoples of the global South, and the way that capitalism would uproot their livelihoods and dissolve the social bonds which had kept these societies intact for centuries. Yet Lenin would simply criticise these as ‘non-Marxist’ (Lenin in Le Blanc 2010). For Luxemburg, imperialism was the ‘deadly enemy of the workers of all countries .... The struggle against imperialism is at the same time the struggle of the proletariat for political power’ (Cliff 1959). It is this message that makes Luxemburg’s theory of imperialism as relevant as ever.

Luxemburg was not free from flaws. Having personally experienced the regressive nature of Polish nationalism and the militaristic nature of German nationalism, she believed that all nationalisms were equally bad and harmful for the socialist and workers’ movement. Rather than understanding the contested nature of ‘nation’ in those oppressed countries, peripheral nations, and countries of the global South, she equated them with the nationalism of the oppressor (Luxemburg 1909). History has shown us that during progressive anti-colonial movements such as the Arab and Irish ones, nationalism successfully challenged imperial domination and colonialism.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Luxemburg’s anti-imperialist message is as prescient now as it was when she first wrote at the beginning of the 20th century. Drawing on her first-hand experience of war and the tumultuous changes taking place at the time, her work remains a benchmark in the study of imperialism and anti-imperialist strategies. The War on Terror, structural adjustment programmes in the global South, and the increased importance of the exploitation of foreign labour for capital accumulation highlight the need to deal with her ideas anew.

Her understanding of the relationship between the capitalist centre and the peripheral countries remains limited by

her interpretation of Marx’s reproduction schemes in *Capital* (vol. 2) and her emphasis on under-consumption. However, this allows her to see how these countries become testing grounds for policies later to be employed on the metropolises’ populations. The criticisms levied against her from within the Marxist tradition raise valid concerns about some of her conclusions. Yet her work forms part of a rich Marxist tradition of anti-imperialist thought which cannot be dismissed but needs to be built on.

Mark Bergfeld

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## Magubane, Bernard Makhosezwe (1930–2013)

Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane was born on 26 August 1930 close to Colenso, in Natal, South Africa. His life story, as a black South African and one of the country's leading scholar activists in the 20th and 21st centuries, including during his years of exile, is an instructive and inspiring example. Magubane wrote some of the most powerful works of scholarship analysing the relationship between imperialism, white-settler colonialism, and race and class in South Africa and the global system. This included overseeing a massive ten-volume work on the history of the black liberation struggle upon his return to South Africa under the country's majority rule and multiracial democracy inaugurated in the 1990s with the election of President Nelson Mandela, the head of the African National Congress (ANC), after his release from prison.

While a child, as recounted in *My Life and Times* (2010), Magubane's grandparents related stories to him of the Zulu War of 1879 and the Bambatha Rebellion of 1906, named after the Zulu minority ruler, and these made an indelible impression. Magubane's grandparents had seen the defeat of the Zulu Kingdom and its incorporation into Natal and the British Empire in 1897, soon followed by the Anglo-Boer War, which helped bring the word 'imperialism' into the English language, the formation of the Union of South

Africa, which became a dominion of the British Empire, and the passage of the 1913 Natives Land Act which dispossessed the African majority while concentrating them in some 7–13 per cent of the land, leaving 87 per cent to the white invaders.

At around this same time, in 1912, the South African Native National Congress was founded by Zulus who had been educated in the US. Renamed the African National Congress in 1923, this was ‘the country’s first pan-tribal political organization’ (3). Its aims were known to Magubane’s father and friends by heart and they often recited them from memory: ‘To encourage mutual understanding and to bring together into common action as one political people all the tribes and clans of various tribes or races and by means of combined effort and united political organization to defend their freedom, rights and privileges’ (ibid.). The Land Act forced Magubane’s family to become squatters and made Africans foreigners in their own land, replete with Pass law regulations that became infamous under apartheid. After his father, a farm worker, clashed with the owner of the farm, the Magubanes abruptly moved to the famous port city of Durban, where they were influenced by the Pass-burning campaign of 1919.

Magubane’s political awareness was heightened in 1948 with the victory of the Nationalist Party and the full institutionalisation of apartheid, Bantu education (designed to limit Black African advancement), and the ANC’s Programme of Action, as well as the adoption of the Freedom Charter and the Defiance campaign, anti-Pass law activities and related protests. At the University of Natal, Magubane earned his BA and MA in Sociology, and was introduced to the concepts of social pluralism and then as a postgraduate Marxist critiques of this, criticisms on which his subsequent scholarly career were initially built. With the banning of the ANC and at risk of his own arrest, Magubane went to study Sociology at UCLA in 1962, involving himself in the anti-apartheid movement in the city, this around the time of the Watts uprising, earning another MA and his PhD in Sociology there, before returning to Africa to teach at the University of Zambia from 1967–70.

In Zambia, Magubane became close to the vice-president and then president of the ANC (while Nelson Mandela was in jail) Oliver Tambo, who began using his study to work

and eventually moved in with the family. Magubane also befriended other Executive Committee members of the national liberation organisation, on whose behalf he attended various conferences as a delegate, meeting future leaders of South Africa such as one-time president Thabo Mbeki. It was in Zambia, in a fertile environment with many South African radicals and ANC leaders in exile, including Jack and Ray Simons, authors of *Colour and Class in South Africa* (1968), that Magubane’s teaching and scholarship began to mature. At this time he published some of his earliest writings critiquing the Manchester School of Anthropology, with its master concept of the tribe as the supposed key to unlocking African society. This work included his 1968 ‘Crisis in African Sociology’ in the *East African Journal* (reprinted in Magubane 1999: 1–26), followed by subsequent work on the political economy of migrant labour. Returning to UCLA in 1970, he eventually secured a position at the University of Connecticut and was for a time a visiting professor in the Department of Sociology at SUNY Binghamton, which had become the centre for world-systems analysis (formulated by Immanuel Wallerstein, Terence Hopkins, and Giovanni Arrighi) and was home of the Fernand Braudel Center. Throughout his time in the US, Magubane was active in the anti-apartheid movement and with the ANC.

In 1979 Magubane published *The Political Economy of Race and Class in South Africa*, begun before he left Zambia in early 1970 (followed in 1989 by *South Africa: From Soweto to Uitenhage, The Political Economy of the South African Revolution*). Magubane’s first chapter, ‘The Problem and Its Matrix: Theoretical and Methodological Issues’, starts off with an approving quotation from the famous African scholar who helped pioneer what would later become known as world-systems analysis, Oliver Cox, while also drawing on another of its forerunners W.E.B. Du Bois, notably from his towering work *Black Reconstruction*:

Our hypothesis is that racial exploitation and race prejudice developed among Europeans with the rise of capitalism, and that because of the worldwide ramifications of capitalism, all racial antagonisms can be traced back to the policies and attitudes of the leading capitalist people, the white people of North America and Europe. (1990: 1)

The book is a tour de force and was part of the long-term project of Magubane, chronicling as it did the story of how a white minority came to rule over the black South African majority. Especially significant about this work is that it is a deeply theoretically informed account, written from a black Marxist perspective, of the South African experience from the standpoint of its victims and protagonists in the liberation struggle. As Magubane relates:

The plight of black people in South Africa is intimately bound up with the history of white settlement in their lands, and the South African social formation itself represents a stage in the evolution of the world capitalist system ... although there are many ways to define and study racial inequality, in this book we shall conceptualize it as an aspect of imperialism and colonialism, concepts that will be used to refer to roughly the same phenomena: the economic, political, and cultural domination of the African people by the white settlers. We will use the term imperialism to refer to the specific relation between a subjugated society and its alien rules, and colonialism to refer to the social structures created within a colonized society by imperialist relationships. (1–3)

The book then devotes itself to an historical sociological analysis of the pyramid of white wealth and power build upon the backs of black African labour, land, and resources, as part and parcel of processes of imperialism. Especially crucial is the way in which the so-called policy of apartheid, or separation, is shown to be a lie, with the exploitation of black Africans, rather than separation, the basis of the white-settler state. South Africa's system of racial stratification, which developed its own relatively unique aspects of course, is moreover related to the larger structure of global power whereby the imperialist countries assure the subordination and under-development of other states in the global capitalist system. Of particular importance is Magubane's emphasis on the central role of British imperialism during the era of British hegemony in adumbrating the foundations of what would become South Africa's apartheid state, both before and most especially after the discovery of gold and diamonds in the region. Particularly important

here was the special role of gold in the international monetary system and the historic control of the gold and the diamond mines in South Africa by British capital, in alliance with the US.

Subsequently, in his massive study *The Making of a Racist State: British Imperialism and the Union of South Africa, 1875–1910*, Magubane (1996) turned to the question: How did the Union of South Africa come to be dominated for almost a hundred years by a white minority? Here, Magubane returned especially to the neglected theme of the central role of British imperialism in the emergence of white supremacy in South Africa. Analysed here is Britain's astonishing period of aggression and imperial advance in South Africa. Coming into particular focus is the legendary imperialist Cecil Rhodes (after whom Rhodesia, today's Zimbabwe and Zambia, was originally named), something curiously neglected in South African historiography and scholarship. As always, Magubane's quest for understanding has profound political implications, as he recognised:

As I write this preface the elections have just taken place which made Mr. Mandela the first democratically elected president of South Africa ... The end of white minority rule and the beginning of the process of black emancipation are momentous events. Yet South African scholarship – which to this day is predominated by white scholars – has hardly prepared the people of South Africa to understand the meaning of this change ... Indeed, the various schools of South African historiography and sociology have never confronted what it meant to the Africans to be deprived of the franchise and the claim that South Africa was a *white man's country*.

Reviewing the twists and turns of racist scholarship on South Africa, including efforts to let British liberalism and global capitalism off the hook for the structures of racial domination in South Africa, Magubane here illustrates the structures of knowledge and ignorance in the modern world-system, particularly Bonaventura de Souza Santos's argument that social injustice is always accompanied by cognitive injustice. Yet this book is no mere study of the origins of the South African state, in and of itself. Instead, it is a larger study of centrality of race and class

in the making of South African and global capitalism. Magubane draws on writings of the architects of imperialism to document their white supremacist views, from Ireland to Africa, squarely underscoring the role of British imperialism, most especially followers of Cecil Rhodes such as Alfred Milner, the one-time proconsul of South Africa, and his kindergarten – largely from Oxford – and the related Round Table Movement in forming the Union of South Africa and laying the material foundations of the South African political economy more generally, upheld as it was by cheap black labour. At the same time, Magubane draws on masters of race and class analysis and related structures of colonial domination such as Du Bois and Fanon, underscoring the spread of white-settler states across the globe, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the US, those lands that Alfred Crosby (2004), in his *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900*, named the neo-Europes, or what is sometimes referred to as the Anglo-sphere.

Indeed, in an important seminar paper, *The Round Table Movement: Its Influence in the Historiography of Imperialism* (1994), subsequently republished in his collected essays, *African Sociology – Towards a Critical Perspective* (1999), Magubane focuses more on the role of the Round Table movement, with chapters in each of the white dominions, assisted by the largesse of the Rhodes Trust, as a vehicle for British imperialism, replete with their quarterly journal of the same name. The Round Table movement also went on to form the Royal Institute of International Affairs, also called Chatham House, the British counterpart to the Council on Foreign Relations in the US. Participants in the Round Table movement read like a *Who's Who* of the British ruling class. Moreover, to a large extent, through the Round Table's special relationship with Oxford, notably All Souls College, the heart of the British Establishment, they largely controlled the historiography of the British Empire, including through contributions to Oxford's *Dictionary of National Biography*. In this essay, Magubane's humility, with important lessons for scholar activists today, is made plain:

Let me, at once make a confession. When I was writing my first book, *The Political Economy of Race & Class in South Africa*, I was embarrassed by how ignorant I was,

not only about the history of our people but even more about the history of our conquest and colonization. My education had failed me completely. In order to educate myself, I decided to spend many hours in the library paging through whatever book I could find dealing with the so-called discovery of diamonds and gold and the impact of these events on the life of our people. My interest in the gold and diamond industry was the result of stories that my grandmother used to tell about my grandfather (who had died before I was born) as a result of working in the Kimberley mines and later in the Witwatersrand gold mines. She has told us about how my grandfather, in order to earn money to pay the poll tax, would divide his time between the Kimberley mines and working for a Boer farmer on whose 'land' we were squatters. (1994: 3)

Magubane goes on to relate being taught about Cecil Rhodes in South Africa and his supposed belief in equality for civilised men, seen as concomitant with English liberalism. Subsequently, Magubane uncovered the truth about perhaps the greatest imperialist the world had ever seen, reading his *Confession of Faith*, epitomising as it did the philosophy of white supremacy and imperialism. From this vantage point, Magubane underscores the extent to which the Union of South Africa, was not, as liberal British historians would have it, a concession to the Boers and their white supremacist views but in fact at one with British imperial policy as a whole. The structures of white supremacy that were integral parts of the British Empire and its white colonial settler domains were institutionalised to varying degrees in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, not to mention Ireland and the US. Indeed, the origins of apartheid can be traced back to British imperialism, including Rhodes and leading members of the Round Table movement. Though there is by now a substantial literature on the Round Table movement, including Carol Quigley's (1981) *The Anglo-American Establishment*, much of it is difficult to obtain. Hence, the movement is largely unknown, despite its origins and evolution, going back to Cecil Rhodes and Alfred Milner in the late 19th century, being arguably central for understanding British imperial policy from this time on. Magubane continued his work on related

questions of global race and class with the publication of *Race and the Construction of the Dispensable Other* (2007).

Magubane's work represents a tremendous contribution to our understanding of capitalist imperialism and white supremacy in South Africa and the global system. But in retrospect, his most significant achievement may be his editorial leadership of the monumental multivolume *The Road to Democracy in South Africa* (various years). While formally chronicling the period largely from 1960 on, various parts of this project explore the earlier origins of South Africa, with the first volume beginning with an introduction by the then South African president Thabo Mbeki.

In Volume I, while underscoring the extent to which the roots of race-class oppression and exploitation go back to the origins of colonial and imperial settlement, Magubane again chronicles the discovery of gold and diamonds in the dispossession of the African peasantry and the creation of a system of labour reserves for the mines. Subsequent chapters by a host of different scholars chronicle armed and peasant struggles, various types of rural resistance, state repression (including South Africa's State of Emergency), the activities of the various national liberation and related organisations, from the Pan African Congress to the African People's Democratic Union, the South African Communist Party, and the African National Congress itself, including its turn to the armed struggle, its leaders in exile, its worldwide efforts, and of course those imprisoned at the infamous Robben Island.

Volume 2 begins with two chapters by Magubane dealing with the social and political context and the rise of the garrison state from 1970–80. Coming into view here is the sustained period of mass upsurge, including the activities and repression of the Soweto students in 1976, the collapse of Portugal's fascist regime, Steven Bantu Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement and Biko's death in police custody in 1977. The mass upsurge during this period presaged the increased militarisation of South Africa. Deftly dealing with the changing composition of South African capital and the ruling hegemonic bloc as a whole, Magubane chronicles the evolution of the regimes Bantustan policy in the context of the increasing importance of the Black South African proletariat to South Africa's economy. The Nixon and

Kissinger strategy of support for South Africa and the white minority regimes in the region, as expressed in National Security Strategy Memorandum 39 and South Africa's failed attempt to turn back the Angolan revolution as Cuban troops beat back the South African regime and the CIA, are also discussed here. These issues have also been discussed expertly by Piero Gleijeses (2013) in his *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for South Africa, 1976–1991* and his (2002) *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976*. Recent newly released documents now show that then US Secretary of State, Kissinger, thought of attacking or possibly blockading Cuba over this issue.

Subsequent chapters detail the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement, the labour movement, Soweto, the ANC underground, the activities of the ANC and PAC and resistance and repression in the Bantustans. Other chapters deal with the rise of the Black Consciousness movement with Steve Biko in response to the segregation of university students, along with related articles on culture and representation, the revival of the labour movement, as well as the Soweto student uprising and its deadly repression in 1976. Two other chapters, co-written with Magubane, chronicle the ANC political underground, and the ANC armed struggle, respectively, in the 1970s.

Volume 3, Parts I and II, take up the critical importance of international solidarity and the anti-apartheid movement. Volume 4, Parts I and II, deal with the crisis of South Africa's garrison state and the collapse of its total war strategy, this at a time of renewed mass upsurge, with the rise of organisations such as the United Democratic Front. Subsequent chapters deal with the ANC and the beginning of negotiations between the national liberation organization and the white minority regime. Other chapters deal with both underground activity by the ANC and above-ground mass organising by the UDF and the emergence and development of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Azanian People's Organisation. Still other chapters deal with the role of civic and religious organisations, with Zine Magubane contributing a chapter on the role of women in the ANC and the question of feminism while her father contributed final chapters on the collapse of the

US policy of ‘constructive engagement’ and the garrison state.

Volume 5, Parts I and II, deals with African solidarity. Volume 6, Parts I and II, deals with the dismantling of the apartheid state, with an introductory and closing chapter by Magubane. There is a wide array of chapters, including detailed accounts of the National Party, the re-establishment of the ANC inside South Africa during the years leading up to the inauguration of its multiracial democracy, the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1990s, and the role of women and efforts for gender inclusivity during the transition. Finally, there is also another volume entitled *South Africans Telling Their Stories, 1950–1970*.

Magubane’s journey, as a black South African, from poverty in Durban, to exile in the US and then back to South Africa, and his legendary work as a scholar activist for South African, African, Black liberation and human emancipation as a whole, presents a compelling tale for those interested in the history of imperialism and anti-imperialism. Moreover, as Magubane wrote in a review of Mandela’s legacy:

Until the economy is democratized, South Africa’s newly born freedoms will remain a chimera. This central truth has been obfuscated in South Africa in particular and in capitalist countries in general ... Indeed, current globalization with its challenge to the nation state highlights that under capitalism democracy has always been restricted to the political domain, while economic management has been held hostage by non-democratic private ownership of the means of production. Such a democracy is incomplete, even by Western standards. (2001: 36)

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## Malcolm X (1925–1965)

Malcolm X was one of the most charismatic, controversial, and iconic figures of the US civil rights and black power struggles of the 1950s and 1960s. His legacy has had a lasting influence on successive generations of political activists and intellectuals in the US and throughout the world. Though he was a contemporary of Dr Martin Luther King (1929–68), Malcolm met the de facto leader of the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) just once, on Capitol Hill, Washington, on 26 March 1964,

during the passage of the Civil Rights Bill. The primary reason for this was that he spent the majority of his active adult life building the Nation of Islam, an organisation which explicitly denounced and abstained from the civil rights struggles.

Malcolm X was neither the name that he was given at birth nor the one that he used when he died. He was born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, on 19 May 1925 and died El Hajj Malik El Shabbaz in Harlem, New York, on 21 February 1965. This changing identity is indicative of what Manning Marable, the author of a major biography (2011), characterises in his title as a ‘life of reinvention’.

### Early years and influences

Malcolm was the son of Rev. Earl and Louise Little, who were politically active as supporters of Marcus Garvey’s United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which sought to build its support in towns where racism was deeply entrenched. It is worth pointing out that the UNIA was the single largest black or New Afrikan organisation in US history. Malcolm’s earliest memories were of travelling to meetings organised by his father to rally black people and encourage a sense of black pride. When Malcolm was aged just four, the family home was burned to the ground by members of the violently racist Ku Klux Klan. The family survived this attack but Malcolm’s father lived for only two more years. Officially his death on 8 September 1931 was a tragic accident in which he slipped and fell under a moving street car, but it is almost certain that he was murdered by racists. Louise Little was therefore left to raise a family on her own. She struggled valiantly for almost eight years but was eventually incarcerated at the Kalamazoo State Hospital, where she remained for 24 years.

These experiences had a profound and lasting effect upon Malcolm. Though he was a bright and popular pupil, Malcolm became increasingly disillusioned by an education system that refused to recognise him as anything other than a ‘nigger’ who should abandon any aspirations to be a lawyer and should instead ‘plan on carpentry’ because he was good with his hands (Malcolm X 1965: 118). Angry at the violent brutality of organised gangs and the institutional racism of the

education system, he left school and sought refuge in the bright lights of the north, in Boston, New York, and Detroit. It was during this period of his life that he transformed himself from a country hick into a slick and streetwise hustler.

The racism of US society meant that it was almost impossible for black people to secure prestigious and well-paid work. Having initially struggled to survive as a sandwich vendor and shoeshine boy, Malcolm turned to the more precarious pastimes of drug running, pimping, and burglary. He enjoyed a certain amount of notoriety, glamour, and wealth as he mixed with famous artists such as the jazz singer Billie Holiday, but eventually his luck ran out. He was caught, charged, convicted, and sentenced to a ten-year term of imprisonment. He was just 20 years of age.

### The Nation of Islam

It was while he was in prison that Malcolm underwent his next reinvention. Following an introduction by his brother Philbert, he abandoned his ‘Detroit Red’ hustler image and became an abstemious and devout member of the Nation of Islam (‘the Nation’), a controversial and marginal organisation which was shunned by Islam. At the heart of the organisation was a philosophy centred on a belief that white people were created in an experiment by a mad scientist called Yacub. These ‘devils’ had somehow managed to trick the world’s original black inhabitants and seize control of society. The Nation’s aim was to re-awaken the consciousness of Original Man and encourage black people to ‘wake up, clean up’ and reassert their authority. In the interim, it preached complete separation from white society and both encouraged and developed its own form of black capitalism. This philosophy culminated in the establishment of a major economic programme in which supporters were encouraged to contribute \$10 towards the purchase of a 4500-acre farm in Georgia. Later the Nation was able to establish its own shops and restaurants. In a society in which racism was deeply entrenched and in the southern states legally enshrined, the appeal of this philosophy cannot be underestimated.

It was not surprising that the Nation’s promotion of black pride was so attractive to someone who had heard a similar message being preached in his formative years.



Malcolm threw himself into the Nation, and after leaving prison in 1953 he was to become its most charismatic figure. Following a meeting at which he received the approval of the Nation's leader, Elijah Muhammad, he abandoned his 'slavemaster's' surname and became Malcolm X. In 1954 he was appointed the minister for Temple No. 7 in Harlem, the de facto capital of black America. Later he founded and edited the monthly newspaper *Muhammad Speaks*.

The Nation's rhetoric was tough and uncompromising, and the appearance of its male members, clad in black suits and with short, neat haircuts, was equally imposing. Malcolm's role in promoting its appeal was pivotal. For example, he played a key role in recruiting the charismatic heavyweight boxing champion Cassius Clay (later Muhammad Ali). As the general tide of struggle and black political engagement increased, however, Malcolm became frustrated at the dictatorial leadership of Elijah Muhammad, his alleged sexual infidelities, and, in particular, his sectarian refusal to sanction the Nation's involvement in the wider movement.

### **Estrangement, departure, and new beginnings**

Malcolm's increasingly strained relationship with Elijah Muhammad eventually came to a head in late 1963. Muhammad had instructed his followers not to attend the March on Washington which Dr King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and several other civil rights organisations had called for 28 August. Officially Malcolm followed the line, decrying it in the days before as the 'Farce on Washington'. The demonstration attracted an estimated 250,000 black and white people but it was denounced by him. In one of his most famous speeches, 'A Message to the Grassroots' delivered in November 1963, he dismissed the event as 'a circus' and observed that instead of transforming the event into the 'black revolution ... those Toms were out of town by sundown' (Breitman 1989: 3–18).

Privately, however, Malcolm disagreed with Muhammad's diktat. Not only was he present in Washington, but the night before the event he spoke to the actor and activist Ossie Davis and indicated that he was there to provide 'discreet' help if needed (Younge 2013: 113). The simple truth was that despite his political differences with Dr King, Malcolm admired the

CRM's ability to motivate and mobilise people. The activist in Malcolm could not help but be impressed by an event that captured the world's attention and shone a light on racial injustice.

Within months Malcolm's relationship with Muhammad and the Nation was stretched to breaking point. The catalyst for his departure was his response to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy on 22 November 1963. As militant opponents of white American power, the Nation might have been expected to comment on the death of the world's most powerful imperialist political leader. Instead, Muhammad instructed his members to stay silent for fear of provoking outrage, and he himself issued a statement expressing shock 'over the loss of our president' (Marable 2011: 269).

Malcolm kept his counsel for over a week, but on 1 December he delivered an address on 'God's Judgment of White America' at a public rally in Manhattan. Following the speech he responded to a journalist's invitation to comment on Kennedy's death by suggesting that it was an example of the 'chickens coming home to roost'. Emboldened by the enthusiastic reaction of the crowd, he continued by declaring that 'Being an old farm boy myself, chickens coming home to roost never did make me sad; they've always made me glad' (Marable 2011: 272–273). This act of insubordination provoked his leader's wrath, and Malcolm was immediately suspended from the Nation. He was never to return. Instead when it became clear that his rift with Muhammad would never be healed, Malcolm set up a new organisation, the Muslim Mosque Inc. (MMI), in March 1964, which was aimed at drawing black people away from the Nation and into a new spiritual home.

Despite his admiration for the CRM's mobilising capacity, he continued to define himself as a black nationalist. He renounced the idea that black people were American, declaring boldly instead that they were Africans oppressed by colonial rule. He argued that the oppressed nations of Africa had shaken off imperial control through nationalism, not by 'sitting in ... waiting in' and 'singing we shall overcome'. Instead of abstaining from the struggle, however, he urged his supporters to join with their fellow Negroes in order to 'show him how to bring about a real revolution' (29 March 1964, in Breitman 1989: 23–45).

### Sharp move to the left: the final year and the final reinvention

What proved to be his final year was arguably the most fascinating of Malcolm's life. It was in this period that he underwent what Marable (2011) characterises as his last reinvention. This was both a religious and political transformation, but at the time of his death it was by no means complete. Malcolm converted to Sunni Islam, changed his name, and embarked on a journey to Mecca.

The pilgrimage had a profound effect upon him. In a letter to his followers in the MMI he declared:

Never have I witnessed such sincere hospitality and the overwhelming spirit of true brotherhood as is practised by people of all colors and races here in this ancient Holy Land ... For the past week, I have been utterly speechless and spellbound by the graciousness displayed all around me by people of all colors. (Malcolm X 1965: 454)

This was a radical break from the avowedly separatist rhetoric that he had previously preached. Malcolm did not completely break from black nationalism, however. Although he came to acknowledge the need to sit down and talk to white people, he continued to argue that black people needed to set up their own businesses, manage their own affairs, and control their own communities. In order to campaign for this he set up a parallel, non-religious, and supposedly non-sectarian body called the Organisation of Afro American Unity (OAAU).

The inspiration for the OAAU was the Organisation of African Unity, which had been set up as an anti-colonial body by a collection of African governments in May 1963. Much of Malcolm's time in that final period was spent travelling to Africa and meeting the leaders of these newly independent states in an effort to learn lessons from their national liberation struggles. The establishment of the MMI and OAAU is therefore indicative of the fact that Malcolm retained a significant core of his old beliefs. In essence, he still did not believe that whites could be equal participants in the fight for black liberation, but in the wake of his pilgrimage, he did begin to accept that the 'sincere whites' could become involved in his organisations and play a supportive role in the struggle.

What is also true is that in his final year Malcolm's politics were moving sharply to the left. As part of this, he began to develop a more sophisticated critique of the economic system. Commenting on the increasingly successful struggle against colonialism in Africa, he observed of the newly independent states: 'None of them are adopting the capitalistic system because they realise they can't. You can't operate a capitalistic system unless you are vulturistic; you have to have someone else's blood to suck to be a capitalist. You show me a capitalist and I'll show you a blood-sucker' (Breitman 1989: 115–137). Arguably Malcolm's assessment that these states were developing 'socialistic systems to solve their problems' ('At the Audubon', in Breitman 1989: 121) was mistaken, but the speech is nevertheless an indication of his attempt to grapple with and embrace new ideas.

In addition his writings began to appear frequently in the publications of left groupings, including the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). This was partly because the SWP was one of the few organisations in the US willing to provide him with a platform, but it was also indicative of the political journey that Malcolm was embarking upon. Speaking at an event organised by the Militant Labour Forum in May 1964, he made a similar point about post-colonial Africa, suggesting that '... all of the countries that are emerging today from under colonialism are turning toward socialism. I don't think it's an accident.' He also explicitly remarked upon the link between capitalism and racism: 'It's impossible for a white person to believe in capitalism and not believe in racism.' He commented on the strong personal commitment to racial equality shown by socialists and noted the role that socialists had played in supporting and participating in anti-colonial struggles (Marable 2011: 336).

Malcolm's assassination on 21 March 1965 saw his final reinvention brought to an abrupt and violent end and the liberation movement lose one of its greatest figures just as it was entering a new phase. While the assassination was attributed to the Nation of Islam, it emerged following examination of the documentary evidence that the US Federal Bureau of Investigation had deliberately infiltrated the Nation of Islam as part of its COINTELPRO programme and had worked to increase acrimony and bitterness between it and the followers of Malcolm X.

### Malcolm X's legacy

Malcolm had realised that American society was about to explode and predicted that 1964 might be the year of 'the ballot or the bullet' ('The Ballot or the Bullet', in Breitman 1989: 23–45). That very year riots against police racism erupted in Harlem, and over the summer there were further rebellions in Rochester, Patterson, Jersey City, Elizabeth, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Within months of Malcolm's death, there was another upsurge. In August 1965 an uprising in the Watts district of Los Angeles lasted several days and proved to be the biggest urban disturbance since 1943. Thirty-four people were killed and 4000 arrested, and \$35 million worth of damage was caused. In 1967 there were eruptions on an even greater scale in Newark (New Jersey) and Detroit.

By this time it was becoming increasingly clear that racism would not be eradicated through legislative action alone. The CRM had succeeded in forcing the Federal Government to pass equal rights laws with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965, but it had failed to transform the material conditions of black people in either the southern or the northern states. While Dr King remained a popular figure, the movement he was part of was increasingly being challenged by those who demanded a more militant strategy. Malcolm recognised this, and after his break with the Nation he threw himself into the task of articulating that anger and giving it organisational expression.

In the years that followed Malcolm's death the struggle for civil rights was transformed into a fight for black power, a demand for economic opportunities. Dr King himself realised this and sought to intervene in wider struggles, opposing the Vietnam War and campaigning for workers' rights. As these struggles progressed new organisations were established to try and take the movement forward. By far the most significant and influential of these was the Black Panther Party of Self Defense (BPP), founded in Oakland, California, in October 1966. Its leaders Huey P Newton and Bobby Seale openly acknowledged that the organisation was set up as 'a living testament to (Malcolm's) work' (Newton 1995: 113). They shunned the non-violent approach of the CRM and instead encouraged their supporters to exercise their constitutional right to bear arms and challenge the oppressive, racist policing of their communities. In addition, they established

a series of community-based projects which focused on black self-help and organisation. The BPP's '10 Point Program' represented a manifesto for political change which built upon and developed Malcolm's black nationalist philosophy. Like the latter-day Malcolm, however, they were prepared to work with so called 'progressive whites'" and left wing political movements.

Malcolm was denounced as a figure of violence and hate when he died, and for many years he was considered a divisive figure whose influence had been negligible. Latterly, however, he has enjoyed a huge resurgence in popularity, not least because of Spike Lee's 1993 film *X*. He subsequently received the official seal of approval with the unveiling of a 33 cent commemorative stamp by the US Postal Service as part of its 'Black Heritage' series in January 1999. For many young black Americans, the marginalised, excluded, and angry 'hip hop generation', and anti-racists across the world, however, Malcolm X remains an uncompromising icon who never betrayed his cause and fought injustice.

Brian Richardson

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## Mandela, Nelson (1918–2013)

Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela was an anti-apartheid activist, political prisoner, and president of South Africa from 1994–99. He was born on 18 July 1918 in the rural Xhosa village of Mvezo in the Transkei (Eastern Cape, South Africa). The name Nelson was given to him by a teacher at his primary school near the village of Qunu, where he later returned to establish his family home. His formative

years were spent within a traditional African tribal context with its firmly established societal structures, including respect for the elders of the village. After his father's death in 1927, he moved to The Great Place (in nearby Mqhekezweni), where he was cared for by Chief Jongintaba Dalindyebo with an equally traditional upbringing. This included initiation through a Xhosa circumcision ritual which young boys of 16 customarily underwent. His school education included six years at the Clarkebury Boarding Institute (in nearby Engcobo) and at the Wesleyan College, Healdtown in Fort Beaufort. In 1939 he started a degree at the only black university in South Africa, University College Fort Hare, where he met his lifelong friend and fellow political activist Oliver Tambo (1917–93). Politics formed an instrumental part of Mandela's life from early adulthood onwards, with his tertiary education prematurely cut short after a year when he was expelled for his involvement in protest action.

Mandela's arrival in the sprawling urban city of Johannesburg in 1941 – after escaping from the prospect of an arranged marriage – would significantly alter the course of his life. With his solid understanding of the structures of traditional African society and a growing awareness of the racial injustices prevalent in South Africa, he became increasingly politically active in attempting to liberate the oppressed, majority, non-white population. In Johannesburg he worked on the mines as a security officer (providing insights into the inhospitable working and living conditions of miners) and as an estate agent before meeting another lifelong friend and political collaborator Walter Sisulu. Sisulu introduced him to Lazar Sidelsky who employed Mandela as an articulated clerk in the law firm Witkin, Sidelsky and Eidelman. He continued with his degree studies through the University of South Africa (UNISA) whilst working at the law firm, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1942, the year in which he began attending African National Congress (ANC) meetings. Although non-white South Africans had, over the years, challenged the repressive colonial regime (in existence since the early 1900s) with numerous uprisings and protests, it was the formation of the ANC in 1923 (originally the South African Native National Congress from 1912) that would serve to strengthen the liberation struggle. Initially, membership was only open

to black South Africans, but by 1969 the anti-apartheid movement recognised that true liberation would need to include representation from all racial and ethnic groups.

Mandela's first marriage to Evelyn Ntoko Mase took place in 1944 in the same year that he co-founded the ANC Youth League (ANCYL). The marriage produced four children: Thembekile (1945–69), Makaziwe, who died as an infant (1947), Makgatho (1950–2005), and Makaziwe (1954). The co-founding of the ANCYL was essential as the younger activists recognised that more hard-line approaches were necessary to challenge the oppressive discriminatory regime, impacting on the lives of all non-white South Africans. Mandela was elected as secretary of the ANCYL in 1948 and became its president in 1951. His positions as political activist and lawyer were complemented by his understanding of the complex systems of Western capitalist ideologies. These would inform his approaches to socialist and communist ideologies which dominated the liberation movement and which would come to play an important role in recognising the necessity of maintaining a strong economic power base during the transitional stages of reform when the apartheid administration was being dismantled in the early 1990s.

By 1948, when apartheid was legally implemented, South Africa had already been ruled by successive, racially discriminating governments. These took their cue from the colonial and imperialist policies of white domination over native inhabitants. Legislation such as the Natives Land Act (1913), banning black Africans from owning land and effectively giving 13 per cent of the land to 87 per cent of the non-white population, had already been implemented early on in the century. From 1948, however, when the right-wing National Party (NP, established in 1913) came to power with D.F. Malan as prime minister, the implementation of apartheid policies was made in earnest. Between 1948 and the formation of the Republic of South Africa in 1961, more than 800 laws were passed, systematically infringing the rights of South Africa's majority non-white population. These included: the Population Registration Act (1950), the Immorality Amendment Act (1951), the Suppression of Communism Act (1951), the South African Censorship Board (1951), the pass laws (1952), the Bantu Education Act (1953), and Separate Amenities Act

(1953). The increasing suppression of political activity, oppression of the non-white peoples of South Africa, and the uncompromising stance taken by the National Party government (who retaliated against any political uprisings with brutal force) only served to consolidate the anti-apartheid movement, which also increasingly gained international support from the rest of Africa the Soviet Union and Europe.

In 1949, the ANC, recognising that the ruling National Party signalled further oppression of non-white peoples, took on board the ANCYL's Programme of Action, calling for increased protest action in the form of strikes and organised acts of civil disobedience. In 1952, when Mandela was head of the ANC's Transvaal region, he set up the first black legal practice in South Africa with Oliver Tambo. From June 1952 the ANC and the Communist Party led a Defiance Campaign, taking the path of passive resistance inspired by the *satyagraha* philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi. (Ghandi spent 21 years in South Africa [1893–1914], initially visiting as a legal representative for an Indian Company, and became disillusioned with the colonial regime after being thrown off a 1st-class 'whites only' train carriage.) The Defiance Campaign included the burning of passbooks (compulsory identification documents which black South Africans were obliged to carry), the illegal occupation of areas reserved for 'whites only', and mass marches. Despite the generally peaceful nature of the Campaign, about 8,000 activists were detained, with Mandela and 19 other leaders convicted under the Suppression of Communism Act and sentenced to nine months' hard labour. Despite the disappointing failure to generate any positive legislative changes and the government's banning of the Defiance Campaign, ANC membership increased and international awareness of the anti-apartheid struggle was also intensified. The results of the crackdown after the Defiance Campaign led Mandela to devise the M-plan for operations in 1953, which meant that the ANC was broken down into smaller cells of activity, enabling easier operations for operating underground.

The Congress Alliance, created in 1955, served as an umbrella operation encompassing all left-wing organisations, including the ANC, the Congress of Democrats, the South African Congress of Trade Unions,

the South African Indian Congress, and the Coloured People's Congress. It was supported by the United Nations as they acknowledged the human rights violations being committed by the apartheid regime. In June 1955, Mandela (despite being under banning orders) drove to Kliptown for a 3,000-strong meeting to witness the adoption of the Freedom Charter by the Congress of People. The Charter outlined the principles of a free South Africa for all races, yet it would be another 40 years before the possibility of equality would become a reality.

The Freedom Charter and the continued actions of the Defiance Campaign were met with ever firmer governmental counter-measures to quash any political action against the policies of apartheid. These included Mandela's arrest, alongside 156 other Congress leaders and political activists, in December 1956. The activists were charged with high treason and with breaking the Suppression of Communism Act (1950). Interestingly, while imprisonment was not an ideal situation, access to newspapers and detention in two large prison cells provided uncharacteristically welcome opportunities for interaction, as Mandela outlined:

Our communal cell became a kind of convention for far-flung freedom fighters. Many of us had been living under severe restrictions, making it illegal for us to meet and talk. Now, our enemy had gathered us all under one roof for what became the largest and longest unbanned meeting of the Congress Alliance in years. Younger leaders met older leaders they had only read about. Men from Natal mingled with leaders from the Transvaal. We revelled in the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences for two weeks while we awaited trial. (Mandela 1994: 233)

The Treason Trial would be dragged out for over four years, with Mandela being one of the last to be acquitted in 1961 through lack of evidence.

In his personal life, the pressures from political commitments finally resulted in the breakdown of his first marriage, with his divorce from Evelyn Ntoko Mase taking place in 1958. He had by this time met fellow political activist (and co-accused in the treason trial arrests) Nomzamo Winifred Madikizela, whom he married in 1958. They had two

daughters Zenani (1959) and Zindziswa (1960), with 'Winnie' Mandela also continuing her role as a key anti-apartheid activist in her own right, and assisting the underground struggle for liberation while Mandela was imprisoned.

The Sharpeville Massacre in March 1960 brought further international attention to the brutality of the apartheid regime, particularly when police forces mounted an armed attack against protesters, leaving numerous dead and wounded. The Massacre was in many ways a turning point for the ANC as the slaughter of 69 unarmed protestors (and scores more wounded) left the ANC with no option but to resort to violence. The NP Government declared a national state of emergency, the banning of the ANC, and Mandela's detention under the Unlawful Organisations Act of 1960. Key political events continued to unfold when South Africa was declared a republic after a whites-only referendum in May 1960. This signalled a withdrawal from the Commonwealth, severing trade and economic links and in effect sanctioning the Afrikaner NP's implementation of further discriminatory laws as it severed its ties with 200 years of imperial rule.

In December 1961, Albert Luthuli (ANC president-general 1952–67) received international recognition with the Nobel Peace Prize in honour of his role in the anti-apartheid movement. Yet despite this, and repeated attempts by the ANC to enter negotiations with the NP Government, their efforts went unheeded. Non-violent strike actions and attempts to generate some form of reaction through passive resistance were instead met with hostile and violent counter-resistance as the government attempted to quell the building opposition.

The events of the previous few years clearly demonstrated that passive resistance was not a workable strategy to overturn the oppressive apartheid regime or even to negotiate with the NP Government. The formation of the military wing of the ANC 'Umkhonto we Sizwe' (Spear of the Nation, or MK) was therefore launched on 16 December 1961, with Mandela as commander-in-chief. MK importantly operated as a separate military arm of the ANC so as not to confuse the ANC's main objectives in the liberation struggle. Although violence was the necessary action to take at this juncture, MK at all times sought to undermine government control with minimum

harm to civilians. This was done through sabotage and the destruction of government property outside of the main working hours in the hope of accomplishing maximum damage to essential government resources. Strike actions were also called to destabilise government operations and a number of safe houses provided meeting places and shelter for the underground resistance movement. As soon as the government became aware of the emerging underground movement, further crackdowns were implemented, with anti-apartheid cells infiltrated by security police and leaders arrested where possible.

By this point, Mandela was also operating underground. He secretly left South Africa in January 1962 to travel through Africa to undergo military training, to seek support for the anti-apartheid movement further afield, and to visit Oliver Tambo in London for two weeks at the end of his trip. On his return to South Africa he was immediately arrested in the Eastern Transvaal (August 1962) and sentenced to five years' imprisonment for travelling without valid papers and inciting political strike action. After his arrest he was briefly interned at Robben Island before being returned to prison in Pretoria. At his trial he stated that the continued oppression of the majority non-white population and the events of 1960 had compelled the ANC to commit to armed struggle. MK continued with acts of sabotage by bombing or burning government resources, with an extensive underground networks developing which included cells set up across Africa and as far-afield as Moscow and Europe.

By this stage in the early 1960s, the police had increasingly been gathering information about the MK headquarters based at Liliesleaf Farm in a semi-rural area 40km outside Johannesburg. The farm had been bought in 1961 for the South African Communist Party and fronted by a white family, the Goldreich's, who were not yet on the government's list of banned people. While the farm appeared to be an ordinary family home, it was here that regular meetings took place of MK's High Command, with their intentions to overthrow the increasingly oppressive government regime. On 11 July 1963, an undercover police raid took place, resulting in the arrest of almost all of the MK High Command. While Mandela had lived at Liliesleaf for the best part of 18 months (posing as farmhand David Motsamayi), he had

at this point already been arrested so was not present on the day of the raid. Liliesleaf was significant as it was here that the important Operation Mnyibuyeye was drawn up: a plan of sabotage action to bring down the South African government. The Rivonia Trial in June 1964 included Mandela and eight other activists ('Rusty' Bernstein, Dennis Goldberg, Ahmed Kathrada, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi, and Walter Sisulu), all of whom were tried for sabotage. Mandela's now legendary statement from the dock, which he used not only to defend himself but also as a voice of reason outlining the motives and actions of the anti-apartheid movement, is encapsulated in the final sentences:

During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die. (438)

All, with the exception of Bernstein and Goldberg, were sentenced to life imprisonment, and Mandela began his historic 26-year sentence, most of which was spent on Robben Island in a punishing regime breaking rocks at a lime quarry.

The intervening years between imprisonment and release saw Mandela become an international figurehead for the struggle against apartheid. Although he was periodically kept in solitary confinement or had limited access to other political prisoners, he managed to keep abreast of national and international activities taking place underground and within the growing international anti-apartheid movement. He secretly began writing his autobiography in 1975, smuggling it out through fellow-prisoner Mac Maharaj in 1976, but it would be another 18 years before the publication of *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994). Despite imprisonment, Mandela's political commitments never wavered and he continued, as much as it was possible for an interned person, to fight for freedom and justice for the majority non-white population of South Africa. He became an international

symbol of resistance against the apartheid government, yet despite international pressures it would be almost three decades before apartheid was judicially dismantled and a new constitution brought into existence, adopting the principles of the 1955 Freedom Charter.

Mandela spent 18 years on Robben Island before being moved to Pollsmoor Prison in 1982, where he shared a communal cell with fellow political prisoners Ahmed Kathrada, Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, and Walter Sisulu. The last few years of his internment were in Viktor Verster Prison (Paarl), where he stayed until his release in 1990. Mandela twice rejected an early release from prison, with the first offered in 1984 when his nephew Andrew Mlangeni, president of an 'independent' Bantustan (state), offered sanctuary in the Transkei. A year later, when President P.W. Botha offered a conditional release (if he renounced the use of violence for political ends), Mandela again refused. Although these offers of release were rejected, Mandela entered into talks with the NP Government in which they explored viable conditions for future negotiation with the banned ANC. His house at Viktor Verster prison thus became an unlikely meeting ground for individuals from both sides of the political divide, as attempts were made to bridge the gaps between political ideologies and find a way towards reconciliation and peaceful resolution. During Mandela's extensive prison stay, he utilised the time available and continued studying for his law degree, finally graduating with an LLB in 1989 through the University of South Africa, shortly before his release.

In the intervening years, while Mandela was imprisoned, the NP had desperately attempted to maintain tight controls and hang onto power, countering any political unrest with increasingly violent crackdowns. Despite international economic sanctions, sports and cultural embargoes, and steady pressure from the international community, the ruling regime only conceded defeat in 1990 with the unbanning of all political organisations and finally the release of the figurehead of the anti-apartheid movement Nelson Mandela.

President F.W. de Klerk's role in the final years before Mandela's release would also be important in forging a path – alongside Mandela – for the transition to democracy and the future prosperity of South Africa. De Klerk

surprised the nation with a speech delivered to Parliament on 2 February 1990. In this he announced the immediate unbanning of all political organisations (including MK) and Mandela's release a week later. Both Mandela and de Klerk were intent on overseeing a peaceful resolution, needing to include the white minority who formed the stronghold of the economic base in South Africa. They also recognised the need for economic stability to facilitate the emerging black middle class, as this would be central in the transition to a free and democratic society for all races in South Africa. While de Klerk was almost certainly committed to change there is no doubt that the governing apartheid regime must have seen that there was no option but to start on the process of dismantling apartheid and moving towards a free South Africa for all its inhabitants.

Soon after the unbanning of all political parties, Mandela's long-awaited release took place on 11 February 1990, with a speech to the nation delivered to a jubilant crowd in Cape Town. Political exiles returned and additional political prisoners were released, including ANC (and MK) activists who were guaranteed protection from prosecution. The ANC president, Oliver Tambo, returned in December 1990 from his 30-year exile for the first ANC meeting on home ground in 31 years. In December 1991, de Klerk announced that key laws enforcing apartheid control such as the Land Act (1913), Group Areas Act (1950), and Population Registration Act (1950) would be revoked, thus in effect ceasing the legislative control of non-white peoples. These were historic shifts for a nation where the majority of the population had had to endure extreme infringements of their human rights.

Although the next three years entailed increasing violence, from right-wing white activists the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) and Inkatha activists led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, attempts were made to keep the transition process as smooth as possible. The first free general elections took place in April 1994 with almost 20 million queuing to vote over a three-day period. As the ANC did not win with an absolute majority, a Government of National Unity was formed with the NP and the Inkhata Freedom Party. (COSATU and the Communist Party had aligned with the ANC for the elections.) Mandela was elected as president with F.W.

de Klerk as vice-president. On a personal level, the hardships of being separated during his internment and Winnie Mandela's controversial political involvements (with alleged involvement in the death of Stompie Moeketsi in 1989) placed great strain on their marriage. Despite attempting to reconcile their differences, they divorced in 1996 and on Mandela's 80th birthday, two years later, he married Graça Machel, a humanitarian and politician (and widow of Mozambican president Samora Machel).

With South Africa's blemished past under apartheid and enormous changes undergone in the transition to freedom, it was hoped that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), set up in 1995 and overseen by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, would enable a sense of forgiveness to prevail in the reconstruction of the new 'Rainbow Nation', as Tutu christened it. As traumatic as it often was for participants, the TRC was an important process to allow for the atrocities committed under apartheid to be brought into the public domain. While it also, to some extent, assisted the country in coming to terms with the oppressive apartheid regime, the mindset which apartheid had inculcated would take many more years to change. It would take at least one new generation of individuals to be educated side-by-side before there could be substantial progress to a more equitable and egalitarian society.

Mandela's roles as political activist, symbolic figurehead of the liberation movement whilst free and in prison, president, and also as icon of a free South Africa were instrumental in maintaining clarity of purpose in striving for justice and equality for all. The difficult yet miraculously smooth (on many accounts) transition to a free South Africa was to a large extent attributable to Mandela's unwavering perseverance, openness in finding a way forward with his oppressors, and his fairness and generosity as a human being. His death on 5 December 2013 was mourned internationally, and he will be remembered alongside other great leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi as one of the great historical figures of change in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Patti Gaal-Holmes

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## Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) (1893–1976)

### Introduction

In this essay I will not spend time on a descriptive presentation of Mao's biographical details since that kind of information is easily available on the Internet or in numerous other sources, for instance Snow (2008/1937–44), and Karl (2010). The Chang and Halliday book *Mao the Untold Story* of course has to be mentioned. Anyone who wants to have his or her anti-communist prejudices confirmed or who wants to enjoy ideological fantasies can read this book with relish, like former US president George W. Bush, jnr and the last colonial governor of Hong Kong Chris Patten.

Instead I will focus on three thematic arguments. The first is that in the post-Mao narrative, both in and outside China, the first three decades of the People's Republic of China (PRC) have either disappeared from history or have been largely distorted by the necessity of imperialist and capitalist logic. The second thematic argument is that Mao Zedong

contributed greatly to anti-imperialism internationally and made huge efforts to build socialism at home. Finally the third thematic argument is that the Cultural Revolution was Mao Zedong's last effort to combat capitalism.

### Why have the first three decades of the PRC disappeared in history?

Post-Mao mainstream media in the West, especially Anglo-American media, and even some mainstream scholarship, be it at universities or in think tanks, tends to portray contemporary China in terms of the so-called 'open up and reform' in the post-Mao period. They talk about the Chinese 'economic miracle' that was made possible by Deng Xiaoping's statement that 'getting rich is glorious', (a statement that has been repeated thousands of times orally and in print without any citation, and is most likely another little myth regarding China); about the double-digit growth of GDP for more than 20 years; about lifting 100 million people out of absolute poverty in three decades; about how Shenzhen, a fishing village, has turned into a modern cosmopolitan city; how rice paddies on the east side of the Huangpu River, Pudong of Shanghai, were turned into one of the main financial centres in Asia and how China has suddenly become a superpower threatening the world. The distinguished Harvard scholar and one-time US government Intelligence officer Vogel, in his monumental biography of Deng Xiaoping, spends only 30 pages on Deng up to the year 1979. In the section of biographies of key people of the PRC, Mao is not even included. From Vogel's point of view, the transformation of China did not happen until Deng became the paramount leader after the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress in 1978.

According to this convenient historiography, the Mao Zedong period had achieved nothing in bringing China to modernity. If anything, it is the opposite: Mao had delayed China's trajectory to modernity, with his initiation of the Great Leap Forward (GLF) programme that led to starvation and the Cultural Revolution that brought chaos. For some people, Mao is responsible for worse than the delay of China's modernity. They portray him as having been a mass murderer, the worst possible mass murderer in human history. It is such a saleable condemnation

that the English historian Frank Dikötter's book *Mao's Great Famine* was reported to have sold 100,000 copies. Many claimed it to be a definitive history of Mao in relation to the GLF, and Professor Dikötter's book won the 2011 Samuel Johnson non-fiction prize. It does not matter that the cover photo of the book of a hungry boy was a photo of the 1942 famine in China. It does not matter that Professor Dikötter not only has great problems with his research methodology, as reviewed by Anthony Garnaut (2013) of Oxford University, but also has deliberately distorted documentary evidence as pointed out by Sun (Sun 孙万国2013) at the Australian National University.

In fact nothing matters so long as you can find evidence or argument against the Mao era. The 1949 Chinese Revolution has to be denigrated, Mao's anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist legacy has to be dumped, and the 30 years of the Mao era have to be wiped from history.

This process of erasing 30 years from PRC history in fact started in China and was initiated by the Chinese themselves. This has mostly to do with the Cultural Revolution. During the Cultural Revolution the political and intellectual elite were supposed to be the target of a cultural revolution aimed at remoulding their world outlook so as to prevent them from being agents turning China into a capitalist country. The method of this revolution (mobilizing the masses to rebel against their leaders) meant that a lot of the Chinese political and intellectual elite did suffer emotionally and some of them physically, and most of them were temporarily stripped of power. But, only about a month after the death of Mao in 1976, his widow Jiang Qing was arrested together with her closest colleagues in the name of the Gang of Four. Deng Xiaoping and his like were brought back to power.

As a backlash against the Cultural Revolution, the ten years from 1966–76 were denounced by the post-Mao authorities as 'ten years of holocaust' or 'ten years of calamities' (the Chinese term is *shi nian haojie*"" , when 'haojie'"" can either be rendered as holocaust or disaster). Of course there were many Chinese at that time and even now today, especially among the non-elite sectors of Chinese society, who would not agree with this description.

Deng Xiaoping and his followers achieved their aim of denouncing the 1966–1976

decade by using two strategies. The first was either to execute or jail the followers of Mao, rebels or those who were active during the Cultural Revolution. The victims of this greatest purge in the history of the CCP and PRC, a history that is hardly recorded, were called *san zhong ren* (three kinds of people). One example of the so-called *san zhong ren* is Lin Qinglin, a school teacher who during the mid-1970s wrote a letter to Mao, complaining about the hard life of the 'educated youth' who were sent down to the countryside. It was Mao's sympathetic response to that letter that led to great improvement of the life of the youth who had left their homes in cities and towns. But because Li was promoted to a leadership position as a result of his letter, he became victim of the post-Mao purge and was put in jail for many years (Gao 1999).

Another example typically illustrates the ups and downs of the political elite and the post-Mao purge. Wu Zhipu, party secretary of Anhui Province, initiated some of the most radical measures during the GLF which led to most of the damage during the famine. He admitted to his role and was held responsible for the large number of deaths in Xinyang County. He was so hated by the people who had suffered under his leadership that during the Cultural Revolution he was captured by the rebels and subsequently died as a result of torture. In 1979, Deng Xiaoping, a good friend of Wu, chaired a make-up memorial service for him in which his pre-GLF reputation was restored. On the other hand, Wu's rival Zhang Qinli was purged and jailed for 13 years after the Cultural Revolution. But Zhang was the very person who had criticised Wu's damaging policies and written a letter to Zhou Enlai about the serious consequences of his policies (Changkong Yihe 长空一鹤 2012). Just as Li Qinglin's letter had drawn attention to the problems of the educated youth policy, Zhang Qinli's intervention drew attention to the GLF problems in Anhui. Both men were promoted despite their criticism of Mao's policies because they had addressed real problems. And yet they were purged by the post-Mao regime in the name of correcting Mao's mistakes.

The other strategy that Deng used was a decree that the debate on the Cultural Revolution should cease altogether and that energy should instead be focused on economic development. This was a convenient as well as useful strategy for reducing dissent

on the one hand and meeting the demand of material consumerism on the other. With the two strategies in place, any discussion of the Cultural Revolution has been out of the agenda or even taboo. Consequently, one decade of the PRC has disappeared from history.

The Chinese authorities under Deng Xiaoping wanted to sweep under the carpet two other important events in the history of the PRC: the GLF years of 1958–60 and the so-called three years of famine; and the anti-Rightist movement of 1957. There is no doubt that there was a famine during the period, but there are debates about whether its origin, cause, and effect owed anything to the GLF policies. It is generally accepted that there was a demographic change as a result of the famine. In other words, many people would have lived longer without the famine and many would have been born without the famine. However, in what way and to what extent China's population growth was affected by the Great Leap Forward is hotly debated even today. China's official population census in the early 1980s seems to show that there was a population decline in that period, instead of growth on the basis of normal death and birth rates, in the range of several to tens of millions of people.

But the Chinese official census statistics are based on data collected on household registration. There can be errors and fraud in household registration during that period for two important reasons. First, the data could not be complete because the household registration was in the process of being established at the time. Second, the Great Leap Forward policies involved huge internal migration first from rural to urban areas as industrialisation was expanding and then from urban to rural areas as industrialisation was contracting in the face of shortage of grain and the failure of some foolish policies such as backyard iron and steel manufacturing (Yang 杨松林 2013). During these years, households might fail to de-register when they left during the Great Leap Forward and then register when they moved back to rural areas. Because the population base of China was and is so huge, a tiny percentage of error or miscalculation leads to large differences in absolute numbers. Since members of the post-Mao political elite, such as Deng Xiaoping, were actually involved in the GLF and therefore any evidence-based analysis would have implicated them, it was thought

better to keep these years out of sight as well. In addition to the matter of famine estimates during the Great Leap Forward being based on dubious demographic data, it is important to note that they are crudely extrapolated from birth rates and mortality rates established in the decade before, these having improved massively from the pre-PRC era (Patnaik 2002). Moreover, even assuming the worst, the increase in mortality during the GLF was still no worse than that in many countries, including India's, during the same period. Even accepting the very dubious figure of 15–30 million excess deaths during the GLF, it must be admitted that the dramatic and unprecedented decline in infant mortality and rise in life expectancy achieved in the Mao era saved many more Chinese lives.

As for the anti-Rightist movement in 1957, though the CCP government represented by Deng Xiaoping acknowledged the wrongness and 'mistakes' of the movement and therefore rehabilitated almost all of those who were labelled the Rightists, scores of very well-known intellectuals were made to keep the label even so. This seemingly contradictory resolution has been maintained precisely because of the role that Deng Xiaoping played in the movement. Deng was the general secretary of the CCP and ran not only the day-to-day activities of the CCP at that time but also was responsible for putting abstract ideas and paper policies into practice. In other words, to condemn both the GLF and the Anti-Rightists movement fully and completely would have involved condemning of not just other leaders like Liu Shaoqi but also Deng Xiaoping himself. It was therefore convenient for the post-Mao power holders that these years should not be talked about either.

Furthermore, to justify the capitalist direction that has been taken since the death of Mao, the very revolutionary discourse of socialism and anti-imperialism had to be submerged if not abandoned altogether. On the one hand, the policies undertaken by the post-Mao government have been moved more and more to the opposite of the 1949 Revolution. On the other hand, the very legitimacy of the CCP's rule rests on the 1949 Revolution. So symbolically, the portrait of Mao still hangs on the wall of the Tiananmen Rostrum, but almost nothing positive has been said officially about the Mao era since his death, while condemnation of him has been allowed here and there either

in utterances by some members of the political and intellectual elite (e.g. the publication of *Yanhuang Chunqiu*), or outside of mainland China, as in Hong Kong. So basically the three decades of the Mao era have disappeared from the mainstream history of the PRC, except for condemnation.

### **Mao Zedong's contribution to anti-imperialism and socialism**

Mao's contribution to anti-imperialism and socialism has to be examined in the big picture of world capitalism dominated by the Anglo-sphere powers. Mao's contribution can be characterised domestically and internationally. Domestically, he tried to build a socialist system, with various degrees of success and failure. Internationally, Mao called for a united front to resist the force of US imperialism. In this section of the essay, I will start with Mao's efforts at building socialism in China and then I will follow by studying his international exertions. With regard to the latter, I will briefly discuss the issue of the Sino-Soviet relationship and the split between the CCP and Soviet leadership.

#### **Socialism in the Mao era**

There have been disagreements and debates among scholars and thinkers of a left-wing persuasion about whether China in the Mao era was socialist. It has been argued that China in the Mao era was at best stood halfway between capitalism and socialism and, at worst, amounted to state capitalism. There are socio-economic and even political features in the Mao era that can be justifiably described as capitalist, such as exploitation of the rural sector to accumulate capital for industrialisation, the rigid household registration system (*hukou*) that virtually held the rural population down as second-class citizens or even non-citizens, the eight scales of the wage system, and the privileges such as the provision of drivers, bodyguards, cooks and domestic servants enjoyed by high-ranking party officials and army officers.

However, there are two important points that are relevant to this line of reasoning. The first is whether any state, however socialist it wants to be, can afford not to industrialise. Given the fact that the PRC was born during the Cold War, with not only the West's economic and technological sanctions against it but also with real hot wars (the Korean War

and the Vietnam War) threatening its very existence. Furthermore, it may be argued that, given the fact that China was in ruins after eight years of fighting brutal Japanese aggression and occupation and three years of civil war involving millions of troops, what could the PRC do but industrialise rapidly in a hostile environment? Surely, it had no choice but to exploit the rural sector as a way to accumulate capital for industrialisation? This strategy of survival was successful: by the late 1970s, China stood up as a nuclear power, a country that had satellite technology and had become the sixth largest industrial power in the world whereas in 1949, when the PRC was established, China's industrial capacity had only been that of little Belgium (Meisner 1999).

The second point is about the nature of the state in the Mao era: the means of production were all publicly or collectively owned. There were no individual capitalists. The arrogant party officials or army officers might have behaved like masters within their own organisations, but they could never claim to be owners of any means of production. Even at the height of collectivisation (i.e. in the rural commune system established after the GLF), land had been collectively owned by all the villagers of any particular village. People were constantly reminded of the possibility that there might be 'masters' in Mao's mass campaigns, and the Cultural Revolution, as will be discussed later in this essay, was Mao's last but most brutal reassertion that leaders should be the servants of the people.

Despite some capitalist features existing in the Mao era, there were many features that could only be characterised as socialist: the striving for gender equality; eight-hour working days; almost full employment; widespread availability of free housing; free education; free medical care for all urban people; retirement pension for the working class; and some subsidies for the widowed, old and childless rural residents.

It was during the Mao era that the average Chinese life expectancy rose from 38 in 1949 to 68 in the 1970s. The literacy rate increased so dramatically that it prepared millions and millions of skilled workers in the post-Mao period for economic expansion. Despite all the false and misleading claims to the contrary, China's GNP grew at an average annual rate of 6.2 per cent between 1952 and 1978. Indeed, as Lin (2006) points out, the

industrial sector outperformed most other developing economies. Although rural development was seriously impeded by the industrialisation strategy that was biased in favour of the urban sector, the quality of life by the 1970s had improved and was on the edge of being transformed throughout county towns and villages. Though China was decades behind the economically developed world, it was already 'on a par with middle-income countries' in human and social development (Bramall 1993: 335). Measured by social indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, and educational attainment, China (especially urban China) in the Mao era had already forged way ahead of most market economies at similar income levels and surpassed a number of countries with per capita incomes many times greater.

Throughout China's long history of civilisation, the Chinese have been plagued by hunger and starvation. As witnessed by foreign correspondents, missionaries, and travellers, China before the establishment of the PRC was constantly devastated by natural disasters and starvation on a large scale, some of which claimed millions of lives at one go. The GLF period of failure from 1959–61 could be considered the blackest spot in the history of the PRC, but this famine was the first one, the last and the only one in the whole history of the Mao era and of the PRC. This is not a result of luck or accident, but of decades' hard work to build a solid infrastructure of irrigation and management of rivers and lakes. It has entailed the mobilisation of massive manpower as part of Mao's campaign.

As I have personally witnessed in the village of Gao, life in rural China during the Mao era was poor and spartan. Even in the urban sector, life was very basic and most of the daily necessities such as oil, even soap, were rationed. Life here was not affluent but adequate and decent. Life in the rural sector was poor and hard but stable and improving. Some, especially those who are anti-communist, or anti-Mao, tend to take phenomenal features as evidence of linear causes and effects. This is not necessarily logical. They would compare the phenomenon of poverty in rural China and the rationed material scarcity in urban China in the Mao era with the material abundance in the post-Mao era to make the linear cause-and-effect argument that socialism failed because it is anti-human nature whereas capitalism succeeds

because it motivates people to work hard. However, this kind of economic rationalist argument sounds logical only on paper. If one gets down to empirical data it does not accord with reality. As a case study of empirical work in the village of Gao shows, its inhabitants in the Mao era did work hard. On a national scale, China's GNP grew at more than 6 per cent. The logical argument is that there is no economic miracle, and any rational economist should know there is no miracle in economic development in human history. The logic is that the hard work in the Mao era paved the way and laid a sound foundation for later take-off.

Let me take grain output as an example. Clearly, grain output in the Mao era was not as high as in the post-Mao era, and clearly most Chinese were hungry then but they are not hungry now. We know the staple grain in the Chinese diet is rice. There are two important factors that boost rice output. One is improved seeding and the other is chemicals for fertilising and for insecticide. We know the hybrid seeding developed by scientists like Yuan Longping has made a great difference in rice output. But very few bother to point out that the development of hybrid seeding takes many years to achieve and scientists like Yuan Longping started working on this kind of project in the Mao era and their results were implemented only during the post-Mao era. Likewise, it took some years for China to accumulate enough capital and technology to build up chemical factories to produce enough fertilisers; that stage of development again corresponds to the transition from the Mao era to the post-Mao era. When I was in the village of Gao in the 1960s and early 1970s, there was very little chemical fertiliser available and we had to use organic material such as pig manure. This kind of manure was good for the land but of slow and very limited quantity output. Nowadays, Gao villagers just spread large quantities of chemical fertiliser onto the land. The consequent output is high but the effect is hugely damaging to the environment, an issue yet to be addressed.

### **International anti-imperialism**

Mao made a great contribution to anti-imperialism, and China under his leadership supported weak and oppressed nations across the globe. For this very reason, Mao was accused of being a warmonger and

communist threat to the world. This can be examined in a number of cases below.

#### Korean War

US imperialists and Western Cold Warriors justified their fighting in Korea on two grounds. The first was that the North Korean communists had fired the first shot and invaded South Korea. The second pointed to their moral high ground in needing to stop the domino effect of the communist threat. As the end of the Vietnam War has shown, there was no such domino effect. The so-called communists in both Korea and Vietnam were nationalists, and their primary goals were to get rid of Western colonialism, gain national independence, and possess their own sovereignty. Their struggle for independence was entirely legitimate and justified. The same goes for the point concerning North Korea's invasion. Both sides wanted to overcome the other to unify Korea. It was none of the business of the Western powers if and when the Koreans wanted to fight for their own destiny, and it was their internal affair to choose to fight for any political system they wanted. As we know, the US imperialists and their allies not only beat back the North Koreans but also attempted to overtake North Korea and threaten the very existence of the new PRC that had been established barely a year before. It is not surprising that Chinese wanted to stop them, and China under Mao did so.

#### Vietnam War

The same was the case with the Vietnam War. In fact if there had been an election held in Vietnam at that time it would have been highly likely that the Communists, headed by Ho Chi-min, would have won the whole country. But imperialists would never allow that to happen. Not only did they want to stop a Vietcong victory, they also wanted to overrun North Vietnam. China under Mao gave US imperialism a timely warning: if the war extended to North Vietnam, China would intervene. On 24 June 1964, Mao declared that if the US invaded North Vietnam China would send volunteers to participate in the Vietnam War, just as China had done in the Korean War. Mindful of history, this time the US military-industrial complex listened.

However, the US imperialists could not stay clear altogether, and they started to

bomb North Vietnam. It was in response to these circumstances that China began sending troops to support the North Vietnamese defending their own country. From June 1965 to August 1973, China despatched more than 300,000 air-defence personnel and road-construction workers to North Vietnam to help in the struggle. At the height of the war in 1967, there were 170,000 Chinese troops in Vietnam. Furthermore, China maintained a supply-chain of food, weapons and daily necessities to the North Vietnamese, some originating in the Soviet Union, some in China itself. Attempting to stop this supply chain, the US imperialists even started bombing countries such as Laos and Cambodia, aggression that had unfortunate consequences in the latter.

#### Supporting the people of Africa and Asia

China under Mao also supported other African and Asian countries in their struggles against Western colonialism and efforts to achieve national independence. For example, on 20 May 1970, China published Mao's declaration 'People of the World, Unite to Defeat the US Aggressors and All Their Running Dogs!' (全世界人民团结起来, 打败美国侵略者及其一切走狗!) to support the anti-imperialist struggles of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. In 1956, China declared its support for Egypt in reclaiming its rights over the Suez Canal. China also supported Algeria's struggle for independence, for example by supplying weapons and material goods. China supported Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Namibia in their struggles against colonialism and imperialism by providing training courses and materials and supplying weapons.. According to the Organisation of African Unity, from 1971–72, some 75 per cent of weapons supplied from outside Africa originated in China and most of them were supplied free of charge. On the 12 January 1964, Mao declared his support for the people of Panama people in their claim over the Panama Canal (中国人民坚决支持巴拿马人民的爱国正义斗争).

As an example of its support of weak and oppressed countries, consider China's use of the best technology and construction materials then available to help build the Tan-Zan Railway, a 1,860km line from Tanzania to Zambia costing \$500m. According to

a Chinese source on the Internet, China offered interest-free loans of nearly CN¥1b and sent more than 55,000 workers and technological personnel, 66 of whom lost their lives in the construction project (坦赞铁路 <http://baike.baidu.com/view/75336.htm#3>, accessed on the 4th January 2014). This was carried out at a time when China urgently needed capital and technology for its own construction.

In October 1954, China hosted a visit of the India premier Nehru, and in April 1955, China and Indonesia signed a contract on the issue of dual nationality, so that the ethnic Chinese who had Indonesian nationality automatically lost their Chinese nationality (中华人民共和国和印度尼西亚共和国关于双重国籍问题的条约). From 1963–64, the Chinese premier Zhou Enlai and foreign minister Chen Yi visited 14 Asian and African counties including Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Sudan, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Albania. Finally, but more importantly, Mao developed the idea of three worlds and held that Asia (except Japan) and all the African and Latin American countries were Third-World countries. China was on their side.

### **Mao Zedong's last efforts in combating capitalism**

According to the current official historiography, if anything proves to be wrong or bad in the history of the PRC, Mao should be held responsible; and if anything proves to have been useful and good, it must have been done by those who did not follow Mao or who acted against him.

However, it should be possible, at least for some notable policy developments in the history of the PRC, to envisage events the other way around. According to this alternative narrative, Mao was the person who actually wanted to be moderate but those under him went further than what he wished. There is certainly evidence that Mao wanted the CCP to be criticised in 1957 and therefore launched what was called the 'Two Hundreds' (let a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thoughts contend). It was his colleagues in the CCP who resisted Mao's ideas first and then wanted a harsh crackdown as soon as possible when the very existence of the Party was under threat. There is also evidence that Mao

was one of the first who saw the problems caused by radicalism during the GLF. For instance, Bo Yibo was the one who made a report to Mao that China could catch up with the UK in steel production in two years. Liu Shaoqi was the one who encouraged communal canteens for he thought that would liberate women from kitchens and so be one way to eliminate gender difference. Zhou Enlai was the one who invented the term 'Great Leap'; Chen Yi and Tao Zhu were the ones who believed and advocated unrealistic agricultural output. If one reads Mao's rambling talk in the 1958 Wuchang and Nanning Conferences and the 1959 Shanghai Conference, one can see that he was the person who wanted to slow down.

We have to realise that the choice of what has been allowed to be published (e.g. Mao's speeches, and speeches by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in their so-called collected works) has been very political. One might notice that in their selected works the speeches of Deng and Liu during the GLF years are not included. The politics is obvious: putting aside personal vengeance (as Vogel (2011) records, Deng Xiaoping was very passionately bitter about the Cultural Revolution because one of his sons was crippled during the movement), to justify a dramatic change of politics, the post-Mao leadership had to declare that it had been correct all the time and that it was Mao who was to blame for the past problems. For the Western audience, it is satisfying to nail down a villain: Mao the monster of evil communism.

By pointing out these issues, I am not suggesting that Mao was not responsible for bad outcomes. All I am trying to say is that he was not a god and therefore could not have been involved in all (bad or good) that had happened under his leadership. It was humanly and organisationally impossible for him to have been involved in all the policy making let alone policy implementation in such a large and war-torn country facing so many daunting tasks of reconstruction in the 1950s. Therefore it is reasonable to expect that many of the initial policies and their implementation were the responsibility of Mao's colleagues, and may even have been undertaken without his knowledge (Li Yi 李毅 2005) thinks that Mao would probably not have known the exact details of *Gaokao* (the tertiary education entrance examination)

that was introduced in 1955. According to Li Yi, once the system was established, it favoured educated families and disadvantaged poor ones. For instance in 1957, 80 per cent of the enrolled university students were from landlord, rich peasant and capitalist family backgrounds. Mao of course was not happy with this, but did not have the chance to address this until the Cultural Revolution when the university operation stopped altogether. He then started an experiment of recruiting students from among the workers, peasants and soldiers directly via mass recommendation. According to Li, the hierarchical scale of salary and the household registration that classified Chinese into virtually two different countries were also policies designed by Liu and his colleagues, which Mao was not very happy about. The Cultural Revolution's radical policies of abolishing army ranks and sending urban youth up into the mountains and down to the countryside were a reflection of Mao's ideology, one that was very different to that of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping.

Mao was very aware that China could easily be swept along with the dominant capitalist system in the world. I would argue that the Cultural Revolution was his last, bold, and desperate attempt to steer China towards what he perceived to be socialism and to prevent the country from moving into the trajectory of capitalism. Mao is reported to have declared that he had only achieved two things in his life: to have driven Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), the leader of the Chinese Nationalist government, to the island of Taiwan; and to have launched the Cultural Revolution. It is therefore fascinating to read in Vogel's account of how Mao in his dying days urged Deng Xiaoping to acknowledge in writing (or before colleagues) that he supported the Cultural Revolution, even if not totally then at least 70 per cent of it. According to Vogel (2011), Deng was very resistant on this although in writing he did pledge to Mao that he would never reverse the verdict of the Cultural Revolution. But history proves that Deng did reverse the verdict, as Mao said with a sigh of despair, referring to Deng Xiaoping: 'capitalist roader is still walking along the capitalist road. [He] says never reverse the verdict! Not reliable'. Deng did restore capitalism in China, and 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' steered by him was more blatantly capitalist

than systems in many developed capitalist countries.

The Cultural Revolution has been constantly narrated as Mao's personal power struggle against his designated successor Liu Shaoqi, even though all the documentary evidence suggests otherwise. Mao's authority in the CCP and PRC was and could never be challenged by anyone after the establishment of the PRC. Mao knew it and everyone else knew it. He could easily have got rid of Liu without mobilising a mass movement like the Cultural Revolution that was supposed to have lasted ten years from 1966–76. In fact, as early as August 1966 during the Eleventh Plenum of the Eighth Party Congress held in Beijing, Liu had already been demoted from the number-two position in the party ranking to number eight. All Mao had to do to achieve this was write a few lines on a piece of scrap paper called the 'big poster'. Many years later, Liu's widow, the intelligent Wang Guangmei, who also suffered terribly during the Cultural Revolution, admitted that Mao and Liu had policy differences and that Mao had not initially intended to get rid of Liu politically. Liu's political and even personal fate went downhill only after Mao was presented with 'solid evidence' that Liu was once a traitor during his days as an underground communist activist. How this could have happened is still a top secret in China, possibly because it at least partly involved the still beloved premier Zhou Enlai.

Why did Mao launch the Cultural Revolution then? For Mao it was to decide China's road ahead: to guarantee that China moved towards socialism rather than slipped into capitalism. In 1965, barely a year before the Cultural Revolution, Mao made a trip to Jinggangshan, where he had first started a base for guerrilla warfare, then continued to the establishment revolutionary base area in Jiangxi, where eventually most of the top CCP leaders gathered before the now famous Long March. Mao's symbolic visit to Jinggangshan was apparently to contemplate another new starting point for China. In some rare occasions during the visit there, Mao talked to those around him about why he did not like idea of contracting land to households, and why he thought collectivisation was crucial to Chinese socialism (Ma Shexiang 马社香 2006). This was a point about which Mao disagreed with Liu Shaoqi. It is worth pointing out that dismantling the commune system in



rural China was the starting point at which the post-Mao leadership launched its so-called reform.

Mao knew such a task was difficult because it required the remoulding of mentality and world outlook. That was why the revolution for the elite to go through was called ‘the Cultural Revolution’. In May 1966, when the launch of the Cultural Revolution was in full swing, Mao called the inner-circle thinkers of the party (figures such as Chen Boda, Qi Benyu and also Lin Biao’s hand-picked general Yang Chengwu) to Shanghai to listen to what he thought was a concrete way to change people’s minds lifestyles. This was later called the 7 May Directive, after a letter written by Mao on that date praising a People’s Liberation Army report which talked about how the soldiers were participating in not only military training but also cultural studies and agricultural production. The directive basically says that one should not work to live, to earn money, but one should live to work. Although division of labour cannot be abolished, a worker should do some farm work and a farmer should do some industrial work, a soldier should engage in production as well as military training. A student should do all kinds of physical labour as well social activities. Party official should sometimes live with those they lead, engage in production work with them and so on (Qi Benyu 戚本禹 2013).

Mao’s idea of the Cultural Revolution as written into the Sixteen Articles document that launched the movement was for a three-stage movement: struggle; criticism; reform (*dou pi gai*). All Chinese should engage in struggling against established ideas and habits, especially these who are in leading or authoritative positions. After that, all Chinese should engage in criticism of others and of themselves. Finally, all the institutions should be reformed according to new ideas and consensus reached out of the struggle and criticism stages. As it happened, the Cultural Revolution did not develop the way Mao had envisaged.

## Conclusion

Mao was and remains a controversial figure. For a long time after his death, the Chinese authorities, while not allowing a straightforward denunciation of Mao like Khrushchev’s denunciation of Stalin, have encouraged or at least allowed implicit or explicit criticisms

of him in many concrete areas of policy, like the Cultural Revolution. Thus, condemnation and damming of Mao, some elements of which are obviously false and fraudulent, by prominent economist Mao Yushi (not personally related to Mao), school teacher Yuan Tengfei, party historian Xin Zilin and former journalist Yang Jisheng, have been allowed. On the other hand, any positive assessment of Mao, especially concerning the Cultural Revolution, has not been allowed. Especially poignant is that grass-roots activities to commemorate or celebrate Mao are very often banned or harassed. Websites that celebrate Mao and his ideas, like *wuyou zhixiang* (the Utopia), have been shut down several times.

This in a sense is understandable. Mao’s theory of class struggle, which was used skilfully by the party power holders at various levels against the classic class enemies, when applied to themselves as a new class of enemies who wanted to turn China into a capitalist country, really caused much consternation. Not to utterly condemn Mao, ideologically and personally, was already a huge concession on the part the Chinese political and intellectual elite of that generation. For the broad sectors of the masses, however, it is a totally different story. According to a recent survey carried out in December 2013, 1,045 people above the age of 18 from Beijing, Shanghai Guangzhou, Chengdu, Xi’an, Changsha and Shenyang were asked whether they would agree that Mao had more merits than demerits. Some 78.3 per cent agreed and 6.8 per cent strongly agreed (*Global Times* 环球时报 2013). Some may doubt the validity of such a survey since it was carried out by the official Chinese media *Global Times*. But my research (Gao 2008) has convinced me that this percentage does indeed reflect the reality in China today. Another response, which is as predictable as the sun rising tomorrow, is that the Chinese have been brainwashed and they have not been told the truth. This kind of patronising response not only betrays the Cold War mentality with very little understanding of what China is like now, but also an astonishing arrogance; as if nobody else holds the key to the truth, as if the broad masses of the Chinese are so unthinking that they can be easily manipulated by a god-like hand. In fact the survey also asked what they thought Mao’s biggest mistakes had been. The majority answer to that question was the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap

Forward. This shows that a positive evaluation of Mao was not based on blind and ignorant worship of a great leader but balanced by the knowledge of what Mao was perceived to have done wrong.

There are signs that even the official Chinese evaluation of Mao by the present generation of leaders is going to be different from that of Deng's generation. Xi Jinping, chairman of the CCP and president of the PRC, recently made it clear that both the Mao era and the post-Mao period are an integral part of the history of the CCP and the PRC. One should not use the second 30 years to denigrate the first 30 years or versa versus. There are achievements and failures in both periods, Xin states. With this kind of less political attitude, let us hope a more relaxed and balanced evaluation of Mao is in the process of developing.

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## Martí, José (1853–1895)

José Martí, a deported Cuban who resided in New York City between 1880 and his death fighting for Cuban independence in 1895, observed with alarm the emergence of US imperialism during the transformative decades leading up to US intervention in the Cuban War of Independence and its resolution in 1902, through which the US annexed Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and other islands, and set up a tutelary relationship to Cuba. His extended residence 'in the monster's entrails', as Martí described his life in New York to his dear friend and Mexican editor Manuel Mercado, provided him with insights about his host country's imperialist

vision with respect to Latin America and the Caribbean. Viewing with greater prescience than most of his North and South American contemporaries, Martí developed a critique of the US's double dealings with Native Americans, of Westward expansion into the states that once were Mexican, of attacks on Chinese and European immigrants, of the miserable conditions of working people, and of lynching as a common method of administering justice.

Above and beyond his keen interest in Cuba's national independence from Spain, he devoted thousands of pages as a translator of US literature and society, its popular culture and politics, its prominent literary figures, and influential late 19th-century ideas such as the definition of what is the 'modern', as I argued in 2008. These translations facilitate his Latin American, Caribbean and Latina/o readers' conceptualisation of themselves as a region with common political, cultural, and economic interests, as 'Latins' and not 'Saxons', and as a 'United States of South America', with every bit as much or more potential than the republic north of the Río Bravo to define the future of America (Martí 2002/1894: 330). The key text that has established Martí's reputation as a foundational anti-imperialist in the Latin American and Latina/o tradition, is 'Nuestra América' (1891), but to grasp the ways he theorised race, class, culture, and politics in order to make a case against empire, let us consider the context in which this manifesto emerges.

Born José Julián Martí y Pérez in 1853 in Havana, Cuba, to a Valencian father, Mariano Martí Navarro, and a Canary-Islander mother, Leonor Pérez Cabrera, Martí was the eldest in a family of eight children and the only son. His early education with Rafael María de Mendive introduced Martí to a growing movement in support of Cuban independence dating to the early 19th century. Aged 16, as the first war of Cuban independence was unfolding, Martí was convicted of sedition and treason and condemned to six years of hard labour because of a letter (which he never sent) that discouraged his classmates from serving as part of the police forces of the Spanish colonial regime. Through the influence of his mother, the sentence was commuted after six months; he was released but with the stipulation that he live out his exile in Spain. The marks of the whippings and scars due to chains he wore coloured the rest of his

life. In Spain, Martí pursued Law, Philosophy, and Literature; for political and financial reasons, he did not formally receive the degrees for which he completed courses of study during his lifetime. (In 1995, the University of Zaragoza granted the degrees posthumously.) Martí returned first to Mexico for two years. After a brief sojourn in Cuba in 1877, he moved to Guatemala and worked as a professor of literature where he became renowned for his fiery oratorical style. He resigned from his post after one year in protest at the firing of a fellow Cuban. Martí and his new wife Carmen Zayas Bazán returned to Cuba, but his political views led to him being deported a second time to Spain. As quickly as possible, he made his way to New York to join the efforts on behalf of Cuban independence.

While living in New York, Martí worked long hours and organised the growing Cuban and Puerto Rican émigré community at night. Having become bored by his work as a Wall Street office worker, Martí began to make his living by writing for major Latin American newspapers as a foreign correspondent, and by contributing to local Spanish-language newspapers and magazines. In the later 1880s, he also held posts as a consular officer for Uruguay, Argentina, and Paraguay. In his work as journalist and cultural critic, Martí engaged in translation of the events, the culture, and the politics of the US and Europe for readers in Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, and in the Spanish-speaking United States. The novelty of the scenes he described pushed him to forge a new genre, the *crónica* (short, very literary, prose essays), that convey non-fiction in highly metaphorical and rhetorically rich figurative language which Rubén Darío described as unforgettable. In these pages of journalism, Latin American readers encountered for the first time and through Martí's critical eye the aesthetics and politics of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Oscar Wilde, Helen Hunt Jackson, Mark Twain, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, George Bancroft, and Frank Blackmar among many others. He returned to teaching, but of Spanish as a second language at night. While immersing himself in this study and representation of the US, Latin America, and Europe, Martí also wrote several volumes of poetry, travel sketches, edited a newspaper, wrote a magazine for children and his own short novel, diaries, personal notebooks, and an extensive epistolary. Scholars such as Julio

Ramos, Ivan Schulman, Evelyn Picón Garfield and Susana Rotker have attributed to Martí an inaugural role in defining a modernist sensibility in these texts, marked in large part by his attempt to depict the intense changes that accompanied industrialisation, immigration, urbanisation and imperial expansion and through his influence on subsequent writers. He sketched outlines for 50 book projects in his short lifetime, but lamented that his radical political commitments would require him to go to the grave with many books unwritten.

In New York, Martí expanded his nationalist vision to include a Latin Americanist regional consciousness. Simultaneously, he developed a critique of the US's betrayal of its own revolutionary tradition, insofar as it increasingly assumed the mantle of European-style empire. A series of historical events, often neglected in narratives of US history, contributed to Martí's anti-imperialist turn. These events proved crucial for shaping his profound alarm at the possibility that the US would simply 'take' his island and make it a protectorate. First, the annexation of the northern half of Mexico in 1848 haunted him as a possible future for Cuba: he depicted the maddening effects of annexation for the original Californianos in his translation of Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*. Second, the 1879–83 War of the Pacific, in which US suppliers provisioned both Chile and Peru with arms, introduced Martí to the tactics by which the US sought to compete with Britain and France for rights to exploit Latin America's resources. Secretary of State James Blaine, the most powerful Republican of the second half of the 19th century, blocked European attempts to mediate between Bolivia and Chile, invoking the Monroe Doctrine. After creating expectations that the US would defend Peru militarily, the US abruptly withdrew and left Peru open to the mercies of the Chileans. Third, real threats of popular expansionist sentiment horrified him, as when the US came close to invading another row of mineral-rich northern Mexican states in 1886, as a result of the intrigues of the Annexationist League and its leader Augustus K. Cutting, which prompted Martí to write a letter in fierce opposition, recently republished by Rodolfo Sarracino (2003).

The tactics of the Republican Party under Blaine's leadership generated a suspicion of the US's intentions that lasted until the end of Martí's life and informed much of

his reporting on the other major historical event that shaped his critical understanding of US attitudes toward his America: the International American Conference of 1889–90, on which Martí reported with passion and vigilance. This Conference, organised by the same secretary of state, James Blaine, now under President Benjamin Harrison, promised to establish procedures for arbitrating military conflicts, common weights and measures, even a common currency to be called the 'Columbus' (in English), all in the name of friendship among the American Republics. The leaders of the 'pueblos latinos de América', as Martí described in his report in 1891, in his capacity as official delegate for Uruguay to the International American Monetary Commission, refused to co-operate with the official and unofficial aims of the conference and the Commission. Precisely during this period, Blaine made arguments about the convenience and wisdom of US annexation of Cuba. To Martí, this proposal was anathema. The culture of the 'Congreso Panamericano', as Martí referred to it, devised by Blaine as a means to secure business deals, concessions for US transportation industries, and to extend US influence in the region, proved odious to Martí. He transcribed the heady imperial sentiments he found in the headlines reporting on the meeting for his Latin American readers: 'Clay's Dream'; 'The Just Influence'; 'Not Yet'; 'Steamships to South America'; 'Manifest Destiny'; 'The Gulf is Ours!' The proceedings of the conference and the Commission revealed to Martí and to his readers 'the open proposal of new era of domination of the United States over all the peoples of America' (Martí, 1963–1975/1889: 52–53).

Simultaneous with Cutting's provocation and the popular call for a second invasion of Mexico, police abuse and corruption of the juridical system and failure to address the root causes of the massive protests of working peoples further confirmed to Martí, as he wrote in his unpublished notebook (no. 18), that 'Cuba must be free –from Spain and from the United States' (Martí 1963–75: vol. 21, 380). Although many Latin Americans had seen the US as a model for their newly independent nations, including Argentine president Domingo F. Sarmiento and perhaps even Martí, his descriptions of the largest demonstrations of workers in the history of the US, where hundreds of thousands demanded an eight-hour workday and an end to child

labour, suggest that Martí came to question the appropriateness of the US model for his America. In his reporting on the Haymarket anarchist's trial and the eventual hanging of four men with anarchist political views on charges for which they were posthumously exonerated, Martí voiced the anger and shock of the immigrant workers as they realised that the US would not offer them a 'new' world: 'The police, proud in their wool jacket uniform, proud of their authority, and terrifying to the uneducated, beat and assassinate [the workers]. They are cold and hungry and they live in reeking shacks. America then is the same as Europe!' (1963–75/1888: Vol. 11, 338; *Selected Writings* "Class War in Chicago: A Terrible Drama" 200). In addition to this lack of representation for workers, Martí documented gruesome and xenophobic acts of vigilante violence, including the lynching of 11 Italian immigrants inside a Louisiana jail and of the burning at the stake of an African American, both of which reveal his awareness that structural injustice prevented full exercise of rights for all in the US. Martí's 'Letter to the Director of the *Evening Post*' (2002/1889), also entitled 'Vindication of Cuba' and republished in English and Spanish, denounces racism toward Cubans resident in the US and on the island as part of a founding imperialist discourse that stereotyped Cubans – because of their mixed race or supposedly failed masculinity – as incapable of governing themselves.

Martí meditated in his writings on events from his location within the empire's belly; 'Nuestra América' or 'Our America,' bears the oratorical flourish of its first enunciation as 'Madre América' at an 1890 gathering of same Latin American leaders who had assembled in New York for the International American Conference. The revised version, which we know now as Martí's anti-imperialist manifesto, appeared in print in January 1891 simultaneously in New York and in Mexico. 'Our America' called upon its Latin American and Spanish readers inside the US to awaken to the threat that the US posed to the independence and sovereignty of Latin America's nations: 'It is the hour of reckoning and of marching in union, and we must move in lines as compact as the veins of silver that lie at the roots of the Andes' (2002/1891: 289). Although it was the document of a light-skinned creole leader addressed to other creole leaders, he asked

his Latin American colleagues to turn their orientation away from European and North American models (the imported books and reheated leftovers of colonial legacies) and instead to embrace and celebrate the knowledge and culture of their own 'hybrid lands', for only an original creation would correspond to the 'enigma' of Latin America (294). He called for his America's schools to teach the native languages of 'our Greece', or the ancient American civilisations in order to decolonise Eurocentric curricula that are the legacy of colonialism and imperialism (291). In an anti-racist bid for unity and equality, he declared that in his America 'there is no race hatred, because there are no races' (295). Here Martí differed from the vast majority of white people in the US who actively invested in and advocated for white privileges; but he underestimated the trenchant legacies of white supremacist policies and racial terror in the wake of centuries of colonisation and enslavement.

Within two years of the International American Conference, together with Arturo Schomburg and others, he founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party and its newspaper *Patria* in New York; from mid-1892 until his death he worked full time to raise money and support for a third strike for Cuban independence. In the first skirmishes of that war in 1895, Martí was killed by a Spanish soldier. He was quickly immortalised for his self-sacrifice as a martyr of the Cuban nation. In the wake of the 1959 revolution, both Cuban exiles and Fidel Castro himself have defined Martí as intellectual ancestor to their politically antagonistic projects. Philip Foner is clear that Martí was never himself a socialist nor a Marxist, although he knew of and respected Marx's commitment to the oppressed and disenfranchised and conveyed a thorough critique of the social conditions in which workers lived under the capitalism he observed in the US. In 2001, George W. Bush cited Martí in his speech on behalf of economic regionalisation at the Summit of the Americas in Quebec (21 April 2001), but study of Martí's writings suggests that he vehemently opposed such US-led 'pan-American' projects. Although Martí's politics continue to be hotly contested by Cubans on and off the island, his writings reveal growing suspicion and discontent with the US's imperial turn in the late 19th century. His writings and first-hand

experiences as an economic migrant in New York led him to predict the US's aspirations to global empire in his final 'Letter to the Editor of the *New York Herald*', published in English on the day of his death (Martí 1895). Martí's writings call upon his readers to prevent this imperialist development by fighting for Cuba's independence and for his America's self-determination, which would in turn help the US to return to its founding revolutionary principles.

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## Marx, Karl (1818–1883) and Imperialism

The word 'imperialism' as it came to be used in the 20th century, especially among followers of Lenin, denotes the global spreading of the capitalist mode of production, or rather a particular version of it, not unlike the more recent – but less clearly politically charged – term 'globalisation'. As the words 'imperialism' and 'imperialist' hardly occur in Marx's writings, a discussion of Marx's view on this matter and of the extent to which the concept 'imperialism' is either indebted to Marx or rather implies an alternative to the Marxian conception would therefore be coextensive with a discussion of Marx's theory of the dynamics of capitalism in its entirety. (For succinct statements of what Marxian theory has to offer on the issue of globalisation, the dynamic of the capitalist mode of production, and 'imperialism' in this most generic sense of the term see Postone (1993, especially chs 1, 9 and 10), and Sutton (2013). On its most recent rearticulation as 'Empire' – in the sense of a 'limitless' form of imperialism – see Hardt and Negri [2000], Holloway [2002] and Murphy [2012, ch. 5].)

Setting itself a more modest goal, this essay will briefly examine Marx's actual (and, for its time, fairly conventional) use of the word (as a near-synonym of 'Caesarism' or 'Bonapartism') and how it relates to the predominant 20th-century meaning of 'imperialism' as it emerged in the decade or so leading up to the First World War. The essay will then focus on Marx's views on some of the aspects of 'imperialism' that seem to be most discussed in the literature, namely his views on colonialism, anti-colonial movements, and the meaning, in this context, of the notion of historical progress.

### 'Imperialism' in Marx's usage

Karl Marx grew up in a reasonably well-to-do, caring, and harmonious middle-class family in the Rhenish town of Trier. His father was a lawyer, an enlightened man, and a moderate liberal who had converted from Judaism to Protestantism only a short time before Karl Marx was born. Perhaps not insignificantly, Trier (a Roman capital, one of the oldest cities in Germany and a centre of Catholicism) had been conquered by Napoleon in 1794, and French imperial government acted to reinforce the liberal traditions of the town that fell to Prussia in 1815. The Prussian monarchy (in the eyes of contemporary German nationalists) reversed Jewish emancipation, and this was in fact what forced Marx's father to convert as he did not want to lose his career and livelihood (Blumenberg 1962; Nimitz 2000; Rühle 1928).

Marx studied Law, History, and (increasingly) Philosophy at the Universities of Bonn and Berlin from 1835–41, after initially also producing large amounts of poetry. As he became more and more involved in the 'young-Hegelian' circle of radical intellectuals, an academic career became unthinkable due to the anti-liberal political climate of the period, and Marx became an editor of a new, liberal-democratic journal based in Cologne. When this publication had to close down, he moved to Paris in 1843 and accepted a position as editor of a German-language journal there. His journalistic work forced him to deal with social and political issues, while he continued to sharpen his philosophical critique – especially of Hegel – and began to study political economy as well as the French socialist literature. In 1845 he was expelled from France and moved to Brussels where he

stayed until he was expelled from Belgium, too, in March 1848. In these intense five years, Marx published his first essays, including some of his most influential pieces such as 'A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction', and his first two books containing critiques of contemporary French and German socialist theories; he also started his collaboration with Friedrich Engels, whom he first met in 1844, and produced copious drafts that were to become highly influential after their posthumous publication, including the *German Ideology*. In 1845 Marx visited England for the first time, where he settled in 1849 as a stateless person after a year of revolutionary activity in Germany. From 1851 onwards his principal source of income was his journalistic work for the *New York Tribune*; at the same time he engaged in the sustained research that resulted chiefly in the 1867 publication of the first volume of *Capital* and an enormous amount of draft material, some of which was edited by Engels as the second and third volumes of *Capital*. The most famous portion of the unpublished material of that period has, since its publication in 1939 under the name *Grundrisse*, come to be seen as perhaps the most profound statement of Marx's theory of capitalist modernity apart from the first volume of *Capital*.

Marx was at no point a detached scholar or 'Great Thinker'; primarily he was throughout his life a fighter who saw study and research as self-evidently important parts of the struggle for human emancipation. It is fitting therefore that the text most directly connected to his name is the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* that he co-wrote with Engels. Published just before the February 1848 revolution, it was of little influence at the time, though in the 20th century it became probably the most influential political pamphlet ever published up to that point. A decade in which human emancipation remained off-stage ended when slavery was abolished in Russia in 1861 and between 1863 and 1865 in the US, and also in Europe things started moving again. Marx was elected a member of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association (the 'First International') from its foundation in 1864, and remained its chief strategist until its dissolution in 1876 as a victim of another reactionary backlash following the military destruction of the Paris Commune of 1871.

Marx used the term ‘imperialism’ in his 1871 *The Civil War in France* in what was then its common meaning, namely denoting a specific form of the exercise of state power, considered in its relation to class relations (Fisch et al. 1982: 181). The term was generally used to indicate changes that were under way at the time, especially in the aftermath of the Great Depression, and visible especially in the regimes of Napoleon III, Bismarck, and Disraeli: ‘imperialism’ would refer in these contexts to rule on the basis of alliances of the elites with the working class against the liberal bourgeoisie, or indeed against parliament, and governance above particular political parties, modelled on the imperial Roman example (176) and based on centralised state agencies and monopolies (177; Koebner, Schmidt 1964, ch. 1; on the various usages of the term ‘empire’, see Leonhard 2013). The necessity to address the ‘social question’ and to react to economic crises and the emergence of the American competition on the world market through colonialism is also sometimes implied in the term ‘imperialism’. On occasion, it meant ‘neomercantilism’ (Fisch et al. 1982: 207). In the English context, the term was typically used for those who wanted to maintain colonialism (178). The aspect of colonialism was not necessarily the dominant one, though, as ‘imperialism’ referred to a whole range of aspects of governance of empires; its anti-liberal impetus sits uneasily with the fact that colonialism was a key item on the agenda of 19th-century liberalism itself (Mehta 1999; Mantena 2010).

The often-quoted passage in *The Civil War in France* in which Marx uses the term runs as follows:

Imperialism is, at the same time, the most prostitute and the ultimate form of the state power which nascent middle-class society has commenced to elaborate as a means of its own emancipation from feudalism, and which full-blown bourgeois society had already finally transformed into a means for the enslavement of labour by capital. (Marx 1971: 72)

‘Imperialism’, discussed by Marx here in the context of Napoleon III, is presented as ‘the ultimate form’ of bourgeois ‘state power’, whereby the state is understood to have emerged initially as a means of bourgeois

society’s emancipation from feudalism and then, in the course of the consolidation of bourgeois society, turned into ‘a means for the enslavement of labour by capital’. Imperialism is the end result of this process whereby the state becomes also ‘the most prostitute’, which seems to mean the most subject to arbitrary and violent (ab-)use. The ‘prostitute’ character of the developed bourgeois state (indicating a certain degree of conceptual emptiness, indifference, and the possibility that it can be ‘bought’ and used for any purpose by anyone who is prepared to pay for the privilege) follows on from Marx’s comments on the modern state in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, written nearly two decades earlier at the beginning of the rule of Napoleon III.

Leon Trotsky remarked that ‘this definition has a wider significance than for the French Empire alone, and includes the latest form of imperialism, born of the world-conflict between the national capitalisms of the great powers’ (from *The Defence of Terrorism*, quoted in Winslow 1931: 717). Trotsky pointed thereby to the connection between Marx’s use of the term (not commonly used in socialist theory until the late 1890s) and its 20th-century meaning. The implication here is that the internal and external aspects of the exercise of state power are closely inter-related.

The main shift in meaning, first clearly expressed by the liberal writer Hobson (1902) and then most prominently by Lenin (1917), was that ‘imperialism’ became the name of a historical period, or ‘stage’ in the (apparently unavoidable) evolution of capitalism. A key contribution was the description in 1902 by Hilferding of a change in the function of protective tariffs: rather than enabling ‘infant industries’ to develop to a state where they would be able to compete on an unprotected world market (as in the conception of Friedrich List), protective tariffs now had the function of warranting high prices on the domestic market that would allow a manufacturer to compete successfully (i.e. at much lower prices) on the world market. In other words, through modern, ‘imperialist’ protective tariffs, domestic consumers subsidise the manufacturer’s world-market activities (Fisch et al. 1982: 217). Protectionism is here no longer a merely temporary means in a conception that assumes that in the end all the world will interact on a ‘free-market’ basis. Hilferding’s



second contribution to the modern concept of ‘imperialism’ was his description of *Finance Capital* (1906), in which financial and industrial capital are effectively fused, as the dominant political agent in the ‘imperialist’ period. All modern conceptions of ‘imperialism’, liberal as well as socialist, describe versions of what could be addressed summarily as ‘organised capitalism’, i.e. the capitalism after the eclipse (since the Great Depression) of ‘classical’ liberalism. This is of course the same capitalism that is expanding in the (long-standing but accelerating) process of what is now referred to as ‘globalisation’, of which colonialism was (or, arguably, is) a principal means. The ‘Bonapartism’ that Marx addressed with the term ‘imperialism’ was indeed a pioneer of this wider constellation. It could be added that ‘anti-imperialism’ is almost as old as ‘imperialism’ itself: an ‘anti-Imperialist League’ was founded in 1898 in Boston (one year before Kipling wrote ‘The White Man’s Burden’) to defend republican principles and oppose militarism; it had at times 150,000 members (Fisch et al. 1982: 189). Its crucial domestic implications were pointed out by Anton Pannekoek, an anarcho-syndicalist theoretician of the European labour movement in the years immediately preceding the First World War, who argued in 1916 that imperialist capitalism escalates and generalises exploitation of various groups in society beyond the proletariat, provoking also a generalisation and radicalisation of socialist struggles, and renders the perspective of parliamentary struggle for socialist reform all the more anachronistic and implausible as state policy is increasingly decided in institutions other than parliament (Pannekoek 2012; see also Bricianer 1978).

Apart from the publication of Lenin’s pamphlet on imperialism of 1917, the most decisive date for 20th-century socialist and left-liberal debates on imperialism and colonialism was 1928 when the Sixth Congress of the Communist International adopted the position that imperialism retarded the industrial development of the colonies. Up to this point, the issue had remained controversial as many in the communist movement and parties had stuck to the older Marxian position that expected colonialism at least in the long run to result in industrialisation (which in turn it considered a necessary precondition for general human emancipation). Warren describes the 1928 Comintern position as one of the first statements of

‘the underdevelopment outlook that was to become the stock in trade of liberal development-economists after the Second World War’ (Warren 1980: 85). As it is not possible here to discuss the Bolshevik position in detail, it must suffice to point out that it can be understood as a simplified and mechanical articulation of a contradiction that is central to Marxist theory, namely the dialectic between capitalism (and its principal modern political form, the nation state) and emancipation. Lenin, on the one hand, strongly affirmed the Marxian notion of the progressiveness of capitalism to the extent that he promoted (in theory but more importantly in practice) the intense and rapid development of the capitalist mode of production, while he blamed the worldwide spread of capitalism, under the name of ‘imperialism’, for retarding and blocking in the colonies the modernisation process that would (at least potentially) result in general human emancipation. In other words, this position implies a split between, as it were, the benign side of capitalism that brings development (i.e., more capitalism) and therewith the potential of emancipation (to be ‘built’ under a socialist regime that will at some point in the process turn communist) and its malign side that must be fought as ‘imperialism’. The latter (capitalism that refuses to spread evenly) is to be fought in particular by national liberation movements that in the process establish modern nation states, which are the natural environments for the development of capitalism in its progressive guise. This conception reflects but also misconstrues a genuine aspect of Marxian theory: the dialectic between capitalism and progress robbing it of its dialectical character. There is a world of a difference between attempting (by way of social struggles) to exploit a presently unfolding contradictory historical process, and attempting (by way of political revolution and party dictatorship) to *organise and promote* such a process. (On Lenin’s advocacy of state-capitalism, whose ‘transition to full socialism would be easy and certain’, see Marcuse [1971: 42]. Marcuse discusses the role of the concept of ‘imperialism’ in Bolshevism in Chapter 2. The notion that the Bolshevik revolution structurally, not merely accidentally, due to the necessity of warfare, developed the capitalist mode of production was formulated in the 1930s by a variety of individuals in the context of the

left-Marxist ['council-communist'] opposition to Bolshevism (see Mattick 1978). An overview of [left-communist as well as Trotskyist and Maoist] discussions of the Soviet Union as 'state-capitalist' is contained in van der Linden [2007].)

The second half of this essay will point to Marx's own take on some of the areas of the debate that are central to what in the 20th century has been discussed as 'imperialism'. It is important to keep in mind in this context that even the concept of 'colonialism' – as used in the 20th century – was not available to Marx. 'Marx did not have a generic term to describe the rule of a more advanced nation state over a more backward area', such as the 20th-century concept of colonialism. He used the term 'colonialism' more narrowly to refer to 'the settlement of uninhabited areas or areas from which the indigenous inhabitants have been driven out (such as Australia and America)' (Brewer 1980: 27–28).

### Marx's views on the phenomena addressed as 'imperialism' in the 20th century

An obvious starting point for a discussion of Marx's views on imperialism (in the 20th-century sense of the word) is the following famous passage in the Communist Manifesto:

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce the so-called civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. (Marx and Engels 2004: 121)

Taken on its own, this passage seems to take sides with a European, imperialist 'civilization' that rapidly improves means of production and communication and deserves to be applauded for defeating obstinate and xenophobic 'barbarians'. The only hint at distancing in this paragraph itself is the use of the phrase 'the so-called civilization'. However,

no text by Marx, especially not one whose composition is as strongly rhetorical, almost poetical, as the *Manifesto*, allows isolated readings of single paragraphs. The context of the quoted passage, from the beginning of the *Manifesto*'s first chapter 'Bourgeois and Proletarians', is a section that elaborates the statement or thesis, 'The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part'. The text enumerates various aspects of this 'revolutionary part' in 11 paragraphs, most of which begin with 'The bourgeoisie ...'. Significantly, this list – sometimes described as a 'panegyric' to the bourgeoisie and to bourgeois modernity – is followed by a statement that is marked by the word 'but' as the antithesis of the preceding one: 'But we have seen'. What 'we have seen' is that the means by which the bourgeoisie became revolutionary were created in the previous, feudal historical epoch, and that likewise the capitalist period is already creating the means by which it will be replaced in the not so distant future. The rhetorical power of the text derives from the build-up, over 11 cumulative paragraphs, of a deliberately one-sided description of the bourgeoisie's revolutionary qualities, making the revolutionary qualities of the proletariat (that, so the argument runs, is already in the process of succeeding the bourgeoisie) look even greater. As it was the purpose of the text to support and mobilise the revolutionary energies of the (emerging) proletariat in what Marx and Engels understood to be a revolutionary situation (the winter of 1847/48), it needed to glorify the modern contemporary and future enemy whose immanent negation was the proletariat; at the same time, it denounced as merely reactionary the previous, already superseded enemy (feudalism etc., including its rebirth in various forms of backward-looking 'socialist' garb). The bourgeoisie and its 'so-called civilization' are welcomed, as their triumph means the replacement of rather stable and static forms of exploitation by one that carried its own self-destruction in itself, clearing the way for general human emancipation: the 'free association where the free development of each is the precondition of the free development of all' (163). As the *Manifesto* understands capitalism to have been 'globalised' from the start, it also imagines human emancipation whose preconditions it creates to be global. (It admits of course that 'the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie' is 'at first

a national struggle', 'in form', 'not in substance', though: the nation state is merely a formal aspect of a substantially global social relationship.) It must be added, however, that the remarks about 'Chinese walls' and 'the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of 'the foreigners' are not dialectically cashed in anywhere later in the text, which makes these remarks stand out as somewhat ethnocentric, pointing to the fact that Marx 'gave little specific attention to non-Western societies in this period'. After he moved to cosmopolitan London, though, he increasingly began to fill 'this gap in his worldview' (Anderson 2010: 9–10).

Marx's take on imperialism cannot be understood without understanding his general approach to capitalism and modernity for which the *Manifesto* is a key reference. The *Manifesto* was written in order to clarify how Marx's and Engels's position differed from that of competing socialist groups and writers. The defining characteristic of their position was the dialectic in the relationship of the movement that would bring about general human emancipation to the bourgeoisie and the capitalist mode of production, as well as, by implication, liberalism and nationalism. This was and, indeed, remained throughout modern history, a relationship of antagonism as well as mutual dependency, as no bourgeoisie ever defeated feudalism (or any other pre-capitalist social formation) without using popular movements as its infantry; and likewise, no popular movement was ever able to sideline (or 'leap over') the bourgeoisie; the latter has a habit of already being installed in the institutions of the popular movement itself, no matter how 'anti-bourgeois' that movement might aim or conceive itself to be. This is an aspect of modern capitalist society being a 'totality' that imposes near-identical patterns of development on all spheres and areas. The combination of two characteristics distinguishes the position taken by Marx and Engels from that of other socialists of the time: first, a visceral, revolutionary hatred of any form of 'the old regime'; and second, a continuing effort to figure how the 'free association' can slowly, painfully emerge out of the antagonistic but interdependent struggles that the bourgeoisie and the proletariat conduct against all the 'barbarians' of all the old regimes. All the latter are builders of walls: ghetto walls, Chinese walls, culture walls, state border walls.

As the triangular relationship between 'old regime' (feudalism, 'barbarians', 'Oriental Despotism' etc.), the capitalist bourgeoisie and general human emancipation was conceived on a global, non-nation-state level and as dynamically expanding from the beginning, it also continued to frame Marx's position on what we would now call colonialism and imperialism. Brewer points out that Marx's complex position on British domination of India was shaped by his view of the change in the relation between Britain and India that came with the Industrial Revolution: 'While merchant capital and its allies exploit and destroy without transforming, industrial capital destroys but at the same time transforms' because (in Marx's words) '[y]ou cannot continue to inundate a country with your manufactures, unless you enable it to give some produce in return' (Brewer 1980: 54). Therefore, Marx saw British manufacturers seek the destruction of the East India Company and the corruption inherent in the form of imperialism that predated the industrial age. Brewer summarises Marx's position thus: 'British rule in India (a) causes misery, (b) creates the preconditions for massive advance and (c) must be overthrown before the benefits can be enjoyed' (58). As in the *Manifesto*, Marx uses in his journalistic writings on India a style that includes 'deliberate juxtaposition of the most exalted praise for material achievements and the shocking images used to bring home the concomitant human misery' (59). Straightforward imperialist plunder (i.e. the imperialism of the pre-industrial period) is recognised by Marx as a contributing (but not decisive) factor in the development of capitalism in Britain, a view that is consistent with the fact that the capitalist mode of production failed to develop early in other empire-building countries such as France and Spain (43).

The insistence on the dialectical nature of modern, bourgeois 'so-called civilization' as bringing intense misery and exploitation but also the possibility of general human emancipation is key to understanding Marx's numerous comments on anti-colonial struggles. While his view of capitalist modernity was ambivalent, Marx's hatred for 'the old regime' and any form of patrimonialism, caste-thinking, slavery, and authoritarianism (including the modified forms in which they continue to exist within capitalism) was unequivocal. Careful study of the primary and

secondary literature shows that Marx (ever remaining an unreconstructed ‘1848’ revolutionary) responded enthusiastically to any struggle against exploitation and domination that occurred (such as in China, India, the US, Ireland, Poland, Russia) but also moderated (sometimes throttled) his enthusiasm when dialectical analysis led him to think a struggle failed to further the promise of emancipation that he saw as intrinsic to capitalist modernity. (Most recent detailed accounts of the complexities of Marx’s position can be found in Anderson [2010] and Pradella [2013]. For critical comments on Anderson see Stoetzler [2013]. Critical contributions on the Leninist legacy of anti-imperialism include Goldner [2010] and Bassi [2010]. Useful older accounts include Owen and Sutcliffe [1972], Kiernan [1974] and Mommsen [1981].) As Marx saw the phenomena that in the 20th century were addressed as ‘imperialism’ as normal and regular aspects of capitalist modernity (rather than a phenomenon extrinsic to the capitalist mode of production, or a ‘stage’ in its evolution), his view of the dialectic of capitalist modernity extended also to ‘imperialism’.

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## Nasser, Gamal Abd al- (1918–70)

A conspiratorial group of young military officers called the Free Officers, led by Gamal Abd al-Nasser (Gamal Abdel Nasser), a young army officer born in 1918 in the coastal city of Alexandria and the son of a postal clerk, coalesced in the aftermath of the 1948 war that witnessed the creation and expansion of the state of Israel. The network of Free Officers' cells extended throughout the military services and excelled in planning, organisation, and timing. In the evening of 22 July 1952 they effortlessly occupied key centres of power in Cairo and Alexandria, beginning with the army headquarters and broadcast outlets, thereby staging a quick and bloodless coup. By the next morning, the Free Officers were in charge. The seeds of social change had been in the making. A huge polarisation of wealth existed. Many Egyptians lived in poverty as wealthy landlords controlled huge plots of arable land. Power was shared between the British occupiers, the monarch, and the Egyptian elite. Economic industrialisation progressed at a painfully slow pace, and dissatisfaction with an inept monarchy was growing. On 26 July King Farouk was exiled, sailing from Alexandria aboard a royal yacht.

A cascade of events followed the Free Officers' seizure of power in 23 July 1952. The military junta chose not to share power with former allies and had negligible regard for democratic principles, freedom of association, and freedom of expression. In October 1952, strict censorship was imposed. In December, the constitution was abolished. In January 1953, all existing political parties were banned and their publications ceased to exist. A year later, in January 1954, the Muslim Brotherhood, a potent, anti-colonial religious, social, and political movement formed in 1928, was outlawed.

Like any army force that suddenly finds itself in power, the Revolutionary Command Council, the central committee of the Free Officers, had no coherent agenda for governing Egypt. On the domestic front, it moved

quickly to implement land reform in 1952, limiting the size of family holdings to 300 feddans. The army's stated goal was to retain power for three years, during which time a constitutional government would be established. Promises to restore an elective government were soon abandoned since society first needed to be reorganised according to revolutionary principles, the Free Officers argued. The revolutionary vanguard believed they had earned the right to rule; they were in charge of directing, controlling, and organising the masses.

### Domestic and international politics

Following the king's abdication, Muhammad Naguib, a highly regarded general, became president and prime minister. Nasser held the posts of deputy prime minister and minister of the interior. Quickly becoming popular among Egyptians, Naguib favoured a parliamentary democracy. Nasser evidently did not. Nasser began working behind the scenes to undermine Naguib's supporters within the army and police. The Revolutionary Command Council announced in March 1954 that elections would not be held and that it would remain in power. Naguib was deprived of the presidency a few months later and placed under house arrest. Nasser assumed executive powers, and the presidency would soon become his.

The Muslim Brotherhood's confrontation with the Free Officers' regime culminated in an assassination attempt by a Brotherhood member on 26 October 1954 against Prime Minister Gamal Abd al-Nasser as he delivered a speech in Alexandria. The eight shots fired – all of which missed their target – were heard via radio across the Arab world, an incident that Nasser seized on to rally the Arab people. In an intense crackdown on the movement that followed, thousands of Brotherhood members were summarily rounded up and detained, critically shaping the development of Islamist groups for decades to come. Silencing dissent and consolidating his rule, Nasser went further by closing the opposition press and suppressing all forms of ideological dissent. He alone increasingly held the reins of power through control of government ministries, the military, and security services.

British troops finally left Egyptian soil in June 1956, and on 26 July 1956, the fourth anniversary of the last king's exodus from

Egypt, Nasser challenged the French and British by nationalising the Suez Canal in a speech that he delivered in Alexandria and broadcast on live radio at 7.00 pm. It came as a response to the West's withdrawal of support for the Aswan High Dam, the mega-infrastructure project of the time that promised to modernise Egypt by harnessing the waters of the Nile to generate hydroelectric power. A code word in his speech – 'de Lesseps' (the name of the French developer of the canal) – was the signal for the Egyptian takeover of the Suez Canal Company, nominally an Egyptian shareholding consortium that had constructed and operated the canal but was in the overall control of the British and French. As Middle Eastern oil passed through the canal en route to industrialised Western economies, the value of the canal increased, with annual revenues reaching £36 million.

Colluding with Israel and France, the British invaded Egypt in November with the aim of seizing the Suez Canal and toppling Nasser. Traffic of oil tankers through the channel came to a standstill. The United Nations, the US, and international public opinion were overwhelmingly against the invasion. In the midst of the invasion, the Egyptians sunk 50 or so ships in the canal, and it took five months before they were cleared, by which time international quarters were in agreement on which country controlled the vital waterway. The incident accelerated the demise of traditional colonial power in the Middle East. British and French property was sequestered. Later, foreign business interests were nationalised, and new residency and citizenship requirements forced the expulsion of foreigners and Egyptian Jews.

Nasser's defiant resistance to the Tripartite Aggression of 1956 made him a hero in the developing world where anti-imperialism was on the march. His rhetoric promoted national independence and sovereignty for all Arab states, and he sought to establish Egypt as the leader of the Arab nationalist movement. But he was first and foremost an Egyptian nationalist who pursued policies guided by what he saw to be Egypt's interests. Nasser's relationship with the Soviet bloc grew as he sought to modernise the Egyptian army through arms purchases, although he would have preferred to buy them from the West had it not been for the foot-dragging and restrictive conditions they placed on weapons sales. A Soviet

arms deal via Czechoslovakia in 1955 provided Egypt with 150 aeroplanes, 300 tanks, and a wide range of guns and rocket launchers.

Nasser's crowning vision was the construction of the Aswan High Dam, which would vastly increase agricultural productivity and generate vast amounts of electricity to power Egypt's industrial zenith. Nasser negotiated funding for the US\$1-billion dam through the World Bank, with the US bankrolling most of the deal. At first the US signed on to the project, seeing it as a way to counterbalance growing Soviet influence in Egypt. Still, the US imposed a litany of conditions, which Nasser reluctantly accepted, only to be told that the US was pulling out of the arrangement, believing that Egypt lacked the means to repay the credit.

Revenue from the canal, when it reopened in 1957, was insufficient to build the Aswan High Dam, and Egypt lacked the technical expertise for its construction. The Soviet Union stepped in, providing funding and engineering, with the motive of extending its influence in Egypt and the Middle East. Construction began in 1960 and was completed a decade later, generating 10 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually, or half of the country's electricity requirement at the time. The dam was the highlight of Nasser's reign, shaping present-day Egypt.

In 1956, when a new constitution was finally drafted, it allowed for a representative assembly that served a consultative, not legislative, function. Political parties remained banned, save for the state-controlled National Unity Party. Unopposed, Nasser won with 99.9 per cent of the vote in a plebiscite in the year the new constitution was adopted. With power firmly in his hands, Nasser undertook measures to transform the economy and accelerated the pace of his socialist programmes: education and health care were expanded, and housing units for low-income families were built. Nonetheless, Nasser's social initiatives often faced problems in funding, staffing, and implementation. His policies of socio-economic levelling drew students to the fold of Nasserist-socialist principles. But he also reorganised universities, banned independent student movements, purged faculty members and administration, and placed the institutions of religion, including al-Azhar, the centuries-old seat of Sunni Islamic learning, firmly under state control.

### Nasser's cult of personality

Gamal Abd al-Nasser emerged on the world stage leading a nationalist struggle and possessing the dream of Arab nationalism. He looked beyond Egypt's national borders. Either loved or despised, Nasser was a phenomenon unto himself. With Nasser's rise to power, Cairo became the fulcrum of Pan-Arab nationalism. Nasser's rhetoric promoted national independence and sovereignty for all Arab states. Beyond Egypt's national borders, Nasser was seen as leading a nationalist struggle and embodying the promise of Arab unity. Egypt's cinema, publishing, and broadcasting were outlets to spread his message. He captured hearts and minds, across generations, through hopes for greatness.

Once Nasser was firmly in power, his personality cult grew, with the state apparatus serving to underscore the leader's destiny, wisdom, and vision as a national icon. Immensely confident and charismatic, he spoke to the masses in other countries via the medium of radio, often over the heads of their leaders, seizing on a nostalgic longing among Arabs for a mythic hero, a modern-day Saladin. Sawt al-'Arab (Voice of the Arabs) carried his speeches of Pan-Arab nationalism to all corners of the Arab world. The Algerian novelist Ahlam Mosteghanemi writes in *Chaos of the Senses*:

At the time, we could listen some evenings to Voice of the Arabs from Cairo, broadcasting Abd al-Nasser's speeches and inflamed anthem. I still remembered some of them, the way that children at that age memorized nursery rhymes – they were forever inscribed in my brain. Then we would go to sleep happily, with no need for a television, which we have never seen in our lives. (2004: 132)

Nasser showed concern for workers and farmers in a way the old political order had not done. Swept up by a vibrant sense of nationalism and enamoured of the first native son to rule Egypt in two millennia, singers and writers embraced the Arab nationalist cause. Umm Kalthoum, the superstar of Arabic song hailed as the 'pearl of the Orient', was closely tied to Nasser's Pan-Arabism, as was the singer, actor, and heartthrob Abd al-Halim Hafez, who crooned in praise of the Aswan High Dam. The acclaimed poet and

lyricist Salah Jaheen was a devotee of Nasser's vision and penned the words of the national anthem.

### **Egypt's union with Syria**

Nasser spurned Western designs in the Middle East, and refused to sign up to the 1955 Baghdad Pact, a collective defence organisation which aimed to prevent Soviet encroachment in the region. He did not see the need for regional defence requiring the patronage of a superpower and felt that it carved up alliances that divided Arab states. Considering Israeli expansionism and imperialist powers the main threat, in 1961 Nasser instead co-founded the Non-Aligned Movement, which promoted a somewhat independent approach in Cold War politics. In his dealings, Nasser played one power off against another, but it was the Soviet pole that proved more beneficial, and Egypt under Nasser was seen as falling under the Soviet sphere of influence.

In a step towards Nasser's Arab nationalist vision, a short-lived union between Syria and Egypt was declared in February 1958. In a plebiscite, Nasser was overwhelmingly chosen as the union's head of state, in a country he had never before set foot in. It seemed likely to some that Nasserism might sweep the Middle East, especially following a coup in Iraq inspired by Egypt's Free Officers revolution and dubbed the 14 July revolution, which ended a monarchy and removed Iraq from the Baghdad Pact. As president, Nasser remained firmly in charge of the newly created United Arab Republic, whose slogan was 'Freedom, socialism, unity'. It was the first test of Pan-Arabism and a harbinger of the future of Nasserism. Threatened by the union and Nasser's popularity in the region, King Saud of Saudi Arabia paid Syria's chief of military intelligence to place a bomb on Nasser's plane. But after the payments were cashed, the incident was made public.

Syria and Egypt formed a national assembly, yet Egypt retained the upper hand, including control of major ministerial posts. Syria's political parties were abolished and Egypt dominated the military, often imposing its will and bureaucracy on Syria's institutions. By 1961, the union was unravelling as sectors within Syria were disappointed with the progress of the United Arab Republic and resistant to socialist reforms decreed by Nasser. An army coup in Syria in September brought

the union to an end. And by doling out generous payments to military leaders, King Saud helped to instigate the coup in Syria that dissolved the union with Egypt. (He was later forced to abdicate in favour of his brother Faisal and sought political asylum in Egypt.) Nasser decided against preserving the union through armed intervention; that would be the only occasion Nasser's brand of Pan-Arabism would see tangible fruits.

### **Economic revolution**

Nasser tightened his grip on the Egyptian economy through sweeping changes: taking over industries and imposing state control over the whole of economic life. Beginning in 1961, he nationalised businesses, banks, hotels, media outlets, and other economic sectors, and instituted heavy regulation on companies that were not nationalised. Properties of wealthy families were sequestered and further land reform was initiated. Even with the move towards socialism, inequalities remained, and with any change in social order, one ruling class was replaced with another. During the time of the monarchy, Egypt's elites were the landed gentry. Nasser's land reforms stripped them of their source of wealth, only to replace them with another elite: the officer class. Army officers, for example, were chosen to head nationalised companies. The military became the new route to social mobility and personal enrichment through graft.

While bringing businesses and major economic sectors under state control, Nasser's expansive economic reorganisation paid few long-term dividends. Instead, the state became the economy's prime mover. In the short term, the regime had new sources of revenue, but over time many government-owned businesses failed to turn a profit or had to be heavily subsidised; they were generally overstaffed under Nasser's policy of guaranteeing jobs to university graduates, and with no formidable competition there was no incentive for state-owned enterprises to upgrade products, services, or management practices.

Adding to the state's bureaucratic tentacles, a police state was created. Security and intelligence services were dramatically expanded under Nasser's rule. Their main function was to keep track of any subversive plotting against the regime within the military but



they were also pervasively used to keep tabs and silence dissent among factions of society. Arbitrary arrest and imprisonment were common. Having been a conspirator himself, Nasser was obsessed with preserving control. Egypt's 1964 constitution added little by way of democracy; power remained with the presidency, and in a plebiscite Nasser again commanded 99.9 per cent of the vote.

### Media, the arts, and religion

In 1955 Nasser decreed a censorship law, which set the legal parameters for the arts. Filmmakers were co-opted to support Nasser's brand of socialism. Censorship was extended to cover broader areas of artistic expression. Nasser nationalised the private press in 1960, bringing it under the control of the Arab Socialist Union, the sole political organisation, and branding it the 'media of mobilisation'. The move was justified within the socialist vein of being anti-capitalist. The press had lost touch, Nasser said, and was much too concerned with tantalising society gossip and Cairo nightlife instead of serving its public function by representing the ordinary struggles of rural Egypt.

The state media wholeheartedly embraced socialism and Pan-Arabism, becoming a filter of information and propaganda, instead of being transformed into an institution that would supposedly guide the public and build society. Critical voices were muted, the military junta was sacrosanct, and Nasser was fortified as a national hero. The failings of the regime were not attributed to the president, but to the reactionary and destructive forces of capitalism and feudalism.

The nationalisation of the film industry followed in 1961, and that of publishing houses from 1961 to 1965, even when books already required the approval of security agents before printing. Army officers were placed in charge of these nationalised businesses, which were also increasingly imbued with propaganda about Arab socialism. The monopoly that the state held on print media, books, television, and film served a more direct form of control than state rules of censorship. As in the times of the pharaohs millennia before, the function of art was to exalt the ruler's power, idealise his perfect administration, and serve the state. Self-censorship was already becoming engrained. A network of security and intelligence agencies made the

domination of the media airtight, and a climate of fear was fortified.

The revered religious institution of al-Azhar was made an appendage of the state by Gamal Abd al-Nasser in June 1961. The head of al-Azhar was then appointed by the president, not internally as had been the practice for centuries. The *'ulama* (religious scholars) were expected to give their unconditional support to the regime, with the understanding that they were given dominance in questions pertaining to religion and jurisprudence. The 1961 law established the Islamic Research Academy at al-Azhar, comprising scholars who held sway on censorship matters when it came to Islamic texts, but that role was broadened at times to compete with other official censorship bodies. A civil court decided on matters of confiscation. The censorship authority and the secret police in Nasser's Egypt remained the major force behind the censorship of works of fiction and science that they found blasphemous or politically objectionable.

### War and intervention

In a failure of Pan-Arab nationalism, Nasser embroiled himself in a military quagmire in Yemen to prop up a regime that came to power through a violent military coup staged by General Abdallah al-Sallal, the commander of the royal guard, in 1962. King Muhammad al-Badr (who reigned for just over a week following his father's death) and loyal tribesmen continued to fight on. Fearful of the spread of Nasserism, Saudi Arabia and Jordan lent assistance to the royalists. By 1964, seventy thousand Egyptian troops were stationed in the harsh desert terrain of Yemen to maintain a floundering regime. Fearful of ruining his Pan-Arabist image, Nasser remained committed to a prolonged and hopeless struggle where the Egyptian army, under the command of his defence minister, vice president, and incompetent political ally Abd al-Hakim Amir, fought a five-year battle against a foe that had mastered guerilla tactics. The military confrontation was costly. Ten thousand Egyptian troops were wounded, captured, or killed before Egypt pulled out in 1968, after the humiliating defeat against Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Arab opposition to Israel increased as the Palestinian refugee crisis festered. As the self-crowned Arab patriarch, Nasser linked

a solution to the Palestine question with Arab honour. Nasser adopted increasingly strident rhetoric towards Israel and its colonial designs, and called for the liberation of Palestine. He contended that Arab puppet regimes and the division of the Arabs contributed to the Palestine defeat. Israel, as an imperialist power, he thundered during speeches, represented a threat to the entire Arab world. Hostility to Israel centred on its displacement of the Palestinians from their homeland.

Nasser's bellicose posturing was confined to rhetoric; he was in no way prepared for a confrontation with Israel. Yet war seemed inevitable, as the Arabs believed they could change the balance of power to their favour. Nasser's military command assured him that they could match anything Israel's military forces could muster. Soviet intelligence falsely informed Nasser that an attack on Syria was imminent, claiming that Israel was concentrating troops on the Syrian border in response to attacks by Palestinian fighters. On 16 May 1967 the Egyptian leader demanded the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force stationed on its border with Israel. Egypt's alliance with Syria, which was sponsoring Palestinian raids into Israel, pulled Nasser to impose a naval blockade of the Straits of Tiran on 22 May as Egyptian diplomats were seeking United Nations intervention to get around the impasse.

Egypt was taken by surprise when Israel struck in June 1967, disseminating in a co-ordinated air offensive the Egyptian air force on the ground within the first hours of the war, then burrowing across the Sinai Peninsula. In six days the Jewish state seized all of Sinai, Gaza, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Syria's Golan Heights. The brief and humbling war for Arab armies claimed the lives of some twelve thousand Egyptian troops, with another five thousand captured or missing; 80 per cent of all military equipment was lost. During the conflict, as the Egyptian army, under Abd al-Hakim Amer's command, was wildly retreating from Sinai, broadcast outlets aired invented reports of fabulous victories against the Zionist foe. At no other moment did the state media prove so woefully deficient, contributing to a deep sense of public betrayal.

The defeat was an unforgivable embarrassment for Nasser, who on 9 June 1967, a day

before the war came to an official end, took responsibility and told the Egyptian people that he was resigning from the presidency. 'My brothers, we are accustomed, in times of victory and in times of adversity, in sweet hours and in bitter hours, to sitting together and talking with open hearts, honestly stating the facts, believing that we are on the same path, always succeeding to find the true way, no matter how difficult the circumstances and no matter how faint the light', began a remorseful Nasser in a live radio and television broadcast at 6.30 pm. 'We cannot hide from ourselves that we've faced a devastating setback during the past few days', he continued. 'I have decided to step down completely and forever from any official position and any political role, and to return to the ranks of the masses to fulfill my duties as any other citizen.' The speech was written for him by the prominent journalist Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, Nasser's personal confidant, editor-in-chief of the flagship daily *al-Ahram*, and chairman of the board of state-owned media and publishing houses.

It was a moment that served to shore up his support. Egyptians took to the streets demanding that their leader stay in power. Thousands of protesters surrounded the National Assembly. The Egyptian parliament demanded that Nasser withdraw his resignation, refusing to leave the building until he did so. It is difficult to say how populist and genuine the appeal was and how much of the public display of support for Nasser was the behind-the-scenes political machinations of the regime. While Nasser did stay in power, it was only later that Egyptians could comprehend the true extent of the defeat (especially in light of the propaganda on state-controlled media) and the institutional failures that placed the whole of Sinai under Israeli occupation. Believing that the US had colluded with Israel, Nasser ordered all Americans to be expelled from Egypt.

The outcome of the war was not only a military failure; it was a failure of the established political and social order. Waves of student protests erupted on college campuses in the war's aftermath. Nasser became the object of direct, public criticism. A campaign against student unrest was waged in the state-owned media, which labelled the activists as provocateurs and counter-revolutionaries goaded by foreign elements. Nasser found a way to crack down hard on his opponents. Student unrest

on university campuses was firmly suppressed. Clamouring for the rule of law and the adoption of liberal principles, judges blamed the defeat on the lack of political liberalisation. Dissenting judges were summarily dismissed or transferred to administrative posts.

The setback of 1967 reinforced a general distrust of reports on state-owned media, compelling Egyptians to tune to the short-wave transmission of the BBC World Service and French Monte Carlo to find out what was not being reported in the official press. Faced with the limited means of expression in the printed press, literature and film evolved into an abstract channel for social and political commentary. Accustomed to political censorship, film audiences have become attuned to uncovering subtle and hidden messages.

The decisiveness of the June 1967 war dramatically and irreversibly changed the balance of power in the region, fortifying Israel as a stalwart US ally in the strategic, oil-rich Middle East. Egypt became more reliant on the Soviet Union to rebuild its army and provide economic assistance. In contrast to the situation after the Tripartite Aggression of 1956, Nasser could not claim victory in defeat. The Suez Canal was closed, depriving the country of much-needed hard currency, tourist revenue ground to a halt, and Israel now occupied a sizeable chunk of Egypt's oil reserves. Nasser launched the War of Attrition in March 1969, which only served to increase the devastation. Reprisal raids intensified. For the sinking of one of their ships, Israel bombed canal cities and oil installations in Suez.

Nasser accepted the US-brokered Rogers Peace Plan in July 1970, effectively ending the War of Attrition and implementing a cease-fire. The Palestinians viewed Nasser's acceptance of the plan as turning his back on the Palestinian cause. Militant Palestinians increasingly used Jordan as a base of operations to launch attacks, and King Hussein of Jordan launched a full-scale attack against the Palestinians, an event that came to be known as Black September. Syria was set to intervene on behalf of the Palestinians, which would have escalated the crises, pulling in other Arab states and making a mockery of any sense of Pan-Arabism. In his last foreign policy accomplishment, Nasser convened an Arab summit in Cairo that mediated between the parties and brought the simmering conflict to an end, his final move as

the Pan-Arab leader. Nasser suffered a heart attack that ended his life just after the summit was concluded on 28 September 1970. He was 52.

### The legacy of Nasserism

Gamal Abd al-Nasser had an uncanny ability to communicate with the Arab public, yet his influence was in large measure due to complete state domination of the press and airwaves, leaving little room for dissent. Autocratic power was concentrated in the hands of the president. Nasser's control of the media buttressed this imagined dream state. In his novel *Before the Throne*, the Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz has Egypt's rulers critique one another: 'Unfortunately, you wasted an opportunity that had never appeared to the country before', went one rebuke of Nasser. 'For the first time, a native son ruled the land, without contention from king or colonizer. Yet rather than curing the disease-ridden citizen, he drove him into a competition for the world championship when he was hobbled by illness. The outcome was that the citizen lost the race, and himself, as well' (2009: 37).

The 1967 war became a watershed as Nasser's Pan-Arabism began to lose currency and to be seen as an illusion of the Egyptian leader's power or a ploy to seduce the masses. Defeat brought with it new realities – a wake-up call of sorts. The new force of Islamism began its evolution. A growing number of Muslims across the Arab world began holding the opinion that a humiliating defeat was possible because Muslims had strayed from their faith, embracing Nasser's secular nationalism over Pan-Islamism. Islamism in its various forms would become a dominant force against occupation and authoritarianism in the Middle East for decades to come.

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## Newton, Huey P. (1942–1989)

Huey P. Newton was the co-founder of the Black Panther Party ('Party'), and its leader, chief theoretician, and ideologue. When the Party was founded by Huey and Bobby Seale in 1966, Huey was 24 years old.

Born on 17 February 1942, in Monroe, Louisiana, Huey was the seventh and last child of Walter and Armelia Newton. In 1945, the family migrated to Oakland, California.

With some difficulty, primarily in reading and on account of conflicts with teachers, Huey finished high school, and, in 1959, enrolled in Oakland City College, a community college. There, he joined the Afro-American Association, and immersed himself in its agenda to read and study books by and about black people. He and other Association members would then take their newly found knowledge out onto the streets of Oakland and nearby Berkeley to proselytise people about the wrongs of racism in America. Ultimately deeming the Association too 'bourgeois', as unwilling to take action against the racism they denounced, he soon left it.

Disillusioned with the religious tenets embraced by his family and with the actions of the emerging black movements, Huey became reclusive, studying the works of great thinkers and philosophers, and supporting himself by street hustling. Swayed by the ideas of Kierkegaard, Huey considered himself an existentialist. Later, after attending meetings of the Progressive Labor Party, he began to transform himself into a socialist, determining that the problem of racism in the US was the problem of capitalism. He became further influenced by the positions set forth by Malcolm X in his many speeches, one of which Huey heard in person at McClymonds High School in West Oakland. All of this led to his interaction with what became the West Coast branch of the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM). He joined RAM's student affiliate, the Soul Students Advisory Council. Deemed by some to be the paramilitary wing of Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity (formed in 1964 after Malcolm's expulsion from the Nation of Islam), RAM articulated a revolutionary programme for blacks that fused Black Nationalism with Marxism-Leninism.

During this time, Huey enrolled in criminal law classes at Merritt College, primarily, as he stated in his autobiography *Revolutionary Suicide*, to 'become a better burglar'. Though the money he gained on the streets allowed him a lot of time to read and study and contemplate the social and philosophical questions that beleaguered him, this activity resulted in numerous brushes with the law. He was never convicted of any of these crimes. In 1964, however, he was charged and found guilty of assault, for stabbing a man in a knife fight. For this felony, he was sentenced to prison.

While in prison, in 1964, he endured living in an extreme isolation cell, where he felt he developed a clearer consciousness about the social construct of the US. Once released from incarceration, in 1965, he reconnected with his college comrade Bobby Seale. Huey describes their relationship before this as one in which they were not always on the same side politically. He cites the time when, during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, Bobby aligned himself with the position of the NAACP to support President John F. Kennedy and the US government, which Huey denounced, arguing in favour of Cuban prime minister Fidel Castro. Both had actively tried to change the

status quo in America, however, and they joined forces in exploring the burgeoning movements and organisations forming to address black rights and black liberation. They returned to the Soul Students Advisory Committee, by then embroiled in a struggle to create an Afro-American history class at Oakland City College. Huey urged that, to be effective, students should carry guns at their proposed rally to demand institution of this class. As this idea was totally rejected, Huey and Bobby began to consider the need for a new organisation, one that involved working blacks and unemployed blacks surviving on the streets by any means necessary.

### Formation of the Black Panther Party

Huey began studying the works of Frantz Fanon, who promoted engaging the lumpen-proletariat of the oppressed class in the revolutionary struggle as a critical element to success, which was antithetical to traditional Marxism that defined the lumpen-proletariat, the non-working class, as scum that had no place in the workers' struggle to overcome capitalism. While adhering to the fundamental tenets of Marxism-Leninism, Huey favoured the ideas of Mao Zedong, particularly relating to the necessity of armed struggle as the resolution to the contradictions that existed between the oppressed and oppressor, summarised in Mao's statement that would become a Party motto: 'political power grows out of the barrel of a gun'. Finally, Huey focused on the Leninist concept that a necessary step in preparing the oppressed people for revolution was the creation of a vanguard party. As importantly, Huey idealised and would come to embody Ernesto Che Guevara's concept that the revolutionary guerrilla was at once military commander and political theoretician.

Armed with these ideals, Huey and Bobby launched the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, and wrote out its 10-Point *Platform and Program*, articulating the basic social and economic contradictions that had to be resolved for blacks to be free in the US. The first point stated: 'We want freedom'. Huey became the minister of defense, the highest rank in the Party, which came to be organised around a paramilitary structure. Early on, Huey commanded that the Party was a vanguard party for black liberation, that it was guided

by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism and the philosophy of dialectical materialism, that the black lumpenproletariat were the guiding force of the vanguard party, and the goal of the Party was to create the conditions for revolution by instigating war against the 'two evils' of capitalism and racism toward the liberation of black people in the US.

Focusing first on the *Platform and Program's* seventh point, calling for an 'immediate end to police brutality and murder of Black people', and for blacks to be 'armed for self-defense', Huey began to organise the members recruited into the Party in the early days to carry arms and patrol the streets of Oakland, Richmond, and other nearby cities in Northern California to educate the people in these ghetto communities as well as the police that the people had a right to defend themselves against the rampant brutalities regularly carried out by the police against blacks. Over that first year, more and more young blacks became attracted by this stance and joined the Party.

In October of 1967, Huey became involved in a direct confrontation with the Oakland police. During this clash, Huey was shot and severely wounded, one of the policemen was shot and wounded, and one was shot and killed. Huey was arrested for murder and related charges, which arrest spawned the 'Free Huey Movement', in turn triggering the explosion of the Party over the next year from a small, Oakland-based group into a nationwide organisation with chapters in 48 states. The rallying cry 'Free Huey' became a clarion call that galvanised blacks around the country into a single voice that shouted 'The revolution has come. It's time to pick up the gun'.

Even though he was incarcerated, awaiting trial, Huey began to shape the theories and practice of this growing organisation. From jail, in 1967, he issued 'Executive Mandate No. 1', calling for 'Black people to arm themselves', arguing that, 'As the aggression of the racist American Government escalates in Vietnam, the police agencies of America escalate the repression of Black people throughout the ghettos of America'. In 1968, he issued 'Executive Mandate No. 3', commanding that 'all members of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense ... acquire the technical equipment to defend their homes and their dependents and shall do so. Any member ... who fails to defend his threshold shall be expelled from the Party for Life'.

## Liberation struggles

Newton led the Party to form coalitions, and he encouraged the formation of various revolutionary organisations that represented the interests of other oppressed groups inside the United States, including: the American Indian Movement (AIM); the Brown Berets, a Chicano organisation; the Young Lords, a Puerto Rican organisation; the Young Patriots, an organisation of poor whites; the Red Guard, Chinese. All of these organisations recognised the Party as ‘the vanguard party’, and used it as the model for their agendas and ideology. At the same time, in 1970, just after being released from three years in prison on account of the success of a new-trial motion following conviction on lesser charges in connection with the killing of the Oakland policeman, Huey issued a statement that the Party not only called for an end to the then raging Vietnam War but also that: ‘In the spirit of international revolutionary solidarity, the Black Panther Party hereby offers to the National Liberation Front and Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam an undetermined number of troops to assist you in your fight against American imperialism’. This position was in line with the Party’s agenda to develop coalitions with socialist organisations around the world.

Pronouncing that the liberation struggle of black people in the US was tied to the struggle of others around the world fighting for freedom against the US and its allies, Huey outlined the Party’s position on developing international coalitions in his letter of 29 August 1970 to the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (as referenced above): ‘There is not one fascist or reactionary government in the world today that could stand without the support of United States imperialism. Therefore, our problem is international, and [we recognise] the necessity for international alliances to deal with this problem’. Soon, the Party had developed alliances not only with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (‘North’ Vietnam) and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam but also, among others, with: the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea; the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU); the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELMO); the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC); the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Sinn Féin; the Tupamaros of

Uruguay; the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde); the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. In addition, the Party developed close ties with the Republic of Cuba and the People’s Republic of China, to which it sent several official delegations over the next years, one of which was led by Huey himself (1971).

By this time, Huey had been identified by the US government, particularly the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as an enemy of the state, and the Party had been deemed by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover as ‘the greatest threat to the internal security of the United States’. Under its COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Program) operations, the FBI orchestrated assaults on Party offices and murders of Party members, and used other tactics to ‘discredit, disrupt or destroy’ the Party, on account of which Huey entitled his second book *To Die for the People*.

In furtherance of the necessity to build revolutionary coalitions, Huey led the Party to form partnerships with other marginalised groups seeking liberation within the US, launched by his seminal statement in 1970 articulating the Party’s position on Women’s Liberation and Gay Liberation: ‘[T]he women’s liberation front and gay liberation front are our friends ... We should try to form a working coalition with the gay liberation and women’s liberation groups’. No other black or progressive or radical organisation of the time had taken this revolutionary position. As a result, the Party engaged in joint activities not only with radical women’s groups and gay organisations but also developed coalitions with labour unions, particularly the United Farm Workers; with older people struggling for human rights, launching the Gray Panthers; with the disabled independence movement, coalescing with the Center for Independent Living; and with environmental activists, creating a programme of developing ‘gardens in the ghetto’ with the Trust for Public Land.

## Survival programmes

At the same time, Huey promoted strengthening of what he named the Party’s Survival Programs, stating:

We recognized that in order to bring the people to the level of consciousness where they would seize the time, it would be necessary to serve their interests in survival by

developing programs which would help them to meet their daily needs

... All these programs satisfy the deep needs of the community but they are not solutions to our problems. That is why we call them survival programs, meaning survival pending revolution. (Newton 2002: 229–230)

Starting with the Free Breakfast for Children Program, the Party established a number of Survival Programs throughout the US, including: Free Clinics and Ambulance Programs; Free Food and Grocery Programs; Free Clothing and Shoe Programs; Free Legal Aid and Bussing to Prison Programs; Free Plumbing and Maintenance Programs; and Free Pest Control Programs. In this vein, the Party also launched the Oakland Community School in East Oakland and, in 1973, the People's Cooperative Housing Program. The latter was organised through the Oakland Community Housing non-profit corporation, which developed a \$12 million co-operative housing complex of 300 affordable homes in West Oakland, with rents not exceeding 25 per cent of monthly income.

In 1972, Huey reorganised the entire Party, closing down all chapters and ordering all members to move to Oakland, the base of the Party and what he deemed could become the base of revolution in the US. With all forces consolidated, Huey ordered Bobby Seale and Elaine Brown to run for public office, launching the Party's electoral campaigns.

All theories and activities of the Party were published in its newspaper, instituted by Huey in the early days. Ultimately entitled *The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service*, the newspaper was published by the Party and distributed around the world for 13 years.

## Conclusion

Huey Newton was not only the leader of the Black Panther Party for all the years of its existence, from 1966 to 1981, but he was the Party's chief theoretician. In that capacity, he set forth his theory of Intercommunalism, fully articulated in a speech republished in *To Die for the People*. Huey postulated that, as industrialisation had heightened the contradictions of capitalism around which Marx and Lenin et al. had advanced the ideal of socialist revolution, technological advances had so shifted the construct

of the world's societies that the nation state had disappeared and the question of socialist revolution had been rendered irrelevant.

Technology, Huey argued, had allowed US capitalists to consolidate their interests around the world, which had so transformed the planet by the end of the 20th century that the US had been able to reduce the rest of the world to a collection of communities over which it had economic, social, and political dominion. He pointed out, however, that with the success of global capitalism, as Lenin had predicted, conditions were ripe for a global revolution. Technological production and 'outsourcing' of labour by US capitalists had rendered or would soon render the majority of US workers as unemployables replaced by workers of the world. This Huey identified as a state of Reactionary Intercommunalism, whereby local and national economies had disappeared in a world where, for example, Coca-Cola was the largest private employer on the continent of Africa; a world in which European countries had to surrender their national identities, as reflected in the merging of Franc, Deutsche Mark and other currencies into the Euro in order to stay afloat in a global economy defined by the US dollar; a world in which only the US and its designated satellites (e.g., Israel) held nuclear weapons.

With the disappearance of national sovereignty and independent economies came the prospect of the unity of the world's communities under the banner of Revolutionary Intercommunalism, whereby the people of the former nation states, which had withered away, could, without going through the Marxist stage of socialism, organise global revolution, overthrow the US empire and create the communist world ideal.

In August 1989, Huey was murdered in Oakland, California. He was survived by his siblings and second wife, Fredrika Slaughter Newton. He had no children. More than 10,000 people attended his funeral.

As founder and leader of the Party and author of numerous treatises and articles, poems (published in *Insights and Poems* with Ericka Huggins), and several books (including those noted above as well as *In Search of Common Ground* with Erik Erikson), and his PhD dissertation 'War Against the Panthers, A Study of Repression in America', Huey P. Newton stands in the pantheon of revolutionary leaders and thinkers.

Elaine Brown

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## Nkrumah, Kwame (1909–1972)

Kwame Nkrumah was one of the leading figures in the movement for the Gold Coast's (modern-day Ghana) independence from

Great Britain as well as one of the most vocal and public campaigners for the African continent's independence from European rule. Politically active from his student days, Nkrumah went on to become Ghana's first prime minister (1957–60) and first president (1960–66). In addition to his political career, Nkrumah was a prolific author, writing on subjects ranging from philosophy to guerilla warfare. Among the first generation of African heads of state, he was one of the most articulate proponents and theorists of Pan-Africanism. Anti-imperialism and anti-racism were central to Nkrumah's political thought and policies. A commitment to Pan-Africanist philosophy and politics remained a pivotal aspect of his thought throughout his life. He worked closely with major African-American and Afro-Caribbean intellectuals, including George Padmore, W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James, and the Nobel Prize winning economist W. Arthur Lewis. Nkrumah identified as a socialist, but chose not to ally himself with the superpowers during the Cold War. Instead, he worked to forge close ties with other heads of state who resisted joining either the Western or the Soviet bloc. He was an ardent supporter of Pan-African unity, advocating the creation of a federation of African states. While Nkrumah's foreign policy promoted the emancipation of colonised peoples, his national policies became harshly authoritarian, which included making strikes and opposing political parties illegal and empowering the state to detain and arrest suspected subversives. Nkrumah was overthrown in a coup in 1966 and died in exile. He spent his remaining years in Guinea.

### Early life and the birth of a Pan-Africanist

Nkrumah was born in the village of Nkroful in the British Gold Coast. From 1925–30, he studied at the Achimota School in Accra, and for the following five years, he worked as a teacher and saved money to travel to the US to continue his education (see Birmingham 1998; Nkrumah 1971). In his autobiography, Nkrumah notes the impact that the writings of the Nigerian nationalist and the future first president of Nigeria Nnamdi Azikiwe had on his own developing nationalism (Nkrumah 1971: 22). At that time, Azikiwe was the editor of the *African Morning Post*, based in Accra. In 1935, Nkrumah travelled to Britain. There, he



learned of the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, which further fuelled his anti-colonialism. He arrived in the US in October 1935 and began attending Lincoln University – the first historically black university in the US and Azikiwe’s alma mater. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Lincoln in 1939. There, Nkrumah developed an interest in European philosophy, a topic he would engage in his philosophical work *Consciencism* (Nkrumah 1964). He pursued his interest in philosophy, receiving a Bachelor of Theology degree from Lincoln in 1942 as well as a Master of Science in education in 1942 and a Master of Philosophy in 1943 from the University of Pennsylvania. During his education, Nkrumah worked as a lecturer and on ships as a member of the National Maritime Union. He also remained active in African politics, contributing to the growth of the African Students’ Association of America and Canada. Nkrumah’s interest in philosophy and politics drew him to radical thinkers such as the Trinidadian Trotskyist C.L.R. James.

In 1945, Nkrumah returned to London. He had contacted the Trinidadian Marxist George Padmore in advance and, on arrival, began to work closely with him. With Padmore, Nkrumah was one of the principal organisers of the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester, which took place from 15–21 October 1945 (for primary sources see Padmore 1947; for critical discussion, see Cooper 2002: 58–59). The gathering was sponsored by the Pan-African Federation, which had been founded the previous year. It was scheduled to coincide with the World Trade Union Conference in Paris. The Congress was timed immediately after the Second World War in order to mobilise for decolonisation, particularly after the defeat of the Axis empires. Over 90 delegates attended from throughout the African diaspora and British Empire. Though the gathering’s stated purpose was to condemn all forms of imperialism, and its attendees came from throughout the British Empire, the discussion focused largely on peoples of African descent. Further, despite its aspiration to represent Africa as a whole, all the African attendees came from British Africa. Each region represented prepared its own set of resolutions. The resolutions passed by the West African delegation were perhaps the most radical in explicitly connecting imperialism to economic exploitation (Padmore 1947: 102–103).

Among the Fifth Congress’s notable African attendees were the South African novelist Peter Abrahams, the future president of Kenya Jomo Kenyatta (who also helped to organise the Congress), Malawi’s future president Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, and Nigeria’s Obafemi Awolowo (for list of delegates, see Padmore 1947: 117–120). The Congress’s two most distinguished attendees were Amy Jacques Garvey, the widow of Marcus Garvey, and W.E.B. Du Bois, who served as the Congress’ honorary president. Du Bois had attended the first Pan-African Conference in 1900 and organised the first Pan-African Congress in 1919. The attendance of Garvey and Du Bois lent credibility to the mostly young African delegates as heirs to the Pan-African movement. This first meeting between Nkrumah and Du Bois would later evolve into a lasting friendship and intellectual collaboration. Unlike the preceding gatherings, the Fifth Congress was distinguished by the increased presence of Africans as well as by the major role played by Africans, such as Nkrumah and Kenyatta, in organising the event, which undoubtedly moulded Nkrumah’s thought and politics. He regularly cited the meeting as one of the key events in the anti-colonial movement and, as a statesman, he made Pan-African cooperation the centrepiece of his political work (Nkrumah 1963; 1964; 1971; Padmore 1971: 168). For him, the independence of individual African states served as a first step towards the greater goal of Pan-Africanism (Nkrumah 1971: x).

### **Founding of the Convention People’s Party and Ghanaian independence**

Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast in 1947 to work for the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) (for more on the UGCC, see Adu Boahen 2004). Soon thereafter, Nkrumah set to work organising the UGCC by forming a Shadow Cabinet to prepare for independence, recruiting supporters, consolidating the party’s branches, and planning demonstrations (Nkrumah 1971). One of the UGCC’s first actions was a boycott of European and Syrian merchants. On 28 February 1948, the same day the boycott was ended, a peaceful demonstration by the Ex-Servicemen’s Union ended in a clash with the British colonial police. Two ex-servicemen were killed.

The shootings led to riots in which Africans targeted the European and Syrian populations. The UGCC was blamed for the riots. Nkrumah was detained and arrested on 12 March 1948, but was released a month later after the UGCC was cleared of responsibility. Nkrumah's arrest, however, helped to solidify his reputation as a leading, young political leader. Young Ghanaians were becoming increasingly frustrated with the UGCC's moderate political strategies and its reluctance to demand immediate self-government. Nkrumah shared these frustrations. He began to tour the country and his skills as an organiser helped win support among groups that were usually fractured under the colonial administration, including urban intellectuals, war veterans, youths who had become disenchanted by their life prospects under colonial rule, women, trade unionists, and rural farmers. In 1949, he united his supporters to form the Convention People's Party (CPP), a central platform of which was the immediate implementation of self-government, and began his campaign of positive action, a form of non-violent action, to press colonial authorities for self-government.

As leader of the CPP, Nkrumah constructed a People's Assembly that would convey grievances to the colonial authorities. The proposals included the call for universal suffrage and for self-governing status under the 1931 Statute of Westminster. When the colonial government rejected these proposed constitutional amendments, the CPP responded by launching its first major Positive Action campaign. On 1 January 1950, Ghanaians performed non-violent acts of civil disobedience, boycotted European goods, and trade unions went on strike. Nkrumah and other members of the CPP were arrested that day. Support for Nkrumah continued to grow as a result. Due to continued unrest, on 1 January 1951, colonial authorities presented a new constitution that allowed for the creation of a Legislative Assembly and universal suffrage. The first elections took place on 5 February. Though still in prison, Nkrumah won a seat and the CPP won a majority in the Assembly. Nkrumah was released on 11 February and invited to form a government. The Gold Coast had not achieved full independence. Rather, Nkrumah's government was expected to co-operate with the British government in facilitating a gradual transition to independence. In 1952, Nkrumah became Ghana's first

prime minister after an emendation to the Constitution.

Already in 1951, Nkrumah had begun to consolidate his power. The greatest challenges to his nationalist political programmes came from chiefs throughout the Gold Coast and from Asante nationalists (for more on this, see Allman 1993; Rathbone 2000). Chiefs had ruled parts of the Gold Coast for hundreds of years and were seen as legitimate rulers. In particular, the Asantehene, the king of the Asante, could trace his family's rule back to 1707 and had a strong base of support in his kingdom's capital at Kumasi. Nkrumah viewed the chiefs as a threat to his nationalist programme and efforts to centralise power. He was in the precarious position of having to both publicly show reverence for the Asantehene as well as delegitimise him by associating him with feudal tyranny and anti-modernism (this is discussed in Rathbone 2000). The stronger political challenge came from the National Liberation Movement (NLM), which was the organisational body that opposed Nkrumah's nationalism. Beginning in 1954, the NLM began to advocate a federal system of government in Ghana. They opposed Nkrumah's centralisation of power and sought to preserve the culture and traditions of the Asante peoples. The NLM pursued its aims through electoral politics. This severely weakened the movement when, in 1954, the CPP once again won a majority. The CPP worked actively to weaken the movement and by 1958 had managed to completely marginalise it (see Allman 1993).

## Independent Ghana

On 3 August 1956, the assembly authorised the government to request independence from Britain as a member of the Commonwealth. On 6 March 1957, Ghana became an independent member of the Commonwealth with Nkrumah staying on as prime minister and Queen Elizabeth II as its monarch. Nkrumah became known as 'Osagyefo' (redeemer). Ghana was the first of the major sub-Saharan African colonies to gain independence. Though the 1957 constitution initially included protections for the rights of chiefs and different regions, these protections were weakened as CPP supporters managed to infiltrate and take control over the country. Constitutional provisions that checked power were slowly abolished.

Nkrumah's Government introduced a succession of measures to secure the authority of the CPP. In 1957, political parties founded on ethnic, religious, or regional interests were banned, thus, leading to the decline of the NLM. The NLM, however, merged with the United Party to form the major opposition party to the CPP. The Deportation Act allowed for the expulsion of non-Ghanaians perceived to be acting against Ghanaian interests, but was later applied to Ghanaians as well. In 1955, Nkrumah had already begun to evince autocratic tendencies after banning strikes in the name of patriotic duty in response to the 1955 Gold Miners' Strike. He strengthened the Trade Union Act in 1958, but also worked to remain on good terms with the powerful Gold Coast Trade Union Congress (TUC). Nkrumah dealt with the TUC leadership by integrating them into the CPP. His base among rank-and-file unionists would suffer further when he refused to support railway workers during their 1961 strike (see Birmingham 1998: 74–76). In 1958, the Preventive Detention Act empowered Nkrumah to detain individuals without trial. Among those detained was his former ally Danquah. Danquah expressed support for the NLM's criticisms of Nkrumah, and would die in prison in 1965.

As Nkrumah instituted increasingly authoritarian policies within Ghana, he worked hard to cultivate an image as an international spokesman for African independence, inviting dignitaries and travelling abroad frequently. Almost immediately after Ghana's independence, his attention shifted back to his Pan-Africanist vision of continental co-operation. By 15 April 1958, Nkrumah was already welcoming the representatives of the eight existing African states (Ghana, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Liberia, Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco) in Accra for the first Conference of Independent African States (Nkrumah 1963: 136). On 5 December of that year, he would host another meeting, the first All-African People's Conference, this time inviting delegates from the different African nationalist organisations throughout the continent. In 1960, Ghana left the Commonwealth and became a republic. The following year, Nkrumah brought Ghana into the Non-Aligned Movement, joining a group of four other states that rejected alliances with either of the Cold War superpowers. The Movement's other leaders were Jawaharlal

Nehru of India, Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and Sukarno of Indonesia. In 1960, Nkrumah invited his old friend Du Bois to settle in Ghana and begin work on the *Encyclopedia Africana*. Du Bois died in Ghana in 1963 without living to see the *Encyclopedia* completed (for more on Du Bois' later years, see Lewis 2000). Padmore had died in 1959.

In 1963, Nkrumah was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize. That year also proved a decisive one for Nkrumah's Pan-Africanist aspirations. He had continued throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s to campaign for continental unity, particularly as an ever increasing number of African states became independent. On 25 May 1963, the Organisation of African Unity was established in Addis Ababa. In that same year, Nkrumah published *Africa Must Unite*. Echoing many of the Pan-Africanist sentiments of the Fifth Pan-African Congress, he drew on US and Soviet Union examples to argue for a union of African states. Nkrumah's position was supported by Algeria, Guinea, Morocco, Egypt, Mali, and Libya, which received the collective label of the 'Casablanca Bloc'. They were, however, defeated by the 'Monrovia Bloc', led by Léopold Senghor and other African leaders who either favoured continued close relations with former colonial powers or a slower transition to political union. Nkrumah held out hopes that a union of states would, despite the delay, come eventually (see Manby 2009: 157).

Believing that modernisation was an essential component of the ultimate end of Pan-African union, Nkrumah had embarked on a variety of ambitious economic and industrial projects. He was able to harness Ghana's natural resources to bring enormous wealth to the country, which he used to finance further public works projects. This enabled him to introduce free education and health care. However, other major projects, such as the Akosombo Dam on the Volta River, helped to put Ghana into increasing debt. This was coupled with increasing expenditures to modernise the Ghanaian military. He lent military support to Rhodesian rebels battling Ian Smith's white-African government. Throughout this time, Nkrumah struggled to keep Ghana economically self-sufficient and not reliant on either the US, Europe, or the Soviet Union. But his regime was frequently susceptible to charges of corruption made

against the beneficiaries of his industrialisation contracts.

Nkrumah was on a state visit to North Vietnam on 24 February 1966 when the National Liberation Council, led by eight high-ranking members of the military and the police force, overthrew his government in a military coup. Nkrumah had lost the support of his base. The Trade Union Act and his reprisals against strikers helped turn trade unionists against him. The Preventive Detention Act had helped nurture growing public disenchantment with Nkrumah's rule and fostered support for his political opponents. Danquah was dead. Yet, another former Nkrumah ally, Joe Appiah, had arisen as a popular critic of Nkrumah's rule. Nkrumah's refusal to take sides in the Cold War had also frustrated foreign powers, particularly the US and Britain. There is little evidence to back claims that the CIA had a direct hand in the coup, but foreign agencies were likely aware that it would take place. Nkrumah settled in exile in Guinea at the invitation of President Ahmed Sékou Touré. Touré and Nkrumah shared many ideological affinities. Both were viewed as radicals among the new African leaders. Touré was the only African leader to reject Charles de Gaulle's offer to African states to join the French Community. They had also worked together as members of the Casablanca Bloc. During his exile, Nkrumah continued to support Pan-Africanism. His rhetoric took on an increasingly radical tone. He became more supportive of the notion of armed resistance to imperialism and was fearful of assassination attempts. In August 1971, he flew to Romania in ill-health to seek treatment for prostate cancer. He died on 27 April 1972.

### **Pan-Africanism and Consciencism**

Despite his controversial presidency, Nkrumah has enjoyed a reputation as a significant Pan-African political theorist and philosopher. His Pan-Africanism can be traced back to his days in Britain working with Padmore. Certainly, the idea of a union of African states was one of the most consistent features of his political thought. He supported it throughout his life in various books and pamphlets. It informed his political policies and diplomatic missions. As a pre-independence intellectual, Nkrumah's promotion of Pan-Africanism was largely abstract. As a political organiser, his thought centred on the concept of 'positive

action', which advocated non-violent civil disobedience in the vein of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. (explained in Nkrumah 1964). Once in power, his Pan-Africanism took on a more concrete form by way of referring to federal models for a union of states. After his expulsion from office, Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism turned to the critique of neo-colonialism, arguing that the continued European involvement in African affairs constituted a new phase of imperialism (Nkrumah 1966). Nkrumah's analyses proved all the more prescient as African states made greater concessions to Western and corporate interests, which led to debt and economic instability. Following the coup and fearful of a resurgent imperialism, Nkrumah would later argue that Africa had entered a period that necessitated armed revolution, which he discussed in his *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare* (1968). Nkrumah's strengths lay more in his abilities as a polemical pamphleteer than as a systematic theorist.

Nkrumah's most developed theoretical text is his 1964 work, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization* (1964). The work is Nkrumah's strongest effort to participate in the philosophical discourses that first fascinated him in his youth. But, it is a clumsy text. Much of the book is mired in a confused and extended discussion of the history of European philosophy. It weakly argues that idealism is inherently reactionary and that materialism is inherently revolutionary. From this lengthy discussion, Nkrumah goes on to make broad and unsupported statements about the egalitarian nature of traditional African societies. These are highly questionable given the complex and diverse shapes of political governance one finds throughout the continent and historical record. The simplistic claims echo views that he had developed in his youth. Already in the West African Resolutions at the Fifth Pan-African Congress, which it is likely Nkrumah had a hand in drafting, one finds statements emphasising that among the West Africans' chief grievances with colonialism was the destruction of traditional African social structures. Nevertheless, the final section of the short book is the most interesting, if only for giving an insight into his thought and the justifications for his politics. Nkrumah argues that there is a natural affinity between the egalitarian aims of socialism and the egalitarianism that he attributes to traditional

African society. However, he recognises that the effects of colonialism as well as the necessity of dealing within a global context make an unmediated return to traditional African social structures impossible. Hence, this becomes a justification for the continuation of certain colonial industrialising campaigns.

In the text, Nkrumah identifies positive elements in both Western and Islamic intellectual traditions and the impact both have had on African intellectual life. It therefore becomes necessary to cultivate a new ideological basis for African philosophy and politics, which Nkrumah calls Consciencism. Consciencism retains what he understands to be the fundamental egalitarian principles that underlie pre-colonial African societies, but appropriates ideas from the Western and Islamic intellectual traditions and especially those socialist principles that would allow Africa to modernise and develop political institutions. Because Nkrumah finds a precedent for socialism in traditional African communalism, he implies that Africa's road to socialism relies more upon reform than violent revolution. With Consciencism serving as the ethical and intellectual foundation for a movement, Nkrumah argues that 'positive action' is that form of activism that serves African's interest in both the struggle against colonialism and the effort to build the individual nations and foment co-operation among the disparate African states. Nkrumah's argues that positive action is best directed by a single-party state run by his CPP, which suggests a certain conception of a vanguard that may or may not be linked to Lenin's thought of which Nkrumah was an admirer. African independence meant much more to Nkrumah than simply ousting a colonial power. In order for Africa to be truly independent, he believed it had to develop a fully functioning industrial and economic infrastructure. Yet, more importantly, independence, for Nkrumah, was about reclaiming Africa's intellectual heritage and synthesising it with other intellectual traditions. Independence requires creating a new intellectual tradition for Africans – Consciencism.

### Legacy

The argument of Consciencism is not as philosophically sophisticated as Nkrumah might have hoped. The concept of Consciencism is

remarkably vague and Nkrumah makes logical leaps that are unsupported by his argument. Nevertheless, the book does reveal some of the key features of Nkrumah's thought that have a bearing on his politics. Nkrumah may have paid homage to traditional African society, but he was an unapologetic moderniser who ultimately saw traditional society as a barrier to change. As pointed out earlier, he had little tolerance for the traditional culture of the Asante. This often meant resorting to questionable legal manoeuvres at the least and the outright use of force at worst. Nkrumah's defence of the single-party state, which he would institute as president, is also intimately tied to his philosophy. There are strong affinities between his single-party state and the vanguard revolutionary theory of Lenin, of whom Nkrumah was a great admirer. Despite these authoritarian features, Nkrumah's thought is interesting insofar as it is an attempt, albeit a weak one, to bring Western, Islamic, and African philosophy into dialogue with one another. This enterprise has been taken up with greater success and more sophistication by a younger generation of philosophers. This is not to suggest that Nkrumah was unprecedented, but, in this regard, he was, in spite of his shortcomings as a philosopher, something of a pioneer. It therefore makes sense that African philosophers – who have done much to build a canon of African philosophy – have embraced Nkrumah the philosopher. He is also undoubtedly an important influence on modern Pan-Africanism. He was an articulate spokesperson for the movement and was the leading African statesman to try to make Pan-Africanism a political reality. This commitment to Pan-Africanism made him, along with Touré, one of the most uncompromising African leaders who sought to pave an independent path for African development. The lasting appeal of these features of Nkrumah's life and work are important and should not be underestimated. At the very least, they have helped to cultivate a mythic persona with strong resonance.

All of this helps to explain Nkrumah's current status as something of a hero among many modern-day Africans. But this is a relatively recent phenomenon. When he fell from power, he was largely unpopular among Ghanaians (for a discussion, see Appiah 1992: 161–3). With the exception of Touré, Nkrumah's ouster elicited little outrage from

his fellow African heads of state. Ghanaians better remembered him for his oppressive-ness. Any movement that he was unable to incorporate into the programme of CPP was either severely weakened or abolished by his supporters or through his revisions to the constitution. While he publicly and in his writings expressed respect for traditional African culture, he banned parties that were founded on tribal, religious, or ethnic interests. Though trade unionists helped bring him into power, Nkrumah's policies turned labour leaders into elites who were indebted to him and ignored the interests of the Ghanaian working class. He punished African workers for striking against inhumane working conditions. Competing political parties were labelled unpatriotic. Nkrumah made ready use of the Deportation Act and the Preventive Detention Act to silence his opponents. His ambitious modernisation programmes ultimately had the opposite effect of placing Ghana in debt and making it more reliant on foreign aid. Nkrumah's reputation began to undergo a cautious revival under the oversight of President Jerry Rawlings following the latter's coup in 1979. This period gave birth to 'Nkrumahism' to refer to Nkrumah's thought as a system of political philosophy (see Assensoh 1998; Martin 2012). But the oppressive elements of his regime linger.

It is difficult to disentangle Kwame Nkrumah the admired Pan-Africanist visionary from Kwame Nkrumah the despised authoritarian. At any given point, one view is privileged over another. They are not, perhaps, mutually exclusive. It is likely that Nkrumah himself saw little inconsistency between his ideas and his policies. The consolidation and abuse of power in the name of nationalism might, in his view, have been seen as a necessary condition for the kind of national unity that could serve as the basis for and make possible the grander goal of African unity. Nkrumah might be better understood less as a Ghanaian nationalist than as a Pan-Africanist for whom Ghanaian nationalism was an instrument (for a version of this claim see Appiah 1992: 162). Nevertheless, Nkrumah the one-time dissident did not tolerate dissent. He oversaw a thoroughly anti-democratic government, which regularly bought off or destroyed the opposition instead of negotiating with it. But Nkrumah very much remains the public face of African independence. He was the leader of the first

major African state to achieve independence and was a stalwart, if not embattled, campaigner of a grander vision of African independence that extended beyond the end of colonial rule. He condemned ongoing colonial rule and white racism when other African heads of state were reluctant to do so. His lasting significance may best be understood, rightly or wrongly, as a symbol of African independence.

Gregory R. Smulewicz-Zucker

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## Nyerere, Julius Kamparage (1922–1999)

### Early life and education

Julius Kamparage Nyerere was born on 13 April 1922 and died on 14 October 1999. He was born in the village of Butiama on the eastern shores of Lake Victoria in north-western Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika), the son of Burito Nyerere, a chief in a village of the Zanaki tribe. His mother was Mgaya Wanyang'ombe, the fifth of his father's 22 wives. He was one of 26 children. He died in a London hospital in England where he was being treated for leukaemia. A Tanzanian politician, he became the first president of Tanzania when the country achieved independence in 1961. He committed his life to working assiduously against the oppression and marginalisation of his people. He saw colonialism as destroying cherished African and human values. He argued for the revival of those values, which he encapsulated in the term 'Ujamaa'. It is worth noting that before his career as a politician he was a professional teacher, which is why he was popularly known as Mwalimu, which means teacher in the Kiswahili language.

It was not until the age of 12 that he started primary school. He had to walk a distance of about 26 miles to Musoma to attend. There he completed the four-year programme in three years. In 1937 he started at Tabora Secondary School, a Roman Catholic Mission school. He was baptised as a Roman Catholic on 23 December 1943 with the name Julius. While at Secondary School his excellent behaviour and intelligence were recognised by the Catholic priests who taught him, and they were the ones who encouraged and helped him to train to be a teacher at Makerere University, Kampala

from 1943–45. After his teacher training and certification, he taught Biology and English for three years at St Mary's Secondary School, Tabora. He was then granted a government scholarship with which he was able to study for a Master of Arts degree in History and Economics at the University of Edinburgh. He obtained this degree in 1952, and was the first Tanganyikan to study at a British university.

### Nyerere's politics and views

When he returned to Tanganyika after his studies, Nyerere first taught History, English, and Kiswahili at St Francis College, near Dar es Salaam. It was there that he founded the Tanganyikan African National Union (TANU). He faced hostility from the colonial authorities, which were afraid of his political activities, and he was forced to make a choice between teaching and political activities. TANU was founded in 1954 and Nyerere was able to reorganise the divided nationalist camps into this union. He was president of the organisation until 1977. In 1958, he entered the Legislative Council, and became chief minister in 1960. His party helped in the struggle for independence, and when Tanzania was granted self-rule in 1961 he was made premier, then president on independence in 1962. In 1964 he negotiated the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar as Tanzania. He retired from the presidency in 1985, though he remained party chairman until 1990. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2012) noted that at the time Nyerere entered politics, the old League of Nations' mandate exercised by the British over Tanganyika had been converted into a United Nations trusteeship aiming at independence. And it was due to his uncompromisingly resolute stance in the quest for independence that Tanganyika was eventually to gain independence from the British.

Nyerere was not interested solely in the independence of Tanzania; he was a pan-Africanist to the core and advocated the total independence of Africa. Campbell (2010) has shown that Nyerere was one of the strong individuals who helped form the Pan-African movement for East and Central African (PAFMECA) in 1958, which would later become the Pan-African Freedom Movement for East, Central and Southern African (PAFMECSA). This organisation would help

in the struggle for African independence and become ‘the nucleus of the liberation committee of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)’ (178). When the OAU was formed in May 1963, its Liberation Committee opened its office in Dar es Salaam, testifying to Nyerere’s and Tanzania’s importance in the independence of Africa. Groups such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan African Congress of South Africa, FRELIMO, and many others received his support (Campbell 2010).

Nyerere was a strong voice for the rights and freedom of the African people. And so, for instance, he did not hesitate to oppose the brutal rule of Idi Amin in Uganda. When Amin dared to invade Tanzania in 1978, the Tanzanian army defeated him and restored Uganda’s first president, Milton Obote. Nyerere’s significant contributions also include having been the chief mediator in the Burundi conflict of 1996.

There were difficult times in his career. No African country at independence was economically self-sufficient. Colonialism had sucked the immense resources of the African soil and transferred them to the homeland of the colonialists. Like other African countries, Tanganyika was a poor country and suffered under the bondage of foreign debts after independence. Nyerere expressed his firm belief in the doctrine of Ujamaa (African socialism) and Tanzania’s ability to be self-reliant in the Arusha Declaration (Nyerere 1967). He implemented policies to enhance communal agriculture and there was large-scale nationalisation. The Arusha Declaration stated that Tanzanian society aimed to provide equal rights and opportunities for all to live in peace with their neighbours free from suffering, injustice, and exploitation. All were to live a satisfactory material life. The villages were to be organised as Ujamaa villages on a co-operative basis, with residents living and working according to the cherished value of familyhood. People all over Tanzania were to live as one family of brothers and sisters, using traditional African values rooted in socialism through sharing food, water, health services, and housing and other essential resources.

Nyerere’s political views stemmed from his background and education. Campbell (2010: 177) writes that, ‘He learned the values of sharing and cooperation that later inspired his philosophical understanding of Ujamaa from his local village community

and the African environment’. He claims that Nyerere’s studies in Scotland exposed him to the Fabian movement and socialists in the United Kingdom, and that it was during this period that his philosophical outlook on socialism and co-operation was further shaped. The Fabian movement also helped him to see a relationship between certain socialist values and African communalism.

In his book *Ujamaa: Essays in Socialism*, Nyerere (1968) argued that socialism is not foreign to traditional African society; rather it is capitalism that is the stranger. Individualism and selfish consumerism has never been part of traditional Africa. African societies lived in harmony. There was a spirit of community and brotherhood. There was a spirit of cordiality and hospitality. People readily came to the aid of those in need. He also made clear that the kind of socialism present in traditional Africa was not Marxist socialism, rooted in class struggle and violence. African society was one of ‘familyhood’, based on cordial family relationships. He believed that as traditional societies entered into the modern world; the idea of familyhood must be extended to embrace the whole society, the African continent, and the entire human race. Makumba (2007) rightly notes that Nyerere on this point was in consonance with Nkrumah and Kenneth Kaunda, who saw African brotherhood as larger than the tribe and embracing all humanity. It began with the family but did not end there. Love and solidarity must move from the local family to the universal family. This traditional African value of Ujamaa helped to counter social ills such as individualism, greed, exploitation, embezzlement of public funds, and selfishness. A society that cherished Ujamaa would work towards self-reliance and freedom from foreign control and influence. Furthermore, the landmark Arusha Declaration (which equally contained TANU’s policy on socialism and self-reliance) affirmed fundamental human rights such as: the right to dignity and respect; the right to freedom of expression, of movement, association, and religious belief; the right to a just wage. It also enunciated the right of the state to intervene in the economy and to act as a democratic socialist government, to co-operate with Africans engaged in liberation struggles, and to exercise effective control over the principal means of production and exchange. It is important to quote directly



from the Declaration to reveal the crux of Nyerere's thinking. It states:

Socialism is a way of life, and a socialist society cannot simply come into existence. A socialist society can only be built by those who believe in, and who themselves practice, the principles of socialism. A committed member of TANU will be a socialist and his fellow socialist – that is, his fellow believers in this political and economic system – are all those in Africa or elsewhere in the world that fight for the rights of peasants and workers. The first duty of TANU members, and especially as a TANU leader, is to accept these socialist principles, and to live one's own life in accordance with them. In particular, a genuine TANU leader will not live off the sweat of another man, nor commit any feudalistic or capitalistic actions.

The successful implementation of socialist objectives depends very much upon the leaders, because socialism is a belief in a particular system of living, and it is difficult for leaders to promote its growth if they do not themselves accept it. TANU is involved in a war against poverty and oppression in our country; the struggle is aimed at moving the people of Tanzania (and the people of Africa as a whole) from a state of poverty to a state of prosperity. (Nyerere 1967)

Nyerere as an anti-imperialist fighter saw imperialism or colonialism as a form of capitalism, and hence rooted in the exploitation of humans by humans. In capitalism, a few individuals enrich themselves to the detriment of the masses. Many African leaders and nationalists who replaced the colonisers simply continued the oppression of their people while enjoying abundant privileges. Omoregbe (2010: 140–141), commenting on Nyerere, writes:

Thus the perpetuation of capitalism in Africa by the colonizers and its acceptance by Africans was mainly because African leaders and nationalists were more concerned about replacing the European colonizers and enjoying the privileges that they were enjoying. All they wanted was the exit of the whites while they themselves would take their places. The people accepted

capitalism because they trusted their nationalist leaders, respected them and wanted to co-operate with them.

At the heart of Nyerere's political views were the dignity and well-being of the human being. The people are at the heart of the society; everything must be done to ensure their well-being. The goals of socialism should foster an adult education system that makes the people free, inculcates the values of development and freedom, and enhances co-operation and solidarity among them. Nyerere's written works clearly express such values. They include, *Democracy and the Party System* (1963), *Socialism and Rural Development* (1967), *Freedom and Unity: A Selection from Writings and Speeches* (1967), *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism* (1968), *Freedom and Socialism: A Selection from Writings and Speeches* (1968), *Freedom and Development* (1974), *Man and Development* (1974), and *Crusade for Development* (1979).

### Critique and conclusion

Nyerere's Tanzania was a one-party state. We cannot gloss over the fact that he handicapped his successor (thus violating the tenets of democracy), and left the country very poor and dependent on foreign aid. He ended up imprisoning political opponents, thus violating human rights. Some scholars may explain this away as necessary for unity in the country. In implementing his socialist vision, people were forcefully displaced and uprooted from their localities into collective farms, and many villages were burned down.

In his thought, he seems to belittle the presence of exploitation and oppression in traditional African societies. There is no gain-saying the fact that in traditional African societies there were some elements of corruption, or that some powerful people such as kings and village elders were oppressive. There were also conflicts and strife in traditional African societies, and inequalities arose as some people were considered outcast because they were children of slaves.

On the other hand, some would argue that nationalisation did not go far enough in Tanzania to allow it to succeed, with many foreign organisations maintaining their stranglehold on industry. Crucially, without workers' ownership of industry, nationalisation tended to facilitate the growth of bureaucratic state capitalism, rather than socialism.

The villagisation programmes pursued by the Nyerere Government also ran into difficulties, since there was little articulation between socialist industrialisation (as opposed to the strategy of national industrialisation actually favoured) and rural collectivisation. Rather, villagisation tended to reinforce the colonial *ante*, whereby farmers continued to direct most of their efforts toward export crop production. Moreover, a class of landowning bureaucrats took advantage of state patronage to further their individual interests at the expense of the poorer peasantry.

Ujamaa is a form of African socialism and so it is proper to evaluate it in the light of socialism. African socialism combines some values from African communal ways of life with some values from Marxist social and economic theories (Makumba 2007); Nkrumah's Consciencism, Kaunda's African Humanism, and Awolowo's Democratic Socialism are other forms. Appadurai (2004: 115) sees socialism as concerned with 'collective organisation of the community in the interests of the mass of the people through the common ownership and collective control of the means of production and exchange'. It arose as a protest against the exploitation, oppression, alienation, and other ills of capitalism. Socialists can be broadly divided into revolutionarily/scientific and evolutionary. On this, Appadurai (2004) states that the revolutionary group believes in bringing about socialism through violent change, and that other groups believe in gradual constitutional change.

Nyerere's Ujamaa is unlike the socialism just described, even though he called it Tanzanian socialism. In scientific socialism, socialism is just a stage on the route to a communist society. The socialist society is rooted in central economic planning, and revolutionary violent change. One of the fundamental requirements of a democratic society is that economic decisions and policies should be subjected to the democratic process either through parliament or referendum. Ujamaa did not originate from the grass roots or the people. It was Nyerere's conception of how society should be organised. Thus conceived, it was an imposition, and because of that ran into many of the problems already mentioned. Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003) have suggested that though there was nationalisation, nationalised institutions still partnered foreign

firms, thus total control was not exercised by Tanzania. The implementation of Ujamaa even allowed for some private firms to own factories without state control. Indeed, Ujamaa is an aberration from socialism. Collectivity or communalistic values do not mean a society is in consonance with socialistic values.

Pre-colonial African societies from which Nyerere drew inspiration were patriarchal, monarchical, lacked egalitarianism, and even what was owned in common was often fought over leading to the killing and destruction of peoples and properties. The many inter-tribal and ethnic wars in pre-colonial Africa negated the so-called humanistic values vaunted by Nyerere. State control did not guarantee effective restructuring of the economy and nationalisation often led to bureaucracy, inefficiency, and corruption (*ibid.*). A core aspect of Ujamaa was the implementation of villagisation aimed at the development of rural places. In the Ujamaa villages, people were meant to focus their lives on a common service centre (not living in separate homesteads) and the land was to be farmed by co-operative groups not individual farmers (*ibid.*). Many villagers were unwilling to come to the Ujamaa villages as they were afraid their lands would be nationalised. Because of this and other difficulties, the policy was abandoned in 1975 (*ibid.*).

Ujamaa should be evaluated within the post-independence era of Africa. It was overly optimistic and utopian. Zinhle (2010) says that as African countries were gaining independence they wanted to create a political and economic system rooted in African traditional values in opposition to capitalism, which they saw as foreign to African tradition. Ujamaa or Tanzanian socialism should never be equated with scientific socialism. Ujamaa, like some other forms of African socialism, is not materialist, atheistic, and deterministic as Marxian or scientific socialism is. While scientific socialism is mainly focused on the future of human history and society, Ujamaa looks back to draw lessons from African history. Though this is the case, both share a vision of a society free from exploitation of man by man, oppression, and alienation.

Despite the limitations and failings of Ujamaa, the social and political significance of Nyerere and his thoughts should not be underestimated. He struggled against imperialism. He advocated authentic African and human values. What Campbell (2010) writes

about the significance of Nyerere is very helpful as this essay begins to draw to a close. He says of him that he: voluntarily stepped down from power in 1985; saw political power not as a route to personal gain but to the good of the people; inspired the struggle for justice, peace, and liberation; developed the doctrine of Ujamaa (African socialism) as an African contribution to human freedom; acted as a strong moral leader where many were corrupt and embezzled public funds; and practised religious tolerance towards people of other faiths. His sole interest was the restoration of the dignity of the human being. In all, he is considered as among the foremost champions of African liberation and one who struggled against imperialism.

Mark Omorovie Ikeke

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## Padmore, George (1903–1959)

George Padmore was a radical anti-imperial activist most well-known for his leadership of the Communist International's Negro Bureau in the early 1930s, his key role in organizing the 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress, and as a political mentor to Kwame Nkrumah, first prime minister of Ghana. Born in the British colony of Trinidad in 1903 under the name Malcolm Nurse, the boy who would become known as George Padmore is usually celebrated as an important leader of the Pan-African movement. His thinking and his activism, however, actually encompassed a much wider and more complex range of traditions that was most sharply focused on a Marxian analysis of capitalism and imperialism. He published ten books and thousands of newspaper articles that focused on the policies and practices of colonialism, as well as the governing ideological tenets of imperialism, especially in relation to Africa.

Tracing George Padmore's life of political activism provides a snapshot of many of the most important trends of thinking about British imperialism and anti-imperialism in the first half of the 20th century. Padmore came of age in the British West Indies at a time of significant political activity characterised by post-war disturbances and the rapid spread of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association. He entered the international communist movement at a moment when it played a particularly prominent role in black politics. Moving to metropolitan London in the 1930s, he was involved in contentious debates among the British left about its position on imperialism and fascism, as well as the catalytic events of the Italo-Abyssinian crisis. His continued criticism of British imperial policy in the 1940s, particularly its new policy of colonial development, reflected the early contingencies of the Cold War and the response of British imperial policymakers to decolonisation and

nationalist movements. He became a close adviser to Kwame Nkrumah in the late 1940s and worked with him to negotiate the independence of the first British African territory, Ghana, in 1957. His presence in Ghana from 1957 until his death on 23 September 1959 witnessed the earliest signs of the problems and contradictions new African leaders began to experience once they attained political power.

George Padmore viewed imperialism as a system of exploitation arising from monopoly capitalism and perpetuated through racism. Padmore also argued, along with others at the time, that all people of colour were subjugated under a system of power relations rooted in imperialism. His 'anti-imperialism' articulated liberation for all peoples of colour, whether living under formal colonial rule or not. Padmore's ideas about imperialism and his anti-imperial activism emerge from three important strands of anti-imperial thinking in the first decades of the 20th century: a West Indian intellectual tradition; radical left anti-imperialism; and the rise of fascism in Europe.

Padmore's anti-imperialism was forged in the early 20th-century Caribbean and, in particular, the West Indian middle class. This world produced an attitude of responsibility that embedded a deep respect for those who committed themselves to causes for which they received a high standing within the community but little financial reward. A tradition of voicing opposition to injustice and exploitation emerged among the West Indian middle class that often used the newspaper as a means of articulating opinion and engaging in dialogue among a highly migratory population. His boyhood friend and future political comrade C.L.R. James has positioned Padmore within a group of 'remarkable West Indian men' including Toussaint L'Ouverture and Henry Sylvester Williams, as well as contemporaries like Aimé Césaire, Marcus Garvey, and Frantz Fanon. Their tradition also often recalled the memories of slavery and fed into a powerful rhetoric of moral and intellectual opposition to empire. Part of this West Indian intellectual tradition also, however, embodied complex contradictions with regard to elite and popular politics. Padmore came of age among a generation who still struggled with these ambiguities but also aligned more concretely with working-class movements. This generation also began to

challenge the idea of imperialism itself rather than simply the morality of its administration (Cudjoe 2003: 16–33; Smith 2002: 33).

At the end of 1924 Padmore moved to the US to train for a profession. This brought him to two prominent African-American universities: Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee and Howard University in Washington, DC. The dynamic space of these increasingly radical 'hybrid diasporic settings' drew him into student politics and, over time, into the Communist Party (Gaines 2006; King 1970). His entry into US communism and to the international communist movement in general occurred in a uniquely fertile period of communist activity regarding the 'Negro Question'. The American Negro Labour Congress (ANLC), which Padmore had joined by 1928, emerged out of the work of Cyril Briggs and the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), and the political milieu of places like New York and Chicago that were heightened by the ferment of the Harlem Renaissance and the effects of Garveyism (Makalani 2011; Wilson 1976). His move to Moscow at the end of 1929 coincided with the growth of Third Period Comintern policy which engaged more directly than ever before with, in particular, the situation of black peoples (Callahan 1995; McClellan 2007: 61–84). Padmore became one of the foremost black activists for the Comintern through his editorship of the *Negro Worker* and the publication of his book *The Life and Struggles of Negro Toilers* (1931). The port of Hamburg, from which he worked from 1932 until his office was raided by Nazi officials two weeks after Hitler came to power in February 1933, had become a convergence point for colonial seamen from all over the world that was utilised as a central depot for dispersing what was deemed in the colonies as 'subversive literature'.

Padmore's rapid rise within the Comintern and equally swift departure by the end of 1933 has come to represent, for historians, the attraction and subsequent disillusionment with European communism by many black radicals. For the Communist International in this period, and its work with Africa and the 'Negro Question', see Adi (2008). To establish his position outside the bounds of the Comintern, Padmore published *How Britain Rules Africa* (1936) – a book that provided a forensic outline of conditions in British African territory and in South Africa, and responded to communist debates

about colonial revolution by arguing that the unique conditions of racial prejudice in Africa required different strategies for instigating a socialist revolution that would end imperial rule. Importantly, Padmore remained a committed Marxist after he moved to London in 1935. But his networks widened significantly as he worked from the metropolis to explain imperialism to British workers and to advocate for colonial nationalists. From London he befriended Indian nationalists, engaged with all the various strands of the British left, and built alliances with campaigners of all political stripes who were interested in questioning the British Empire. For example, Pennybacker's study of Padmore and other activists who addressed racial politics draws attention to the wide geography of campaigns which converged in London and usually involved organisations led by socialists and communists. Padmore's politics, Pennybacker highlights, were part of a larger discourse that 'condemn[ed] imperialism and fascism in the same breath' (Louis 2006: 974–989; Pennybacker 2009: 13).

Padmore's life was spent attacking the purported liberalism of empire as a sham. All of his writing utilised government reports and statistics about conditions in the colonies as a means of countering the dominant narrative of imperial historians, which told the history of Empire 'as the unfolding story of liberty'. His work was a response to 'immensely influential' contemporaries like Lord Lugard and Margery Perham, who championed 'indirect rule' and gradual reform in order to stall the advance of radical colonial nationalists. In the 1930s, Padmore countered their narrative by arguing – perhaps more vehemently than anyone else at the time – that European rule in its colonies was itself fascist. He also argued that the Italian invasion of Abyssinia in 1935, and the rumoured appeasement of Hitler via the return of former German colonies in Africa, proved that imperialism was the result of the present state of capitalism by which industrialised countries strove to monopolise markets, raw materials, and spheres of investment. His work in this regard displays the greatest influence on Padmore's ideas about imperialism, which came from the British anti-imperial theoretician J.A. Hobson and, most influentially, from V.I. Lenin. Imperialism, in this analysis, provided an outlet for markets and a source of raw materials. Thus, not only were fascist countries aiming

to acquire colonies, Padmore argued, but British and French colonial governments were behaving in their colonies in a manner similar to Germany and Italy in their own territory.

Padmore's continued Marxism and persistent encouragement of colonial unity came together in the late 1930s in his support for Caribbean workers who were waging a revolt across the British West Indies. These revolts became a major subject of Padmore's journalism and a key action point for the organisation he had founded with C.L.R. James and other black radicals in London: the International African Service Bureau (IASB). After the Second World War, Padmore transformed the IASB into a much wider alliance in Britain called the Pan-African Federation (PAF). His lead role in organising the Manchester Pan-African Congress was crucial to establishing a much stronger orientation to colonial workers than previous Pan-African Congresses. The Congress also marked an important turn for Pan-Africanism in its approval of, for the first time, the use of force and mass action (Adi and Sherwood 1995).

Padmore's work at the end of the Second World War embodied the sense of both hope and scepticism that many anti-colonial activists articulated in the 'new era' of the United Nations. He believed that new strategies needed to be employed in the post-war period that exploited the changes in the international order and Britain's increasing ambivalence towards colonial policy; but he also increasingly argued that colonial independence would only be won through careful negotiation and strategic resistance on the part of colonial peoples. Padmore's *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire: A Challenge to the Imperialist Powers* examined how the nationalities policy of the USSR contributed to the national liberation of countries formerly contained within the tsarist empire and how socialism was effective in resolving the colonial problem in a progressive manner. When, in one of the first manifestations of Cold War tension, British imperialism became a prime target of the Soviet Union after 1946, Padmore's journalism and his books were at the centre of British official debates about the suppression of anti-colonial movements and their potential communist ties. He continued to counter the narrative of a liberal empire by reporting regularly on the presence of a colour bar in Britain and attacking what he argued was the underlying exploitative

intentions of Britain's new colonial policy of 'development' (Lewis 2011). Padmore's strength as a journalist was his ability to link popular and unpopular events across the Empire together. In particular, he relentlessly covered developments in South Africa and the solidification of the apartheid state, arguing that every progressive step in an African or Caribbean colony towards independence challenged the racial supremacy and segregation of apartheid.

Padmore's most frequently cited example of this was Kwame Nkrumah's march towards self-government in the Gold Coast. Although Padmore maintained interest in and contacts with anti-colonial nationalists in South Asia and the Caribbean, he became increasingly focused on Africa and on the Gold Coast as a beacon for other anti-colonial movements. He engaged much more closely with the party political system and harnessed the processes of government to the cause of negotiating independence, arguing that success in one colony would have a catalytic effect on others. Ending imperialism became, in some respects for Padmore, a game of dominos; in which victory in one colony would lead to victory in others, and political independence would be the first stage of combating the social and economic strands of imperialism's many permeations. Indeed, Nkrumah's famous refrain to 'seek ye first the political kingdom' is a mark of the close thinking these two political allies maintained.

Yet as an end to formal colonial rule became real, Padmore's arguments about the use of violence became ambiguous, and his ideas about mass action and the strategic manipulation of elite party politics began to collide. Contentious questions about how former colonies would be governed, how their economies would be structured, and who would 'belong' in these communities also emerged. The transnational, anti-imperial vision of Padmore which sought to create entirely new societies, clashed with that of some anti-colonial nationalists. Indeed, the encounter between transnational anti-imperial thinkers like Padmore with a new generation of anti-colonial nationalists, particularly after the Second World War, provides much fertile ground for future research. The impact of the continued influence of Marxism on many of these thinkers is another, highly relevant area for research.

Ultimately, Padmore's form of Marxism did not wane in the face of a stronger commitment to black unity nor the evolving ideas of 'pan-Africanism' after he left the Communist International in 1934. But his form of Marxism shifted to one in support of a Labourite commitment to 'democratic socialism' or 'libertarian socialism', as he termed it. Padmore denounced communism in his later years as something that was largely formulated according to the interests of the Soviet Union and profoundly opposed to freedom, this even after the Comintern had been disbanded. Padmore seems to have taken non-Marxists like Gandhi and Nehru in India as models.

Instead these ideas were for Padmore central aspects of the same logic that understood racism as a product of imperialism, and imperialism as both a political and economic system of dominance that could not be modified by those bound up in its interests. When the British Labour Party came to power in 1945, he exposed the hypocrisy of their support for empire against their previous promises, and identified resource extraction as the exploitative intention of colonial development policy. Contrasting the peaceful negotiation of independence in the Gold Coast with the brutal suppression of Mau Mau in Kenya, he placed the blame for violence squarely at the feet of the imperialists and the nature of the system they perpetuated. He held up a mirror to late imperial Britain and expressed what 'outsiders' saw.

Leslie James

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## Rodney, Walter (1942–1980)

Born in Georgetown, Guyana, on 23 March 1942, Walter Anthony Rodney won a scholarship to enter Queen's College in Georgetown in 1953. In the same year, he had his first political experience when he distributed leaflets calling for the victory of the Marxist-oriented People's Progressive Party (PPP) in the first general elections ever organised in the colony of British Guyana. Against the background of the early Cold War, the elections won by the PPP were cancelled after the British troops, with the support of the US and the US multinational corporations, landed in Guyana in order to save the people from a 'communist menace' (Prescod 1976: 114). Rodney grew up in a global environment and benefited from the experience of political activists and working people who had shown an early and deep interest in socialist and anti-imperialist movements.

In 1960, Rodney joined the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Jamaica. There he actively supported the stillborn project to form a Federation of the West Indies to oppose the US hegemony in the Caribbean. Travelling to the Soviet Union and to Cuba as a representative of the UWI's students, Rodney returned from his trips with Marxist and anti-imperialist literature which, regarded as subversive, was seized by the Jamaican customs. From this moment on, he fell under the scrutiny of the Jamaican, Guyanese, and American services. In his own words, 'travelling to Cuba was also another important experience, because I was with Cuban students and I got some insight at an early period into the tremendous excitement of the Cuban Revolution. This was 1960, just after the victory of the revolution. One has to live with a revolution to get its full impact,

but the next best thing is to get there and see a people actually attempting to grapple with real problems of development' (Rodney 1990: 17).

In 1963, he moved for doctoral research to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, where he expanded his intellectual and social life. Under the supervision of Richard Gray at SOAS, he studied the impact of slavery in West Africa; his research led him to explore the Vatican archives in Rome, and to visit research libraries in Spain under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco and in Portugal under the authoritarian regime of António de Oliveira Salazar. In Lisbon, he became aware of the ongoing struggle led by Amílcar Cabral and other prominent figures for the liberation of Africa from Portuguese colonial domination. Frustrated by the classic and bourgeois vision of African history at SOAS, Rodney became associated with a group of Caribbean students who were organising lectures on Marx, Trotsky, imperialism, and revolutions at the London home of the Trinidadian thinker C.L.R. James. Rodney, who had performed in academic and political public debates since his years at the UWI, joined his comrades at the Hyde Park Speakers' Corner, where they denounced the regimes of apartheid in South Africa, the remaining colonial powers in Africa, and the institutionalised racism that continued in England through the 1962 Immigration Act, and in the US with segregation.

After defending his doctoral thesis, which launched controversies on the impact of slavery and European trade on African societies, Rodney broke with the tradition of the typical Caribbean scholar graduating in England, who would go back home to inculcate in his own students the biased colonial British knowledge. After an unsuccessful application for a job in Senegal, he was recruited as an assistant lecturer in the department of history at Dar es Salaam University, established three years previously by Terence Ranger. Rodney arrived in a decisive period in Tanzanian political history: in February 1967, the Tanzanian president, Julius Nyerere, proclaimed the Declaration of Arusha, which urged the creation of an African form of socialism, known as 'Ujamaa'.

This radical and progressive turn of the Tanzanian regime encouraged Rodney to



develop new themes and methodologies in his teaching of African history. A subversive thinker, he contested the mutually accepted division of intellectual labour between historians working on the past, social and political scientists working on the present, and economists trying to predict the future. In his mind, history, especially in Africa, should be oriented towards social transformation, and should not be relegated to the study of the past in itself. Because he was ‘interested in the past not for its own sake but with intent to illuminate the neo-colonial plight within which Africa was engulfed’ (Swai 1982: 44), Rodney strongly rejected the glorification of the African past which had become prominent in the historiography developed in the new African independent states.

The decolonisation of history in the context of the emergence of newly independent nations in Africa and the Caribbean required the writing of a social rather than a triumphalist history. In this way, Rodney ‘also avoided what can be called the “great kings and queens syndrome”, which measured a society’s worth based on the existence and power of its royalty, the size of its army, its political structure, its literature, and so on. Rodney rejected this notion of civilization in favour of concepts that reflected the way in which people related to one other in a given society’ (Austin 2001: 64). Thus historical research should stress the initiatives of the people instead of reflecting the life of the ruling class. Engaging with the masses, therefore, Rodney learned Kiswahili and started to give lectures away from the university, teaching Tanzanian peasants about labour history, the impact of colonialism on environment, and political economy.

In January 1968, Rodney, his wife Pat, and their son Shaka returned to Jamaica. Now holding a position as lecturer in African history at the UWI, Rodney took the initiative of teaching off the campus, coming into contact with Rastafarians and working people and setting up joint discussions of African culture. His most relevant talks were published later in *The Groundings with my Brothers* (2001). Rodney’s social activism and political solidarity with every group which had been repressed by the authorities finally caused alarm bells to ring. The government, which was controlled by the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP), decided to ban him from the country while he was away in Montreal at the Congress of Black Writers,

giving a lecture on Black Power and African history.

On 16 October 1968, after the news spread in Kingston that Rodney had been sent back to Montreal in the same aircraft, hundreds of students and academics took to the streets between the campus and the city centre to force the prime minister, Hugh Shearer, to change his position. As the march came close to downtown Kingston, the situation became increasingly violent. The students were joined by groups of youths who were familiar with Rodney’s activities, and by crowds of workers and unemployed people who had just taken part in a protest against the rise of bus ticket prices and the decline in living conditions. The march turned into a series of riots, with urban groups burning motor cars and buses, looting the stores, and attacking every symbol of the capitalist authorities, causing several million dollars’ worth of damage. The civil riots claimed two lives, several policemen were injured, and over 30 people were arrested. Known as the ‘Rodney riots’, they became a mobilising event and a turning point in the history of the Caribbean. They also became ‘part of the permanent political experience of a large number of students and staff. They have been politically educated in a direct and unforgettable way into the arbitrary of executive power, the naked use of physical force, and the mobilisation of the media of communication behind this power to justify its use and encourage its repeated use’ (Girvan 1973).

Rodney had spread the concept of Black Power throughout Jamaica, arguing for a radical break with imperialism, mobilising the African masses in the conquest of political power, and calling for a cultural re-evaluation of the African legacy. Taking the theories of C.L.R. James on self-emancipation to a higher level, Rodney’s teachings on black empowerment resonated with the middle-class dissident aspirations of the students, the sophisticated and eclectic philosophy of the Rastafari movement, the disciples of Marcus Garvey, the youth, the working people, and the sub-proletariat living in the most depressed urban areas. From this connection of diverse branches emerged a new radical Afro-Caribbean culture which emphasised reggae music, literature, painting, and dub poetry (Morley 2007: 134).

In this way Rodney became an icon of the Pan-African, Rastafari, and Black Power

revolutions which culminated in the late 1960s. At the Congress of Black Writers, while Stokely Carmichael defended the racist branch of Black Power which opposed attendance by white people, Rodney took the opposite position. In Rodney's mind, the situation in 1968 needed a critical reassessment of the conclusions of the 1955 African-Asian Bandung conference, emphasising a single alliance of coloured people. The defeat of several progressive Third-World movements and the overthrow or containment of some anti-imperialist regimes in the years before the world revolution of 1968 had changed the course of history. As Western people were contesting their own governments, broader alliances were needed to globalise the revolution, and to insist upon the priority of class over race. This position placed Rodney among the ranks of the Third-World internationalist groups.

After a short stay in Havana and London, Rodney returned to Tanzania, where he spent the most distinguished years of his career. Meeting members of African liberation movements based in Tanzania, living with Vietnamese and Cuban diplomats, and debating on nationalism, Marxism, and Pan-Africanism with East African scholars, he raised essential issues concerning the African revolution, the use of violence, solidarity with Vietnam and Third-World anti-imperialism, and so on. While writing in several African academic and leftist political reviews, he also gave financial support to African fighters and served as a referee for the US-based African Liberation Support Committee.

At Dar es Salaam University, Rodney taught colonial and post-colonial African history and the economic history of Tanzania. He also introduced the first course on the history of the black peoples in the Americas. Taking in Samir Amin, Andre Frank, and Immanuel Wallerstein's research on the global world system, his course on international political economy introduced to Tanzania the theory of dependency and the debate on the practical application of economic disengagement from imperialism and Euro-centrism. With a Marxist basis, his course on the English, French, and Russian revolutions highlighted the historical formation of social classes and their role in the balance of power.

Rodney's most famous and controversial book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, was published in Dar es Salaam in 1972. After

asserting his introductory thesis that 'African development is possible only on the basis of a radical break with the international capitalist system, which has been the principal agency of underdevelopment of Africa over the last five centuries' (Rodney 2012: xi), Rodney detailed the ongoing process by which Africa was disempowered by the Western capitalist system over a long period from the trans-Atlantic slave trade era to post-colonial and neo-colonial times. His book clearly pointed out the alliance between the African neo-colonial elite and the local *comprador* bourgeoisie, which endorsed economic policies of development that deprived African peoples of the control of their own destiny. Challenging myths and stereotypes of Africa and tackling W.W. Rostow's theory of the stages of economic development, Rodney argued that Africa's under-development and poverty were caused by European colonial capitalist interference. Rodney's research was the first systematised study to raise the dialectical relations between the impact of slavery and colonialism, the source of the capitalist accumulation, and the concept of global reparations as a consequence of the denial of opportunity which prevented Africans from realising their own vision of social and human development. In a sense, 'Rodney tried to understand why the moment of independence was also a moment of recolonization. This was due not only to the strength of international capitalism and the Western political alignment in the years following the Second World War, but also to the weaknesses of the social forces in the ex-colonial countries and of their political elite' (Lewis 1998: xvii). With important references to Che Guevara, Fanon, Nkrumah, and Cabral, the book was translated into Portuguese, Spanish, and German in the following years, and it became an essential text in many anti-imperialist circles.

The Tanzanian fusion of politics and academics attracted scholars from all over the world. Under Rodney's banner, the Dar es Salaam school of historiography became 'the intellectual revolutionary hub of East Africa, Africa and the Third World generally' (Ngugi 1993: 166). However, in June 1974, in Dar, Rodney missed the Sixth Pan-African Congress for medical reasons. He also had been banned because of an diplomatic paper that he had written for the congress. 'Aspects of the International Class Struggle

in Africa, the Caribbean and America' (1975a) contains scathing critical attacks on several African and Caribbean regimes that had sent official delegations. Besides criticising his own government, the Guyanese authoritarian regime, Rodney expressly denounced the Brazilian delegates who had applauded the coup against Salvador Allende in Chile at an early stage. Rodney felt that his time in Tanzania had come to an end.

In summer 1974, the Rodney family, enlarged by the birth of two daughters, Asha and Kanini, returned to Guyana. However, Rodney's appointment as professor of history at the University of Guyana was cancelled by the authorities because of his political opinions; academic support and popular demonstrations in Georgetown, Washington, DC, and London did not improve his situation. Against all expectations, Rodney did not go into exile, and instead decided to engage with the political opposition while doing historical research on the social history of Guyana. Soon Rodney became the leading figure of a Marxist and multi-ethnic political party, the Working People's Alliance (WPA), which engaged in a political battle with the prime minister, Forbes Burnham. Rodney's desire was to become more involved in the revolutionary movements in the Caribbean, and to work and build lasting alliances with the progressive forces in Cuba, Trinidad, South America, and Central America. Writing of this situation, Wazir Mohamed (2007) emphasised that 'Walter anticipated the movements that are now flowering all over Latin America, the fusion of the struggles for collective land rights with the struggles for women's equality and human rights – represented by the horizontal and unemployed workers movements in Argentina; the struggles of indigenous and black people, landless workers and trade union movements in Brazil; the indigenous Amerindian and water justice movements in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru; the Zapatistas of Mexico; and of course Chavez's Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela.'

However, Rodney was active mainly in Guyana. Travelling around the country to teach history and to meet the bauxite miners (mostly Africans) and the sugar cane workers (mostly Indians), he tried to weaken the ideology of the regime, which politicised the ethnic division between these two communities, both of whom were working in a capitalist system which regulated their competition

for better wages and living conditions. In one of his speeches, 'People's Power, No Dictator' (1981: 76–77), Rodney warned against the illusions of governmental policies of nationalisation by saying that 'the highest expression of modern capitalism is found in the multinational companies. The power of the modern capitalist is tremendous because it is on such a scale that it dominates entire nations and sustains imperialist exploitations.' These political rallies formed the public side of his scholarly investigations published posthumously in *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881–1905* (1981).

In the late 1970s, Rodney understood that his fight against the regime would not conclude as long as the masses did not organise and rise up. In 1979, he was arrested in the investigation of the criminal arson of an official building. He gained the status of a political prisoner when he was released but prohibited from leaving the country before the trial opened. However, in April 1980 he managed to enter Zimbabwe in April 1980, where he was warmly received by Robert Mugabe after the celebration of independence. While his unexpected presence humiliated Forbes Burnham, Rodney was offered a post as head of the department of history in the newly founded University of Zimbabwe. After he declined this opportunity – like many others emanating from African and Western universities – he returned to Guyana. A few weeks later, on Friday, 13 June 1980, Walter Rodney was killed by a bomb in Georgetown, Guyana. His death remains unexplained, but his works and his life as an organic intellectual still inspire many people fighting imperialism all over the world.

Amzat Boukari-Yabara

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## Roy, Arundhati (1961–)

Arundhati Roy is an Indian novelist, essayist, scriptwriter, and political campaigner who is best known for her novel *The God of Small*

*Things* (1997), for which she won the Booker Prize for Fiction. Since then she has concentrated on developing her interest in politics, as manifested in her essays and novel on a range of political subjects, some of which are specific to India while others are more global in outlook. Since the late 1990s she has maintained an active presence in the media through her contributions to newspapers such as *The Guardian*, where she has written about issues including the plight of oppressed groups in India, the Mumbai terror attacks, Kashmir, India's nuclear weapons programme, ecosystems, and violence against women. She has been described as a spokesperson but believes that this is a misrepresentation of her intentions, which are to raise awareness about inequality and advocate the right to freedom but not to represent or speak for any particular group. Although esteemed in the academy, Roy is reluctant to be allied to elitist institutions because she thinks that those in power exploit the powerless in such a way that the latter are simply unaware of what is happening to them (Roy 2004: 120).

## Biography

Suzanna Arundhati Roy was born on 24 November 1961 in Shillong in Meghalaya, a state in the north-east of India, to a Syrian Christian mother, Mary Roy, and a Bengali father, Ranjit Roy. Roy's parents divorced when she was young and her mother took both her and her brother to live in her home town of Ayemenem in Kerala, a coastal state in the south-west of India. One of Kerala's most distinctive features is its relatively high percentage of Christians: while Christians make up only a tiny minority of the total population of India as a whole (about 3–4 per cent), Syrian Christians in Kerala comprise 20 per cent of the population of the state. The inter-caste marriage of Mary and Ranjit Roy and their subsequent divorce meant that neither she nor her children would be wholly accepted back into her community. Moreover, Mary Roy had jeopardised the *tharavad* (the family lineage that is passed down from the father's side): 'If you don't have a father, you don't have a *tharavad* [sic]. You're a person without address' (Roy 2004: 5). Undeterred by these attitudes, Mary Roy, an ardent feminist, was determined to make the best start for her children by giving them a good

education. In 1986 she won a legal case in the Indian Supreme Court challenging the Syrian Christian inheritance law that stated that a woman can inherit at most a quarter of her father's property (or 5000 rupees, whichever was less). Her case made history and changed the law to give women equal inheritance; furthermore the law was backdated to 1956. Passionate about education, Roy's mother founded two schools: a small primary school, and in 1967 Corpus Christi (now called Pallikoodam School) in the town of Kottayam. Roy benefited from attending her mother's schools, where she was encouraged to learn without the restraints of conventional schooling, a trait that would influence her throughout her life.

Roy left her mother's school in Kottayam when she was 16 to attend the Lawrence boarding school in Tamil Nadu. From there she moved to Delhi to study architecture at the college of architecture, where she met a fellow student, Gerard Da Cunha, who would become her first husband. After engaging in architectural projects, Roy and her husband decided to abandon their professional lives and moved to Goa, where they made a simple living selling hand-made goods on the beach. Within six months or so Roy had tired of this life and moved to Delhi, separating from Da Cunha after a four-year marriage. It was here that she began her creative life as a writer. In 1984 Roy met and married the film-maker Pradip Krishen. Roy wrote screenplays for some of her husband's films, including *In Which Annie Gives it Those Ones* (1989, published 2003) and *Electric Moon* (1992).

Although Roy never pursued a professional career in architecture, the influence that the subject had on her sensibilities and outlook cannot be underestimated. From an academic point of view, it developed her understanding of the sociological aspects of housing. As a discipline architecture enabled her to develop her ideas structurally, on many different spatial and temporal levels. Through a multi-layered framework she was able to explore the hybridity of different cultures, a characteristic that was displayed in her first novel. By her own admission, '[s]tudying architecture taught me to apply my understanding of structure, of design and of minute observation of detail to things other than buildings. To novels, to screenplays, to essays. It was an invaluable training' (Roy 2003: xii).

Another aspect of her life that continues to underpin her work is the quest for liberation. Her family circumstances meant that she was not fully accepted in society and had to struggle against conventional Indian society, which some 50 years ago was opposed to inter-caste marriage and divorce. Being displaced was a double-edged sword because, although it meant that she was made to feel like an outsider because of her background, it also freed her from the expectations placed on women to prepare themselves for marriage. By not belonging to a caste or religion and being exempt from pressure to conform, she was free to explore her own identity on her own terms.

### ***The God of Small Things***

Roy's novel is semi-autobiographical and excels in its powers of observation and imagination. Set in Ayemenem, a village in Kerala, it draws on Roy's own life experiences while using the symbolic power of nature, and in particular the changing of seasons, as a backdrop. The plot centres on a relationship between a low-caste carpenter, Velutha, and a Syrian-Christian divorcee, Ammu, and the narrative is told from the perspective of Ammu's twins Estha and Rahel. The key events concern the visit of their half-English cousin Sophie Mol and her mother. At the beginning of the novel we learn that Sophie Mol has drowned in the river by the family's house. The text shifts between the past and present registers, moving from 1969 to 1993; meaning is created through the knowledge generated by memory, flashbacks, and flash-forwards. The non-linearity is one of the most distinctive features of the novel and means that the reader has to avidly connect with Estha and Rahel, who tell and re-tell the story at different points in their lives: when they are seven as they observe things around then, and then at the age of 31 when they are reflecting on the past and trying to make sense of it.

One of the most characteristic features of the novel is the attention to detail; seemingly trivial actions or aspects of nature are connected with larger political and social issues, such as pollution, class struggles, and immigration. We learn that society is still shaped by the caste system, which defined the position that people would occupy in life; even though it was outlawed in the Indian

constitution in 1949, it continued to dominate society in a real and pressing way. The depth of her world view, coupled with the intricacy of her writing style means, that Roy is able to forge a connection between the different levels of social, geographical, and economic reality, an ideal that reflects the sensory richness of India. Roy states that in the book she:

connects the very smallest things to the biggest. Whether it's the dent that a baby spider makes on the surface of water in a pond or the quality of the moonlight on a river or how history and politics intrude into your life, your house, your bedroom, your bed, into the most intimate relationships between people – parents and children and siblings and so on. (Roy 2004: 11)

The above quotation conveys a more central and ongoing aim in Roy's writing, irrespective of its type: 'all of her writing shares the aim of telling a story, building bridges between the small realities of people's lives and the immense social forces that affect them' (Higgs 2004: 17).

The novel's richness means that it can be discussed on many different levels. A popular strand of interpretation examines it as an example of post-colonial discourse, which sets out to contest ideas of universality and to impose singular frameworks of meaning. We hear instead the voices of the silenced others, who are given platforms on which to speak. By focusing on the Christian community, rather than the Hindu or Islamic communities, Roy presents a fresh perspective of post-colonialism in South Asia.

Since its publication *The God of Small Things* has continued to be enormously successful, having sold more than six million copies worldwide and been translated into more than 40 languages. However, it has also divided critics into those who lauded Roy's rich use of language and intricate plot and those who were bemused by the somewhat convoluted narrative. The award of the Booker Prize in 1997 was not only an individual victory for Roy but also marked the growing significance of writers from former colonial states, including Salman Rushdie (*Midnight's Children*, 1981), Keri Hulme (*The Bone People*, 1985), and Ben Okri (*The Famished Road*, 1991).

## Political activism

Both before and after her critically acclaimed novel, Roy was active in the writing of political essays, which raises the question whether she should be primarily defined as a novelist or whether her novel simply represented a literary excursion from her central objective. For the purposes of classification a writer's works are often divided into categories of fiction and non-fiction, of which the latter involves discussion of social, political and economic ideas often relating to projects or initiatives that have been or are currently being carried out. However, Roy does not believe in a clear-cut distinction between the purposes of non-fiction and fiction. In her opinion, although fiction is rooted in the imagination and may not be fact-based, it still has the capacity to truth-tell; indeed non-fiction and fiction simply represent two different forms of storytelling. *The God of Small Things* is a case in point, where the reader learns as much about religious, ethnic, and cultural practices and traditions as she or he does about the characters in the story and their complicated family life.

Roy's intellectual energy and wide political interests explain the extent of her commentaries on subjects that she is passionate about. Broadly speaking, she is interested in factors that have shaped the identity of India, including its colonial past and more recently the impact of neoliberalism. At the heart of her interpretation is the struggle between power structures and how this is played out between states, societies, and people. Roy's principles about social activism govern her approach to her work in general, and she strives 'to never complicate what is simple, to never simplify what is complicated'. In addition, she aspires 'to be able to communicate to ordinary people what is happening in the world' (Roy 2004: 120).

Much of her criticism is levelled at what she deems to be pernicious practices of the Indian Government in exercising corporate control and militarisation. Capitalism has swept India with the government's active collusion, which is done under the aegis of globalisation and the global economy. Roy has defended the position of the Naxalite-Maoist insurgents, who she believes have been treated reprehensibly by a government which should recognise that these indigenous groups are trying to protect their land from corporate takeover, and should not view them as an internal security threat.

One of her main projects is the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), a social and grass-roots movement opposed to the construction of dams across the Narmada river and consisting of groups of people from different strata of society including *adivasis* (tribal groups throughout India), farmers, and human rights activists. In spite of the Indian Government's insistence that the dams will benefit the population, many communities have been displaced since the building of them began in the 1980s. The construction of the dams has threatened the homes and livelihoods of a vast number of people. The campaigning has been non-violent, in keeping with Gandhian principles, or truth (*satya*) being attained through non-violent means. Roy has been an active participant in the protests, and was arrested at the site of one of the proposed dams in the village of Sulgaon, but she escaped a jail sentence after paying a fine. Her donation of her Booker Prize money (about £50,000) to the organisation reflects her continuing commitment.

Like many other post-colonial writers, Roy is an active proponent of anti-globalisation and believes that modernity should not be incompatible with the preservation of traditions, arguing for the importance of sustainability. Roy argues:

It's as though the people of India have been rounded up and loaded onto two convoys of trucks (a huge big one and a tiny little one) that have set off resolutely in opposite directions. The tiny convoy is on its way to a glittering destination somewhere near the top of the world. The other convoy just melts into the darkness and disappears. (2002: 2–3)

Some critics may view her desire to write in English as inconsistent with the efforts to preserve the numerous vernacular languages in India, and as contrary to the objective, following Independence, to preserve Hindi as the national language of India. This is especially striking given that Roy is not an expatriate. An alternative view is that Roy intended to show the effects that colonialism had on the Indian psyche whereby English became synonymous with everything that was cultured and elite. In *The God of Small Things* she intersperses Malayalam words in the text to give a sense of the cultural exchange between different languages and dialects which is a trademark of communication in India even today.

One of Roy's most recent books, *Broken Republic: Three Essays* (2011), analyses the effects of India's economic policies on its people and the environment. The first essay is about the government's war on the forest-dwelling people in the state of Chhattisgarh as it attempts to mine the land's mineral supply. The second essay, 'Waking with Comrades', is a poignant piece about Roy's three-week journey into the Chhattisgarh forest and her time with the Maoist rebels who befriended her. This excursion symbolises her shift from her earlier position of non-violent resistance. She discusses problematic cases where violence is justifiable: a violence of resistance, or type of counter-violence, as when defending human rights against the brutality of governmental policies. Like other texts, *Broken Republic* combines Roy's allegiance to the people of India with her poetic mindset.

Roy's denunciation of the caste system is implicit in many of her texts, and is more explicit in her recent introduction 'The Doctor and the Saint' to B.R. Ambedkar's *The Annihilation of Caste of 1936* (2014b). Ambedkar was a politician and social reformer who campaigned against caste discrimination and for rights for the Dalits. In a radical but undelivered speech, which was self-published, he criticised many ideas that were sacrosanct to Hindu values including the caste system, the effects of which he believed were ubiquitous in society. His radicalism stemmed from his advocacy of breaking up the caste system, which he believed meant tackling it at its heart, that is, destroying religious ideas that upheld that tradition. Roy's support for his efforts to expose such systemic injustice is conveyed in her introduction to his book, which was published in 2014 by Navayana. The same year also marked the publication of Roy's stark examination of the invisible masses of Indians who, in their powerlessness, go unnoticed. *Capitalism: A Ghost Story* (2014a) is an examination of the real nature of democracy in contemporary India. Focusing on the gross inequality of the distribution of wealth, Roy tells the story of a nation of 1.2 billion people where there are pockets of wealth but also legions of 'ghosts' – the poor and the oppressed.

### Controversy

Although it has not been Roy's intention to court controversy and it is certainly not her wish to be regarded as a celebrity, there have

been occasions when she has been thrust into the spotlight. This is mainly because of her forthright views on development and class politics, which have offended the Indian upper classes and nationalists and marked her out as a dissenter. She came under scrutiny after the publication of *The God of Small Things* on a charge of obscenity because of the graphic sex scenes, which caused offence in India. All her campaigns have in common the need to expose the internal corruption in India, which purports to be a democracy, the world's largest democracy in fact, an ideal that is not reflected in the invidious split between those in power who make the decisions and those who are disempowered on the basis of caste and class. Roy speaks up for the rights of under-represented and disenfranchised communities. In 'The Great Indian Rape Trick' (1994) Roy writes about Shekhar Kapur's 1994 film *Bandit Queen*, criticising the fact that he did not approach the real-life protagonist for her consent to the representation of her rape. In 'The Greater Common Good' (1999b) she expresses her dissatisfaction with the Indian Government's neglect of the devastation done to the lives of its citizens by the building of the dams. Its lack of concern is reflected in the inadequate official records kept of the people affected. Since most of the displaced people were the *adivasis* and the Dalits, who are treated as 'non-persons' anyway and are not granted the same human rights as other groups, the government did not take their plight seriously. Systems such as the caste system that are integral to Indian society perpetuate the structural inequalities and the continued oppression of the under-classes, a fact that is explained by the problematic concept of karmic justice.

### Contribution

Roy is an important figure in post-colonial and women's writing, following writers such as Jean Rhys, Anita Desai, and Nadine Gordimer. Focusing on questions of identity and history, she discusses India in the post-Independence era, which has an evolving identity that is defining itself against its colonialist legacy by considering its mythic past and ideals. Her contribution to women's writing is in the acknowledgement and articulation in her narratives of women's experiences in their individuality and diversity, thus recognising their impact as agents of history

and transformation, rather than as passive recipients. The public attention to *The God of Small Things*, and the eager anticipation of her next novel (if indeed there is going to be one), should not overshadow her continued commitment to politics, and awards such as the 2002 Lannan Prize for Cultural Freedom testify to her work in this area. Although Roy's status as a novelist contributed to her initial success, the impact of her subsequent projects, which include political essays and campaign work, should not be underestimated. Roy remains fiercely committed to combating the corruption caused by imperialism, in particular the realignment of the Indian Government with the US at the end of the Cold War and the concomitant rise of Hindu nationalism. She describes the militarisation and corporatisation of the government as contributing to the 'hollowing out' of democracy, and is focused on articulating the plight of the oppressed in her home country and beyond.

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## Said, Edward W. (1936–2003)

In a manner which would no doubt have afforded him some wry amusement, Edward Said's standing in the academic world and beyond typifies the fickle, and ultimately rather shallow, nature of fashion in an area which ought to be above it. Said first achieved prominence with the publication in 1978 of *Orientalism*. Such was the effect that the book created that it was often (incorrectly) regarded as the single foundational text of the emergent field of post-colonial studies. At the same time, Said was often (incorrectly) hailed as the founder of that same emergent field. After this initial (over-)enthusiasm, Said's status declined in various quarters as he was considered insufficiently 'theoretical' in comparison to the other major figures in post-colonial theory, such as Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha. Over the next couple of decades, however, in the period up to his death and since, his standing has never ceased to grow, to the point where he is acknowledged as one of the major intellectuals of the end of the 20th century, a figure of personal and intellectual courage and integrity.

Said was born in Jerusalem to Palestinian Christian parents (Anglican on his father's side, and Baptist on his mother's) and brought up in Cairo where his father's successful stationary equipment business was located. As a result, Said was able to attend fee-paying English schools, including the prestigious Victoria College, where, as well as the assumed benefits of a 'good' education, he acquired an awareness of the pretentiousness, hypocrisy, and frequent downright

racism of his colonial 'masters'. The same financial background, as well as his father's adopted American citizenship, saw Said sent to complete his secondary education and attend university in the US, which became his home for the rest of his life. While many might have seen this as a smooth and comfortable progression, Said nevertheless felt that his was a life characterised by 'the many displacements from countries, cities, abodes, languages, environments that have kept me in motion all these years' (1999: 217).

That sense of displacement came to be epitomised by the condition of, and Said's relationship to, the country of his birth, Palestine. In 1948, the *nakba* (disaster) occurred: the brutal occupation of Palestinian land by the Israelis and the concomitant expulsion of the majority of the Palestinian population from their homeland, which meant that henceforth Said's life would be lived as one of the millions in the diaspora. The Israeli victory in the June war of 1967 saw the loss of the remaining Palestinian territory. It also deepened Said's sense of displacement, since there was now no Palestine left to return to, as well as marking his political awakening. Henceforth, Palestine would form the focus (implicit or explicit, partial or whole) of much of his work, particularly in his later years, and he would become one of the most eloquent spokesmen for his country and his people. Despite the degree of his attachment to Palestine, his feelings for the country were not altogether straightforward, as he expressed in his memoir *Out Of Place*:

Even now the unreconciled duality I feel about the place, its intricate wrenching, tearing, sorrowful status as exemplified in so many distorted lives, including mine, and its status as an admirable country for them (but of course not for us) always gives me pain and a discouraging sense of being solitary, undefended, open to the assaults of trivial things that seem important and threatening, against which I have no weapons. (142)

In view of this sense of repeated displacement and loss of homeland, it is no surprise that the idea of exile came, as we will see, to play an increasingly important part in Said's thought.

In the same memoir, Said comments that during his time as an undergraduate at

Princeton he developed ‘a fascination with complexity and unpredictability’ (277), and although ‘complexity’ did not translate into the way in which he wrote about complex issues (arguably quite the reverse) a certain ‘unpredictability’ could be held to characterise his performance as theorist. One finds this above all in his existence as a traditionally formed professor of literature who at one point champions radical theory but subsequently turns away from it, but also as a literary theorist who argues that the point of theory is to engage the experiential and the social; in his terms, ‘the worldly’. Indeed, the manner in which theory approaches the world, or not, became for Said one of its most important qualities. In addition, a form of ‘unpredictability’ as resistant, transgressive, or in Saidian terms ‘unco-opted’, intellectual practice typifies much of his approach to theory.

Although for many readers Said is principally associated with post-colonial theory, his engagement with theory is earlier, and different, and it is worth briefly examining his changing relationship with its different forms. His book *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (1975) is notable for its inclusion of a range of structuralist and post-structuralist theorists (Roland Barthes, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Ferdinand de Saussure, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida), and he was subsequently known as an advocate and populariser of continental theory. It therefore came as a surprise to many when, less than a decade later in his 1984 collection *The World, the Text, the Critic*, he subjected Derrida and Foucault, the most substantial of the theorists in *Beginnings*, to stringent critique in ‘Criticism between Culture and System’. Of the two, it is Derrida who comes off worse, but even Foucault is seen to epitomise many of the problems which Said had come to regard as vitiating theory. In particular, they both espouse theory which insufficiently engages the world. Derrida’s theory, as Said says, leads us into the text; Foucault’s in and out. While Derrida’s approach thus leaves the reader trapped in the realm of the textual, even Foucault’s putative re-emergence into the world is insufficient. His theory of power/knowledge, for example, perhaps his most ‘worldly’ in Saidian terms, and one which Said made some early use of, still fails to display an appropriate sense of historical change or, more significantly, a recognition of what

Said, in an echo of Walter Benjamin, calls the ‘coarse items’ (1984: 221): class struggle, military coercion, wealth, and privilege.

In addition to what theory does (neglecting the social, ‘textualising’ itself), there is also the problem of what can happen to theory. In the essay ‘Travelling Theory’ in *The World, the Text, the Critic*, Said identifies a pattern of rise and fall, whereby a dynamic, perhaps oppositional, theory emerges, flourishes, but through a process of repetition becomes tame and ineffectual. Part of that repetition may involve a trajectory of transmission, from one theorist and one socio-historical location to another, and the example Said uses is the incremental diluting of the radicalism in Georg Lukacs’s *History and Class Consciousness* (1923) as it passes through the work of Lucien Goldmann in Paris in the 1950s, and that of Raymond Williams in Cambridge in the 1970s. A different kind of trajectory, but no less negative, is that taken by theory as it loses radical energy, becomes increasingly institutionalised, co-opted, part of the system it originally aimed to oppose. A final element in what Said calls ‘the systematic degradation of theory’ (1984: 243), with its echoes of ‘the seductive degradation of knowledge’ from the final page of *Orientalism*, is the shift from theory as progressive intervention to theory as, in Said’s terms, ‘cult’ with its chief priests and hordes of disciples.

The question arises whether Said is offering a general account of the (inevitable) problems of theory, or one which is historically specific, particularly to the US academy in the 1970s and 1980s, which he analyses in a number of essays. One of the clearest answers is provided by ‘Travelling Theory Reconsidered’ in *Reflections on Exile* (2000a), an important example of Said rethinking concepts and locating them in appropriate social and historical contexts. Here, despite the previously identified problems, all is not lost: the degradation of theory, in its over-specialisation and professionalisation, and as a result of ‘travelling’, is not inevitable. The same Lukacsian theory now goes in the opposite direction, towards a better, more resistant intellectual practice in the person of Theodor Adorno, and, most importantly, towards the world and the political in Frantz Fanon’s anti-colonialism, internationalism and visionary humanism. If theory’s journey was previously a marker of its flaws, degradation, and decline, now, interestingly, ‘The point of theory ... is to travel, always to move beyond its confinements,

to emigrate, to remain in a sense in exile'. (2000a: 451) Also, the situating of theory 'in exile', as a worldly location, is no coincidence.

Despite what might look like a form of redemption in the previous example, one of the results of the perceived failure of theory as a general intellectual and cultural project is that Said increasingly distances himself from it, though this is nothing like the simple, wholesale rejection of theory that some have portrayed it as being: as he commented, 'to say that we are against theory ... is to be blind and trivial' (2000a: 383). Nevertheless, he is concerned to rethink and rename his practice, and the term chosen, for a variety of different reasons, is criticism, above all, 'secular criticism': humanistic, socially grounded, and embodied in a 'critical consciousness'.

Said's first major 'worldly' intervention came in 1978 with the publication of *Orientalism*. The impact of the book has been such that it merits its own separate entry, and discussion of it here will be accordingly brief. Importantly, it made strategic and eclectic use of theory to demonstrate the way in which ideas (from the commonsensical to the philosophical, from the literary to the scientific) individually and, more significantly, collectively worked to produce the demeaning representations of other cultures that served to legitimise colonial occupation and oppression.

Although *Orientalism* remains Said's best known work, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) has a claim to at least equal importance. It is in many ways an even more 'worldly' text than its predecessor, of which it is a continuation and extension, as well as its opposite, Other, face. For instance, if *Orientalism* is a study in the construction and maintenance of hierarchical and oppressive cultural divisions by means of ideas, images, and texts, *Culture and Imperialism* is an argument for recognising the many possible connections which bridge those divides. One of the sections of the book is entitled 'Overlapping territories, intertwined histories', which indicates how far Said is from the conventional view of the gulf separating coloniser and colonised. Here, we enter that space of 'complexity and unpredictability' mentioned earlier, as Said challenges received wisdom, even its radical forms, in setting out a more complex view of colonial and post-colonial relations. At the same time, *Orientalism's* thesis about the material impact of ideas remains central to the new study: 'For

the enterprise of empire depends upon the idea of having an empire ...' (1993: 10, emphasis in the original).

To a certain extent, *Culture and Imperialism* looks like a more Saidian book than *Orientalism*, since it devotes a great deal of space to discussing the classic European novel, the subject he taught for the whole of his career. The approach adopted is modest and iconoclastic: in addition to (modestly) noting the connections between the European novel and imperial expansion, Said argues for the mutually constitutive nature of those connections, which outraged various literary scholars, as well as drawing accusations of 'culturalism' from certain, especially Marxist, quarters. At the heart of the analysis is Said's own strategy of 'contrapuntal reading'. Derived from musical counterpoint, where various themes or voices interweave without dominance or necessarily any overall resolution, the contrapuntal aims to show the 'overlapping territories, intertwined histories' in text and world.

In addition to reading these great novelistic assertions of colonial cultural authority in contrapuntal fashion, Said also sets them in a different counterpoint alongside their antithesis, *Orientalism's* significantly (if appropriately) absent Other: anti-colonial resistance. The opposition of Fanon, Yeats, Césaire, C.L.R. James, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and others to colonial oppression, as well as their complex relation to colonial culture, is examined. The latter is embodied in the ambivalence of the 'Voyage in' to the metropolitan centre, which, despite the possibilities it creates for assimilation, more usually functions as 'a sign of adversarial internationalism in an age of continued imperial structures' (1993: 295).

One of the available forms of resistance (as well as classic expression of colonial power) is narrative, and in *Orientalism* Said had already noted its ability to disrupt the reifying power of the imperial 'vision'. Here, in terms which prefigure his essay on the politics of narrative in relation to Palestine ('Permission to Narrate', in Said 1995), he says: 'The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them' (2003: xiii). In that context, the struggle to tell one's own story has implications, and effects, far beyond the aesthetic.

The combined battle to resist the blocking of the Palestinian narrative (by Israel, the

US and others), to recognise, encourage, and discuss the various attempts at the creation of such a narrative, and, finally, to play his own part in the creation, occupied Said in many different ways over the course of many years. It was his most worldly, and most important, intervention. Although *Orientalism* made occasional mention of Palestine, it was the book which immediately followed it, *The Question of Palestine* (1979), that marked his determination to bring the condition of his people and his homeland to the world's attention. Between its publication and the second edition in 1992, there were, as Said points out in his Preface, momentous events across the world, but nothing had changed for the Palestinians: 'the main aspects of Palestinian life remain dispossession, exile, dispersion, disenfranchisement (under Israeli military occupation), and, by no means least, an extraordinarily widespread and stubborn resistance to these travails.' (1992/1979: vii). While it was difficult enough to focus people's attention on the 'negative' dimension of the narrative (dispossession, exile, and the rest), the 'positive' aspect, embodied in the numerous forms and strategies of Palestinian resistance (many of them peaceful, progressive, non-violent; completely removed from the convenient stereotype of Palestinian terrorism) tended to disappear completely. Said could confidently say, 'Palestine is the last great cause of the 20th century with roots going back to the period of classical imperialism' (1992/1979: 243), but adequate recognition of the fact and, even more so, anything resembling appropriate action consequent upon the recognition, could be hard to spot.

Part of the reason for the widespread refusal either to recognise or to act lies in the fact that, as Said put it, the Palestinians are 'the victims of the victims': 'We are clearly anti-colonialist and antiracist in our struggle but for the fact that our opponents are the greatest victims of racism in history, and perhaps our struggle is waged at an awkward, postcolonial period in the modern world's history' (1992/1979: 122). The repeated distorted representations in media and political discourse of Israelis as permanently vulnerable potential victims, always threatened by the possibility of a second Holocaust, and the Palestinians as aggressors, if not terrorists, help to maintain the oppressive status quo; and this despite the fact that 'there is nothing in Palestinian history, absolutely

nothing at all to rival the record of Zionist terror against Arabs, against other Jews, against United Nations officials, against the British' (1992/1979: 172).

Opposing such distortions is a task for anyone concerned with truth and justice, but it is particularly a task for intellectuals, a group Said spoke and wrote about on many occasions in the last decade of his life, most famously in his (variously controversial) BBC Reith Lectures in 1993, subsequently published as *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994). Speaking out on behalf of the Palestinians is, however, nothing like special pleading, since it introduces another intellectual-specific function: 'For the intellectual the task, I believe, is explicitly to universalise the crisis, to give greater human scope to what a particular race or nation suffered, to associate that experience with the sufferings of others' (1994: 33). In this particular context, the specific example of Palestine takes its place in the ongoing and dreadful history of oppressed communities (alongside, among others, the Jews), but given due weight, understanding, and human sympathy, rather than the routine dismissals or demonising perpetrated by the media or antagonistic politicians. An additional aspect of the universal is that of universal values (which intellectuals are to fight for and instantiate) as well as universal human rights. Once again, Palestine is central: 'Palestine, I believe, is today the touchstone case for human rights, not because the argument for it can be made as elegantly simple as the case for South Africa liberation, but because it cannot be made simple' (2000b: 435). In part, that absence of simplicity is the result of the deeply implicated human situation of Israelis and Palestinians, the product of 'Overlapping yet irreconcilable experiences ...' (2004: 143). This is a reminder that the more positively inflected 'overlapping territories, intertwined histories' of a decade earlier are no guarantee of a positive outcome.

There are other ways in which Palestine has a representative function. Said and the majority of Palestinians live a life of exile. That material fact is then extended to the position of contemporary intellectuals, creating the duality that 'while it is an actual condition, exile is also for my purposes a metaphorical condition. ... Exile for the intellectual in this metaphysical sense is restlessness, movement, constantly being unsettled, and

unsettling others' (1994: 39, emphasis in the original). This restless, unsettled and unsettling intellectual clearly has something of the displaced, complex, and unpredictable figure we encountered earlier.

A final area of intellectual endeavour, which requires very much more space than is available for discussion here, is humanism. Said, never a follower of fashion, remained an unrepentant humanist throughout his career, while humanism became one of the most unfashionable areas in academe. He was, however, fully aware of the failings of traditional humanism and in the final book completed before his death, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, he discusses at length what humanism ought to be, and how humanist intellectuals ought to act. As a first step, and completely contrary to how it is typically viewed, 'humanism is not a way of consolidating and affirming what "we" have always known and felt, but rather a means of questioning, upsetting, and reformulating so much of what is presented to us as commodified, packaged, uncontroversial, and uncritically codified certainties, including those contained in the masterpieces herded under the rubric of "the classics"' (2004: 28). On that terrain of oppositional activity, 'the intellectual's provisional home is the domain of an exigent, resistant, intransigent art into which, alas, one can neither retreat nor search for solutions. But only in that precarious exilic realm can one first truly grasp the difficulty of what cannot be grasped and then go forth to try anyway' (2004: 144). It is impossible not to imagine Edward Said going forth and trying.

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## Sankara, Thomas (1949–1987)

On 4 August 1983, Thomas Sankara led a coup d'état against President Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo and Colonel Somé Yoryan in the West African country of Burkina Faso (at the time known as Upper Volta or Haute-Volta). In the early 1980s, Burkina Faso, like many African nations, was deeply in debt. At the same time, global commodity prices had declined significantly, agricultural exports had decreased, and a sweeping

financial crisis resulted in the retrenchment of poverty, joblessness, and precarity across Burkinabé society. The infant mortality rate was the highest in the world, estimated at 280 deaths per 1,000 infants. In this context, there was a growing popular dissatisfaction with the repressive neo-colonial political regime, evidenced by a series of labour-union strikes and military coups in these years.

Sankara described the state of Burkina Faso during this period, saying, 'The diagnosis was clearly somber. The root of the disease was political. The treatment could only be political'. Sankara ambitiously set-out to de-link Burkina from this debilitating political disease by enacting programmes for auto-centric development, creating wide-sweeping reforestation programmes, implementing new educational models, transforming the national army, and working towards the emancipation of women. His radical political thought is known as Sankarism or Sankarist tradition: a Pan-African, anti-imperialist, and communist-inspired political praxis that emphasises holistic social transformation through the permanent dismantling of (neo-)imperial structures of dispossession. According to Sankarist tradition, this emancipatory social transformation is possible only through the collective energies and everyday actions of the Burkinabé.

## Biography

Thomas Isidore Noël Sankara was born on 21 December 1949 in the town of Yako in northern Burkina Faso. In an interview with Swiss journalist Jean-Philippe Rapp in 1985, he reflected on his experiences growing up during the end of the colonial period in Gaoua. He vividly remembered how, as a child, he yearned to ride a bicycle that belonged to his European primary-school principal's children, a bicycle which none of the neighbourhood children was allowed to use:

The other children dreamed about this bicycle for months and months. We woke up thinking about it; we drew pictures of it; we tried to suppress the longing that kept welling up inside of us. We did just about everything to try to convince them to lend it to us. If the principal's children wanted sand to build sand castles, we brought them sand ... One day, I realized

all of our efforts were in vain. I grabbed the bike and said to myself, 'Too bad, I'm going to treat myself to this pleasure no matter what the consequences.' (Sankara 2007c/1985)

For this act, Sankara's father was arrested and Sankara was expelled from school. This early encounter with colonial injustice and inequality shaped Sankara's worldview. It was reaffirmed when his father was arrested again when Sankara's sister was caught throwing rocks to dislodge some wild fruit and some of the rocks fell onto the principal's house. Sankara reflected years later: '[These falling stones] disturbed [the principal's] wife's nap. I understand that after a wonderful, refreshing meal, she wanted to rest, and it was irritating to be disturbed like this. But we wanted to eat'. These encounters with the systems of oppression (where a father was arrested, in essence, for his child's hunger) can be seen as an early impetus for Sankara's political consciousness. He was deeply troubled by the gap between the people living in relative luxury, whose primary concern was leisure, and those living in uncertainty, whose primary concern was food. The struggle for dignity and sustenance would remain at the centre of his political project.

In 1970, Sankara attended officer training in Madagascar. There he witnessed the popular uprising of students, farmers, and labourers against the French-appointed leader Philibert Tsiranana. Two years later, he attended parachute academy in France and was exposed to some of the philosophies that would become the foundation for his revolutionary leadership, including Marxist political economy and development theory. At the age of 33, Sankara had risen as a military leader in the Upper Volta army. By 1980, he was speaking out against imperialism and building a network of allies within the ranks of the military. He was appointed minister of information in 1981, but quickly resigned after exposing high-level corruption to local journalists (Harsch 2013).

His anti-imperial political stance was not well received by Burkinabé elites and, as a result, Sankara and a handful of his supporters were arrested in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina, by the Ouédraogo regime. Thousands of Burkinabés took to the streets to protest and demand his release. Sankara's long-time friend and military ally

Blaise Compaoré marched with 250 men on Ouagadougou, overtook the old regime and released Sankara. This insurrection became known as the August Revolution. Sankara describes the movement as a culmination of years of struggle and demonstration against neo-imperial domination. For the next four years, the National Council of the Revolution (CNR), under Sankara's leadership, ambitiously undertook one of the most radical collectivist and anti-imperialist projects on the African continent.

### **Sankarism and contributions to anti-imperialism**

Sankara's emancipatory project was founded on a conviction that a radical transformation of the relationship between the people and the State in the post-colony was needed. He strove to dismantle the post-colonial Burkinabé State as an extension of neo-colonial power interests, one which facilitated the ongoing plunder of Burkina's resources for a small native elite while the majority of the population lived in poverty. He abandoned the use of wealth and status symbols, which had become a component of the post-colonial African elite, stipulating that his ministers must drive modest vehicles rather than the preferred Mercedes Benz. Breaking with a globalised political culture that idolises political leaders, Sankara refused to have his portrait on display. He advocated the consumption of locally produced goods for the self-sustainability of Burkina Faso.

Indeed, Sankara dressed modestly and boasted that his clothing, often a traditional Faso Dan-Fani, was made from materials woven in Burkina. Much like the name he selected for the country, Burkina Faso (the land of upright people), he encouraged and cultivated a love for country, for community and for self. This was a radical shift in consciousness for a post-colony that continued to draw upon the colonial education system, in which ideas of African selfhood were shaped and narrated through the colonial gaze. Twenty-three years after the formal end of colonial rule in Burkina, students continued to be instructed in French, the former colonial language, and in Western cultural, political, and social ontologies and epistemologies. Sankara described this system: 'The colonial schools were replaced by neocolonial schools, which pursued the same goals

of alienating the children of our country and reproducing a society fundamentally serving imperialist interests' (2007b/1983: 81–82). At the time he came into power, 98 per cent of rural Burkinabés were unable to read or write and only 16 per cent of school-age children attended. He recognised the need for a radical re-education of Burkinabés, one that made necessary the building of a foundational respect for Burkinabé history, culture, and selfhood. In response, Sankara launched an educational campaign to begin the project of building and sustaining a critical political consciousness.

Sankara spoke with conviction, persuasion, and charm to argue for a holistic approach to social change, one that considered women's emancipation to be essential to the anti-imperial project. His contributions to women's emancipation are not focused on equality in the Euro-American sense; instead they articulate a gender complementarity approach, one which recognises that 'Women hold up the other half of the sky' (Sankara 2007e/1983: 66). He did not replicate colonial or patriarchal power dynamics by professing to speak for women. Instead, he spoke *with* them, reflecting his abiding respect for the dynamic and diverse roles of women in social and political life. He said, 'We do not talk of women's emancipation as an act of charity or out of a surge of human compassion. It is a basic necessity for the revolution to triumph' (ibid.). He envisioned the movement for social transformation as 'one that entrusts responsibilities to women, that involves them in productive activity and in the different fights the people face' (ibid.). He implemented a national day of solidarity with housewives, encouraging men to adopt the work of women for a day as a means of cultivating recognition for women's essential roles in Burkinabé society. Sankara's commitment to the emancipation of women was a radical contribution to Pan-African politics, one that named patriarchy and male privilege as detrimental to the struggle for African empowerment.

Sankara's speeches often included direct confrontations with neo-imperial powers and reactionary forces. At the 39th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in 1984, for example, Sankara described the state of international politics as 'A world in which nations, eluding international law, command groups of outlaws who, guns in hand,

live by plunder and organize sordid trafficking' (2007d/1984: 155). He pronounced the indigeneous Burkinabé elite as 'a passive and pathetic consumer' (157). Sankara's goal of total emancipation and empowerment for every Burkinabé challenged the foundations of the neo-imperial capitalist system and threatened foreign and domestic elites. On 15 October 1987, Sankara and 12 of his comrades were assassinated on the order of his political associate and deputy Captain Blaise Compaoré. On 17 January 1988, a death certificate was issued by the Compaoré regime, claiming that Sankara died of 'natural causes'. International political elites, including Guy Penne in France, the CIA in the US, Houphouët Boigny in the Ivory Coast and Charles Taylor in Liberia (Montanaro 2009; Ray 2008), are suspected of having been involved in the movement to violently remove Sankara from power and to stop his political momentum, which had gained significant international attention and support. A comprehensive investigation into the events of his death has never been carried out and the United Nations Committee for Human Rights closed its file on the assassination on 21 April 2008. After Sankara's assassination, Compaoré immediately set-out on a 'rectification' programme that opened Burkina Faso to the neo-liberal economic reforms that have had devastating consequences for the Burkinabé population. Compaoré remains president of Burkina, after nearly 27 years in power.

Sankara's contributions to the anti-imperial struggle cannot be overstated. He led one of the world's poorest nations in one of the world's most radically egalitarian political projects. He emphatically refused to pay back debts that had been incurred during colonialism and by the neo-colonial regimes that followed. He urged African leaders to unite in their refusal to repay. His courage and conviction were founded on an abiding respect for ordinary people and in his recognition of their intellectual, creative, and political contributions. He fearlessly critiqued the destructive and exploitative forces of global empire.

In moments that seem to be deeply reflective and anticipatory of his own assassination, he spoke of death, meaning, and the return to homeland. It is difficult not to read his tribute to Che Guevara, 'You cannot kill ideas', as foreboding his own death. He said, 'Che Guevara was cut down by bullets, imperialist

bullets, under Bolivian skies. And we say that for us, Che Guevara is not dead ... you cannot kill ideas. Ideas do not die' (2007a/1987: 421). A week later, he was assassinated by machine-gun fire. 'La patrie ou la mort, nous vaincrons' (Homeland or death, we will win), Sankara declared triumphantly at the end of each of his speeches. Although there are powerful forces that would erase Sankara's memory and heritage, African youth, activists, and students across the continent continue to draw upon the tenets of Sankarism to criticise political corruption, to advocate political change, and to draw inspiration and hope for a better future.

### Postscript

Under pressure from a popular youth-led movement, which drew inspiration from Sankara's political heritage and organised under the slogan 'enough is enough', Blaise Compaoré resigned as president of Burkina Faso on 31 October 2014.

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## Sembène, Ousmane (1923–2007)

Sembène Ousmane was born nine years after Blaise Diagne was elected as Senegal’s first African deputy to the French parliament. In the late 19th century, France had gained control over the territory of Senegal after the British had left. It became part of French West Africa. Over the centuries, this region had been exploited for slave and goods trade by the Portuguese and the Dutch. In 1946, Senegal became part of the French Union. Some 12 years later, it became a republic and part of the French Community.

Sembène saw all these changes, but also how they resulted from the struggle of the Senegalese people for emancipation. Hope for self-determination would soon be realised. In June 1960, Senegal became independent and a constituent of the Mali Federation, which it abandoned later that year. Leopold Senghor was the first president of the new republic, whom Sembène, as a communist and internationalist, criticised along with ‘African socialism’, particularly Senghor’s Négritude and the endorsement of a Francophone Commonwealth. After a failed coup led by prime minister Mamadou Dia, a constitution was drawn up and approved. In 1966, Senghor’s Senegalese Progressive Union became the country’s sole political party and remained so until 1978. Abdou Diouf became president in 1981. Senegal

and neighbouring Gambia aimed to combine military and security forces and so the next year they formed the Senegambian Confederation. It was dissolved seven years later. The separatist movement in the southern province of Casamance gained momentum at the beginning of the 1980s. In 2000, the opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade won the second round of the presidential election and ended 40 years of Socialist Party rule, introducing political changes such as giving the president power to dissolve the parliament. Wade’s Senegalese Democratic Party won an overwhelming majority in parliamentary elections in 2001. When 1,863 passengers died in a ferry disaster off the coast of Gambia, the incident had a political impact that led to the government’s resignation. In October 2005, a dispute with Gambia over ferry tariffs on the border resulted in a transport blockade. The economies of both countries suffered. Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo organised talks to resolve the issue. In 2006, the Senegalese army launched an offensive against rebels from a faction of the Casamance Movement of Democratic Forces. Senegal and Spain agreed to jointly patrol the Senegalese coast so as to curb the exodus of so-called illegal migrants heading for Europe, particularly for the Canary Islands. Senegal was and still is a common starting point for poor and desperate migrants setting out in rickety boats.

The Senegalese Sembène Ousmane, one of the key African artists of the 20th century as a writer and a film director, was attentive to this historical process. As Pfaff states, his originality ‘as a filmmaker lies in his having managed successfully to adapt film, a primarily Western medium, to the needs, pace, and rhythm of African culture’, and, specifically, Senegalese culture (1993: 14). In the vein of the African tradition of telling and transmitting stories that creatively reflect the situation of its peoples, Sembène opted for fiction instead of documentary filmmaking. His novels, short stories, and films adopt a social-realist aesthetics and mode of narration, limpid and spare. His movies strengthened the cause of the liberation from colonial oppression. With a sharp political conscience rooted in knowledge of the history, culture, and reality of Senegal, these works portrayed the tensions generated by economic factors, the social classes, the racial statuses, the religious degeneration, and the gender

conditions in the country. He was an African filmmaker and a political artist who criticised Négritude (the unreflective affirmation of the value of black or African culture, heritage, and identity) because Africa before the arrival of white colonisers was not an idyllic place.

David Murphy points out that a fundamental element for the understanding of Sembène's view of art is his paper 'Man Is Culture' (2000: 29). In this presentation as a Hans Wolff Memorial Lecture at Indiana University-Bloomington, Sembène explained that the concept of art as an adornment is unknown in West Africa. Humanity is art. Humanity is culture. That is, culture (of which art is a part) cannot be abstracted from the historical roots and human conscience that are at its origin and are produced by it.

Sembène was born in Ziguinchor, Casamance to a Lebou family, and he initially followed the path of his father and became a fisherman. Working in plumbing and masonry gave him an inside perspective of the problems and challenges of the working class. His maternal grandmother reared him and greatly influenced him; she is arguably the reason why women play a major role in his works. Wolof was his mother tongue. He learned basic Arabic at a madrasa and French at a French school until he clashed with the principal in 1936. During the Second World War, Sembène was drafted into the Senegalese Tirailleurs, a corps of colonial infantry in the French army. Later he served with the Free French Forces, the resistance organisation founded by Charles de Gaulle in 1940 in London to continue the campaign against the Nazis and their allies. After the war, he returned to his home country. In 1947, he participated in a long railroad strike. *God's Bits of Wood* (1995/1960) is inspired by this courageous strike of the Dakar–Niger railroad workers, from October 1947 to March 1948. It is a portrait of post-Second World War French West Africa, set in today's Senegal and Mali (French Sudan), in the moment that the African working class became organised. It has no protagonist, much less a hero, except for a community of nearly 50 characters who band together in the face of hardship and oppression to defend their rights.

Late in 1947, he went again to France, where he worked at a Citroën factory in Paris, and then on the docks at Marseille, where he started writing. His first novel bears the title *The Black Docker* (1987a/1956), and is about an

African immigrant who faces racism and mistreatment on the same docks. He witnesses the oppression of Arab and Spanish workers, making it clear that their problems have to do with labour despite the fact that they are experienced as racism and xenophobia. Sembène became active in the French trade union movement and joined the General Confederation of Labour and the French Communist Party (PCF), helping to organise a strike to hinder the shipment of weapons for the Indochina War, which he saw as a resistance war against French colonisation. During this time, he discovered two men who became major influences in his work: Claude McKay and Jacques Roumain. McKay was the author of *Home to Harlem* (1928), which looked among the ordinary people for a distinctive black identity. The Haitian Marxist Roumain had been actively opposed to the US occupation of Haiti between 1915 and 1934, the year when he founded the Haitian Communist Party with other comrades. It is clear that Sembène saw his artistic work and political activism as not merely a personal desire, but as a social necessity (Gadjigo 2010: 115).

He left the PCF in 1960, never leaving the communist ideal and continuing to be a militant through his art, which made use of historical materialism to interpret and intervene in Senegalese society. In his exchange with ethnographic filmmaker Jean Rouch, who had made films about African culture, he contrasted their approaches in a clear manner:

You say seeing. But in the domain of cinema, it is not enough to see, one must analyze. I am interested in what is before and after that which we see. What I do not like about ethnography, I'm sorry to say, is that it is not enough to say that a man we see is walking; we must know where he comes from, where he is going. (Busch and Annas 2008: 4)

In order to discuss an artist, we usually discuss his work and its context. At times, we also consider his life and its connection with his art. Yet in this case we must examine his name as well. Should we write 'Sembène Ousmane' or 'Ousmane Sembène'? This is not a futile question. The first, which was adopted by the artist in his films and books, is written in the style used in official French documents, with 'Sembène', a patronymic surname, first. It bears the mark of history,

therefore calling attention to the persistence of colonialism after the ending of colonisation. The second erases these associations.

Sembène's art gives voice to revolutionary Africa. Despite the individuated characters, the true protagonist of his fictions is the Senegalese people, catapulted by the historical development and the production relations of colonialism to the centre of the contemporary class struggle. His works unmask the new bourgeoisie and critique the persistence of feudalistic structures and cultural obscurantism. For him, the autonomy from colonial powers in Africa was often merely formal. It did not change the economic and social structures in place.

He realised that films could reach a wider African audience that did not have the means or the education to read his writings. In 1962, he went to study at the Soviet Gorky Film Institute in Moscow with a scholarship, where he studied with the Ukrainian filmmaker Mark Donskoy. After returning to Senegal, he directed two short films on 16mm: the documentary *The Sonhrai Empire* (*L'Empire sonhrai*, 1963) and the drama *Cart Driver* (*Borom Sarret*, 1963). *The Sonhrai Empire* (produced by the Republic of Mali) depicts the history of the Islamic Songhai Empire. *Cart Driver* introduces an unidealised style that Sembène would develop later, portraying economic exploitation through the perceptive rendering of a cart driver's everyday in Dakar. His third short film, *Niaye* (1964), based on one of his short stories – 'White Genesis', later included in *The Money-Order and White Genesis* (1966) – is the tale of a pregnant young girl who faces the judgment of her community, which tries to prevent the scandal from reaching the French colonial administration. *Black Girl* (*La noire de ...*, 1966) was his first feature and it adapts one of the short stories that can be found in *Tribal Scars* (1981/1974). It won the Prix Jean Vigo in France, because it was a French-language film, calling attention to African cinema and Sembène. The film's main character, Diouanna, is a Senegalese maid who is taken to the south coast of France by her French employers. It is only in this exiled condition that she realises what being colonised and African means; the same process that Sembène had gone through. The success of this film gave him an opportunity to make *The Money-Order* (*Mandabi*, 1968) in his native dialect Wolof. Once again, the film was based on one of his short stories,

'The Money-Order' (1987b/1966), about a village man, used to ordering around his wives, who receives a money-order from his nephew in Paris and helplessly attempts to cash it. Sembène exposes the vanity and cold ambitions of the petite bourgeoisie. It is not just the language that is important, but the power and history of oral communication in its public and private dimensions (Niang 1996: 67–68). In the late 1960s, the filmmaker developed two small projects for public television, *Employment Problem* (*Les Dérives du chômage*, 1969) and *Polygamy* (*Traumatisme de la femme face à la polygamie*, 1969), both focusing on social and cultural problems, which have roots in human exploitation.

*The Money-Order* had marked the adoption of a critical stance towards the corrupt African elites that followed the racial and economic oppression of the colonial government. *Xala*, as a novel (1974) and a film (1975), would prolong this analysis of the social and moral collapse of post-independence Africa, followed by the books *Niiwam and Taaw: Two Novellas* (1992/1974) and *The Last of the Empire: A Senegalese Novel* (1983/1981). It is the story of El Hadji, a rich businessman struck by what he believes to be a curse of impotence, *xala* in Wolof, on the night of the wedding to his beautiful, young third wife. Only after losing most of his money and reputation does he discover the source of the problem to be the beggar who lives outside his offices, whom he had wronged to acquire his fortune. The story satirises modern African bourgeoisie, exposing the corruption at the heart of post-independence governments, as if white colonialists had merely been replaced by a black elite who promote capitalism and imperialism. The man's erectile dysfunction is an image of this failure, the postponing of African emancipation. The short film *Taaw* (1970) is about an unemployed young man in modern Senegal. Although accused of being lazy, he is able to help his pregnant girlfriend who has been abandoned by her family. *God of Thunder* (*Emitaï*, 1971) is a film in the Diola language and French portraying the confrontation between French Gaullist colonists and the Diola people of Senegal in the last days of the Second World War. The women are at the forefront of the resistance and the film conveys their social power as keepers, preservers, and enhancers of myths, rituals, and stories. It was banned throughout French West Africa, and was showed at the 7th

Moscow International Film Festival, where it won a Silver Prize. Sembène's films were always welcomed at this Soviet festival, which awarded him an honorary prize for his contribution to cinema in 1979. *African Basketball at the Munich Olympic Games (Basket africain aux Jeux olympiques de Munich, 1972)* was shot during the 1972 Summer Olympics that took place in the Federal Republic of Germany, but it was never commercially released due to the Munich massacre in which six Israeli coaches, five Israeli athletes, one German police officer, and five members of the Black September group died.

West African spirituality and religion are crucial topics in Sembène's work. As a child, he came into contact with the Serer religion, whose followers believe in a Creative Divine Spirit called *Roog*. Sembène often helped in the rituals of offerings to ancient saints and ancestral spirits that the Serer people call *Pangool*. Then he was attracted to the Layene brotherhood, a small Senegalese Muslim community in Senegal. Some of his artworks draw parallels with Serer themes, even if he opposed religion on the grounds that it mainly had been a social force, superstructurally connected with economic relations of domination and exploitation. His films stated and restated that it is the people who make their history, not the gods. *Outsiders (Ceddo, 1976)* is his most relevant film on the subject, laying bare the onslaught of Islam, Christianity, and the Atlantic and Arab slave trades in African history. It shows that the representation of history has been changed by the elimination of older beliefs, but also that the new religions integrated elements from the local culture. This is the reason why the film jumps from the conflict in the 17th century to the present to make connections. This was a narrative structure and editing pattern already employed in his first feature film, *Black Girl*. It was heavily censored in Senegal, apparently because of a problem with the required paperwork, but more probably because of its perspective on religion; in particular, its depiction of the killing of an imam by a tribal princess who resists forceful conversion to Islam. Sembène was able to release an uncut version for international distribution.

*The Camp at Thiaroye (Camp de Thiaroye, 1988)* was the only film that he made in the 1980s and it is a vigorous indictment of European imperialism in West Africa. The film focuses on an event that was a turning point in the fight for

Senegalese independence: the Thiaroye massacre. In 1944, West African soldiers who had fought against Fascism in Europe were waiting for better living conditions and severance pay in a transit camp in Senegal. In the film, the French officer in charge is at first diplomatic, but then tries to cheat them, which provokes a mass revolt. The French response is to open fire on them, killing 35 soldiers. The movie won the Special Jury Prize at the 45th Venice International Film Festival.

*Guelwaar (1992)* initiated a trilogy on daily bravery that goes unnoticed, which continued with *Faat Kiné (1999)* and *Moolaadé (2004)*. *Guelwaar* opened the 13th Pan-African Film Festival in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, which honoured Sembène as a father of African cinema. It was based on the events around the interment of Henri Thioune, a Christian Catholic who was a popular member of the anti-establishment resistance and whose body was mistakenly buried in a Muslim cemetery. This allows the filmmaker to analyse religious conflict as something that masks real economic and social problems. *Faat Kiné* dissects post-colonial Senegal, focusing on the day-to-day existence of a single mother of two children, whose name is the film's title, struggling for independence and equality. Her life of opulence and flashy female friends is at odds with the lives of other Senegalese women, but the present power and commodity relations inherited from the past shape both groups. *Moolaadé* won the Prix Un Certain Regard at the Cannes Film Festival, a prize that rewards cinematic originality and distinctiveness. Set in a small village in Burkina Faso, it denounces female genital mutilation. The last image of *Faat Kiné's* shows her feet curling in pleasure. The woman who protects young girls from genital cutting in *Moolaadé* is asserting the right to such pleasure.

All of Sembène's films were made under severe technical and financial constraints. Distribution was a challenge throughout his career, especially since he insisted, from *Mandabi* on, that his films be spoken in Wolof. He wanted the movies to be true to their subject matter and to their primary audience members, making them aware of their history (Busch and Annas 2008: 217) and situation (109). In other words, his cinema was a critical and popular narrative art, an activist art that was not simply made for the people, but came from them, out of their striving to

be unshackled. Sembène's convictions were clearly embodied in his films and articulated in his public discourse:

Culture is political, but it's another type of politics. You're not in art to be chosen. You're not involved in its politics to say 'I am.' In art, you are political, but you say, 'We are. We are' and not 'I am'. (cited in Busch and Annas 2008: xx)

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## Senghor, Lamine (1889–1927)

In the mid-1920s, Lamine Senghor (1889–1927), a Senegalese veteran of the First World War, was one of the most celebrated figures in the emerging, global, anti-colonial movement. However, he was also a very sick man: during the war, his battalion of *tirailleurs sénégalais* (colonial infantrymen drawn from across French West Africa) had been gassed near Verdun, and Senghor suffered terrible injuries from which he never fully recovered. In the summer of 1927 his health failed rapidly, and the movement he had launched began to crumble. After his premature death that November, aged just 38, his reputation quickly faded, and the inter-war period later came to be seen as a 'failed' one for the anti-colonial struggle. However, since the 1990s, there has been renewed interest in his career and the movements he led.

In the autumn of 1924, Senghor joined the Union Intercoloniale (UIC), an organisation created by the French Communist Party (PCF) with the aim of providing a forum in which different colonised groups could join together in opposition to empire (Nguyen Ai Quoc, the future Ho Chi Minh, was one of the most active members of the group in the early 1920s). The UIC was perceived as a threat to colonial interests, for the Communist International (Comintern) of 1920 had adopted a resolutely anti-imperial stance. In practice, this led to little concrete anti-colonial activity but, in 1924, the Comintern called on communists to seek alliances with anti-colonial nationalist movements. This united anti-colonial front would only last a few years but it is in this context that we must situate Senghor's activism.

Senghor quickly became a mainstay of UIC activities and a regular contributor to its firebrand newspaper *The Pariah*. In 1924–25, the PCF carried out its most sustained anti-colonial campaign when it organised opposition to the war in the Rif Mountains of Morocco. Senghor threw himself into the campaign, speaking at countless rallies, and developing his extraordinary skills as an orator. He adopted the 'official' Comintern line and promoted an alliance between all those engaged in anti-colonial struggle. Whereas Jacques Doriot 'translated' the actions of the Rif rebels into a proto-communism, Senghor

regarded the sense of despair and oppression felt by the Islamic world as sufficient motivation for revolt: the Rif war was not the result of a Samuel Huntington-style clash of civilisations but rather the understandable resistance of a colonised people to external domination.

After loyally serving the PCF/UIC throughout the Rif campaign, Senghor gradually came to resent the limited space devoted by the communist movement to black questions in general, as well as to his own marginalised status in particular. He decided that in order to promote the interests of black people, it was necessary to create independent black organisations, and in March 1926 he launched the Committee for the Defence of the Negro Race (CDRN), a less revolutionary, more reformist-minded group (initially at least). He immediately embarked on a tour of France's port cities in order to try and convince the small, largely working-class, black community to join the CDRN: his skills as a public speaker served him well and by the summer it was estimated by the secret police of the Ministry of the Colonies that he had recruited over 500 members (in a black population numbered at less than 20,000).

The most original aspect of the CDRN was its critical reflection on the language of race and its exploration of the modes of self-definition available to black people. In his article 'The Negroes have Awoken' (published in *The Pariah* in April 1926), Senghor articulates a black identity that is based not on shared racial characteristics but on a shared sense of oppression. To call for 'the awakening of the negro' was immediately to evoke a set of ideas and a vocabulary that had been rendered popular by Marcus Garvey in the early 1920s. In the course of his seemingly inexorable rise as a major leader of black America, Garvey had consistently called for the black world to wake from its long sleep, and his appeals for black people to take pride in themselves had resonated around the world (even though his influence in French contexts has generally been underplayed). The most striking aspect of this influence was the CDRN's use of the term 'nègre' [negro] as a badge of self-identification, just as Garvey proudly proclaimed himself a 'negro'. In an era when the term 'noir' [black] was widely gaining prominence as a more dignified replacement for 'nègre', seen as derogatory and demeaning, Senghor

and the CDRN deliberately chose 'nègre' as the term that encompassed all black people. In CDRN discourse, the 'nègre' is an individual who has been downtrodden and oppressed through slavery, colonialism, segregation: the terms 'noir' and 'homme de couleur' [coloured] are seen merely as escape routes for educated blacks seeking a minor role in a dominant white society. The first step towards liberation is to embrace one's identity as a 'nègre': for that allows one to perceive the true nature of Western oppression of the black world.

Even as the first issue of *The Voice of the Negroes* proudly and insistently proclaimed the unity of 'les nègres' (negroes), the CDRN was in fact in the middle of a protracted schism. Much of the rancour centred on Senghor's ongoing clandestine links to the PCF; this would soon lead to the break-up of the organisation, with Senghor and his fellow radicals deserting en masse to create the *League for the Defence of the Negro Race*. In the midst of the CDRN in-fighting, he enjoyed one final moment of glory, when he was invited to speak at the inaugural meeting of the League against Imperialism (LAI) in Brussels in February 1927: the LAI was largely a communist initiative, but in its initial phase it sought to unite all anti-colonial forces. In Brussels, Senghor shared a platform with prominent nationalist leaders from India (Jawaharlal Nehru), Indonesia (Mohammed Hatta), and other parts of the colonised world, and his speech was widely greeted as one of the highlights of the Congress: it was almost immediately translated into English and published in the US. He launched a vehement attack on imperialism as a renewed form of slavery, denounced violence against the colonised, forced labour, as well as the iniquity and double standards of the pensions paid to colonial veterans of the First World War. In the final stages of the Congress, the LAI placed Senghor at the head of the working party asked to draft the 'Resolution on the negro question'. Little more than two years after his first public appearance, he had carved out a position as a radical spokesman not only for black people in France but also internationally.

The final act in Senghor's career was the publication of *La Violation d'un pays* [The rape/violation of a land] in June 1927. This slim volume relates, in polemical fashion, the bloody history of slavery and

colonialism. It is a deeply hybrid text that mixes the form of the fable with a highly didactic approach, utilising the political language of revolutionary communism: the text is also accompanied by five simple line drawings that reinforce the political message. In many ways, *La Violation d'un pays* might be seen as a founding text in a tradition of hybrid pamphlets-essays that would later become a dominant form for black anti-colonial thought in French (from Aimé Césaire to Frantz Fanon to Achille Mbembe). It concludes with the overthrow of the colonial regime by a world revolution that liberates not only the colonies but also the metropolitan centre from the yoke of capitalist imperialism. This resolution is obviously unrealistic in the context of the 1920s, but it acts, within the context of Senghor's story, as a form of ideological wish fulfilment. For the first time under the French imperial nation state, an author sought to give narrative form to the independence of the colonised world. Within a month of the volume's publication, however, his health faltered, and he passed away just a few months later.

At the heart of Senghor's writings and his activism is an attempt to reconcile the claims of race and class (Was the exploitation of the 'black world' the result of racial or economic exploitation or both?), questions that would be central to the careers of later black writers/militants from Richard Wright to George Padmore to Aimé Césaire. Unlike them, Senghor was not forced to make a choice between pan-Africanism and communism, but he appeared to believe that these ideologies could complement each other in the quest for black liberation. On the evidence of his activism and his writings, Senghor might thus be situated within a lineage of left-leaning pan-Africanists (from his compatriot Ousmane Sembene to C.L.R. James and Frantz Fanon) for whom both pan-Africanism and Marxism remained throughout their lives crucial to constructing a transnational politics as well as transnational forms of identification.

David Murphy

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## Senghor, Leopold Sédar (1906–2001)

Léopold Sédar Senghor was born on 9 October 1906, to a family of wealthy tradesmen, in Joal, Senegal. Like most Senegalese children, his education was a colonial one, overseen by missionary priests. After spending his early years at Father Léon Du Bois's Catholic mission school, which he entered in 1913, and the Fathers of the Holy Spirit school in Ngazobil, he went on to attend the Collège Libermann in Dakar. In 1928, he was to win a scholarship to the prestigious Lycée Louis-le-Grand in Paris, after which he continued his studies at the Sorbonne. At Louis-le-Grand, he befriended the future French president Georges Pompidou (1911–74), and, more importantly, the Martiniquan student Aimé Césaire (1913–2008), with whom, together with his Guyanese friend Léon-Gontran Damas (1912–78), he was to found the Négritude movement, influenced by contemporary civil rights movements in the US. The 1931 colonial exhibition in Paris, designed to celebrate France's 'civilising' mission and colonial power, represented an opportunity for the young movement to question this ideology and its explicit erasure of colonised peoples' cultures.

### Négritude and its critics

In 1932, together with Césaire and Damas, Senghor outlined the concept of Négritude, defining this cultural and political movement as 'the combination of all the cultural values of the black world' (Senghor 1964: 9). According to Césaire, even though the political struggle for black peoples' independence

and development was to continue, the cultural battle would be over once Négritude was recognised and valued as equal to French culture, for Négritude was a ‘realisation of difference as memory, fidelity and solidarity’ (Césaire 2004: 83). With Senghor, Césaire was a member of the editorial board of the short-lived journal *L’Étudiant noir* (1934), dedicated to expounding the movement’s theses and violently condemning colonialism.

In 1936, Senghor’s interest in the humanist theories of socialism motivated him to join the Section Française de l’Internationale Ouvrière (SFIO). His commitment to acknowledging the value of African cultures is powerfully expressed in a 1937 lecture on ‘The Cultural Problem in French West Africa’, which is included in *Liberté I. Négritude et Humanisme* and is summed up by the following:

Intellectuals have a mission to restore black values in all their truth and excellence, to awaken within their people the taste for bread and games of the mind, which makes us human. Especially through the arts. There is no civilisation without a literature to express and illustrate its values, as a jeweller hones and polishes the jewels for a crown. (Senghor 1964: 19; this and subsequent translations by the author)

Senghor broadened and developed his definition of Négritude in *Liberté V. Le Dialogue des cultures*: ‘Négritude was, traditionally, for scholars and ethnologists, what Maurice Delafosse called the “black soul”, and Leo Frobenius “African civilisation”, or, to borrow from his own vocabulary, “Ethiopian civilisation”’ (Senghor 1993: 17). He was later to expand this definition by evoking a ‘negro being’ endowed with a specific *Weltanschauung*. Many African writers and intellectuals of African origin criticised these aspects of the definition, which they saw as being rooted in the ethnological myths used to validate the colonial system.

Among the intellectuals reluctant to embrace Négritude were many West Indian writers, such as Frantz Fanon (1925–61), who, in his *Wretched of the Earth* (1961), warned that the movement was heading for a dead-end and chose to fight instead for political independence. African authors – for example, the Cameroonian Marcien Towa (1931–) and the Beninese Stanislas Adotevi (1934–) – harshly criticised the movement in works such as

*Négritude ou Servitude* (1971) and *Négritude et Négrologues* (1972). Anglophone writers and intellectuals from Ghana and Nigeria were also to voice their disapproval, as with the famous phrase from Nigerian Nobel Prize winner Wole Soyinka (1934–), at the 1964 Berlin Conference on African Arts: ‘A tiger does not proclaim his tigritude, he pounces’ (Jahn, 1968: 266).

As far as post-colonial writers are concerned, they seem to favour Césaire, who inscribes the concept in a more global dimension, seeing it as ‘one of the historical forms of the human condition’ (Mbembe 2013: 230). Even today, many critics blame Senghor for the essentialist tendency that continues to lend a mythical quality to the French vision of Africa. Thus, the speech made by the former French president Nicolas Sarkozy (1955–) in Dakar on 26 July 2007, considered by many to be a milestone in the African continent’s recent history, contained numerous *faux-pas* which some argue are a direct legacy of Senghor’s Négritude. The Cameroonian intellectual Achille Mbembe (1957–) reacts strongly against this speech written by Sarkozy’s adviser Henri Guaino, who evokes ‘the main sources of Senghor’s thought mobilised by Henri Guaino in the hope that he will give the presidential words a native stamp. Isn’t he aware of the inestimable debt that the Senegalese poet, in his formulation of the concept of Négritude or of the notions of culture, civilisation, even *métissage*, owes to the most racist, essentialist and biologising theories of his time?’ (Mbembe 2007). Mbembe’s reaction shows just how vigorously the idea of Négritude is still criticised, as it has been since Francophone African countries became independent. This is not to say, however, that Senghor did not attempt to inscribe his movement in a pragmatic setting, underlining its cultural and political implications in *Liberté V*:

It is a project insofar as we wish to anchor ourselves to traditional ideas of Négritude so that we may play our part in the Civilisation of the Universal. It is an action insofar as we take concrete action to carry out our project in all fields, particularly the fields of literature and the arts. (Senghor 1993: 17).

Senghor’s humanist vision aims at the collaborative coexistence of the world’s civilisations



as a means of achieving what the poet calls ‘cultural symbioses’. It was from this perspective that he was, after the Second World War, to write *La Communauté impériale française*, in which he condemns colonisation and its rejection of foreign cultures, while putting forward the idea of a great community in which people, motivated by a shared ideal, would strive for a mutual development that would respect their differences and safeguard cultural equality.

Senghor’s poetry is also oriented toward the universal, evoking the realm of childhood. He started publishing collections of poetry in 1945 with *Chants d’ombre*, followed by *Hosties noires* (1948), *Ethiopiennes* (1956), *Nocturnes* (1961), *Lettres d’hivernage* (1972) and *Élégies majeures* (1979). In a text entitled ‘Ce que l’homme noir apporte’, Senghor was to coin his now-famous phrase: ‘Emotion is Negro, as reason is Hellenic’ (Senghor 1964: 24). Facing criticism in Senegal and Africa, he attempted to clarify it in his subsequent writing. In his article ‘Senghor: Raison Hellène, Emotion Nègre’, Jean Bernabé tries to ‘mitigate the misunderstanding’ surrounding Senghor’s phrase. According to him, ‘[r]ecalling the “Greek miracle”, the Négritude poet aims, symmetrically, through words, to define the essential part that Africa has played in the development of humanity. He therefore suggests, through his much-maligned phrase, the possibility of a form of “African miracle”’ (Bernabé 2011: 123). Despite his adversaries’ attacks, the president-poet continued to fight for the rehabilitation of the black world’s cultural values. Hence, in collaboration with the journal *Présence Africaine*, he organised the first World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar in April 1966, to which dignitaries from across the globe were invited. France was represented by André Malraux (1901–76), minister of culture under General Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970). In strong contrast to Sarkozy some 40 years later, Malraux’s speech referred to Africa’s contribution to world heritage through its dance, music, symbolic sculptures, and ‘furiously emotional’ poetry (Malraux 1966). For Senghor, this key event in African cultural history held the promise of a new humanism, whose lessons were to be drawn from African art – an art whose sheer imagination and symbolism exceeds the measure of man. Senghor’s aim was to promote the black man’s contribution to humanity

through his very being-in-the-world (*être-au-monde*), as it is illustrated in his philosophy and works of art. By mastering the symbolic, the Senegalese poet believed, the Negro aesthetic embodied an egalitarian vision, in which culture is made by all and for all. The festival’s objective was also to allow Africa’s voice to be heard, thus contributing to the construction of the Civilisation of the Universal, so close to Senghor’s heart. For him, as for Césaire, ‘the universal exists only insofar as it is a community of singularities and differences, a sharing which is at the same time a pooling and a separation’, as Mbembe puts it (Mbembe 2013: 228).

### Politics: successes, controversies, and pluralism

Returning to Senegal in 1945, Senghor was encouraged to enter politics by Lamine Guèye (1891–1968), then mayor of Dakar. The political side of his humanist vision was to come to the fore when he was elected to the French National Assembly in 1945 as the representative of Senegal-Mauritania. He left the SFIO, convinced that it no longer represented the interests of African people, and in 1948, joined forces with Mamadou Dia (1910–2009) to create his own political party, the Bloc Démocratique Sénégalais (BDS). He went on to be elected mayor of Thiès in 1956, president of the Federal Assembly of Mali (which included today’s Mali and Senegal) in 1959, and finally president of the Senegalese Republic in 1960, following the dissolution of the Federation of Mali.

The dismantling of the latter led Senghor and Dia to establish a dyarchical system (a political regime where power is held jointly by two persons or two groups), which was to cause a serious crisis among the Senegalese leadership. The conviviality and friendship that the two men shared was to be seriously compromised in the wake of political differences and Senghor’s desire to see the political system evolve into a presidential regime. Accused by Senghor of preparing a coup against him, Dia and several of his ministers were arrested; the High Court of Justice arbitrarily sentenced him to be deported and jailed for life in a fortress prison. This political injustice left its mark on the Senegalese national consciousness, which increasingly saw Dia as a pillar of its developing statehood and the heir to Senegal’s democratic legacy. Even though a proportion of the

Senegalese population remains unaware of Dia's activism to this day, the sacrificial dimension of his fight for his country's greater good has contributed greatly to his progressive rehabilitation as a national figure.

After organising a vote for a new constitution in March 1963, Senghor exercised power alone. His party's victory at the general election was contested by opposition parties and the degradation of the terms of trade weakened the country significantly, making it difficult to overcome the economic challenges it faced. Senghor tried to unite all of the political factions in order to face the situation. Thus, in 1966, Senghor and Dia's party, the Union Progressiste Sénégalaise (UPS) embraced all of the existing political organisations. But differences of opinion were to divide the coalition and, against a backdrop of increasing violence, a coup was organised against Senghor, from which he escaped unharmed. The political upheaval in Senegal was, partially only, a knock-on effect of the events of May 1968 in France. Senegalese politician and professor Abdoulaye Bathily (1947– ) experienced the social upheaval of May 1968 first hand in his country, dedicated his *Mai 68 à Dakar* (1992) to showing how events in Dakar antedated the French upheavals. Indeed, since 1966, a 'creeping May 68' was at work in Senegal, with student protests, agricultural crises, dramatic decreases in purchasing power, and the rallying of workers and economic players. Students seized the opportunity to condemn corruption and accuse the president of being an accomplice to neo-colonialism and the 'lackey' of French imperialism. Senghor responded positively to these protests by creating a new regime which delegated power to the prime minister and moved towards greater democratisation. During the transition, he appointed the young executive Abdou Diouf (1935– ) as prime minister on 26 February 1970, after revising the constitution via a referendum.

In 1970, the UPS held all of the seats in the National Assembly. Student unrest followed Pompidou's visit to Dakar in 1971, which progressively led Senghor to consider opening up the political system in 1973. On 31 July 1974, lawyer Abdoulaye Wade (1926– ) founded the Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS), and, in 1976, reforms designed to usher in a multiparty political system were implemented. They also guaranteed the separation of powers and the freedom of the press. On

31 December 1980, Senghor announced his intention to stand down; a step that he had been planning for the previous ten years. He nominated Diouf as his successor and left for France with his wife to avoid impeding the young president's work, as he put it. His election, in 1983, to the Académie Française elicited renewed criticism from his adversaries in Africa, who once again accused him of Francophilia, but it helped him to achieve global renown, ensuring that he was invited to speak at international universities.

### Cultural and political legacy

The death of his son Philippe-Maguilen Senghor in a car crash in 1981 in Dakar was to haunt him for the rest of his life. He turned increasingly to his writing, perhaps finding in it new forms of resilience. He published *Liberté 4* in 1983, subtitled *Socialisme et planification*. In 1988 his *Ce que je crois* appeared: a defence of Négritude and an optimistic discourse on the Francophone world. In 1993, he published his final book, *Liberté 5. Le dialogue des cultures*.

Senghor passed away on 20 December 2001 in Verson (France), aged 95, after years of ill health. The Senegalese people reacted to news of his death with great emotion, and numerous national and international delegations came to pay their last respects in front of the National Assembly in Dakar, where his body lay in state. A Latin mass was held at Dakar cathedral, in the presence of his wife Colette Hubert and numerous dignitaries from across the world.

Because of the quasi-systematic way in which a number of African countries hijacked power and implemented dictatorships following their independence in 1960, the process of democratic transition initiated by Senghor is still viewed favourably by Senegalese and African people today. His reforms, facilitating democracy through the devolution of power, put Senegal on the path to good governance despite the troubled times experienced under Abdou Diouf's successor President Abdoulaye Wade. The years from 2000–12, marred by nepotism and corruption, were happily brought to a close in an exemplary fashion by a highly educated civil society which has Senghor to thank for its democratic culture. By investing massively in the education sector when he headed the country, Senghor's foremost aim was to produce

citizens who would be able to understand the issues facing their country, Africa, and the world. While Senghor has on occasion been accused of favouring men of letters over engineers and scientists, one cannot overlook the fact that the large numbers of Senegalese intellectuals and executives, and an ever-expanding student body, have laid the foundations for a society capable of expressing concrete demands regarding its national interests.

When assessing Senghor's achievements, we tend to remember his humanism rather than his politics. By claiming his own biological and cultural *métissage*, he was to become the advocate of an Africa rooted in its values but open to the world. It was in this role that he appealed for the creation of political and cultural partnerships between Africa and Europe, which was to spawn an economic community and a Francophone movement, which he defined as '[...] this integral Humanism, which spins its web around the earth: this symbiosis of "sleeping energies" from all continents, all races, awakening to their complementary warmth' (Senghor 1962).

Today, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) comprises 57 member states and is chaired by the former Senegalese president Abdou Diouf in a tacit homage to one of its founding fathers. The organisation's core missions include the promotion of democracy, dialogue between cultures, and the defence of human rights, as well as possible interventions in political crises affecting member states.

The organisation now includes Eastern European and former communist countries, and intercultural dialogue is increasingly becoming a reality. Yet it has also come under fire for being an avatar of French colonialism, at the very least a decoy used by France to encourage its Francophone members to preserve its language, now overshadowed by English. Many Francophone intellectuals and writers have called for it to be replaced by a concept of French-language world literature. A manifesto appeared in the newspaper *Le Monde* on 15 March 2007, followed by the book *Pour une littérature-monde*, edited by Michel Le Bris and Jean Rouaud.

Today, Négritude is often seen as an obsolete, essentialist concept that fails to reflect the world we live in; a world in which black diasporas can be found across the globe. The current consensus that identity is, in fact,

made up of multiple identities invalidates any exclusivist approach to what Patricia Donatien-Yssa calls 'the image of the self' (Donatien-Yssa 2006: 16). In the context of the definition of West Indian identity, in which Césaire and Damas both participated, Francophone West Indian writers thus view Négritude as retrograde. Considering Africa to be just one of their multiple origins and Négritude as one side only of an identity dependent on interrelations, West Indian writers have gone beyond Senghor's concept by identifying additional traces or *tracées* (Chamoiseau and Confiant 1991: 12), leading to the concepts of *Antillanité* and *Créolité*. As a consequence, the concept of Négritude has now been completely absorbed into post-colonial studies and replaced by Édouard Glissant's (1928–2011) philosophy of *Relation* and new approaches to plural, multicultural, and transnational identities.

Nonetheless, Senghor's ideas are today more relevant than one might suppose, in the links he establishes between the actual conditions in which we exist in today's world and his vision of a *presence* of that world, a beauty which 'is not a matter of essence or transcendence, but of the ephemeral plenitude of a series of evolving processes' (Chamoiseau 2013: 45–46). His politics are a *poetical intention*, a true *Relation* that he anticipated throughout his life: dialogues and exchanges without domination, where only cultural enrichment matters, as well as fraternity between whole civilisations, to strive for a better future. Senghor's voice reaffirms the 'inflexible beauty of the world' – in all its diversity. The path he chose is etched with the *tracées* of resistance against all forms of imperialism; the same *tracées* that herald the advent of a richly multifaceted world.

Emmanuel Mbégane Ndour

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## Spivak, Gayatri C. (1942–)

Born on 24 February 1942 to the middle-class family of Pares Chandra and Sivani Chakravorty in Calcutta, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is a self-styled philosopher and literary theorist. As a professor at Columbia University and the founder of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, Spivak became known for her essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' of 1985 and for her translation of and introduction to Jacques Derrida's *De la grammatologie (Of Grammatology)* of 1976. She is widely associated with debates on cultural imperialism and the survival of colonial legacies in non-European domains. Best known as a post-colonial theorist and a

prolific writer advocating the subaltern and other marginalised social groups such as women (Sharp 2008), Spivak describes herself as a 'para-disciplinary ethical philosopher' with a 'reactive' attitude towards various socio-cultural arguments, but her beginnings are unmistakably situated in post-modern analysis, post-structuralism and the deconstructionism of post-war philosophers such as Derrida (Kilburn 1996).

### Personal life and education

Spivak graduated from the Presidency College at the University of Calcutta in 1959 with first-class honours and awards in English and Bengali literature. In an interview with Alfred Arteaga of 1993–94, she stresses the political atmosphere in which she grew up and the ways this fostered a polemics that deconstructed colonial hegemonies from within (Landry and MacLean 1996: 16–18). The term 'deconstructionism' acts as a key word in Spivak's work and has influenced both European and transatlantic academics. It refers to a theoretical movement inspired by Derrida that seeks to question and destabilise the logic of binary or dualistic thinking underpinning Western traditions of thought. Recognising herself as one of the first Indian intellectuals born free by 'chronological accident' (Landry and MacLean 1996: 17), Spivak attained most of her higher qualifications in the US: on borrowed money she completed her master's degree in English at Cornell University, where she also served as the second female member of the Telluride Association, and she undertook a PhD at Iowa under Paul de Man. Her thesis, published under the title *Myself Must I Remake: The Life and Poetry of W.B. Yeats* (1974b), signalled the completion of her 'apprenticeship' in structuralism and post-modern deconstructionism. In 1967 she had already started working on a translation of *Of Grammatology*; during this period she married and divorced the novelist Talbot Spivak, known for *The Bride Wore the Traditional Gold*, an autobiographical novel dealing with the early period of this marriage. Spivak became the first non-white female professor at Columbia University in 2007, and in 2012 she was awarded the Kyoto Prize in Arts and Philosophy. She is founder of the Pares Chakravorty Memorial Literacy Project Inc. (1997) – a non-profit organisation dedicated to providing primary education for poor

children – and continues to be active in international charity projects.

### Theoretical milestones and contributions

Spivak became known for her preface to Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, which was hailed for its self-reflexive quality (Spivak 1976) and was a product of several years of work about the politics and poetics of language (Spivak 1974a). Between 1967 and 1985, as a member of the Subaltern Studies Collective, she produced several essays on feminist politics and cultural imperialism. During those years she developed a theoretical orientation focusing on subaltern subjects, especially women, who are caught in the cogs of Western discursive institutions. Her ethics were defined by herself as Marxist, deconstructionist, and practical feminist but her overall work figures today among notable 'cultural imperialism' contributions that debate Western hegemonisations of powerless cultures. Marxists have viewed her as 'too codic', feminists as 'too male-identified', and indigenous theorists as too committed to Western theory, and this puzzle continues to consign her to an outsider's liminality.

'Can the Subaltern Speak?', which debates how racial discourse contributed to the banning of sati, has a distinctive feminist undertone. In Hindi and Sanskrit texts sati appears as a funeral practice among some Indian communities, dictating that a recently widowed woman ought to immolate herself on her husband's funeral pyre. Spivak (1988) debates the practice as a form of gendered regulation in pre-colonial India, to which British colonial rule and the colonial banning of sati were superimposed as a 'civilising process'. Subsequently, she argues, Indian women experienced a form of twin imprisonment that 'muted' them both in the native community and in the eyes of foreign rulers, and which fostered social rejection, mental illness, and even suicide. Through archival research and theoretical analysis Spivak promoted an extensive deconstruction of Western scholarly representations in the works of Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Giles Deleuze that renewed the plane of feminist critical scholarship: the 'subaltern', she claimed, is not silenced only by bureaucratic institutions but also in Western scholarship.

Although Spivak's writings have been presented as fragmented or incoherent, the epistemological themes she introduced in this essay run through her work with great consistency. In *Outside the Teaching Machine* (1993) Spivak questions the ways in which power is structured through a collection of works of literature such as Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, Karl Marx's writings, and the work of 20th-century thinkers such as Derrida. In doing so she provides a voice for those who cannot speak, proving that the true work of resistance takes place in the cultural margins. In *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (1999) Spivak also provides an analysis of Western (European) metaphysics to suggest that notable philosophical contributions deny non-European subjects their humanity. She argues that the figure of the 'native informant' emerges through various cultural practices and domains (philosophy, history, literature) as a metropolitan hybrid. The text addresses feminists, philosophers, critics, and interventionist intellectuals through the ways in which the notion of the 'Third World interloper' as the victim of a colonial oppressor is sharply suspect. In this book she introduced the term 'strategic essentialism', which also appears in anthropological literature – though Spivak does little to acknowledge this. Reminiscent of the thought of Leon Trotsky (1879–1940), strategic essentialism allows the subaltern to act under structural constrictions by temporarily aligning with hegemonic representations. However, strategic essentialism also debates how subordinate or marginalised social or ethnic groups may put aside 'local' differences in order to forge a sense of a collective identity, usually for political means (for example, uses of the term 'Black British' in the 1980s and 1990s by immigrant groups, and those groups' accompanying rituals and sub-cultural performances are a form of strategic essentialism). The concept resonates with post-colonial theorists such as Homi Bhabha (1994), who pioneered 'colonial mimicry' as the subaltern's twin strategy of colonial parody and emulation. Both Bhabha and Spivak coincide with the Foucaultian argument of the post-colonial critic Edward Said (1935–2003) on the insidious nature that colonial power relationships can attain. More a *topos* or abstracted and homogenised space than a place for the Europeans, the 'Orient' served as a *tabula rasa* for conceptualisations

of non-European otherness that were placed in the service of Western colonial bureaucrats and artistic apparatuses alike, allowing Western European hegemony to produce and subject natives as irrational, 'backward', and subaltern beings (Said 1978).

The turn of the century found Spivak addressing issues pertaining to the globalisation of culture, language, and literary traditions with renewed emphasis on global cultural flows. *Death of a Discipline* (2003) declares the death of comparative literature as we know it and sounds an urgent call for a 'new comparative literature' that is not appropriated and determined by the market. Spivak asks how in this new era we should protect the multiplicity of languages and literatures at the university. Closer to debates on cultural imperialism, *Other Asias* (2005) prompts readers to rethink Asia, in its political and cultural complexity, by focusing on the Global South and the metropolitan centres – broadly speaking a theoretical convergence between Spivak and the British cultural theorist Raymond Williams (1974). Between 2005 and 2010 Spivak's theoretical interventions were mostly confined to short essays and interviews, in which she further elaborated on subalternity. An exception is a collection of her reflections on distributions of socio-cultural action between 'public' and 'private' spheres, which was published as a book. In *Nationalism and the Imagination* (2010) she discerned a collusion of nationalism with the private sphere of the imagination in order to command the public sphere. The argument resonates with Partha Chatterjee's work on Indian nationalism (1986, 1993), which Spivak debates in *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* (2012), but also prominently with the Harvard anthropologist Michael Herzfeld's thesis in *Cultural Intimacy* (2005, first published 1997). In *An Aesthetic Education* she declares the old polarities of tradition and modernity or colonialism and post-colonialism insufficient for interpreting the globalised present, proposing aesthetic education as the last available instrument for implementing global justice and democracy. Her argument focuses on the role of 'linguistic imperialism' in the production of the new 'corporate university' education and the power of literary theory to cancel such developments.

Spivak's work is dedicated to the articulation of an ethical discourse that borrows from different theoretical traditions. Both

her personal activism and her critical theoretical contributions work towards what she has termed 'ethical singularity', our willingness to engage with the Other in non-essentialist terms. This reciprocal flow of responsibility and 'accountability' ('How to Teach a "Culturally Different" Book', in Landry and MacLean 1996: 256) matches Mikhail Bakhtin's conception of 'answerability' in which 'I-for-myself' exists in public only as an 'I-for-others' (Bakhtin 1990: 32). It was in fact on the basis of this ethical commitment that Spivak gained the badge of 'pretentious eclecticism': certain theorists suggested that her representations of the Other and 'working out one's subject position' became for her 'more important than the activist struggle of universal socialism' (Wallace 1999). The following section revisits this controversy alongside the scholarly network in which one can evaluate Spivak's work as an interdisciplinary contribution to social and theory.

### Scholarly connections and critical evaluations

Subalternity is a theme that occupied space in post-colonial and other adjacent anthropological debates extensively. Spivak's introduction of the 'subaltern' as the subject that cannot achieve successful dialogical utterance is mirrored in the works of the sociologist Bonaventura de Sousa Santos (2002), who uses the term more loosely to denote the oppressed groups living at the social margins and struggling against hegemonic globalisation. Spivak herself has stressed that the concept of the subaltern should not be used indiscriminately to describe any marginalised group, a practice often adopted by such groups. Hence, for her the working class does not necessarily become subaltern when it is oppressed. Others claim that in post-colonial terms, 'everything that has ... no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern – a space of difference' (de Kock 1992: 45). It is worth stressing that her examination of the effects of subalternity is not very dissimilar from the argument developed by Paul Gilroy (1987), who claims that cultural difference emerges as resistance to hegemonic modes of representation. Working from post-Hegelian and Marxist theory, Gilroy examines cultural difference in the context of dialogical role-making, of fostering an intersubjective engagement

of black performance and other-observation. For Gilroy, black culture's own voice offers an alternative to dominant cultural practices. Because the voice of difference comes from within the black community it generates the predicament of collective self-narration: others are an inescapable condition of collective self-recognition, and they cannot be ignored, as public (self-) presentation needs an audience to be meaningful (Tzanelli 2008: 11–12).

Studies from the European margins attest to 'crypto-colonial' overlaps of social (working-class) and cultural (subaltern) identities. The term 'crypto-colonialism' was coined by the Harvard anthropologist Michael Herzfeld in his mid-career essay 'The Absent Presence: Discourses of Crypto-Colonialism' (2002). Like Santos (1999; see Barreira 2011: 154), Herzfeld debates the ability of institutional frameworks to erase or amplify disenfranchised voices that escape through the cracks of officialdom into global spheres. While preserving a distinctive Derridian sentiment in his argument, Herzfeld focuses, however, on countries such as Greece and Thailand, which, though never colonised by the West, were steeped in colonial ideas that enforced an inferiority complex in both domestic cultural practices and international political discourse. Although Santos and Herzfeld do not figure as Spivak's interlocutors, they share with her a distinctive cosmological sentiment (e.g. protection of the disenfranchised in post-colonial domains) and the potential for her work to be connected to a feminist poetics.

Spivak was (inaccurately) criticised by Dipesh Chakrabarty, Professor of History and South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, for being 'inauthentic' because she engages with Western thinkers and publishes in English (Wallace 1999: 2). Ironically, Spivak and Chakrabarty share views on the harmful effects of European colonialism in the production of ideal forms of 'human'. As a historian, Chakrabarty (2000) has recourse to precisely those essentialisations of subjectivity that condition theoretical lapses to identity-production – a move he also appears to perform in his criticism of Spivak. The suspicion that such criticisms pertain to a para-nationalist feeling of betrayal (of one's native language and culture) by one of the few famous female Indian scholars may be closer to the truth. A similar rift emerged when Terry Eagleton, then Professor of English Literature at the

University of Oxford, attacked Spivak for her radicalism, which 'tends to grow unpleasantly narcissistic' and 'guilt-ridden' while simultaneously being 'deprived of a political outlet' (Eagleton 1999). Rejecting her theories as 'opaque' and 'a kind of intellectual version of Attention Deficit Disorder', Eagleton set himself against Spivak's supporters from post-colonial and feminist studies alike.

Judith Butler (1999), then professor at the University of California, Berkeley, stressed Spivak's contribution to 'Third-World' feminism, casting Eagleton's 'polemics' as a specimen of covert sexism. Although the 'Third-World' concept emerged as a category of representation in the post-Second World War and Cold War contexts to embrace women from developing countries (usually black and oppressed by local patriarchy), feminist activism in them assumed a life of its own as a counter-polemic to 'First-World' hegemonic representations of subalternity: these women have a voice that has to be heard and understood separately from what 'First-World' activism has to say about them. Spivak and Butler share in theoretical analysis: Butler uses the term 'performativity' (1990, 1993) to analyse the ways in which subjects are both subjected to discursive manifestations of power and 'emerging'. Just as Spivak considers strategic essentialism to be a double-edged sword, Butler does not consider the creation of the human subjects outside the confines of power. Significantly, in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* Spivak recognises that even feminist activists have to temporarily adopt an essentialist position in order to act, especially in the face of a fragmented feminist agenda. Though coming closer to the distinction of 'strategy' from 'tactics' made by Michel Certeau (1984, 1985), Spivak's strategic essentialism does not neglect 'feelings of doing' and individual ontological knowledge tied to bodily practices, as her conception of the subaltern (1988) shows. Nevertheless, the unresolved tension in her work between epistemologies of otherness (this she consigns to 'the domain of law' :Spivak 2003: 83) and the 'eruption of the ethical' as an epistemological interruption (ibid.) continue to invite criticism as much as they bring her closer to established conceptions of cosmopolitanism as a project of world solidarity. Her declaration that one has to unlearn one's privilege does not match her philosophical resolution to respect one's difference intact – a post-war

philosophical position that we encounter in Emmanuel Levinas (1969) – and clashes with her support of strategic essentialism that is rooted in practical ethics. This dissonance is yet to be resolved in her work.

Spivak's work has gained in interdisciplinary popularity across fields as disparate as those of media and visual studies, tourism, and literary political theory and post-colonialism (Elkins 2013; Moynagh 2008). Her borrowing from diverse European and non-European traditions and their application to the social realities in post-colonial settings invite openness and a fusion of cultural horizons once monopolised by overwhelmingly white male hermeneuticians – a prominent point in Spivak's writings. It is ironic that she has been simultaneously accused of leaps from 'allegory to the Internet' and 'US market philosophy' (Eagleton 1999: 3–4). True to her beliefs, Spivak has highlighted with reference to her philanthropic activism the significance of developing 'rituals of democratic habits' (McMillen 2007) even where democracies appear to be in place. And even though she insists that the human imagination cannot be digitised but is enlarged instead through embodied classroom interactions (*ibid.*), her writings and her activism appear to assume a life of their own on the World Wide Web and the new digital humanities. Examples have been the recent debates on the whiteness of new digital humanities, that is, how the digital divide between developed and developing countries should be assessed by considering how social inequalities thrive on combinations of 'race' and colour.

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## Stalin, Joseph (1878–1953)

### Introduction

Stalin is a polarising figure no doubt, but one who it is essential to discuss in considering the history of imperialism and anti-imperialism. For this reason I was glad to accept the task of writing this essay about him, and hope to have done the subject justice. (Special thanks to Dr Zak Cope, Scott Horne, and Prerna Bakshi for their comments.) In the space I have available, it is impossible to comprehensively study a figure of Stalin's significance. As such, this will not be an essay that discusses in depth his general contribution to Marxism, to socialist politics and history, or his role as the leader of the USSR beyond the anti-imperialist context. Owing to his significance as a world historical leader, much has been written about Stalin along these lines, which can be found elsewhere. (For a friendly reading of Stalin, readers would be well advised to consult Anna Louise Strong, Ian Grey or Ludo Martens. There is no shortage of critical readings of Stalin in Western scholarship.) Instead, this essay includes a short biography of the man with a particular focus on his contribution to anti-imperialism (and by proxy the contribution of the Soviet Union under his leadership).

This essay will begin with a brief introduction and description of Stalin's life. While it would be surprising if readers' first encounter with Stalin were through these pages, I include it nonetheless due to both the biographical nature of this essay and as a way of introducing Stalin the man as well as Stalin the anti-imperialist. Stalin's contribution to anti-imperialism will then be assessed through historical analysis of the role of the Soviet Union in the decolonisation of the Russian Empire as well as support to anti-imperialist movements, and the defeat of imperialism during the Second World War.

### A short biography

Stalin was born Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili on 18 December 1878 in the city of Gori in what was then part of the Russian Empire, but is now part of Georgia. His parents, Georgians, were of humble backgrounds. His father, Besarion Dzhugashvili was a cobbler and his mother, Ketevan Geladze, was a

domestic labourer. Stalin's early upbringing was difficult with the Dzhughashvili household suffering from domestic violence. It would not be until Stalin's mother left her husband that Stalin would find any semblance of stability.

Devoutly religious and with the aim of her son joining the clergy, Stalin's mother arranged for him to be sent to a seminary to train as a priest. This experience, according to Stalin, was one of the first major motivations for him to become a revolutionary activist. In an interview with German author Emil Ludwig, Ludwig suggested that Stalin's revolutionary turn might have been motivated by his difficult upbringing. Stalin suggested otherwise:

No. My parents were uneducated, but they did not treat me badly by any means. But it was a different matter at the Orthodox theological seminary which I was then attending. In protest against the outrageous regime and the Jesuitical methods prevalent at the seminary, I was ready to become, and actually did become, a revolutionary, a believer in Marxism as a really revolutionary teaching. (Stalin 1954: 115)

Stalin joined the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP), part of which would become the Bolshevik Party, in 1903 and worked as an organiser in the Caucasus. During this time he led a strike of oil workers which resulted in the first collective bargaining agreement between the workers and the oil owners (Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute 1949: 14). In addition to organising, Stalin was active in illegal work to raise money for the Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP in defiance of the orders of the party. Stalin was a noted organiser of the 1907 Tiflis Bank Robbery, which was planned and organised with many of his later comrades including Vladimir Lenin and Maxim Litvinov. As a result of his activities, Stalin spent a great deal of time in Siberian exile on no less than seven occasions. Upon his final release, he would go on to play various important roles in the Bolshevik Party and the Russian Revolution, becoming the editor of *Pravda*, a member of the Central Committee, and played a key role in helping Lenin avoid capture.

Following the Russian Revolution, Stalin was appointed people's commissar for nationalities affairs as a result of his theoretical contribution on the relationship between

nationality and Marxism as conceptualised in 'Marxism and the National Question' in 1913. Under Stalin's leadership, the Soviet government introduced a policy of equality between all Soviet citizens, the official recognition of the mother tongues of all the nations of the Soviet Union, and the formation of the soviet of nationality affairs, the Narkomnats. Though he would later be criticised for being an agent of 'Russification', it is notable that Stalin was key in shifting Soviet policy away from opposition to national autonomy during his tenure. Early Soviet nationality and language policies would include the development of written languages (if lacking), attempts at national language planning for minority nationalities, and the development of native language presses and books (Slezkine 1994: 431).

In 1922, Stalin would be appointed general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a position he would hold for life. During the early period of his leadership, and following the death of Lenin, he became embroiled in a series of power struggles centred around which personalities and which political lines would be decisive in the post-Lenin leadership of the Soviet Union. After outmanoeuvring his opponents politically, Stalin would emerge victorious as the undisputed leader of the Soviet Union until his death in 1953. The period of Stalin's leadership of the Soviet Union is the most critical with regard to his contribution to anti-imperialism, and will be assessed in greater detail in the following sections of this essay.

### Stalin's theoretical contributions to anti-imperialism

The following section presents a review of Stalin's key theoretical contributions on the subject of anti-imperialism. The shortest way to summarise Stalin's contribution to Marxist-Leninist theory is that his work addressed a key weakness in Marxist theory, namely the complex relationship between nation and class. Prior to Stalin's work on the national question, and indeed even in Stalin's early work on the subject, Marxist theory had assumed the impossibility of identification between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat of any given nation on questions of culture, language, or territory (Van Ree 1994: 227). This position amounted to an effective denial of the role of nationality, culture, or language in

terms of the political behaviour or aspirations of peoples. This clearly unsustainable position flew in the face of historical experience of multi-class national alliances, and would continue to be disproven throughout the 20th century and the experience of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements.

In *Marxism and the National Question*, Stalin laid out a definition of the nation that was key to establishing the Bolshevik position on national self-determination. In this work, Stalin (1955: 307) defined a nation as ‘a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture’.

Stalin’s theory of the nation was critical to Marxist thinking around anti-imperialism. The core contribution of Stalin’s thinking was to recognise firstly that national oppression impacted the exploited classes more than the exploiters, as can be seen in his statement that:

Restriction of freedom of movement, disfranchisement, repression of language, closing of schools, and other forms of persecution affect the workers no less, if not more, than the bourgeoisie. Such a state of affairs can only serve to retard the free development of the intellectual forces of the proletariat of subject nations. One cannot speak seriously of a full development of the intellectual faculties of the Tatar or Jewish worker if he is not allowed to use his native language at meetings and lectures, and if his schools are closed down. (1955: 316)

Secondly, Stalin noted that at historically contingent moments, national oppression creates a temporary identity of interest between classes that would otherwise be engaged in struggle with one another. Stalin noted that:

... the policy of nationalist persecution is dangerous to the cause of the proletariat also on another account. It diverts the attention of large strata from social questions, questions of the class struggle, to national questions, questions ‘common’ to the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. And this creates a favourable soil for lying propaganda about ‘harmony of interests,’

for glossing over the class interests of the proletariat and for the intellectual enslavement of the workers. (1955: 319)

Implicit in this understanding is that the resolution of questions of national liberation is a necessary precursor to the advancement of socialism and the class interests of the proletariat. In this respect, Stalin departed from most Marxist theory at that time.

In assessing the contribution of Stalin to the Marxist theory of nations, Van Ree summarises Stalin’s contribution like this: ‘Stalin was the Marxist who finally destroyed the traditional Social-Democratic concept, to which even Lenin had stuck, that the victory of socialism implied the quick demise of the nation’ (Van Ree: 1994: 230). In the chapter ‘The National Question and Leninism’, Stalin made the fairly obvious suggestion that various aspects of nationality, such as language and culture, had historical roots prior to capitalism (Stalin 1955: 351). In making this suggestion, Stalin implied that these would continue to be important even under socialism (Van Ree 1994: 226).

The centrality of the national question extended beyond Stalin’s views about life in the Soviet Union and would play a key role in his understanding of imperialism and contribution to anti-imperialism. In ‘The Foundations of Leninism’, Stalin noted that:

the struggle that the Egyptian merchants and bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of Egypt is objectively a revolutionary struggle, despite the bourgeois origin and bourgeois title of the leaders of the Egyptian national movement, despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism; whereas the struggle that the British ‘Labour’ movement is waging to preserve Egypt’s dependent position is for the same reasons a reactionary struggle, despite the proletarian origins and the proletarian title of the members of that government, despite the fact that they are ‘for’ socialism. (Stalin 1924: ch. 6)

In contrast to most Marxist theorists of his day, who were disdainful of the role of the peasantry and other non-proletarian classes in waging struggles for liberation, Stalin placed great faith and saw great strategic significance in the world’s national liberation

movements. While most of Marxism was looking towards the advanced countries of Europe for socialism, Stalin correctly looked to Asia, Africa, and Latin America; and therefore to anti-imperialism as being the centre of gravity for socialist revolution.

### The USSR and anti-imperialism before the Second World War

The role of the USSR under Stalin and its contribution to anti-imperialism prior to the Second World War can be divided into two main parts, namely the contribution to anti-imperialism inside and outside the Soviet Union. As will be demonstrated in this section, these efforts were not unproblematic and achieved mixed results. They were, however, attempts and achievements that were without parallel for their time.

It should be stressed that the history of decolonisation in the 20th century began with the Soviet Union. In accord with Stalin's theories as laid out in *Marxism and the National Question*, the Soviet Union began decolonising the former Russian Empire based on the principle of the right of nations to self-determination up to and including secession. Padmore (1946: 48) notes that the decolonisation process began despite the ongoing Russian civil war in which the interventionist forces of the various imperialist powers were aligning themselves with various social forces in Russia's former colonies (51).

The political system established by the Soviet Union was based on national delimitation into constituent republics on the basis of Stalin's definition of the nation. Writing on this administrative division, Padmore notes that 'this structural form of administration' enabled 'each national and racial minority living within another ethnographic area to maintain its own identity, if it so wishes, and helps to nurture the many distinctive cultures of the several peoples' (67). The structure of the Soviet political system was designed to avoid the dominance of one national delimitation over another, with the soviet of nationalities being represented by an equal number of delegates from each republic (69–70).

Beyond the design of the political system was an active attempt by the central Soviet leadership to develop the political and institutional capacities of the former colonial republics. This strategic policy was known as *Korenisatsiya* (nativisation or indigenisation).

*Korenisatsiya* entailed the 'full recognition of the national languages on par with Russian' (Grenoble 2003: 44) and ensured that the language of local administration and education would be the local language. In addition to this, 'new national elites were trained and promoted to leadership positions in the government, schools, and industrial enterprises of these newly formed territories' (Martin 2001: 1). Stalin's policy intent can be seen in his comment that:

it would be an error if anyone thought that in relation to the development of the national cultures of the backward nationalities, central workers should maintain a policy of neutrality ... Such a view would be incorrect. We stand for protective policy in relation to the development of national cultures of the backward nationalities. I emphasise this so that it will be understood that we are not indifferent, but actively protecting the development of national culture. (Stalin [1929: 9] RTsKhIDNI 558/1/4490, cited in Martin 2001a)

As will be demonstrated, *Korenisatsiya* (and by extension, Stalin's nationalities policy) was contested from its very inception, reflecting forces internal to the Soviet Union that either directly or indirectly supported the Russification of the Union. These will be discussed in the following section, and Stalin's role (whether in favour of anti-imperialism within the Soviet Union or otherwise) will be evaluated. A number of critics, for example Marsden (2002: 106) and Van Ree (1994: 164), identify Stalin as a Great Russian nationalist (or even a chauvinist), determined to assimilate minorities and 'Russify' the Soviet Union, and turn the Soviet republics into dependencies of Russia. These claims will be evaluated in this section.

The starting point for the discussion of Stalin's possible role in the Russification of the Soviet Union can be seen in Lenin's criticism of Stalin, Ordzhonikidze, and Dzerzhinskii as 'great Russian chauvinists' in the political debate that surrounded the framing of the Soviet constitution (Martin 1998: 100). Martin criticises the position taken by Lenin thus:

with regard to the rights of the non-Russians, there was little difference between their rival constitutional proposals. Both plans had the identical three tier

commissariat structure. Lenin's proposal was slightly more favourable to the independent republics and raised them above the autonomous republics in status ... Stalin's plan however was more favourable to the existing autonomous republics, such as Tatarstan and Turkestan who would be given the same status as Georgia and the Ukraine. (101)

In fact, Stalin debated furiously with both Lenin and the Tatar Communist Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev against the creation of a specifically ethnically Russian Soviet in place of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, as he believed that Russians had historically benefited from their position as the imperial nation, and even temporarily benefited from being the 'state-bearing nationality' of the Soviet Union (ibid).

In response to the policy of *Korenisatsiya*, there was a backlash from both the Russian population and Russian figures within the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet state apparatus. These political considerations weighed on the ability of Stalin to pursue the affirmative action policies based on his theory of the national question. This can be seen, for instance, in the comments of the soviet secretary of nationalities, Tadzhev, who suggested that:

Local misunderstandings develop because we observe an opposition to assimilation. One sometimes even observes this among communists. In fact, we should not oppose assimilation. Our nationalities policy is absolutely clear and we can never permit forced assimilation. We won't allow that, but we should by all means welcome natural assimilation, we should welcome natural assimilation which takes place at its own pace. This is good as it leads to the formation of a single nation, a single language. (Martin 1998: 109)

Tadzhev was by no means an isolated political voice as can be seen by the comments of Khatskevich, his successor in the soviet of nationalities, that:

many incorrectly understand the rights of national minorities in their economic and cultural development ... More attention must be given to realizing the right of free choice to use any language according

to the choice of the population itself and each citizen individually ... Each *natsmen* [national minority within the Soviet Union] should have the right to liquidate their illiteracy in their native language, but if they want to liquidate it in Russian, living somewhere in the *kraia* and *oblasti* of the RSFSR, then one must give them that right and possibility. (ibid.)

As noted by Martin (ibid), the liberal positions of both Tadzhev and Khatskevich acted in a way that was oblivious to the historical power structure of the former Russian Empire, which carried over into the modern Soviet Union. A liberal position such as the one they took is simply a softer way of supporting Russian nationalism, remaining neutral while the stronger force decides the power struggle.

Beyond the fact that these positions were allowed to develop under Stalin, it is difficult to point to Stalin as the motive force behind the kind of soft assimilationist policies proposed by elements of the Soviet leadership. The extent to which these pronouncements contradicted Stalin's own position on nationalities and policies up to this period of Soviet history suggests that these forces existed despite and not because of Stalin. They were part of a political landscape within which he had the space to govern, and they can be seen as a reaction to the *Korenisatsiya* framework that suppressed Russia, Russian, and Russians in favour of minority nationalities, their leaders, and their languages. What can be said is that as a result of the balance of forces, the 1930s became a period of compromise between Russian nationalism and minority nationalisms in the Soviet Union. The question remains then to what extent Stalin contributed to or supported Russification in the Soviet Union, and to what extent he opposed the forces that were in favour of ending *Korenisatsiya*.

A key point in Soviet nationalities policy came in 1938 when Russian became a mandatory subject of study in all Soviet schools (Kirkwood: 1991: 63–64). While scholars such as Kirkwood (ibid) consider this policy to be evidence supporting Stalin's desire for Russification, the political context of the time suggests otherwise. In 1938, the People's Commissar for Education, Tiurkin, proposed to introduce Russian as a subject from the first grade on a par with the local language,

a policy that was rejected by Stalin (Suny and Martin: 2001: 258). Zhdanov (259), paraphrasing Stalin, noted that he thought ‘what Comrade Stalin pointed out must be included in the draft – that there must be no suppression of, or limitation on, the native language, so as to warn all organizations that Russian is to be a subject of study, not a medium of instruction’. Blitstein notes that the decision to mandate Russian language instruction was mostly tactical and on the basis of ‘(1) the need for a common language in a multinational state seeking further economic and cultural development; (2) the importance of Russian for the advanced training of non-Russian cadres; and (3) the requirements of defense’ (258).

It appears that the rehabilitation and elevation of certain pre-revolutionary political and cultural figures occurring during Stalin’s leadership can be viewed in the context of a tactical compromise in light of the impending struggle against fascism. In addition to this, however, is the difficulty in resolving the discord between the leading role played by Russian workers in the Russian revolution (and later the leading role played by Russians in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–45), and the strategic objectives of Soviet nationalities policy under Stalin. Often, Stalin could be seen as torn between these two poles. On a number of occasions, he was seen to refer to the Russian people as the leading force, or the first amongst equals in the Soviet Union (Martin 2001b: 271–272).

The rehabilitation of political figures such as Peter the Great, Ivan the Terrible, and Alexander Nevsky, and cultural figures such as Pushkin and Tchaikovsky, can be seen in this light, as can the rehabilitation of the Russian Orthodox Church. In addition to this, overtures toward Russian nationalism can be seen in wartime propaganda materials, in the invocation of ‘Mother Russia’ (Lieven 2000: 305–306). These comments and the associated political decisions should be placed in their correct historical (the lead-up to the Second World War) and political (the need to accommodate Russian nationalism whilst simultaneously combating chauvinism based on the historic experience of the Russian revolution) contexts.

While the Soviet Union under Stalin would continue to provide significant support for the development of minority cultures, the period of compromise represented the passing of the high point of the decolonisation

efforts of the former Russian Empire. The Soviet Union had moved from an aggressive policy of affirmative action to a position of support for minority nationalities alongside the promotion of Russian as a lingua franca for the purpose of multinational state building and defence, to the temporary acceptance of Russian nationalism in the face of the Nazi onslaught. The problem with some tactical compromises is that they can evolve into strategic shifts, and this appears to have occurred under the post-Stalinist leadership of the Soviet Union.

The evidence suggests that rather than Stalin, Khrushchev, the Soviet leader most responsible for unpacking and reversing Stalin’s legacy, was primarily responsible for the Russification of the Soviet Union. Capitalising on the tactical compromises made by Stalin in education and in cultural policies, the post-Stalin leadership steered Russia in the direction of its former imperial past. Suny and Martin note that:

it was only in the post-Stalin period, with the school reform of 1958, that non-Russians were given the choice to educate their children in Russian, rather than in their native languages. Whereas during Stalin’s rule, educational policy probably acted as a brake on linguistic Russification, in the Khrushchev and the Brezhnev periods hundreds of thousands of non-Russian parents sent their children to Russian-language schools in order to ease the path to social advancement. (2001: 12)

To summarise Stalin’s contribution to decolonisation within the Soviet Union, then, the Stalin period witnessed an attempt at maintaining and reviving national and minority cultures that was attempted on a scale that had never been seen before, and has not been seen since. The existence and vibrancy of the cultures of many nationalities that were part of the Soviet Union is to a large extent explicable by Stalinist policy. Due to significant internal and external pressure, there was a limit to how far and for how long these aggressive nationality policies could be pursued. Stalin found himself in a position where he needed to maintain unity in the face of external aggression. Following Stalin’s leadership, the active ‘de-Stalinisation’ campaign of Khrushchev would see Stalin’s work on the

national question and its associated policies buried.

### Anti-imperialism outside the pre-war Soviet Union

Outside the Soviet Union, a critical historical question about Stalin's anti-imperialism concerns the influence of the Comintern on the Chinese revolution and its war of national liberation, and on the Spanish Civil War.

One of the most notable criticisms of Stalin and the Comintern comes in relation to their influence on the strategy and tactics of the Chinese Communist Party. Indeed, even the Chinese Communist Party criticised the errors of Stalin and the Comintern in terms of their influence in China, suggesting that:

Long ago the Chinese Communists had first-hand experience of some of his [Stalin's] mistakes. Of the erroneous 'Left' and Right opportunist lines which emerged in the Chinese Communist Party at one time or another, some arose under the influence of certain mistakes of Stalin's, insofar as their international sources were concerned. In the late twenties, the thirties and the early and middle forties, the Chinese Marxist-Leninists represented by Comrades Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi resisted the influence of Stalin's mistakes; they gradually overcame the erroneous lines of 'Left' and Right opportunism and finally led the Chinese revolution to victory. (Communist Party of China 1963: 123–124)

Here Mao is referring to a number of political lines suggested by the Comintern and implemented by figures in the Chinese Communist Party, namely those centring the Chinese struggle around Urban Insurrection (Li Lisan), Frontal Confrontation between the armies of the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party (Otto Braun alias Li De), and the influence of the 28 Bolsheviks group, most notably Wang Ming whom Mao criticised for a dogmatic application of the Soviet experience to Chinese circumstances.

Nonetheless, the Chinese Communist Party resisted an over-attribution of power to Stalin, suggesting instead that as much as Stalin or the Comintern made theoretical errors in their analysis of the Chinese situation, the real weakness was of elements in the

Chinese party who uncritically implemented these ideas.

But since some of the wrong ideas put forward by Stalin were accepted and applied by certain Chinese comrades, we Chinese should bear the responsibility. In its struggle against 'Left' and Right opportunism, therefore, our Party criticised only its own erring comrades and never put the blame on Stalin. The purpose of our criticism was to distinguish between right and wrong, learn the appropriate lessons and advance the revolutionary cause. We merely asked the erring comrades that they should correct their mistakes. If they failed to do so, we waited until they were gradually awakened by their own practical experience, provided they did not organise secret groups for clandestine and disruptive activities. (*ibid.*)

What this analysis suggests is that while Stalin and the Comintern's line during the pre-war period was, according to the Chinese Communist Party, incorrect, the impact of this should not be overstated. Mavrakis (1976: 127–128) similarly disputes the 'command and control' view of the Comintern's role in China, arguing that

how can Stalin be held responsible for the mistakes made by the CCP in the period 1928–35 when we know: 1. that an exchange of messages between the Kiangsi bases and Moscow required six to eight months; 2. that, whenever he had knowledge of them, Stalin upheld the positions of Mao Tse-tung and not those of the CCP leadership which he is supposed to have put in the saddle. 3. that the latter carried out the Comintern's instructions only when it suited it to do so.

This logic suggests that even if incorrect, the ability of Stalin and the Comintern to negatively impact the political line of the Chinese Communist Party, let alone its day-to-day operations, should not be overstated.

The question remains as to what if anything was the contribution of Stalin and the Comintern to anti-imperialism.

Along with Mexico, the Soviet Union was the only state to provide assistance to the Spanish republic during the Spanish Civil War. The Falange under General Francisco Franco received substantial support from

Hitler and Mussolini to bring down the elected government (see Whealey 2004). During this period, it is notable that the Western powers maintained a policy of 'neutrality' in the face of the fascist takeover of Spain. According to Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart, a leading British military adviser to Lloyd George, Anthony Eden (British foreign secretary) and Winston Churchill, 'Whitehall circles were very largely pro-Franco'.

Despite hugely superior naval power, instead of blockading the German and Italian intervention, illegal under the 1919 Versailles Treaty and the 1925 Treaty of Locarno, Hart was 'saddened that so many leading lights of his society 'desired the [Spanish Nationalist] rebels' success' and correctly concluded that '[class] sentiment and property sense would seem to have blinded their strategic sense'. Thus, a non-Intervention Committee under League of Nations auspices was set up, to which Germany and Italy were a part. This prohibited the supply of arms to the Spanish Republic. However, even with France having its own Popular Front government under 'Socialist' premier Leon Blum, it did nothing effective to prevent German and Italian soldiers and materiel from reaching Franco's army (Leibowitz and Finkel 1998: 53–58).

It was clear that nothing was being done to stem the fascist involvement in Spain's affairs. Concerned to contain fascism, and particularly to prevent its encirclement of military ally France, the Soviet Union weighed in on the Republican or 'loyalist' side. The first cases of rifles and ammunition – labelled 'pressed meat' – left the Black Sea coast of Russia on 18 September 1936 (Haslam: 1984: 115). In total the USSR provided Spain with 806 planes, 362 tanks, and 1,555 artillery pieces; it was the Republic's only important source of major weapons, without which, the Republic would not have lasted a week. British historian Helen Graham (2002: 153) writes:

In 1936 the Soviet government would dispatch at least 50% (and probably more) of its precious total annual production of military aircraft to Republican Spain. Later in the war too the Soviet government would provide substantial credits to the Republic when it knew that it had virtually no chance of recouping them.

Soviet anti-imperialist assistance was not however limited to contexts where aid would

provide immediate assistance to a communist party. One example of this includes Soviet military aid provided to Nationalist China in the war against Japan. As a result of the Sino-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact and Mutual Assistance treaty, China was the recipient of military material and advisors, all of which were provided on credit. Additionally, the Soviet Union supported Nationalist China against Japan through Operation Zet, which consisted of a cover Soviet volunteer air force (Demin 2000).

While this is not a comprehensive account of all assistance provided by the Soviet Union to anti-imperialist efforts worldwide, these examples demonstrate the willingness of the Soviet Union under Stalin to provide internationalist aid and assistance, in particular where no benefit to the national interest of the Soviet Union could be obtained. Stalin thus made significant contributions to anti-imperialism prior to the Second World War.

## The USSR in the Second World War

The contribution of the USSR in the Second World War constitutes one of the principal contributions against both fascism and imperialism in the 20th century. While victory in the 'Great Patriotic War' cannot be wholly attributed to Stalin, a significant degree of credit is owed for a number of reasons, many of which have their origins in Stalin's pre-war policies. This section will assess the contributions of Stalin to the victory in the Great Patriotic War and the impact which this had on broader anti-imperialism.

First, the ability of the USSR to respond militarily to the might of fascist Germany is a vindication of Soviet industrialisation policies during the pre-war Stalinist leadership. In the words of Hitler himself, 'If I had known about the Russian tank's strength in 1941, I would not have attacked' (Barnett 1989: 456).

Second, the development of the Soviet military between 1939 and 1941 is a vindication of the tactical delay encompassed by the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact. Meltyukhov (2000: 446) notes that between 1939 and 1941, the Soviet Union expanded its military strength significantly, growing its overall number of: divisions by 140.7 per cent; military personnel by 132.4 per cent; guns and mortars by 110.7 per cent; tanks by 21.8 per cent; and aircraft by 142.8 per cent. The



ability to pursue this dramatic expansion of the Soviet military shows the positive effects of both industrialisation and the delay of the outbreak of hostilities that resulted from the pact (itself forced on the USSR by the failure of its consistent efforts to secure a Collective Security alliance with Britain and France).

Third, the contribution made by the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany was far greater than that of all the other powers combined.

The length of the Soviet-German front differed in different years, varying from 2,200 to 6,200 km, whilst the Allies front never exceeded 800 km after the landing in Normandy and 300 km in Italy. Active hostilities were conducted on the Soviet-German front for 1,320 days out of a total of 1,418 days (93% of the total fighting time), the corresponding figure for the North African, Italian and West European fronts being 1,094 days out of a total of 2,069 days (53%). The third Reich suffered its heaviest losses on the Soviet German front: more than 73% in manpower, 75% in tanks and aircraft and 74% in artillery. (Zhilin 1985: 40)

The Soviet victory over fascist imperialism is one of the most important contributions of Stalin's period of leadership to the cause of anti-imperialism. The result of this conflict was the defeat of major imperialist powers in Europe, and a restructuring of international relations that laid the groundwork for the spread of decolonisation in the 20th century. The example of the Soviet Union demonstrated to liberation movements worldwide that victory over highly advanced imperialist powers was indeed possible.

### **The USSR and post-war anti-imperialism**

Despite the crippling effects of the Second World War, as a result of the industrialisation process of the previous two decades under Stalin's leadership, the Soviet Union emerged from the war in a position to offer assistance to newly liberated countries. This section will discuss some key examples of aid provided to such countries in the post-war period through the leadership of Stalin, including aid to Albania, Korea, and China, as well as the establishment of peoples' republics in Eastern Europe. Following this there will be some discussion

of the Soviet role in denazification in Germany. It is important to note that these subjects are entire research questions in themselves and as such the discussion will be a fairly superficial introduction due to space constraints. However, the reader is encouraged to explore these anti-imperialist achievements further.

The Soviet Union under Stalin provided significant support to anti-imperialist political forces. Some examples of this include the role of the USSR in arming the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK; Anthony 1998: 151). Beyond the mere arming of the DPRK, however, the USSR provided broad economic assistance to it through the provision of scientific and technical personnel and equipment, the majority of which was provided on the basis of credit (Wilson Centre Digital Archive 1949). Under an agreement between Stalin and Kim Il-Sung, the DPRK was provided with significant military assistance as well.

It is notable that only the strength of the Soviet Union was able to prevent the wholesale US imperialist takeover of Korea in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. During this time, Stalin played an important role in checking the military adventurism of Kim Il-Sung who was advocating a war of national liberation in US-occupied Korea. Stalin's position would change after the liberation of China in 1949 and the withdrawal of US troops from the Republic of Korea in the same year, at which time the balance of forces had changed sufficiently in Asia to allow Kim Il-Sung to proceed with his attempt to unify Korea (Wilson Centre Digital Archive 1950).

An additional case of the internationalist anti-imperialist solidarity of the Soviet Union under Stalin came in the form of assistance to the newly formed Albanian People's Republic. Walters (1970: 91) estimates that between 1945 and 1966, a reported US\$246 million in aid was provided to Albania. Given that the Soviet Union withdrew support entirely from Albania in 1961 owing to the Albanian–Soviet Split in 1961 (167), this aid can be seen as even more significant, and the majority of it was provided under Stalin's leadership.

The establishment of peoples' republics in Eastern Europe under Stalin's leadership is another critical contribution by Stalin to anti-imperialism (Minc 1950). The consolidation of these republics and the extraction of reparations from defeated Germany were crucial in preventing further aggression against the countries in question as well as against the

Soviet Union. In evaluating Stalin's contribution in this respect it is important to differentiate between Stalin safeguarding Eastern Europe from imperialist expansion, and the way that subsequent Soviet leaders would turn Eastern Europe into economic dependencies in what is generally conceptualised as Soviet social-imperialism (Xhuvani and Hana 1981).

In 1950, the Soviet Union under Stalin would engage in a key piece of anti-imperialist foreign policy, safeguarding the newly established People's Republic of China (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2000). The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance shielded China from the possibility of imperialist intervention. The alliance between China and the Soviet Union began a period of significant co-operation between the two powers, which ended with the Soviet withdrawal of assistance during the Sino-Soviet split beginning in 1960.

While Stalin would only outlive the Second World War by eight years, and would become increasingly marginalised politically, during this period he made a number of valuable contributions to anti-imperialism. The assistance provided in Eastern Europe, China, and Korea is by no means an exhaustive list, however, these examples demonstrate that even in the context of post-war devastation, the Soviet Union under Stalin was willing to provide significant assistance to other countries in the name of anti-imperialism.

## Conclusion

This essay has assessed the contribution of Stalin to anti-imperialism in three major phases: the period before the Second World War, the war itself, and the period following the Second World War up to Stalin's death in 1953. It has been argued that Stalin made major contributions to the decolonisation of the Soviet Union itself through his analysis of the National Question and the implementation of his theories in policy terms. While Stalin faced significant opposition to the implementation of affirmative-action policies which benefited minority nationalities within the Soviet Union, the policy of *Korenisatsiya* was unprecedented and has yet to be matched in modern history as an example of support for the rights of national self-determination.

This essay has attempted to explain the reasoning behind the retreat from the heights

of *Korenisatsiya* in the late 1930s. Both this and the overtures made to Russian nationalism were seen as the result of both the external pressure due to the threat of imperialist invasion of the Soviet Union and internal pressure from various social forces including a significant number of the Soviet leadership who took up Russian nationalist positions. It has been argued that these tactical compromises evolved into strategic shifts toward the Russification of the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Brezhnev.

Outside the Soviet Union, Stalin provided important contributions to anti-imperialism by providing support to the Spanish Republic and to Nationalist China. Following the Second World War, Stalin continued to contribute to anti-imperialism through his support of various countries in Eastern Europe and Asia.

Overall, therefore, Stalin's contribution to anti-imperialism is a major one. By no means can it be considered perfect or flawless. However, the fact that Stalin was able to contribute so much to the cause of anti-imperialism in difficult circumstances, and in the face of both internal and external pressures within the Soviet Union, speaks volumes for his status both as a historical figure and as a Marxist.

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## Williams, Eric (1911–1981)

Born on 25 September 1911 in Port of Spain, Eric Eustace Williams is remembered as the father of the Trinidadian nation and as a prominent historian. Williams was the first child of Eliza and Henry Williams, a post office worker, and his wife Eliza. In 1922, thanks to a scholarship, he entered Queen's Royal College in Port of Spain. A brilliant scholar and talented footballer, Williams earned several scholarships during his years

at the college. Influenced by his teacher the Caribbean historian and writer C.L.R. James (1901–89), the young Williams won the single School Certificate Island Scholarship in 1932, and then left for Oxford University to enrol for a degree in history. After graduating BA in 1935, Williams undertook research in Caribbean and colonial history, highlighting the connections between the industrial revolution in England and the economics of slavery in the West Indies, and in December 1938 he was awarded the degree of DPhil for his dissertation ‘The Economic Aspect of the Abolition of the British West Indian Slave Trade and Slavery’.

### **The historian: on slavery, monopoly, and European capitalism**

After earning his doctorate, from 1939 to 1948 Williams held the position of Associate and then Assistant Professor in Social and Political Science at Howard University in Washington, DC, the highly distinguished black university. There he worked alongside several prominent African-American leaders such as the philosopher Alain Locke, the political scientist Ralph Bunche, and the economist Abram Lincoln Harris Jr, who had authored the classic *The Negro as Capitalist* in 1936. Williams enlarged his critical vision of the relationships between race and class in colonial and Caribbean history and in 1942 published *The Negro in the Caribbean*, an economic history of the Caribbean. In 1944 he was invited in Atlanta to give lectures on British historiography and the Negro question. There he challenged W.E.B. DuBois, whose *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870* (1896) and *Black Reconstruction* (1935) were pioneering works in the study of the role of economic developing forces in ending slavery.

Also in 1944 a revision of Williams’s doctoral dissertation was published under the title *Capitalism and Slavery*. Inspired by C.L.R. James and his *Black Jacobins*, a study which analysed the political impact of the French Revolution and the economic consequences of the Haitian Revolution on the ending of slavery in the Atlantic world, this was Williams’s most influential book; it was published in the US 20 years before it appeared in Great Britain as a result of controversies raised by Williams’s emphasis on economic

causes of abolition, while the British historiography linked the ending of slavery with humanitarian campaigns.

In *Capitalism and Slavery*, Williams used very detailed quantitative data and materials to analyse the rise of the British economy. He analysed the slave trade and the production of commodities in minute detail, examining the usual economic, social, and political assumptions. Williams asserted that the use of the labour of enslaved Africans in the Caribbean was neither the consequence of the inability of native Indians and European indentured workers to adapt to the working conditions in the plantations, nor the proof that Africans were racially inferior and were naturally fit to tolerate the tropical Caribbean climate. Nonetheless, the so-called racial inferiority of Africans was used as a pretext to justify their enslavement, while their enslavement was rather due to the fact that European capitalism needed the cheapest labour to exploit. In this way, Williams argued, modern capitalism is a world-wide system born from the transatlantic slave trade, and racism is a global ideology born from the economic exploitation of a specific category of humankind. Both capitalism and racism formed a structural element of European domination: ‘Slavery in the Caribbean has been too narrowly identified with the Negro. A racial twist has thereby been given to what is basically an economic phenomenon. Slavery was not born of racism: rather, racism was the consequence of slavery’ (Williams 1944: 7). Beyond slavery, the links between racism and capitalism gave birth to a hierarchy in which African peoples were at the bottom of the economic and social ladder. Williams’s book described the roots of economic segregation and the reproduction of racial discrimination in the capitalist closed circuit of Caribbean colonial societies.

Secondly, in his book Williams questioned the roots of the capitalist system which produced wealth in England and poverty in the colonies. He claimed that the slave trade and the massive exploitation of Africans in the Caribbean economic system had generated the economic profits which allowed the rise of industrial capitalism in England. Using data from the Royal African Company, *Capitalism and Slavery* outlines the system by which a ship would sail from a British harbour to the African coast with a cargo including firearms, clothes, food, and manufactured goods. Produced through the labour of English

workers, the cargo represented capital which was used to buy or capture the labour of Africans, who were then deported across the Atlantic Ocean. On arrival in the Caribbean, the Africans were sold in exchange for raw materials produced in the Americas. Briefly, the Africans imprisoned in the slave trade were both labour and capital, since as human beings, they were bought and sold by slave owners, and as enslaved workers, they produced sugar, tobacco, cotton, rum, and spices which produced the wealth in the colonies. For his emphasis on the concept of 'trade', his claim that the British abolitionists exaggerated the atrocities of the Middle Passage, and his very rational account of an emotional topic, Williams was both acknowledged and criticised by scholars who thought that using the economic paradigm of the 'trade' to talk about slavery paved the way to the assumption that trade is based on a mutual agreement between two parties, each one benefiting from the transaction. Hence Williams's thesis became also central to the revisionist historiography. Was the exchange of human beings for commodities a trade or a crime? What was the method of acquiring African labour?

Finally, in Williams's account, raw materials were transported from the colonies to England, where they were refined and sold. The slave trade led to the development of local industries (producing and refining wool, cotton, sugar, rum, and metal), to the growth of the British seaports (Liverpool, Bristol), and to the modernisation of the shipping industry. The imperial hegemony of the British navy on the worldwide seas was partly due to the Navigation Act and to the fact that the British were supplying rival European colonies with enslaved Africans. However, according to Darity (1985: 702), 'it was not profitability or profits from the slave trade that were essential in Williams's theory, but that the American colonies could not have been developed without slavery. Without the colonies mercantilist development would have been crippled'. This mercantilist development was controlled by British merchants, planters, and ship owners who organised the slave trade, British banks which gave credit facilities, and insurance corporations which took the risk for each triangular expedition. Since the West Indian plantations offered an opportunity for social climbing for many British workers, Williams also revealed the direct or indirect participation of several famous economic and

financial British institutions and renowned familial dynasties that had benefited from the slave trade. Williams's thesis inspired much research on the impact of slave trade on both Western industrial capitalism and African societies. Walter Rodney (1972) and Joseph Inikori (1982) explored the post-colonial consequences of the implication of Western capitalism in the making of slave economies, in the transformation of slavery in colonialism, and, finally, the economic dependency which kept independent African and Caribbean states under Western imperialist control.

Lastly, Williams opposed the myth built around the British philanthropists. On the basis of a critical reading of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and his notion of the 'invisible hand' of the market, Williams claimed that the British did not abolish the slave trade in 1807 and slavery in 1834 for primarily moral and humanitarian reasons: the British abolition of slavery resulted less from the implementation of modernity brought by the Enlightenment (see Beckles 1997) than from economic and political pressures upon an archaic system of exploitation which had reached its limits regarding the accumulation of capital needed for the heavy industry. Alongside the works of Williams, Rodney, and Inikori, the study of the economic impact of slavery nurtured the political debate on the reparations, that is to say the financial compensation and moral contributions that present-day governments of countries formerly engaged in the slave trade had to pay to the descendants of those who were enslaved. (One aspect of this debate was the evaluation of the number of African victims of the slave trade; see Darity 1985.) Williams also detailed the mechanisms which drove capitalism to introduce the system of slavery on a global scale, then the circumstances leading to the reproduction of the capitalist slave system, and finally the need for capitalism to abolish slavery before modernising production processes in order to create a wider market. In his own words, 'the commercial capitalism of the eighteenth century developed the wealth of Europe by means of slavery and monopoly. But in so doing it helped to create the industrial capitalism of the nineteenth century, which turned round and destroyed the power of commercial capitalism, slavery, and all its works' (Williams 1944: 210). After the abolition of slavery reduced the production of sugar, the British imperial preference

system of buying sugar from the Caribbean colonies ended in 1846. As a result, Brazilian and Cuban sugar production increased, and some new sugar markets opened in India and South-East Asia.

Williams's analysis of the conflict between monopoly capital, free trade, laissez-faire, smuggling, and state control influencing the development and abolition of the slave trade echoed Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation*, also published in 1944. Williams studied this transformation of the economic system, which showed that in England, the first nation to both abolish slavery and accomplish an industrial revolution, the maritime commercial bourgeoisie and the planters in the colonies together influenced political metropolitan life. Thus, from a very early stage, the Caribbean islands served as a laboratory for capitalism, imperialism, and globalisation (see Darity 1997). As Williams wrote, 'the West Indian islands became the hub of the British Empire, of immense importance to the grandeur and prosperity of England. It was the Negro slaves who made these sugar colonies the most precious colonies ever recorded in the whole annals of imperialism' (1944: 52). The importance of the Caribbean increased after the 1776 American declaration of independence, which provoked a reconfiguration of overseas trade: 'the Caribbean ceased to be a British lake when the American colonies won their independence. The center of gravity in the British Empire shifted from the Caribbean Sea to the Indian Ocean, from the West Indies to India' (Williams 1944: 123).

### **The politician: anti-imperialist, pan-Caribbean, nationalist**

While teaching at Howard, Williams had been recruited as a consultant by the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, an organisation founded during the Second World War to implement the future policies in the West Indies, which had been through massive social unrest since the period of emancipation and again with the riots in the aftermath of the depression of 1929. In his lectures for the commission, Williams highlighted the backwardness of Caribbean economies impacted by the legacy of monoculture, the economic exploitation of colonies during the Second World War, and the American investments in the post-1945 Caribbean economies. When Williams returned to live in Trinidad in 1948,

after 17 years abroad, he was appointed deputy chairman and head of the research branch of the commission. He continued to travel and lectured in Trinidad and throughout the Caribbean, making contacts with trade unions, unemployed youth, academics, and political leaders. His open-air lectures given in Woodford Square, the main central square in Port of Spain, received positive feedback. His papers on the legacy of the sugar monoculture upon the Caribbean economies also inspired some supporters of a federation of the British West Indies based on economic cohesiveness. In the end, his enthusiasm in unveiling the forms of dependency put Williams in opposition to the neo-colonial expectations of the commission.

In January 1956, just after the commission had decided not to renew his contract, Williams entered politics. Gaining popularity in the Trinidadian middle-class and educational sector, he launched a successful petition for a constitutional reform which advocated moving from a unicameral to a bicameral legislature so as to enlarge the number of seats for elected representatives. After the petition was refused by the Colonial Office, Williams helped to form the first modern political party of Trinidad and Tobago, the People's National Movement (PNM), which in September 1956 won 13 seats out of 24. Williams was appointed chief minister and formed a new government; his political victory was reinforced at the 1961 elections with about two-thirds of the vote. Williams became one of the new leaders of the Caribbean, pressing for independence and for a federation of the West Indies to escape from American hegemony. After the Jamaican referendum voted against the federation, Williams changed his political orientation, from a Pan-Caribbean to a nationalist perspective. On 31 August 1962, he achieved independence for Trinidad and Tobago.

Holding the title of prime minister from 1962 until his death in office in 1981, Eric Williams was the father of the Trinidadian nation. His contribution was political and intellectual, national and international. His decision to publish a book, *History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago*, in 1962, the same year in which Trinidad and Tobago achieved independence, revealed his entangled vision of the past and the future. While honouring the legacy from before 1962, the book argues that the story of the new Trinidadian nation should be written

from the starting point of independence, and should be inserted into a national narrative.

In 1963, Williams achieved the withdrawal of the US from the naval military base of the Chaguaramas peninsula, which fell under Trinidadian sovereignty. In February and March 1964, he made a tour of 11 African countries including Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Egypt. He held political discussions with African leaders, gave academic lectures on development in African universities, established diplomatic relations on behalf of the Caribbean countries, and promoted a privileged relationship between Africa and the Caribbean. Along with Fidel Castro, Williams was probably the first Caribbean leader to give a strong support to the decolonising process in Africa, to promote non-alignment and anti-imperialism, and to denounce the similarities in the neo-colonial situations in Africa and the Caribbean. He also tried to introduce African and Caribbean topics into the academic institutions and curricula. Serving as pro-vice-chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI) from 1963 to 1971, Williams worked towards the implementation of these Pan-African relations through the introduction of Afro-Caribbean studies in African universities and of African studies at the UWI.

### Conclusion: growing conservative?

Although he was regularly re-elected with popular support, Williams faced criticism on account of his paternal style of leadership. In February 1970, in a racially divided country, he stopped a Black Power revolution in Trinidad by declaring a state of emergency and arresting activists and young officers suspected of plotting against him. From then onwards, he sided with the conservative Caribbean regimes and strengthened his political control. In the early 1970s, he also took a right-wing turn on economic issues and industrialisation when the oil boom put Trinidad in the sphere of North American interests. Although beneficial to a growing black and Indian middle class and financing some social health and education programmes, the dependency on oil also engendered risks of clientelism and corruption, which would put Trinidad's national economy under the control of the foreign monopolistic corporations. Williams died of a heart attack on 29 March 1981. He left a

nation endowed with modern institutions, infrastructures, and a dynamic economy, and his legacy remains influential in the academic and political Caribbean area.

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# **COUNTRY AND REGIONAL ANALYSIS**



## AFRICOM, NATO and the 2011 War on Libya

One of the more successful results of US information operations and public diplomacy during the March–October 2011 war on Libya was to create a debate about the purposes of the war, and to even ‘define down’ war itself so that it was officially classed instead as a kinetic humanitarian action: not war, but rather ‘protecting the Libyan people, averting a humanitarian crisis, and setting up a no-fly zone’ (Rhodes, 2011). Thus, on one side is an assertion that the military campaign, first led by the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) on 19 March 2011, invoking the mandate of UN Security Council Resolution 1973 of 17 March, and then led by NATO until the official cessation of its combat role on 31 October, was to be understood primarily as a humanitarian effort legitimised by the ‘responsibility to protect’ doctrine. At stake, in the latter perspective, were the lives of civilians, and a ‘popular uprising’ for democracy, pitted against the ‘brutal dictatorship’ of Muammar Gaddafi. On another side was strong scepticism that primarily emphasised that this was instead another war about oil. On closer examination, there is little to sustain a credible, logical justification for the war on Libya as being about human rights, and the position suffers from a severe deficiency of empirical substantiation. On the other hand, while oil was not insignificant, it was neither the sole concern nor the single determinant of the US-led war. In narrow terms, the imposition of a no-fly zone would serve as a gateway for military action designed to secure regime change, an objective pursued by the US since 1969. In broad terms, what was at stake was the strategic repositioning of the US in Africa, guided by economic interests and pursued through its new unified combatant command (AFRICOM), in developing a militarised neo-liberal relationship with African states.

### Libya: America’s problem in Africa

On 1 September 1969, then Captain Muammar Gaddafi along with other junior officers overthrew King Idris in a bloodless coup. Soon after that it became clear to the US that Libya would embark on a radical Pan-Arab nationalist course. Gaddafi became chairman of the Libyan Revolutionary

Command Council (RCC) and commander-in-chief of the Libyan armed forces from September 1969, and then prime minister and minister of defence from January 1970 to 1972. During that time, and only weeks after Gaddafi first came to power, members of the administration of President Richard Nixon met to discuss options for dealing with Libya. In November 1969, high-level meetings occurred between Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and various Pentagon and CIA officials to discuss the possibility of landing forces at the US’s Wheelus Air Base in Libya as part of an armed takeover of the country, as well as covert actions to engineer a coup; other options included sanctions, freezing assets, reducing bilateral ties, or simple acquiescence (BACM 2011: 79–119). This was largely in response to the RCC’s announcement in 1969 that it would promptly expel the US from Wheelus, and the British from El-Adem airbase as well, with the expulsions executed in 1970. Also in 1970, Libya began to drastically revise the price agreements for its oil exports, and threatened nationalisation (Thornton 2001: 69). From then onwards, the US would develop an increasingly acrimonious relationship with Libya and with Muammar Gaddafi personally.

Tensions between the US and Libya escalated into outright conflict during the 1980s, under the US presidency of Ronald Reagan. Two of the immediate pretexts for US military actions against Libya in that period were the issue of freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Sidra (claimed by Libya as territorial waters, which the US contested), and alleged Libyan support for terrorist acts against US targets. Thus, on 19 August 1981, US jets shot down two Libyan planes over the Gulf of Sidra. The US claimed its planes had been attacked first. During 24–25 March 1986, US forces fired missiles on Libyan targets, again claiming that they had been attacked first. On 16 April 1986, President Reagan ordered US air and naval forces to bomb various installations in Libya, among them Muammar Gaddafi’s own residence, killing one of his daughters. On 4 January 1989, two US Navy F-14s shot down two Libyan jets, 70 miles north of Libya, because of alleged hostile intentions demonstrated by the Libyans.

In addition to these overt instances of direct military conflict, the Reagan Administration worked on various plans for covert actions designed to overthrow Gaddafi, with the

support of neighbouring countries and employing Libyan dissident groups armed and trained by the US. As early as 1981, the US planned for a coup to take place in Libya, with the provision of Egyptian military aid to Libyan rebels. In fact, it was within a mere two months of taking office that Reagan had the CIA draft a plan by the then deputy director for operations, Max Hugel, which examined various proposals for covert action, ranging from disinformation and propaganda, to sabotaging Libyan oil installations, and organising military and financial support for Libyan dissident groups in Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, and in the US itself. US media also produced dozens of articles and op-eds encouraging the campaign against Gaddafi; and Tunisian and Saudi officials confirmed privately that they were 'told by officials of the Reagan administration that Qaddafi would be eliminated by the end of 1981' (Wright 1981–82: 15–16). Among the strategies that were used was the CIA's creation of real and illusionary events with the goal of making Gaddafi believe 'that there is a high degree of internal opposition to him in Libya' (Woodward 1987: 481). Published accounts have documented the CIA's and the National Security Council's 'obsession' with Libya during Reagan's term, designing a set of escalating acts up to and including a proposed Egyptian invasion of Libya (Perdue, 1989: 54; Woodward 1987: 181–186, 409–410, 419–420). In an approach that served as a preview of US objectives over 20 years later, the Reagan Administration sought to isolate Libya from the rest of Africa, and tried to pressure the Organisation of African Unity to censure Libya, refuse to hold meetings in Libya, and cancel the planned Libyan presidency of the OAU in 1981, with especially intense pressure on the Liberian government to persuade it to cut ties with Libya and expel its embassy. The various US pressure tactics used to sway African leaders included military and economic aid, naval port calls, and the employment of military advisers (Wright 1981–82: 14). All of these capabilities would be later combined and focused on Africa with the institution of AFRICOM, and Libya would be its first military target.

Tensions with the US under President George W. Bush were dramatically reduced by Libya. In 2003, Libya decided to take responsibility for the 1988 bombing of Pan-Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, and to pay

compensation to the families of the victims, in return for the lifting of sanctions. In 2004, after Libya announced it would cease development of chemical and nuclear weapons, President Bush withdrew a ban on travel to Libya and authorised US oil companies with pre-sanctions holdings in Libya to negotiate their return to the country. The US also partially lifted sanctions, and approved US companies buying oil or investing in Libya. Most US sanctions were lifted by the end of 2004 after President Bush signed Executive Order 12543 (Klare and Volman 2006: 614).

Yet, mutual suspicion, friction, and new tensions developed soon after Barack Obama assumed the presidency in 2009. That year also marked a milestone in Libya's decade-long effort to gain a position of respected leadership and influence across Africa: 2009 marked the 40th anniversary of the officers' revolt against King Idris; the 10th anniversary of the Sirte Declaration that founded the new African Union (AU); the election of Gaddafi as AU Chairman; Libya taking up a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council; and Ali Treiki, Libya's top diplomat on Africa, becoming the Secretary General of the UN General Assembly. Libya under Gaddafi was taking an increasingly important leadership role in Africa and, dissatisfied with the paltry results of rapprochement with the US, was simultaneously blocking US opportunities for investment and economic opportunities in Libya itself as well as impeding greater US penetration into Africa by subverting US plans with what might be called 'dinar diplomacy'. Libya invested billions of dollars in industrial development across the continent, financed the creation of an African satellite communications network, and provided massive financial contributions towards the African Development Bank and the African Monetary Fund, which would specifically challenge the hegemony of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Gaddafi was passionate about using Libyan oil money to help African allies industrialise and add value to their export commodities, helping even staunch US allies in Africa in achieving a measure of food self-sufficiency. The combined effect was to increasingly move the continent away from its role in the global economy as a supplier of cheap raw materials, which was a legacy of colonialism. All of this happened as the US had developed a new strategic view of Africa

and aggressively began to expand military ties and business opportunities.

An eventual 'target of opportunity' presented itself with the outbreak of street protests in Libya in February 2011, the exposure of serious fissures within the government itself, and the manifestation of strong internal divisions around Libya's orientation towards Africa, which in previous years had already witnessed deadly mass riots against African migrant workers in the country. Ostensibly, the street protests began in Benghazi on 15 February after a human rights lawyer had been arrested. By 17 February, the protests escalated dramatically. Violent confrontations with security forces ensued: police stations were torched and army barracks were raided. African migrants and black Libyans were targeted once again by opposition protesters and rebels. Soon, whole towns were taken by anti-government forces. On 21 February the defected Libyan deputy permanent representative to the UN, Ibrahim Dabbashi, declared that 'genocide' was underway as the Libyan government was allegedly bringing in groups of African mercenaries via the nation's airports. In addition, prominent Arab and then Western media outlets began to assert that Libya was using jets and helicopters against unarmed protesters. On this basis, from 21 February, the first calls were made for the imposition of a no-fly zone to halt flights into Libya and disable the Libyan air force.

### The aims of the 2011 War

Overtly, the stated aims of the US-led intervention revolved around protecting civilians, saving lives, and averting a greater humanitarian crisis. Thus, Obama declared on 28 March 2011, in terms that echoed Reagan's speeches: 'If we waited one more day, Benghazi, a city nearly the size of Charlotte, could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscience of the world' (Obama 2011b). In a joint letter, Obama with UK prime minister David Cameron and French president Nicolas Sarkozy asserted: 'By responding immediately, our countries halted the advance of Gaddafi's forces. The bloodbath that he had promised to inflict on the citizens of the besieged city of Benghazi has been prevented. Tens of thousands of lives have been protected' (Obama et al. 2011). US Secretary

of Defense Robert M. Gates reiterated that, 'this administration's approach has been guided by a core set of principles ... opposing violence, standing for universal values, and speaking out on the need for political change and reform' (Gates 2011).

However, two distinct sets of considerations require alternative explanations to be advanced instead. One has to do with the fact that the official explanation continually meandered and changed shape during the course of the war, morphing into varied and repeated justifications for regime change, along with extensive evidence showing that the assassination of Colonel Gaddafi himself was a persistent objective, and proclamations about the 'democratization' of Libya as a goal, all of which at one point or another had previously been sworn against as objectives of the intervention (see Forte 2012a: 121–130; Hague 2011; Obama 2011b). The then US secretary of state encapsulated this alternative narrative when rejoicing to a US news reporter 'We came, we saw, he died!' following the murder of Gaddafi on 20 October 2011. That the narrative was clearly unsettled is something which requires that we do not take the opening justifications at face value.

Another set of considerations has to do with the alleged humanitarian goals of the intervention: saving lives, protecting civilians, averting a 'massacre' in Benghazi. There are several reasons, with ample evidence to support each, that render these goals as questionable in the context of US and European actions leading up to and during the course of the conflict. For example, well prior to any alleged threat by Gaddafi against Benghazi, and as early as a few days after the first street protests began in mid-February 2011, there were already groups of CIA agents on the ground to 'gather intelligence for military airstrikes and to contact and vet the beleaguered rebels', joined by more agents later. President Obama had 'signed a secret finding authorizing the CIA to provide arms and other support to Libyan rebels' even before the international press had begun to speak of an organised, armed rebellion (Mazetti and Schmitt 2011). Also in that period, USAID deployed a team to Libya, as announced by early March (DipNote 2011; Lee 2011). 'In the early days of the Libyan revolution', as Hillary Clinton recounted, Christopher Stevens, then the Chargé d'Affaires at the US Embassy, was dispatched to Benghazi to work with the

insurgents (Clinton 2012). Thus, before any serious diplomatic initiatives could be organised, before the development of a multinational coalition, prior to establishing the facts of any humanitarian crisis on the ground, and even before a local insurgency could gain strength on its own, the US was already leading the way to intervention designed to secure the overthrow of the Libyan government.

There are many more reasons for questioning the official justifications for military intervention. By all accounts, Libyan government forces had quickly routed insurgents, retaking a number of key towns by late March 2011; foreign military intervention had the immediate effect of slowing the government's advance and started to equalise the military fortunes of the insurgents who were now backed by the most powerful combined air forces of the world. In effect, the conflict between Libyan forces was thus prolonged for several more months, with more cities destroyed in the process, most notably Sirte, which was a bastion of government support. Thus, with many more inevitably killed than 'saved' as a result of the prolonged war, one of the key justifications for intervention was invalidated. US-led forces prolonged the war by also arbitrarily extending their mission in Libya: on 28 March 2011, President Obama had already declared, 'In just one month, the United States has worked with our international partners to mobilise a broad coalition, secure an international mandate to protect civilians, stop an advancing army, prevent a massacre, and establish a no-fly zone with our allies and partners ... we've accomplished these objectives .... I want to be clear: the United States of America has done what we said we would do' (Obama 2011b). Nonetheless, the war was continued for seven more months and only ended for NATO once Colonel Gaddafi had been murdered and Libya's government had been overthrown. Indeed, as a precondition for ending the war, Obama himself stipulated that government forces should withdraw even from the cities where a majority of residents stood with the government, with the list of cities expanding as the war progressed (see Obama 2011a). In other words, the US continually exceeded a military mandate that it had already exceeded, while allowing no solutions except a military one.

In addition, rather than protecting civilians, US and/or other NATO forces targeted

civilian infrastructure (water, power, roads, government buildings, and select residential areas), and in a number of documented instances they deliberately targeted civilians themselves (government workers, public broadcasters, and civilian rescuers). Among the more notable, recorded and verified cases occurred on 15 September 2011 in Sirte, when 47 civilian rescuers were targeted as part of the 'double-tapping' practice for conducting drone strikes (where first a military target is struck, then all adult, able-bodied men who arrive on the scene thereafter to rescue victims are attacked; see FFM 2012: 44–45). Western human rights organisations also confirmed cases where apartment blocks in Sirte were targeted by NATO bombardments: one case occurred on 16 September 2011 when several airstrikes targeted a large apartment building in Sirte containing roughly 90 apartments and 'at least two residents were killed', while NATO did not even list an apartment building as one of its targets, opting instead to produce the following list: 'Key Hits 16 SEPTEMBER: In the vicinity of Sirte: 5 Command and Control Nodes, 3 Radar Systems, 4 Armed Vehicles, 8 Air Missile Systems' (see AI 2012: 13–14; HRW 2012: 50–53; NATO 2011a). On 25 September 2011, just before dawn, NATO carried out an airstrike against the home of Salem Diyab in Sirte, killing four children and three women. The apparent target was Mosbah Ahmed Diyab, a brigadier-general, who in fact 'lived in another area of the city' (AI 2012: 15; HRW 2012: 47–50). Once again, NATO described this civilian residence as a 'command and control' facility and deliberately obfuscated the fact that it was deliberately targeting civilian structures: 'Key Hits 25 SEPTEMBER: In the vicinity of Sirte: 1 command and control node 2 ammunition/vehicle storage facility, 1 radar facility, 1 multiple rocket launcher, 1 military support vehicle, 1 artillery piece, 1 ammunition storage facility' (NATO 2011b). In yet another case documented and verified by both Human Rights Watch and the UN's own Commission of International Inquiry on Libya, on 8 August 2011 in the town of Majer, NATO planes bombed a farming compound, in and around which there was no evidence of any military activity. It was struck a second time when civilian rescuers arrived. NATO bombs killed a total of 34 civilians and injured 38 in that attack (HRW 2012: 27–32; UN 2012: 16).

Instead of protecting civilians, we have evidence of the contrary practice. In some notable cases, NATO forces ignored African refugees adrift at sea, even as they passed NATO vessels that were enforcing a strict naval blockade and had the sea off Libya's coast under close surveillance. In fact, on NATO's watch, at least 1,500 refugees fleeing Libya died at sea during the war. They were mostly Africans from south of the Sahara, and they died in many multiples of the death toll suffered by Benghazi residents during the initial protests there that had captivated media attention in the West. Even the Italian government, a party to the NATO campaign, publicly complained that international humanitarian law had been violated when NATO vessels ignored distress calls and passed by boats adrift at sea without aiding them. One might also note that when NATO repeatedly stated it was protecting civilians, this in practice usually meant it was protecting armed civilians opposed to the government, against other armed civilians who supported it.

Thus, if the practice of military intervention belied the proclaimed humanitarian objectives, and the narratives that justified the intervention shifted and then contradicted the original stated aims, then an alternative explanation becomes necessary as the official ones simply fail to convince, as they inadequately account for enough facts in an accurate, logical, and credible manner. Moreover, there is the critical question concerning historical context. Why now? For decades, US leaders and mainstream media in the global North had cast Colonel Gaddafi as a villainous, brutal dictator, long accused of torture and assassinations at home, and seen as key perpetrator of international terrorism. Yet from 2003–10, there had been an official rapprochement. So what was it about 2011 that seemingly caused the US to suddenly discover 'human rights abuses' as a justification for military intervention? Indeed, 2011 offered a further twist to this issue: just a little over a month before the first calls for foreign military intervention, the UN Human Rights Council received and discussed a report on human rights in Libya, and of the 46 delegations that commented on the report a majority 'noted with appreciation the country's commitment to upholding human rights on the ground', and further commended 'the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the preparation and presentation of its national report,

noting the broad consultation process with stakeholders in the preparation phase' (UN 2011: 3). Was 2011 different then because of the local uprisings? There had been multiple armed uprisings, coup attempts, and assassination plots throughout Gaddafi's 42 years at the helm, and yet none of those had been used to justify a concerted military campaign to overthrow the government, nor were they read as a sign of government illegitimacy. Nor were the human rights credentials of the rebels pristine and unquestionable for that matter, as many African migrant workers and black Libyan civilians were targeted for rape, robbery, and murder on the basis of the colour of their skin and their perceived allegiance to Gaddafi, while pro-government protesters in Benghazi were also killed (Cockburn 2011). Human rights, therefore, explain very little. Also, why was there such intervention in Libya, and yet the opposite in Yemen and Bahrain? Arguing that 'just because the US cannot intervene everywhere, does not mean it should not intervene in Libya' still does not answer why Libya was targeted. Of course, 2011 did offer a new political context that created openings for intervention, particularly around what was much vaunted in the global North as the 'Arab Spring' and 'calls' from elite quarters for the US to 'do something' to aid in ushering a new, democratic Arab world. While that political conjuncture was not insignificant, the only real change that had transpired within the last decade was a new US strategic shift towards Africa, with the creation of a unified military command just three years before 2011, that being the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) which would in fact take the lead in the opening weeks of the military campaign. Since we have very little of what was made public from official quarters that is reliable and can help us answer 'why Libya in 2011', we have to look at long-term, and short-term historical contexts beyond Libya alone, and understand broader and deeper US political and economic objectives. We thus require answers that take into account multiple factors and varied determinants, and that connect them logically. In this effort, what US officials said to each other privately (as revealed in the several hundred diplomatic cables from the US Embassy in Tripoli that were published by WikiLeaks) becomes especially useful, particularly in light of US strategic and economic concerns.

### AFRICOM, oil, and leadership

A broad outline of the array of US objectives that could and in some respects would be fulfilled by pursuing the path of aggression against Libya in 2011 can be discerned in terms of the immediate strategic geopolitical gains to be had from the opportunities presented by the Libyan crisis, as well as benefits for longer-term political and economic interests both in Africa and the Middle East, if not more globally.

There were at least nine areas where the US could maximise gains to be had by overthrowing the Libyan Jamahiriya Government, presented here in no particular rank of importance. The first would potentially involve increased access for US corporations to contracts funded by massive Libyan expenditures on infrastructure development (and then reconstruction), from which US corporations had frequently been locked out when Gaddafi was in power (USET 2008; 2009c; 2009d). Second and closely related to the first, the US would thereby also expand its hold on key geostrategic locations and control over access to lucrative petroleum resources much sought after by China and others. Third and stemming from the first two, the US and its allies would potentially be able to ward off any increased acquisition of Libyan oil and construction contracts by Chinese and Russian firms. Fourth, the overthrow of the Jamahiriya could ensure that a friendly regime was in place that was not influenced by ideas of 'resource nationalism' (USET 2007). Fifth, the US could increase the presence of AFRICOM in African affairs, in an attempt to effectively substitute for the African Union and to entirely displace the Libyan-led Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), whose membership encompassed nearly half of Africa and rivalled the US's Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCPT) (USET 2009e). Sixth, by intervening for declared 'humanitarian' reasons in support of something cast as a 'popular uprising' for 'democracy', the US could bolster its claims to being serious about freedom, democracy, and human rights, and present itself – unlike the image created by the Iraq war – as being on the side of Arabs and Africans. Seventh, a successful intervention could work to ensure a politically stable North Africa, guided by the belief that democratic states are the best defence against radical extremism. Eighth, by

drafting other nations (in NATO and the Arab League) to undertake the work of defending and advancing US political and economic interests, the US could efficiently achieve dominance at a minimised political and economic cost. Ninth, a successful intervention could help to spread the neo-liberal model of governance and development by removing a major impediment. Joseph Biden, who would later become vice president, recounted: 'I told Qaddafi there are certain basic rules to playing in the global economy ... no one will invest in your country without transparency or without stability. To deliver the promise to your people is going to require significant change ...' (Timmerman 2004: 19). Taken together, these present a far more convincing picture of US objectives, than that presented in the humanitarian narrative analysed earlier, especially because they fit a historical pattern of US–Libyan relations and global context of neo-liberal intervention.

In leading the war in its opening phases, AFRICOM's role as part of a US strategic shift towards Africa deserves further elaboration, especially as AFRICOM bridges and combines the political, economic, and military goals of the US in Africa. AFRICOM came about as a result of what was at least a decade-long process of rationalising, strategising, and organising (AFRICOM 2011: vi). From 1990–2000, the US intervened militarily in Africa more than 20 times (Catoire 2000, p. 102). There was increased discussion among military planners of the deficiencies in taking a reactive, piecemeal approach, focused only on contingencies, when 'shaping the environment' could reduce the need for 'expensive and uncertain military interventions' (110, 111). To shape the environment, the military would require a single, unified command devoted exclusively to Africa, rather than have US-African affairs parcelled out to various commands with responsibilities primarily in the Pacific, Asia, and Europe. A US military force was definitely needed, it was argued, in light of France's announcement in 1997 that it would reduce its military forces on the African continent by 40 per cent, creating a perceived vacuum (105–106). While the purpose of a command would be to 'enhance access and influence while communicating regularly with senior foreign civil and military leaders on a variety of issues', it would do so by 'building better security relations' with African nations, 'endeavoring to build trust

and “habits of cooperation” that permit quick agreement and common action to resolve regional conflict’; this would be particularly necessary at time when ‘US resources are limited’ (102).

Military strategists also recognised that Africa had ‘tremendous mineral wealth, huge hydro-electrical power reserves, and significant underdeveloped ocean resources’, with the ‘better part of the world’s diamonds, gold, and chromium’, added to the fact that ‘copper, bauxite, phosphate, uranium, tin, iron ore, cobalt, and titanium are also mined in significant quantities’, and ‘some 20 per cent of America’s oil’ was being imported from Africa, while Africa itself was seen as a potentially large, new market for US commodities (104). The US military itself is totally dependent on an imported supply of cobalt, among other strategic minerals that belong to the US’s stockpile programme, the loss of which would constitute, as was understood already in the 1950s, ‘a grave military setback’ (Magdoff 2003: 55–56).

Adding to the Pentagon’s work, a high-level body was appointed by President George W. Bush in February 2001 (the National Energy Policy Development Group, NEPDG), which was chaired by Vice President Dick Cheney. The NEPDG’s final document is known as the ‘Cheney report’. The Cheney report focused on Africa as a strategically valuable supply of oil as it could be relied upon in the event of major crises and disruptions in the Middle East and elsewhere; moreover, African oil was deemed to be of high value given its low sulphur content and its relative ease of access (NEPDG 2001: sec. 8, p. 11). In order to expand US access on the continent, the Cheney report argued that African nations, under US guidance, would have to ‘enhance the stability and security of trade and investment environments’ (NEPDG 2001: sec. 8, p. 19). Building on the Cheney report, and mindful of the concerns voiced by military strategists before that, oil industry lobbyists were joined by a select group of members of Congress and military officers in producing a White Paper submitted to the US Congress and the Bush Administration in 2002. The group called itself the African Oil Policy Initiative Group (AOPIG 2002). AOPIG tightly linked military and economic goals, emphasising African oil as a vital interest to the US. AOPIG called for ‘a new and vigorous focus on U.S.-military cooperation

in sub-Saharan Africa, to include design of a sub-unified command structure which could produce significant dividends in the protection of U.S. investments’ (2002: 6), and reproduced elements of the prior two reports. Like Catoire (2000: 107), AOPIG also singled out Libya as an adversary state and a ‘threat possibility’ that exposed US personnel and assets to ‘heightened dangers and diminished opportunities’ (2002: 15).

In 2004, an advisory panel of Africa experts, authorised by Congress to propose new policy initiatives, identified five factors that had shaped increased US interest in Africa over the past decade: ‘oil, global trade, armed conflicts, terror, and HIV/AIDS’. They indicated that these factors had led to a ‘conceptual shift to a strategic view of Africa’ (Kansteiner and Morrison 2004: vi, 2). This strategic view, they argued, required that the US should ‘significantly increase’ its ‘presence on the ground’ (4). As with previous reports, this one also combined military with economic goals, the former to preserve and reinforce the latter. Noting that Africa had proven reserves of more than 60 billion barrels of oil – with Libya, as the panel would have known, having the highest proven oil reserves on the continent (39.1 billion barrels) (Frynas and Paulo 2007: 240, 241) – the panel noted that Africa had already become the fourth-largest source of US oil imports, and with a slew of major US oil corporations active on the continent accounting for more than 100,000 energy-based jobs in the US, these actors had ‘a stake in the promotion of a stable investment climate’ (Goldwyn and Ebel 2004: 6, 11, 12). Like Catoire (2000), the panel also recognised that ‘the leverage the United States can muster, in coalition with others, is not overwhelming and will diminish by the end of the decade’ (Goldwyn and Ebel 2004: 7). ‘Stability and development’ could only be achieved if African political leaders pursued ‘a modernising vision’ (9). The US could exercise leverage via its military and international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF; in addition, by ‘engaging’ the continent on ‘common principles for the promotion of transparency, development, and respect for human rights, the more effective U.S. leadership will be’ (10). As with the prior policy papers, this panel also called for the Department of Defense to create a unified command focused on Africa (Morrison and Lyman 2004: 115–116); AFRICOM was

created on 1 October 2007, and became functional one year later. This panel also singled out Libya in ‘fomenting arms trafficking and instability in Africa, and it proposed an initiative that would implicitly counter the work of Libya’s World Islamic Call Society in its proposal for ‘a major continent-wide Muslim outreach initiative on a dramatically large scale’ (Morrison and Lyman 2004: 115–116, 105). Other panellists also cited Libya’s ‘adventurism’ and ‘destabilisation’ activities in Africa, pointing out that it funded rebel movements in West Africa, a key strategic location of oil (Herbst and Lyman 2004: 119, 133).

‘Africa doesn’t need strong men, it needs strong institutions’, US President Barack Obama declared in Ghana in 2009, a sentiment that would be echoed in the policy to establish transparency, good governance, economic growth, and democratic institutions as envisioned by the US in the 2012 *US Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa* (White House 2012: 2). The National Security Strategies of 2002, 2006, and 2010 had all highlighted what was perceived as the growing strategic value of Africa (Ploch 2011: 14). In the preface to the 2012 document, Barack Obama wrote: ‘the United States will not stand idly by when actors threaten legitimately elected governments or manipulate the fairness and integrity of democratic processes’ (White House 2012: i). The ‘democratisation’ of Africa thus became a US national security concern. Added to the US strategic agenda was humanitarian intervention: ‘We have been the world’s leader in responding to humanitarian crises’ (1). As a US military article had constructed this issue, Africa is ‘a world leader in humanitarian crises, failed states, and deadly conflict’ with more UN ‘peacekeeping missions than any other continent’ (Garrett et al 2010: 17). Africa was the problem, and the US was the source of solutions. This was felt urgently by some as Africa loomed larger: ‘by 2050, there may be two Africans for every European’ (16).

Not far removed from the political imperatives for US leadership as constructed in the National Strategy, economic concerns and moulding African institutions to suit transnational capitalist penetration – shaping the environment – weighed heavily. Barack Obama adverted, ‘Africa is more important than ever to the security and prosperity of the international community, and to the

United States in particular. Africa’s economies are among the fastest growing in the world, with technological change sweeping across the continent and offering tremendous opportunities in banking, medicine, politics, and business’ (White House 2012: i). Identified as important to US prosperity, Africa would need ‘to remove constraints to trade and investment’ and open itself to global markets, and promote ‘sound economic governance’ (i, ii). As a result of such a transformation, President Obama vowed to ‘encourage American companies to seize trade and investment opportunities in Africa ... while helping to create jobs here in America’ (ii). However, there would be further obstacles to remove from the path of US expansion: ‘Transnational security challenges pose threats to regional stability, economic growth, and U.S. interests’ (1). As Vice Admiral Robert Moeller declared in 2008, AFRICOM was about preserving ‘the free flow of natural resources from Africa to the global market’ (Glazebrook 2012).

Both AFRICOM and the TSCTP were vigorously opposed by Libya under Muammar Gaddafi’s leadership, as both the US ambassador to Libya and the head of AFRICOM, Gen Ward, were both aware (see USET 2009a; 2009b). There was also opposition from the Northern African Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), led by Libya (Campbell 2008: 21). It also seemed that most of the African continent rejected AFRICOM as well, just as Nelson Mandela, a key ally of Gaddafi, had previously rejected President Bill Clinton’s plans for a US-led Africa Crisis Response force. Thus, in October 2007, members of the Pan-African Parliament, the African Union’s legislature, voted in favour of a motion to ‘prevail upon all African Governments through the African Union (AU) not to accede to the United States of America’s Government’s request to host AFRICOM anywhere in the African continent’ (quoted in Ploch 2011: 25). The defence and security ministers of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) stated ‘that sister countries of the region should not agree to host Africom and in particular, armed forces, since this would have a negative effect. That recommendation was presented to the Heads of States and this is a SADC position’; the 25-member body then backed the position and, ‘flatly refuses the installation of any military command or any foreign armed



presence of whatever country on any part of Africa, whatever the reasons and justifications' (quoted in Campbell 2008: 21). The Arab Maghreb Union 'also voiced strong opposition to the placement of US bases anywhere on the continent' (ibid.). Similarly, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) issued the following statement: 'ECOWAS has stated resolutely its opposition to American bases in the region. At the forefront of this effort stands Nigeria, whose leadership unequivocally denounced the possibility of American troops being based in West Africa' (quoted in Campbell 2008: 22). In summary, it can be safely concluded that in every single respect of what the US identified as the strategic value of Africa, Gaddafi's leadership stood opposed, which itself might not have been significant except for the fact that Libya had both the financial leverage and political clout to exercise a significant competing presence in Africa that raised walls against US expansion.

### Interventionist methodology

The intervention to overthrow the Libyan government relied upon an array of methods, some borrowed from previous US plans from the late 1960s and 1980s. One of these involved arming anti-government insurgents, and bombing the way ahead of them, while targeting personnel and institutions of the Libyan state. At every single point, peace talks between the opposition and the government were halted or undermined by the US, and diplomatic action by the African Union was equally thwarted and side-lined both by the US and the UN. After unsuccessfully seeking legitimacy in the form of an endorsement from the AU, the US later decided that it was totally dispensable, and claimed authority for its intervention in Libya thanks to a vote in the Arab League, where less than half of its members voted in support of foreign military intervention. The government of Libya was barred from representing itself at the UN in an unprecedented and almost certainly illegal silencing by the body, while the US government refused to issue visas to representatives of the standing government in Tripoli. At the UN, largely unknown 'human rights' NGOs held full sway in propagating unqualified and unsubstantiated exaggerations and fabrication of numbers of protesters killed by the government, while never mentioning atrocities committed by the opposition. In

at least one case, one of the Libyan human rights groups speaking at the UN Human Rights Council had not disclosed its overlapping membership with the anti-government National Transitional Council. The general approach at the UN was to take everything stated by the opposition at face value, while refusing to hear the Libyan government. Put simply, virtually nothing was done to avert war, and everything was done to accelerate it. In this respect, the creation of an ambience of 'emergency' became a significant part of the interventionist methodology as it could be used to rush to war, stifle debate, and pre-determine who would have the authority and legitimacy to speak.

Within relatively short order, it became apparent that humanitarian concerns served as a thin veil for the pursuit other goals. Even in the statements by leading US officials, there was little effort to conceal this fact once the bombing was underway. Nearly two weeks after the US fired the cruise missiles that opened the campaign, then Defense Secretary Robert Gates explained in a congressional hearing how and when the US chose to intervene: 'it became apparent that the time and conditions were right for international military action', not because all diplomatic options had been exhausted, and not with reference to a humanitarian crisis, but due to the statements of support for intervention from the Arab League and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and once 'our European allies expressed a willingness to commit real military resources' (Gates 2011).

The US led overall military operations in Libya, from the official opening of AFRICOM's Operation Odyssey Dawn on 19 March 2011 until the official end on 31 October 2011. By the end of the campaign, NATO had completed a total of 9,634 strike sorties against Libyan targets, out of a total of 26,156 sorties overall as part of what it called Operation Unified Protector (NATO 2011c: 2). Of the 28 member states of NATO, only eight actually took part in combat sorties, which was reduced to six by the end of August 2011. The primary participants in combat were the US, France, Italy, the UK, Canada, Denmark, Belgium, and Norway. The US provided the majority of refuelling, resupply, surveillance and reconnaissance missions, and fired nearly all of the 214 cruise missiles apart from seven (Bomb Data 2014). The US also deployed the majority of

drones. In terms of ‘boots on the ground’ – which the Libyan insurgents proclaimed they did not want, but welcomed nonetheless – there were US CIA agents and untold number of ‘private contractors’ of various nationalities (Mazetti and Schmitt 2011); there were also British MI6, SBS, SAS, and SFSG troops, in total numbering as many as 350 and deployed from as early as the time of the first street protests at the end of February 2011 (Mirror 2011; Williams and Shipman 2011; Winnett and Watt 2011); hundreds of troops from Qatar fought on the front lines in nearly every region (Black 2011); also, Jordan had troops on the ground (Barry 2011), and, according to the governments of Sudan and post-Gaddafi Libya, Sudan’s military also participated actively in combat and in arming the insurgents. What confuses matters, aside from NATO and US secrecy, is the extent to which non-US air missions were in fact non-US—as Barack Obama himself revealed: ‘In fact, American pilots even flew French fighter jets off a French aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean. Allies don’t get any closer than that’ (Obama 2011c).

Sirte, as Gaddafi’s hometown, a major stronghold of popular support for the government, and the birthplace of the African Union in 1999, was to be the war’s most devastated city, coming under particularly intense NATO bombing. Sirte was targeted from the very opening of NATO’s bombing campaign, lasting until the end. Indeed, out of the total number of days spent bombing by NATO, Sirte was targeted for 42 per cent of those days. As the final offensive against the city began in August 2011, NATO flew more than 130 air strikes at the end of the month. In just three days after the insurgents first tried entering Sirte on 15 September 2011, NATO bombed 39 targets in the small city. In a period of three weeks in September, NATO struck 296 targets here, even before the final month of bombings. The most conservative assessments found that 70 per cent of the city had been destroyed in fighting on the ground and by NATO bombardment. The total number of civilians killed in Sirte, or in all of Libya during the war, is still not known and no credible investigation has been undertaken, either by the UN, or NATO, or by the transitional governments that followed; if anything, there has been a deliberate effort not to unearth these facts by those with the

authority and resources to do so, and successive Libyan administrations, indebted to NATO, have explicitly rejected any calls for an investigation.

That one of the immediate goals of the military intervention was regime change is an inescapable conclusion derived from substantial evidence that Muammar Gaddafi was personally targeted in a series of bomb and missile strikes (Forte 2012a: 122–129). Moreover, in addition to US drones targeting Gaddafi’s convoy as it fled Sirte on 20 October 2011, one of the prominent opposition leaders, Mahmoud Jibril, later revealed that a foreign agent (likely French) was the one who actually executed Gaddafi (Forte 2012a: 129). Regime change is a violation of international law, as it is a violation of US law to assassinate a foreign head of state. However, in invoking the mandates of the UN, specifically UN Security Council Resolution 1970 and even more so 1973, the US and its NATO partners persisted in presenting every action as legal and authorised. Article 4 of UNSCR 1973 specifically mandates member states ‘to take all necessary measures ... to protect civilians’ (UNSCR 2011: 3). The political and military leadership of NATO would thus present every single action as consistent with that broad and open language, resorting to semantic games in portraying wherever Gaddafi was located as being in and of itself a ‘threat to civilians’. Even as Gaddafi fled, and was struck by missiles fired by US drones, he was still represented by NATO as ‘endangering civilians’.

From a perspective concerned with human rights, protecting civilians, and defending civil liberties, it is interesting to note that in January 2011, France under President Nicolas Sarkozy offered the Tunisian government of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali security support, and dispatched riot-control equipment to put down anti-government protests in Tunisia, right down to the final days of Ben Ali’s rule; additionally, the GCC had itself sent troops to quash protests in Bahrain in March 2011, the same month that the bombing of Libya began; also in March 2011, in the face of massive anti-government protests in Yemen demanding the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the US continued to offer its political support and military co-operation. If taking the humanitarian claims at face value, it is difficult to understand what it was about Libya in particular that presented such a crisis

of conscience and a moral imperative to intervene on the side of government opponents, even in the same month that the US and its allies were doing the opposite in Bahrain and Yemen. However, pretending that there was a unique and urgent moral demand in the case of Libya certainly aided in 'shaping the environment' so as to create an ambience of emergency, and to create that effect public communication became essential in deploying numerous ideational counter-measures to offset questions, criticisms, and potential delays.

### **Complex ideational counter-measures**

Symbolism, myth, morality, and emotion were called upon by supporters of the war with the desire to produce an ambience of 'emergency' around the events of February–March 2011, serving a variety of purposes (while complicating or adding to classical theories of imperialism which tend to downplay such factors). Here we are dealing not just with hegemonic norms, but also potentially more intimate belief-systems, learned cultural values, and emergent structures of feeling that seemingly impel 'humanitarian intervention'. In the rapid lead up to the US-led war in Libya, symbolism, myth, morality, and emotion were used as counter-measures by: (a) dampening or arresting any international mass movement against the impending war; (b) altering the terms of debate by channelling attention to issues of morality; (c) dividing potential leftist opposition by turning the left in the global North into mutually hostile camps divided along anti-imperialist versus pro-democracy lines (and thus achieving the construction of a choice between alleged freedom under imperial dominance versus local authoritarian autonomy); (d) placing obstacles in the path of the articulation and audibility of anti-imperialist critiques from the global South; (e) creating an international chorus of voices, predominantly in the global North, predominantly in the mass and 'social' media, demanding immediate action which was reduced to specifically military action. The alleged 'consequences of inaction' were culturally constructed and socially distributed, with the hope of both spreading accountability and acquiring legitimacy, while also depoliticising the intervention by turning it

into a purely moral choice and a question of witnessing, solidarity, and conscience. 'Not another war in a Muslim country' was a fear felt in the Obama Administration, and voiced by then Defense Secretary Robert Gates, haunted by the spectre of the recent war of occupation in Iraq. While no significantly new weapons technologies were tested in the war in Libya, some of the newer ideational and communicative technologies of the last 20 years were reworked and deployed.

With reference to symbolic constructions, the long-standing US demonisation of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi was particularly compelling for many members of the mass audience, especially in the US itself, and the Obama Administration sought to capitalise on that. Over the course of three decades, US government officials spoke in terms that suggested they favoured the overthrow and death of Gaddafi. Successive US presidents thus demonised Gaddafi in ways that suggested he was evil, or subhuman. President Richard Nixon said Gaddafi was 'more than just a desert rat' but also 'an international outlaw', and urged an international response to Gaddafi; then, President Gerald Ford said Gaddafi was a 'bully' and a 'cancer'; after President Jimmy Carter spoke of Gaddafi as 'subhuman'; more than all, President Ronald Reagan responded to a question about whether he would 'not be sorry to see Qaddafi fall' by stating 'diplomacy would have me not answer that question'; Reagan's secretary of state, General Alexander Haig, referred to Gaddafi as 'a cancer that has to be removed', while Vice President George H.W. Bush described Gaddafi as an 'ego-maniac who would trigger World War III to make headlines' (Wright, 1981–82: 16). One should also recall Reagan's famous statement about Gaddafi: 'this mad dog of the Middle East [who] has a goal of a world revolution, Moslem fundamentalist revolution' (Reagan 1986a: n.p.). To this Reagan added about Gaddafi, 'I find he's not only a barbarian but he's flaky' and 'I think he's more than a bad smell' (quoted in Bowman 2011: n.p.). Reagan also asserted in a televised address to Americans that Gaddafi 'engaged in acts of international terror, acts that put him outside the company of civilized men' (Reagan, 1986b). Gaddafi thus stood for the barbaric, the uncivilised, the animal, the disease that stood against international order. For longer than Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi had been

symbolised in mainstream narratives as a demonic presence, with little in the way of dissenting or critical voices being heard. The fact of the hegemony of this narrative, over an extended period and with the weight of presidential and mainstream media authority, could help to inculcate a popular belief in Gaddafi as a singularly malevolent, dangerous, and unstable creature. It would take little effort for this narrative to be reanimated in 2011, with the desire to secure popular support for regime change.

In terms of myth, numerous fabrications of atrocity and methods of committing atrocity were conjured up by proponents of intervention in ways that spoke to deeply ingrained beliefs around race and sex, and the violence of non-Western others. Some of these unproven allegations simply recapitulated the narrative of Gaddafi as a perpetrator of egregious and lurid crimes, in a manner that sexualised Orientalist discourse. This was especially the case with the charge that Gaddafi had ordered systematic mass rape against Libyans during 2011, a charge made by both the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and the US ambassador to the UN. The additional charge was that troops, ordered to rape, were fuelled by Viagra. If sex performed an internalising function of graphically vivifying the nature of Gaddafi's domestic 'tyranny', race performed an externalising function that forged a convergence between anti-black racism in Libya and US desires to remove Libya as a leader in Africa. Here we are dealing with the myth of African mercenaries being flown in to massacre protesters, and even to indiscriminately terrorise ordinary Libyans with rape and murder. While not a single African 'mercenary' was ever produced to substantiate such claims, nor any evidence recorded in the many photographs and videos of protests and fighting in the streets, there was instead ample evidence documented by international human rights organisations and the media of black Libyans and African migrant workers being indiscriminately assaulted, abducted, tortured, and often murdered by the Libyan insurgents. Thus, the African mercenary myth was useful for cementing the intended rupture between 'the new Libya' post-Gaddafi and Pan-Africanism, thereby realigning Libya with Europe and the 'modern world', which some in the Libyan opposition explicitly

craved. The myth also became a useful cover for mass murder along racial lines. Indeed, Amnesty International itself found that 'some Libyan rebels seem to regard the war against Gadhafi as tantamount to a battle against black people' (Ghosh 2011). Other myths produced by Western and Arab media, as well as Libyan activists at home and anti-government exiles, involved stories proven to be false that concerned alleged atrocities by the Libyan government. These included stories of: Libyan jets, helicopter gunships, and anti-aircraft artillery being used against unarmed protesters; mass defections from government ranks; peaceful protests; and, of course, of a threatened 'genocide' against Benghazi (see Forte 2012a: ch. 5; 2012b). Taken individually or together, these myths could be useful in producing an international perception of emergency by heightening fear, rooted in prior beliefs of the monstrosity of non-Western regimes and the sexual violence of black people.

Morality played a paramount role in compelling and justifying foreign military intervention (as counter-intuitive as this statement might seem at this point). In particular, a series of moral dualisms acted as the central justificatory principles. One such moral dualism could be characterised as follows: 'If we do not act, we should be held responsible for the actions of others. When we do act, we should never be held responsible for our own actions'. A second moral dualism involves selecting certain lives as being better, more important, and thus worthy of being saved than others – thus, while an alleged massacre to come in Benghazi could not be tolerated by Western leaders and key opinion shapers, the actual devastation of Sirte did not occasion any outcry. A third moral dualism comes into play with the selectivity in practice of what in theory claims to be a universal and non-discriminatory defence of human rights: intervention is only justified in some parts of the world, but not in others, regardless of the presence or scope of human rights violations. A fourth moral dualism came into play with the shifting labelling practices employed by US officials and the dominant media: while the US labelled armed civilians in Afghanistan as either 'terrorists' and/or 'insurgents', in Libya they became 'revolutionaries' and their deaths in battle were counted among 'civilian' deaths. Hence, 'protecting civilians' in NATO's public parlance became a practice

of spearheading the Libyan insurgency by attacking government troops and armed civilians who supported the government. However, the broader role of moralising discourse was to depoliticise military intervention, to arrest opposing discourses, and to remove the motivations for intervention from question.

Emotions which, when given voice, supported and demanded intervention, were themselves moulded and motivated by the skilled use of language, within the context of what media commentators dubbed the 'Arab Spring'. Vicariously experienced through messages from activists on the street posted to social media, a certain fervour acquired momentum that hailed all protesters in any streets in North Africa and the Middle East as agents of a new progressive order of freedom, democracy, and human rights. The Iraq War was seemingly forgotten as some Westerners now saw themselves as part of an alliance with Arabs against local tyranny (while preserving US dominance). What remained to shape these emotions into a direction that favoured military intervention in Libya (and potentially in Syria) was the deployment of stock narrative tropes that themselves evoked emotional responses. Thus, the 'international community' of 'civilised' nations 'not standing idly by' as assaults on protesters stained 'the conscience of the world' meant intervening on 'the right side of history' to 'save lives' and 'protect civilians' with 'surgical strikes' that respected 'human rights'. Intervention thus became not a geopolitical act, but something akin to therapy, or a mode of health-care provision. That Libya was made to stand out as the special subject of direct intervention, and be accepted as such by some, owes a great deal to the prior demonisation of Gaddafi, moral dualisms, and the powerful pull of racial and sexual myths. An anti-imperialist stance could thus be made to look as dark, sinister, and seemingly a part of 'the problem'. Emotional responses, however, were highly dependent on attention spans, and as Libya began to fall into ever deeper chaos as a result of the intervention, and violence continued steadily past 2011, the emotional outcry diminished considerably. Moreover, there is little evidence to suggest that such emotions resonated outside of social media, revealing dominant opinion formations in social media spheres not to reflect mass opinion on the whole.

Libya may thus also offer a case study of how the regimentation of emotion can inform new theorising about imperialism. However, considerable caution is necessary. On one side, it is largely true that social and corporate media resonated with calls for a no-fly zone to be imposed, from late February to early March 2011. As an example, the online activist organisation Avaaz (2011) collected more than 800,000 signatures petitioning the UN to impose a no-fly zone over Libya. Meanwhile, it did not clarify to signatories that the UN had no power of its own to implement this, and that such action would involve direct military intervention to destroy Libyan airfields and air defences, as Defense Secretary Gates had to explain emphatically (HAC 2011). Indeed, Avaaz's campaign director obfuscated this latter fact, saying the petition was not a call for military intervention (Hilary 2011). Major human rights organisations in the global North, along with numerous newspaper editorials, made similar calls. On the other side, it is largely not the case that these views were representative of a plurality or majority of citizens, and there is little evidence that they succeeded in persuading the public to back such calls for intervention. A series of opinion polls conducted in the US showed large majorities were against the idea that the US had a responsibility, moral or otherwise, to intervene in the Libyan civil conflict, and even while significant majorities reaffirmed their dislike for Gaddafi and even supported his removal, they were against US military intervention aimed at regime change. The national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, conducted from 10–13 March 2011, during a critical period of especially heightened dissemination of most of the elements discussed above, found that: 63 per cent rejected the idea that the US had a responsibility to intervene, lower than was even the case for the wars in Kosovo and Bosnia; only 16 per cent favoured bombing Libyan air defences, an essential part of imposing a no-fly zone; 69 per cent of US respondents rejected providing arms to Libyan opposition groups; and 82 per cent were against sending US troops. Even so, among those favouring military intervention, moral arguments tended to win over arguments for regime change (Pew 2011: 1–2). A number of polls by other organisations, also conducted in March 2011, tended to produce results very similar to those reported by the Pew Research

Center (see e.g. ABC 2011; Polling Report 2011), with some reporting that fewer than 10 per cent of Americans supported US military intervention to remove Gaddafi (Angus Reid 2011). As something of an exception, a CNN poll found greater support for establishing a no-fly zone and sending arms to the insurgents, with 76 per cent reporting an unfavourable opinion of Gaddafi; yet even here, 62 per cent were opposed to military intervention for the purpose of regime change (CNN 2011: 2–3). By June 2011, what limited US public support existed for the Libyan War had declined further (Condon 2011). In addition, most elected representatives in the US Congress consistently voted to deny support for the war. As one example, on 24 June 2011, the US House of Representatives voted 295–123 against a resolution authorising the limited use of force in support of the NATO mission in Libya (AP 2011).

### Protecting Libya: imperial humanitarianism

The culmination of all of these factors was the intent to continue fortifying a system of globalised humanitarian abduction, ultimately rooted in the civilisational projects of 19th-century British and American colonisation. This system involves claims to be better at administering the world, and being entitled to administer it, according to either divine, moral, political, economic, or technological endowments. Humanitarian interventionism thus points to a way of administering the world that goes beyond brute force alone, and harkens back to the older philosophical premises of settler colonialism. Part of this claim to administrative enlightenment involves the idea of protection, which assumes that some exist in a natural state as hapless and incapable victims who require the aid of powerful outsiders. It also assumes that natives are ruled either by brutish or irresponsible chiefs and parents, and thus redemption necessitates external correction. The construction of ‘humanitarian emergency’ as if it were a simple fact, one that occurs naturally or due to innate deficiencies in a given (usually non-Western) sociopolitical system, tends not only to reinforce notions of pathological primitiveness, but goes further by creating the ‘need’ for a custodial relationship between the tutors from the global North and their racially differentiated wards. It is not surprising, then,

that the ‘responsibility-to-protect’ doctrine – articulated by key proponents such as Gareth Evans, Lloyd Axworthy, and Michael Ignatieff – should arise from settler states such as Australia, Canada, and the US, with long histories of missions, residential schools, and ‘Indian schools’, along with the office of ‘Protector of the Aborigines’ in British colonies. Aborigines were to be saved from themselves, rescued from their own inborn defects and savage habits while their lands and political self-determination would be surrendered to their rescuers.

Humanitarian interventionism is premised on an understanding that the sovereignty of others should not matter when others prove themselves incapable of proper self-rule, as implied by the construction and application of international programmes of good governance, transparency, accountability, and aid to civil society via non-governmental organisations in order to ‘save failed states’ (see Helman and Ratner 1992–93 vs Gordon 1997). This updated version of the civilising mission is found in new reprises of the white man’s/woman’s burden in saving others from barbarity, what some call the ‘white savior syndrome’ (Cammarota 2011). This syndrome usually involves creating decontextualised ahistorical binaries (using mythological principles of demonisation and sanctification): bad guys and good guys, dictators and civil society, extremists and moderates, black and white, them and us.

To the extent that contemporary notions of protection reflect a prior history of settler colonisation and extant philosophies of liberal humanitarianism, we should expect to see an updating of the processes of abduction beyond the straightforward acts of seizure of the past, when indigenous children were forcibly removed from their parents and relocated to white-run schools. Abduction in the contemporary sense can involve, in broad terms, the assumption of responsibility for/over others, thus appropriating control of their social formation; it can also involve varied forms of removal, from the adoption of children to international scholarships and other forms of retraining; it can involve destabilisation, regime change, and forms of military destruction, so that intervention today may beget intervention tomorrow; abduction may also involve the capture of local leaders and placing them on trial in international tribunals or local courts under foreign occupation; and it can involve various ways

of creating the suffering of others and then pleading the need to come to their rescue.

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## Algeria: From Anti-Colonial Struggle to Complicity with Imperialism

### Introduction

The year 2014 marks the commemoration of the 52nd Anniversary of the national political independence of Algeria and the 60th birthday of the Algerian revolution that started in November 1954. The Algerian people resisted French colonial oppression for decades before leading one of the greatest and most important revolutions in the 20th century against the NATO-supported second colonial power in the world.

Any discussion around decolonisation and anti-imperialism cannot ignore the importance of Algeria and how its revolution was so inspiring to many oppressed people all over the world. However, nowadays, Algeria is neither the revolutionary of 1954-62 nor the anti-imperialist of the 1960s and 1970s.

Algeria has been run by a dictatorship since its independence in 1962 and despite undeniable achievements on many fronts, the Algerian people, after regaining their national sovereignty from the French colonialists, have not yet achieved popular sovereignty that will fulfil the emancipatory vision of the Algerian revolution.

This essay will attempt to outline Algeria's trajectory from an assertive anti-imperialist

stance to a position of submission and complicity with imperialism.

### The colonial era and the revolutionary struggle

For in a very concrete way, Europe has stuffed herself inordinately with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries: Latin America, China and Africa. From all these continents, under whose eyes Europe today raises up her tower of opulence, there has flowed out for centuries towards that same Europe diamonds and oil, silk and cotton, wood and exotic products. Europe is literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothered her is that which was stolen from the under-developed peoples.

Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a program of complete disorder. But it cannot come as a result of magical practices, nor of a natural shock, nor of a friendly understanding. (Fanon 1961: 81)

No revolution resembles another. This is because all of them are rooted in a specific national or regional history, are led by particular social and generational forces, and happen at a given moment in the development of the country. However, they present a common point, without which they wouldn't be called revolutions: the seizing of state power. Despite all the elements that might point to continuity, it is this rupture that marks a revolutionary change: the arrival of a new bloc of classes to the direction of the state or the transition from a colonial dependence to a national independence, even if the latter can be formal only.

The Algerian independence struggle against the French colonialists was one of the most inspiring anti-imperialist revolutions in the 20th century. It was part of the decolonisation wave that had started after the Second World War in India, China, Cuba, Vietnam, and many countries in Africa. It inscribed itself in the spirit of the Bandung Conference and the era of the 'awakening of the South', a South that has been subjected for decades (in some cases more than a century) to imperialist and capitalist domination under several forms from protectorates to proper colonies as was the case with Algeria.

Retrospectively, French colonisation of Algeria was unique as it was the first Arabic-speaking country to be annexed by the West and the first country in Africa to be subjugated by a Western empire; way before the Berlin Conference in 1884, when different European empires (British, French, German, Belgian, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese ...) met to carve up the continent between themselves.

Algeria was invaded in June 1830 and the immediate pretext was revenge for an incident in 1827 when the then reigning Dey of Algiers, Khodja Hussein, angry at the French refusal to repay loans from the Napoleonic wars, attacked the French consul with a fly whisk, shouting: 'You are a wicked, faithless, idol-worshipping rascal'. But the real motivations were mainly political and economic. Politically, the invasion of Algeria was intended to distract attention from the domestic problems of the Bourbons and the unpopularity of Charles X's regime by the pursuit of *la gloire* abroad. Economically, Algeria was seen as a country of enormous untapped potential; and French traders wanted to expand outwards from the trading posts they had already established on the Algerian coast (Evans and Phillips 2007: 2).

The French army would spend the next 50 years suppressing an insurgency; 15 of them would be spent fighting the brilliant, fierce, and dedicated resistance-leader Abd-El-Kader. The 25-year-old holy man (*marabout*) was dubbed the Algerian Cromwell by the writer Alexis de Tocqueville and the extent of his success can be measured by the Treaty of Tafna in 1837, whereby he was recognised as the sovereign over two-thirds of Algeria. The war of conquest was relentlessly resumed two years later under the command of the ruthless Marshal Bugeaud who adopted a scorched-earth policy, causing barbarian atrocities that ranged from population displacement, to land expropriations and massacres including by asphyxiation with fire of more than 500 men, women, and children from the Ouled Riah tribe who had taken refuge in caves. In the face of a stronger and better equipped army, Abd El-Kader eventually surrendered in December 1847 (Fisk 2005: 637).

Along with Marshal Bugeaud's 'pacification', colonisation was actively encouraged. In a renowned statement before the National Assembly in 1840, Bugeaud said; 'Wherever there is fresh water and fertile land, there one

must locate colons, without concerning oneself to whom those lands belong'. By 1841, the number of such colons already totalled 37,374, in comparison with approximately 3 million *indigènes* (Horne 2006: 30). By 1926, the number of settlers had reached some 833,000, 15 per cent of the population, reaching just under 1 million by 1954.

French rule in Algeria lasted for 132 years, as opposed to 75 years in Tunisia and 44 years in Morocco, a depth and duration of colonial experience unique within Africa and the Arab world. It was in 1881 that Algeria was administered for the first time as an integral part of France. With the extension of civilian rule, the second-class status of the Muslim population became the foundation stone of French Algeria, and Muslims' exclusion was reflected at all levels of political representation. Anti-Muslim discrimination was also built into the electoral system and the inferior status of Muslims was inscribed into the law with the introduction of the loathsome Code de l'Indigénat in 1881 (McDougall 2006: 89–90). This was a uniquely repressive set of rules that closely controlled the Muslim population and imposed harsh penalties for a multitude of infractions, including vague crimes such as being rude to a colonial official or making disrespectful remarks about the Third Republic (Evans and Phillips 2007: 33).

Frantz Fanon in his powerful book *The Wretched of the Earth*, a canonical essay about the anti-colonialist and Third-Worldist struggle, describes thoroughly the mechanisms of violence put in place by colonialism to subjugate the oppressed people. He wrote: 'Colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence .... The violence which has ruled over the ordering of the colonial world, which has ceaselessly drummed the rhythm of the destruction of native social forms and broken up without reserve the systems of reference of the economy, the customs of dress and external life, that same violence will be claimed and taken over by the native ...' (Fanon 1961: 31,48).

According to him, the colonial world is a Manichean one, which goes to its logical conclusion and 'dehumanizes the native, or to speak plainly it turns him into an animal'. Sartre does not disagree. In his essay 'Colonialism is a System', written in 1956 (two years after the

start of the Algerian revolution), he wrote: 'The conquest was achieved by violence. Over-exploitation and oppression required the maintaining of violence including the presence of the army. ... Colonialism denies human rights to men whom it subdued by violence, whom it maintains by force in misery and ignorance, therefore, as Marx would have said, in a state of "sub-humanity". In the facts themselves, in institutions, in the nature of exchange and production, racism is inscribed' (Sartre 1964).

### **Colonialism denied Algeria its own history, nationalism reinvented it**

National liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new formulas introduced, decolonisation is always a violent phenomenon. (Fanon 1961: 27)

After the French succeeded in violently suppressing the rebellions, the last of which was in 1871 in Kabylia, it took over half a century for the Algerian resistance movement to surge again and to morph into a proper Algerian nationalism. Broadly speaking, we can distinguish three strands of Algerian nationalism, each identified with a particular leader. There was the religious movement embodied by the Association of the Ulema of Sheikh Abdul-Hamid Ben Badis; the revolutionaries following Messali Hadj; and finally the liberals led by Ferhat Abbas. (For more detail on the Associations of the Ulema and the liberals led by Ferhat Abbas, see McDougall 2006.)

Messali Hadj is considered to be the founding father of Algerian nationalism and the first one to call explicitly for total independence (for all three Maghreb nations), part of the programme of the political grouping he founded in 1926 in France called the Etoile Nord-Africaine (ENA), which under his leadership had become the most radical of all nationalist organisations.

In February 1927, in Brussels and during the Congress of the League Against Imperialism, he was charged to present the ENA's programme. It was the first time that an orator on an international rostrum demanded independence for the Algerian colony and the Tunisian and Moroccan protectorates: 'The independence of one of the three countries will only succeed if the liberation

movement of that country is sustained by the other two' (Ikdam, October 1927, cited in Kaddache 2003).

Originally linked to the French Communist Party (PCF), the grouping set out to organise the North African proletariat base, and unlike other organisations had social demands such as the redistribution of land among the *fellahs* (peasants) and confiscation of all property acquired by the French government or colons. Messali fell out with the French communists because they relegated the Algerian anti-colonial struggle to the background of the international fight against fascism. The PCF went a step further in 1939 when it introduced the concept of Algeria as a 'nation in formation'. This concept, which argued that Algeria was not yet a fully fledged nation, was perceived as an apology for colonialism by Messali and his followers. The ENA was dissolved, and then reconstituted by Messali in 1937 as the *Parti du Peuple Algérien* (PPA), this time concentrating its activities on Algeria alone. During the Second World War, the PPA operated as a clandestine organisation and after the war, it assumed another name: *Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques* (MTLD).

### **'Victory in Europe Day' and Massacres in Algeria (8 May 1945)**

It was at Setif that my sense of humanity was affronted for the first time by the most atrocious sights. I was sixteen years old. The shock which I felt at the pitiless butchery that caused the deaths of thousands of Muslims, I have never forgotten. From that moment, my nationalism took definite form. (Kateb Yacine, Algerian writer and poet, quoted in Horne 2006: 27).

While across Europe there were fervent celebrations to mark the Nazi capitulation, and while France was rejoicing at the deliverance from a five-year occupation, Muslim Algerians were massacred by the thousands because they dared to demonstrate for something they had been denied for more than a century. In that Victory in Europe Day, they marched in Setif in favour of Algerian independence and they deployed banners bearing slogans such as: 'For the Liberation of the People, Long Live Free and Independent Algeria!' They also brandished for the first time a flag that would later become that of the FLN liberation movement.

The French colonial authorities repressed the march in blood, and an insurrection ensued leading to the murder of 103 Europeans and the slaughter of tens of thousands (some estimates go up to 45,000) of Muslims in Setif, Guelma, and Kherrata by French gendarmerie, troops, and vengeful European settlers.

These massacres had significant repercussions for the Algerian nationalist movement and for the young generation of militants. The Algerian war had already started and the preparation for an armed struggle imposed itself. Most historians agree that these massacres of 1945 marked every Algerian Muslim alive at the time and every one of the Algerian nationalists who was prominent in the FLN traces his revolutionary determination back to May 1945.

Ben Bella, a future leader of the FLN and head of state, a much-decorated sergeant of the 7th Regiment of Algerian *Tirailleurs*, a unit that had distinguished itself in battle in Europe, wrote: 'The horrors of the Constantine area in May 1945 succeeded in persuading me of the only path; Algeria for the Algerian'. Also convinced was Mohammed Boudiaf, another revolutionary FLN leader and also future head of state, who rejected electoral politics, rejected assimilation, and saw violence and direct action as the only way forward (Evans and Phillips 2007: 52).

In effect, these tragic events represented the first volley of the struggle for independence.

### **The War of Independence (1954–62)**

Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it. (Frantz Fanon)

Breaking with Messali's classical scheme of progressive raising of Algerians' consciousness, some young militants formed a small autonomous nucleus, issued from l'Organisation Spéciale (OS, a clandestine structure of the MTLD that was charged to prepare for a future armed struggle) and pressed for the concrete preparation of an armed insurrection. The idea was announced through the formation of the *Comité révolutionnaire pour l'unité et l'action* (CRUA) by Hocine Aït Ahmed, Ahmed Ben Bella, Mostefa Ben Boulaid, Larbi Ben M'hidi, Rabah Bitat, Mohammed Boudiaf, Mourad Didouche, Mohamed Khider, and

Belkacem Krim. The insurgency erupted on 1 November 1954, and to mark a rupture with the past, a new name was given to the CRUA: Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) (Ruscio 2012).

The Algerian struggle for independence cannot be divorced from the then international context of decolonisation and the first wave of the awakening of the global South: the formation of the Arab League committed to Arab unity in 1945, Indian independence from Britain in 1947, the success of the Chinese Maoist revolution in 1949, and the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955 that united 29 non-aligned countries from Africa and Asia challenged colonialism and neo-colonialism in a setting of Cold War tensions.

The FLN leaders were under no illusion about the scale of the task confronting them and their confidence was bolstered by France's humiliating defeat in Indochina in May 1954. The great victory of the Vietnamese people at Dien Bien Phu, as Fanon described it, was no longer, strictly speaking a Vietnamese victory. 'Since July 1954, the question which the colonised peoples have asked themselves has been "What must be done to bring about another Dien Bien Phu? How can we manage it?"' (Fanon 1961: 55).

The importance and impact of Dien Bien Phu on the psyche of colonised people can hardly be overstated. Benyoucef Ben Khedda, president of the Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne (GPRA), recalled: 'On 7th May 1954, the army of Ho Chi Minh inflicts on the French expeditionary corps the humiliating disaster of Dien Bien Phu. This French defeat acted as a powerful catalyst on all those who have been thinking that an insurrection in the short term is by now the only remedy, the only possible strategy .... Direct action took precedence over all other considerations and had become the priority of priorities' (Ben Khedda 1989).

In 1962, the nationalist leader Ferhat Abbas wrote: 'Dien Bien Phu was not only a military victory. This battle remains a symbol. It is the Valmy of the colonized people. It is the affirmation of the Asian and African man vis-à-vis the man of Europe. It is the confirmation of human rights at a universal scale. In Dien Bien Phu, France has lost the sole legitimation of its presence: the right of the powerful' (Abbas 1962).

What followed the declaration of war on 1 November 1954 in Algeria was one of the

longest and bloodiest wars of decolonisation, with merciless atrocities committed by both sides (for a history of the war see Horne 2006; Stora 1994). The FLN leadership had a realistic appreciation of the military balance of power, which was in favour of the fourth largest army in the world. Their strategy was inspired by the Vietnamese nationalist leader Ho Chi Minh's dictum 'For every nine of us killed we will kill one – in the end you will leave'. The FLN wanted to create a climate of violence and insecurity that would be ultimately intolerable for the French, internationalise the conflict, and bring Algeria to the attention of the world (Evans and Phillips 2007: 56). Following this logic, it was the decision of Abane Ramdane and Larbi Ben M'hidi to take the guerrilla warfare to the urban areas, and specifically to launch the battle of Algiers in September 1956. There is no better way to fully appreciate this key and dramatic moment of sacrifice in the Algerian revolution than the classic realist film of Gillo Pontecorvo: *The Battle of Algiers*, released in 1966. There is a dramatic moment when Colonel Mathieu, a thin disguise for the real-life General Massu, leads the captured FLN leader Larbi Ben M'hidi into a press conference at which a journalist questions the morality of hiding bombs in women's shopping baskets. 'Don't you think it is a bit cowardly to use women's baskets and handbags to carry explosive devices that kill so many people?' the reporter asks. Ben M'hidi replies: 'And doesn't it seem to you even more cowardly to drop napalm bombs on defenceless villages, so that there are a thousand times more innocent victims? Give us your bombers, and you can have our baskets' (Fisk 2005: 640).

Eventually, the urban insurgency was crushed mercilessly using torture on a systematic scale to extract information, including fitting electrodes to genitals (Alleg 1958). By October 1957, the FLN networks had been dismantled in Algiers after the blowing up of the last remaining leader Ali La Pointe in his hiding place in the Kasbah. Despite losing militarily, the FLN scored a diplomatic victory as France was isolated internationally because of the scandalous methods of repression that had been used.

Official estimates claim that in fact 1.5 million Algerians were killed in the eight-year war that ended in 1962, a war that has become the foundation of modern Algerian politics.

### **Support for revolution, delinking from the imperialist-capitalist global order**

In 1962, the Algerian people not only celebrated their newly found sovereignty but also expressed their dreams and aspirations for a different, more just and egalitarian society. Proud of its victory and animated with a revolutionary fervour, Algeria wanted to build a new socialist order, to halt underdevelopment, put in place an agrarian reform, and achieve mass education.

For a big part of what was already called the Third World, especially those countries that were still under the grip of colonial domination, Algeria opened the way, represented a model and a hope. Its capital Algiers was the Mecca of all revolutionaries all over the world, from Vietnam to southern Africa, who desired to bring down the imperialist and colonial order. Algeria was the first country in Africa to regain its independence by force of arms. In 1964, the charter of Algiers declared that: 'The development of socialism in Algeria is linked to the struggles of other people in the world ... The resort to armed struggle might prove decisive to regain national sovereignty. For every revolutionary movement, support to this struggle is sacred and is not subject to any bargaining' (quoted in Deffarge and Troeller 2012: 20). Hence, Algeria's decisions to give asylum and financial support for many movements all over the world that were fighting for independence, against racism, colonialism, and imperialism.

In the Arab world, the new regime established ties with the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, and rode the wave that chased the French and the British after their pitiful adventure in the Suez in 1956, a wave that imposed independence for Tunisia and Morocco, a wave that overthrew the monarchy in Iraq in 1958 and in Northern Yemen in 1962. Palestinians also initiated the first actions to put back their country on the political map, from which it has been removed (Gresh 2012: 6).

In the first year of independence, with an incredible spontaneity and voluntarism, Algerian workers took over operations of modern farms and units in industrial settings abandoned by the Europeans fleeing to France and engaged in an amazing grass-root experience of self-management and socialism from below (Gauthier 2012: 12).

For 15 years from 1962–78, Algeria was fully engaged in a delinking experience to break away from imperialist domination. Hence, its role as one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) that was aspiring for a new world order and seeking economic independence. The Algiers Charter of the 77 in 1967 was a significant step in shifting the fight against colonialism and neo-colonialism from the political sphere to the economic one. It strongly denounced the intolerable logic of an unjust global system where the continuous enrichment of the already privileged countries was obtained through the growing impoverishment of the proletariat nations, which were seen on the one hand as a market for the dominant Western economies, and on the other, as a reservoir of cheap labour and natural resources. Che Guevara also argued in this direction in a speech delivered in Algiers in February 1965. In this he demanded that countries claiming to be socialist should eliminate 'their tacit complicity with the exploiter countries, with the West' in their relationships of unequal exchange with people fighting imperialism (Guevara 1970: 574).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Algerian nation state had a clear and ambitious programme of ideas and the will and ability to realise them. A significant and inspiring industrialisation project was pursued. Nationalisations to recover the resources of the country were initiated and culminated in February 1971 when the oil industry was nationalised, the first successful nationalisation of oil ever to be carried out in the Arab-Islamic world (Roberts 2003: 13).

Inspired by Fanon, the regime under Ben-Bella in 1963 nationalised lands belonging to foreigners; and, under Boumediene, an agrarian revolution was initiated in 1971 to eliminate the agrarian bourgeoisie and to support the peasants, who had been the principal victims of the war operations.

Dictatorial and military, the regime of Colonel Houari Boumediene did not represent a right-wing military dictatorship (like that of Augusto Pinochet's in Chile) that served the interests of an oligarchy linked to imperialism. Boumediene's economic policies were accompanied by progressive social achievements such as democratisation of education, the access of huge segments of the popular masses to health services, guarantees for employment and social upward

mobility. In the 1960s and 1970s, Algeria alongside Egypt occupied a prominent and leading position during the first wave of the 'awakening of the South' in the era of Bandung and the Non-Aligned Movement. By 1980, they were the most industrialised states in Africa, aside from South Africa, with a solid experience in industrial management and technological expertise. This autonomous project served a majority of the population and thus achieved a form of social consensus; indeed, denying its significant accomplishments would be nihilistic. However, this attempt of delinking from the imperialist and capitalist global order had its own limitations and internal contradictions (Amin 1990). These included the continuing food dependence, reliance on oil revenues, the infiltration of foreign capital in the economy, and, more importantly, the dictatorial character of the regime, which concentrated powers in the hands of one person, Houari Boumediene.

The political rule of Boumediene suppressed the democratic practice, depoliticised the masses, and reduced them to passive spectators instead of encouraging them to actively participate in public life. Moreover, this project was piloted by a national bourgeoisie in the Fanonian sense of the word, which led to popular discontent in the form of open criticisms during the debates around the National Charter of 1976 and through strikes in the public sector in 1976 and 1977, contesting the development of inequalities, repression, and lack of freedoms. The crux of the matter was how to remedy these serious shortcomings, and how to overcome the contradictions in order to take the nascent development project to the second phase of consolidation, and achieve genuine economic independence. However, after the death of Boumediene in 1978, these considerations were unfortunately not on the agenda of the Algeria's ruling elite in the 1980s and 1990s.

### **From resistance to submission to imperialism**

#### **Algeria, an immense bazaar: the politics and economic consequences of *infatih***

With the global neo-liberal wave gaining momentum in the 1980s, sweeping away the Soviet Union and the Eastern European bloc,

eventually spreading to the whole world from Argentina to Poland and not sparing China on the way, and with the plummeting of oil revenues, the Algerian national development project was abandoned by the Chadli clique. It was dismantled as a process of de-industrialisation was carried out to give way to neo-liberal policies and the submission to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its structural adjustment programmes (1992–93, 1994–99). This had heavy consequences on the population: job losses (more than 500,000 in a few years), decrease of purchasing power, cuts to public spending, increasing precariousness of salaried workers, opening-up of foreign trade, and the privatisation of public companies. Algeria paid around \$90 billion in debt service between 1990 and 2004, and paid its debt several times, in fact, seven times. This does not constitute a necessary imperative, but a choice of a regime that abdicated to Western hegemony (Belalloufi 2012).

The dignitaries of the new neo-liberal religion declared that everything was for sale and opened the way for privatisations. This allowed an explosion of import activity, which pronounced a death sentence on the productive economy. Rachid Tlemçani notes that by 1997, 7,100 companies (5,500 private) controlled the non-hydrocarbon foreign trade, the majority of which were specialised in import activities resulting in the transformation of the Algerian market into an immense bazaar for foreign goods with its reservoir of corruption (Tlemçani 1999: 118).

Under President Bouteflika, from 1999, this neo-liberal logic of undermining national production while promoting an import-import economy (imports increased from \$9.3 billion in 2000 to \$27.6 billion in 2007 and \$54.85 billion by 2013) was pushed even further, aiming for a complete integration into the global economy. This is evidenced by the dismantling of all custom barriers, the progress in WTO membership negotiations, the adherence to the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA), and the signature of an association agreement with the European Union in 2002.

It is in the name of the sacrosanct principles of the neo-liberal dogma that industrial investment halted for 30 years. It is because of their profiteering disciples that industrial figures mutated into traders-importers. It is also in their name that the share of industry in GDP went down from 26 per cent in 1985 to



about 5 per cent in 2009 (Belalloufi 2012: 25). The successive governments made all the necessary arrangements for the foreign investors to rush into Algeria and confirmed their mission of offering the lion's share of the revenues to multinational companies. As a matter of fact, they have hastened to rescue the crisis-ridden European car industry by importing 200,000 cars a year, perpetuating the logic of an economy based on import, trade, sheer consumption, and shunning local production and industry (Hamouchene 2013b).

The *infatih* (economic liberalisation) of the last three decades ended up assigning the country to the status of a dependant of the imperialist-capitalist system and an exporter of energy within the neo-colonial framework of the international division of labour. Instead of re-industrialising, building a productive economy far from the bazaar import-import activities, and investing in Algerian youths who still risk their lives to reach the northern shores of the Mediterranean in order to escape the despair of marginalisation and relegation as Hittistes (literally, those with their backs to the walls referring to the unemployed who ceased to be stakeholders in post-colonial Algeria), the Algerian authorities confirmed their surrender to foreign capitals and multinationals by the Renault fiasco (Charef 2012) and destructive shale gas exploitation (Slate Afrique 2013), placed its considerable foreign reserves (around \$200 billion dollars) in foreign bonds, mainly American, and also offered financial support to the IMF (\$5 billion dollars), a neo-colonial tool of plunder that crippled the country's economy in the 1990s.

### **Algeria's foreign policy: complicity with imperialism**

In the last two years, several articles and analyses have attempted to decrypt Algeria's ambiguous position towards Western imperialist interventions in Libya and Mali. In contrast to its assertive and resolute diplomacy of the 1960s and 1970s, the Algerian regime confused many people as it was not easy to tell whether it supported or opposed these recent wars.

On the one hand, those who were reductionist failed to analyse the situation objectively and resorted to the easy explanation that Algeria is being pragmatic and that the seeming contradictions in its decisions and actions are only a reflection of its realist approach.

However, those who adhere to a binary view of the world, divided into an imperialist North and an anti-imperialist South, had a Pavlovian attitude which advanced the idea that Algeria is under immense pressure and is being targeted for its resource nationalism and resistance to Western hegemony (Glazerbrook 2013).

Will these claims stand the test of scrutiny? Is the Algerian position towards these imperialist interventions justified? Why has Algeria failed to play a more proactive role in solving the crises in Mali and Libya, given that it is a regional military and economic power that should have been at the forefront in these conflicts? This is even more important as Algeria was very concerned about its security and warned against the risks of destabilisation and spill-overs in the whole region if the conflicts escalated after Western intervention. Finally, is Algeria really resisting Western hegemony and challenging imperialist domination?

### *Tacit complicity with NATO's intervention in Libya*

The Algerian regime was generally hostile to the uprisings that took place next to its borders, and adopted its so-called 'neutralist' position in relation to the momentous events in nearby countries. How could it be otherwise for an authoritarian regime whose survival was threatened by the risk of the revolutionary wave reaching its shores? Several high-ranking officials declared that Algeria had its 'Arab Spring' in 1988, insisted on maintaining the 'false' stability of the country, and used the card of the 1990s traumatising civil war to dissuade the population from going down the same path as the Egyptians and Tunisians.

The Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC), irritated by the 'neutralist' position of the Algerian authorities and their refusal to recognise it as an interlocutor, claimed – without any documentary evidence – that Algeria gave support to the Gaddafi Regime and provided him with mercenaries to curb the revolution. The NTC also reacted angrily to Algeria's decision to grant members of the Gaddafi family asylum and considered this an act of enmity (Guardian 2011). The Algerian ambassador to the UN told the BBC that Algeria was simply respecting the 'holy rule of hospitality' and was accepting the family on humanitarian grounds. Moreover, some sources have reported that the government

had promised to hand over Muammar Gaddafi should he try to follow his family into Algeria.

A closer look at the seemingly ambiguous position of the Algerian regime will reveal that the latter was trying to adapt to a fast-changing situation in the region and was mainly preoccupied about its survival and stability. Algeria voted against a resolution endorsing a no-fly-zone adopted by the empty-shell Arab League, and declared that it was up to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to decide on such a matter, which it did by passing resolution 1973 allowing for a NATO intervention in Libya.

Algeria did not oppose the intervention and did not even question its imperialist motives, and only resorted to vague criticism of the Western powers' implementation and interpretation of UNSC resolution 1973. Algeria's hostility towards the intervention can be explained by its fear of what it would mean for the border zone and by what has become a spiritless and perfunctory opposition to foreign meddling in other countries' internal affairs.

#### *Collusion in the French intervention in Mali*

While Algeria was actively pushing for a diplomatic solution to the conflict in northern Mali and was a mediator in negotiations between the Malian authorities and the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) and the Islamists of Ansar Al-dine, France was not too keen on this approach from the start and ended up intervening unilaterally in January 2013. The Algerian regime surprisingly declared its respect for the French decision to intervene because Mali had requested help from 'friendly' powers!

Since when has the ex-colonial master been a 'friendly' power that cares about the livelihood of Malians? Since when has France, with its neo-colonial tools (Françafrique, Francophonie ...), cared about the fate of Africans?

Two explanations can be put forward to understand the Algerian reaction: (a) the Algerian regime naively believes that the Western powers have suddenly become altruistic, abandoning their imperialist mission of dominating and controlling the world according to their narrow interests; or (b) the regime simply abdicated to Western hegemony and is willing to co-operate.

A few days after the French intervention in Mali, the Algerian people had to suffer the humiliation of being informed by the French foreign minister that their authorities had 'unconditionally' opened Algerian airspace to French planes, and he demanded that Algiers close its southern borders. Who said that neo-colonial attitudes are anachronistic (Hamouchene 2013a)?

Some journalists also reported that a US drone was allowed to monitor the hostage stand-off in the BP plant in In Amenas, in south-eastern Algeria; and more recently, it came to light that the Algerian authorities were giving precious support to the French operations in Mali by discreetly providing much-needed quantities of fuel to the French military. This in fact amounts to collusion with the French neo-colonial expedition (Le Point.fr 2013).

#### *Algeria and the military threat on Syria: words are not enough*

Algeria was among the 18 countries (from a total of 22) which voted in November 2011 for Syria's suspension from the Arab League and for implementing sanctions over its failure to end the government crackdown on protests. It is a staggering majority-decision coming from countries like Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Algeria, which possess dazzling records on democracy and human rights.

In a move perceived as a withdrawal from the process of searching for a political settlement for the Syrian crisis, the Qatar and Saudi Arabia-led Arab League made the decision, on March 2013, to offer the Syrian National Council (SNC) Syria's place in the Arab League. Algeria and Iraq voted against the motion, arguing that such a decision contradicts the Arab League Charter on the inadmissibility of any actions aimed at regime change in the Arab states.

The summit's final document says that, 'each member state of the Arab League has the right to supply defensive means as it so wishes – including military defence – to support the resistance of the Syrian people and the Free Syrian Army (the armed wing of the Syrian opposition)'. With such a statement, one only wonders if the Arab League has not become a sycophant to the Western powers (France, Britain, and the US) and a legitimising tool for their agendas in the region.

On 1 September 2013, the Arab League urged international action against the Syrian government to deter what it called the 'ugly

crime' of using chemical weapons. It was a major step towards supporting Western military strikes but fell short of the explicit endorsement that the US and some Gulf allies had hoped for. Echoing its position in the Libyan crisis, Algeria, alongside Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and Tunisia expressed its opposition to a foreign military intervention in Syria outside of the 'international law', a concept it knows very well to be a euphemism for the rule of the powerful. Fortunately, this time, Russia and China are not on the side of the Western powers.

It is inconceivable to deem such a stance anti-imperialist or reconcile it with an outright collusion in the French intervention in Mali. Such behaviour is utterly inconsistent with a coherent anti-imperialist line and it can hardly be qualified as resistance to Western hegemony. Algeria has adopted a very low-profile diplomacy in the Libyan conflict, and toward the Arab League and Turkey's reactions to the Syrian crisis; a position that no longer captures its heavy-weight and daring diplomacy of the 1960s and 1970s, and which exemplifies the erosion of any semblance of an anti-imperialist line once attached to the FLN Regime. However, this behaviour is not contradictory with the Algerian regime's narrow survival policy, even if it means going by the dictates and decisions of the powerful and manoeuvring within this framework of Western and US domination over the world.

If Algeria really wanted to play an active role in the momentous changes happening in the region (including firmly opposing the intentions of the Gulf monarchies and Turkey in Syria) and to be a relevant actor in managing the multiple crises in its immediate neighbourhood, it would need to change itself first.

### **Resistance to imperialism: a definition**

Let's put the Libyan and the Malian examples aside, and assume that these are isolated cases or that they could constitute exceptions to Algerian foreign policy; and let's examine together whether Algeria can qualify as anti-imperialist in other respects. To do that, we need to have some objective criteria to make a judgement.

Samir Amin – an Egyptian economist, social theorist, and leading radical thinker – identified five privileges of the contemporary imperialist centres that must be challenged

to call into question the logic of imperialist domination (Dembélé 2011: 45):

- domination over technologies with the overprotection of the World Trade Organisation (WTO)
- exclusive access to the natural resources of the planet
- control of the integrated and globalised monetary and financial system
- control of means of communication and information
- control of weapons of mass destruction.

We can already see that certain states are challenging or resisting one or more of these monopolies in a more or less important fashion: China, India, and Brazil in the field of technological development; South Africa, Brazil, and China in access to natural resources; China, Iran, and Venezuela in accessing the globalised capital markets and managing their own financial systems; Qatar, Venezuela, and China in the domain of communications and information; and Iran, India, North Korea, Pakistan, and Brazil in the field of weapons of mass destruction.

However, challenging one or more of these monopolies does not necessarily constitute an anti-imperialist position. For instance, Qatar, India, and Pakistan are close allies of Western powers and qualifying them based on these criteria as anti-imperialist states would be an aberration. China is particularly interesting, as many observers have argued that it could be an aspirant and potential rival imperialist (Klare 2012). 'Rebellious' regimes such as Iran have a double nature. On the one hand, they are part of the global capitalist/imperialist system because they are keeping their own people under its domination as well as applying to them neo-liberal potions. On the other hand, these regimes resist and refuse to align entirely with the big powers. Resistance to these exclusive controls is therefore a necessary but not sufficient condition to become an anti-imperialist state and represents a start on the road towards a fully coherent and principled anti-imperialist position. An anti-imperialist stance should be inscribed in a well-thought-out vision that not only attempts to contest these five monopolies, but also strongly opposes imperialist interventions and meddling in other states' affairs. This stance should also challenge the profoundly unjust political and

neo-liberal economic order, and fully support the emancipation struggles for people all over the world. Surely, there will be some contradictions along the way, but these need to be addressed within an appropriate framework in which the principal aim is to bring an end to imperialist domination.

### Algeria is submissive to imperialism

Is Algeria challenging the imperialist monopolies mentioned above? Is it trying to break away from global imperialist domination? A simple look at the facts on the ground will reveal that this is not the case.

Long gone are the days when the capital Algiers was seen as the Mecca of revolutionaries all over the world. Times have passed when Algeria was audacious and undeterred in its foreign policy, when: (a) it supported anti-colonialist struggles all over the world; (b) the question of Palestine and Western Sahara were at the top of its foreign-policy priorities; (c) it significantly supported (in financial and military terms) the Palestinian cause in the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973; (d) it broke its diplomatic relations with the US in 1967; (e) it played a leading role in the Non-Aligned Movement and hosted its 1973 summit in Algiers, which strongly denounced the structural inequality in the global system benefiting already-privileged countries at the expense of the other ones in the global South. Long gone is the era when Algeria engaged in a delinking experience to break away from imperialist-capitalist domination. It sadly renounced the pursuit of an autonomous national development that involved a certain degree of economic and political confrontation with imperialism.

Alas, recovering the national sovereignty from French colonialists was not accompanied by recovering the popular sovereignty through building a strong civil society and actively involving the masses in public life in a democratic way. These are absolutely necessary conditions in sustaining the resistance to Western domination. The new pathology of power (to borrow Egbal Ahmad's words), observed in the authoritarian and coercive practices of the nationalist bourgeoisie (Said 1994: 269), the demobilisation and depoliticisation of the rural and urban masses, was at the heart of the subsequent dismantling of the national development project and replacing it with an anti-national one. In his chapter on 'the pitfalls of nationalist consciousness'

in the *Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon foresaw this turn of events. He strongly argued that unless national consciousness at its moment of success was somehow changed into a political and social consciousness, the future would not hold liberation but an extension of imperialism with its divisions and hierarchies (Fanon 1961).

Algeria nowadays, and especially after 9/11, closely co-operates with NATO, an organisation that not only supported the French military against the Algerian people in the War of Independence (1954–62), but recently invaded Afghanistan and intervened in Libya. The regime also collaborates with the American and British armies that invaded Iraq and equally with the French army that intervened recently in Ivory Coast to impose a presidential candidate and in Mali to supposedly fight Islamist fundamentalists. The secretive and authoritarian regime – dubbed by Algerians 'Le Pouvoir' – participates alongside the CIA, FBI, MI6 and DGSE in the 'Global War on Terror', which constitutes another alibi for imperialist interventions (in fact and according to the report "Globalizing Torture: CIA Secret Detention and Extraordinary Rendition" by the Open Society Justice Initiative released on February 2013, Algeria is complicit in the human rights abuses associated with the illegal CIA secret detention and extraordinary rendition programme, as it permitted use of its airspace and airports for these operations). And not content with all of this, it plays the role of a guardian to fortress Europe by protecting it from poor African immigrants who are escaping the misery caused by the European powers in the first place (Morice and Rodier 2010). Algeria also joined the Union for the Mediterranean alongside a criminal and colonialist state like Israel and now has a 'moderate' position towards the Palestinian question. Likewise with the Western Sahara situation, Algeria is now backing the outrageous principle of a solution accepted by both parties. Since when do the dominated need to wait for the dominant to accept the terms of their liberation? There was also a rapprochement with the world organisation of the Francophonie, one of the principal instruments of French political domination in the world. This bleak picture of a reactionary and shameful foreign policy is truly disgraceful to the memory of the historical revolutionary FLN.

Having said that, Algeria has not yet become a simple valet to imperialism like the petro-monarchies of the Gulf, the Egypt of Hosni Mubarak or the Jordanian monarchy, but it has renounced the logic of resistance. It embraced another logic, that of abdication, submission, and collusion, which will only worsen. The Algerian regime does not contest the profoundly unjust international order and seeks instead to adapt to it. It is far from the courageous and conscious resistance of certain Latin American countries like Chavez's Venezuela and Morales's Bolivia.

### **Anti-imperialism and the democratic struggle**

#### *The comprador bourgeoisie*

The analysis above suggests that an anti-national, sterile, and unproductive bourgeoisie is getting the upper hand in running the state affairs and hegemony in directing its economic choices, albeit with some resistance from a quasi-non-existent national bourgeoisie (e.g. amendment of the unashamedly anti-national hydrocarbon Khelil Law in 2006, after Hugo Chavez lobbied against it). It is enough to look at the unproductive nature of the Algerian economy, with the preponderance of import-import trade activity and de-industrialisation to realise that this bourgeoisie has a character, which is essentially rentier, commercial, and speculative. It is only interested in exporting its own profits abroad, hoarding them in tax havens, or investing them in non-productive sectors/assets such as restaurants, hotels, and properties. (On how this bourgeoisie is striving to sell off the economy in the most anti-national manner, see Belalloufi 2012.)

This comprador bourgeoisie does not produce but consumes what it imports and seriously undermines vital public services such as health and education, which are deteriorating year after year. The Mafia-like oligarchy is neo-liberal by religion and has no regard for the future of the country and its population. It is parasitic and rapacious as it preys on the economy and maintains an endemic corruption (responsible for a series of major corruption scandals that touched important sectors of the economy, including the most strategic of them all: the energy sector). It is entirely subordinated to the international system of economic, political and military domination, and therefore, represents the true agent of imperialism and is its useful accessory.

No to imperialist meddling, no to the status quo  
This largely comprador regime is the biggest threat to the sovereignty of the nation and must surely be overthrown. However, it is necessary to make sure that this fall occurs within a national context and won't lead to the instauration of another regime submissive to imperialism. This is an extremely challenging task for the democratic opposition and necessitates an adequate understanding of imperialism and its workings to avoid becoming an instrument of destabilisation for the country in favour of imperialism. However, an absolute vigilance towards imperialist designs must not lead to accepting or defending the status quo and the fake stability, namely supporting a regime that is denying its own people the right of self-determination. This caution must not lead to renouncing the struggle for democracy and the hegemony of the oppressed masses.

We must not be blinded by a narrow and simplistic anti-imperialist stance that is based on a Manichean view of the world: an imperialist North and an anti-imperialist global South. This view ignores the realities on the ground where people are suffocated by corrupt and authoritarian regimes, most of which are clients of the Western powers. It also dilutes with its distasteful lack of nuance the importance of building strong democratic states and comforts certain parasitic comprador classes that posture as super-patriots. Unfortunately, this view is reinforced by what has been happening to the inspiring 'Arab Spring', especially its hijacking by the Western intervention in Libya and the proxy war in Syria.

It is therefore of paramount importance to realise that authoritarianism and corruption are the twins of any neo-colonial enterprise, and are objective allies of imperialism (reactionary political Islam being another example). Non-democratic regimes (like those of Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi, Bashar Al Assad, and Bouteflika) can be managed more or less easily by the imperialist centres and are weakened and threatened by a system that dispenses with popular legitimacy to seek the Western powers' approval instead. As long as these regimes are vassals to the imperial powers, they can repress and oppress their people at will, and when they are no longer useful they are abandoned and replaced (Saddam, Mubarak,

Ben Ali, Gaddafi, Ali Saleh ...). This refusal of democracy is hence very perilous for the sovereignty of the nation and its territorial integrity.

Moreover, these 'patriotic' dictatorships serve perfectly the imperial designs of redrawing a greater Middle East within a strategy of weakening nation states. Along with Western military supremacy and massive propaganda, our dictators are key elements in this plot. They repress their own people, participate in proxy wars for the empire (Iraq against Iran) and can be used at the end as a justification for a direct intervention/occupation. The Iraqi scenario is not something of the past; it has been replicated rather efficiently in Libya and is currently underway in Syria, albeit taking a different approach. It can potentially be extended to other countries including Algeria to fully eradicate any unwillingness to be dominated. It doesn't happen only to others, so how can we avoid re-colonisation, the direct management of our energy resources, the control of our territory, as well as the subordination of the country to interests that are not ours?

There is no better quotation to respond to this question, to emphasise the extreme danger of dictatorial systems to national security and to underscore the necessity of a national cohesion based on citizenship and freedom than what the late Abdelhamid Mehri, an intellectual of the Algerian revolution, said about Algeria in the aftermath of the historic events in Tunisia and Egypt in 2011: 'If you don't want to be changed by the others, you have to change yourself. Democracy is not only an ethical necessity; it is equally a national security imperative. Therefore, dictatorship and authoritarianism are real existential threats and objective allies to imperialism'. More than 50 years after its independence, Algeria has to reconnect with its revolutionary past by instigating a democratic revolution to end tyranny and injustice, as well as dismantling the comprador state and installing an audacious anti-imperialist regime that will truly liberate the people and also strive to build an equitable multi-polar world order. This can be done through transcending national constraints and establishing strong alliances worldwide, in particular South-South in order to rise, emerge, and achieve freedom from imperialist domination.

Hamza Hamouchene

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## Anti-Imperialism in Greece and Turkey regarding Cyprus (1950s and 1960s)

### Introduction

Since the Second World War, the US has managed to become an informal empire (Pantich and Gindin 2012), with 'Washington able to set the parameters within which the other capitals [have] determined their course of action' (Lundestad 2003: 64). Together with the advance of imperialist rule, however, resistance to it also advanced (Said 1994: xxiv). In Greece and Turkey, resistance to imperialism rested upon one basic premise: the asymmetric alignment with the US and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) had turned Greece and Turkey into a US dependency, even a semi-colony. Although colonial status was not actually imposed in either country (Bozarslan 2008: 423–427), genuine democracy was deemed to have become impossible and economic underdevelopment inevitable.

The left presented imperialist powers as foreign conquerors who were maintaining their countries in a state of virtual occupation (EDA 1961a; TİP 1963). Greece and Turkey had been transformed into the colonial, or semi-colonial, subjects of imperialist powers, chiefly the US, which exploited these nations by using their geographical, military,

strategic, and economic positions. In other words, it was believed that Greece and Turkey were among those countries of the periphery that supplied imperialist powers with an important market and sources of raw materials and soldiers for imperialist wars, as in the Korean War (1950–53). Thus, both countries could neither form nor execute an independent national policy as imperialist powers were oppressing, denationalising, and colonising them.

The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate in what way anti-imperialism was used in the case of Cyprus; an issue with national meaning for both countries. Indeed, Cyprus presents ‘an episode of contention’ for two (Greek and Turkish) conflicting nationalisms. As anti-imperialism was one of the leftist ‘weapons’, our analysis will limit itself to the leftist parties: the United Democratic Left (EDA) in Greece, and the Workers’ Party of Turkey (TİP) in Turkey. Instead of trying to define what anti-imperialism is, we will try and place anti-imperialist rhetoric and actions in the domain of practical politics. In other words: ‘socialism becomes what socialists do’ (Sassoon 2001: 50).

### **Eniaia Dimokratiki Aristera (EDA, 1951–67)**

After the arrival of a British colonial presence in Cyprus in 1878, Greek irredentist nationalism, under the guise of *enosis* (union of Cyprus with Greece), gradually became a massive movement. The Hellenic ethnic character of Cypriot society, the role of the Church, and the political programme of *Megali Idea* (Great Idea), aimed at encompassing all ethnic Greek-inhabiting areas in a Greek state, provided the foundational elements and legitimacy for this process (Anagnostopoulou 2004a: 198–228), in which Britain was instrumental because it ‘not only created the space for the introduction of Hellenism, it planted its seeds’ (Varnava 2012: 33). Encapsulated particularly in the concept of *Megali Idea*, irredentism soon developed into a sort of political and cultural orthodoxy, ‘the only ideology’, of the Greek state (Stefanidis 2007: 17). After the Second World War, and especially after the Greek Civil War (1946–49), irredentism came to be expressed by the right and was associated with patriotism and anti-communism, excluding the left from the ‘patriotic scene’ of the country, especially,

since the consequences of the Civil War were attributed *en bloc* to those of that political persuasion. *Ethnikofrosyni* (national-mindedness/loyalty to the nation), the updated ideological orthodoxy of pre-war Greece, emerged as an anti-communist platform; it was institutionalised in the security apparatus of the Greek state, and it served as ‘a measure of loyalty to national integrity and the “prevailing social order”’ (30).

Against this background, the Greek left, represented legally in Parliament by the EDA, had constantly to prove its patriotism in order to be incorporated anew into Greek society. This was managed, painstakingly and not always successfully, through the national issue of Cyprus, the Hellenicity of which, as the EDA also claimed, was ‘beyond argument’. As a matter of fact, ‘nobody dared to question the Greekness of Megalonisos [Great Island] and the inalienable right of her people to unite with the national whole’ (CQGP 1997: vol. 1, 40); a transition that, according to the left, would be achieved through self-determination; a stage that, because of the island’s population being 80 per cent Greek, would eventually lead to *enosis*. Self-determination however, could not be exercised because of Greece’s dependency upon US imperialism (EDA 1961a: 13–14), the primary goal of which was to ‘preserve the state of vassalage’ (EDA 1961b: 8–9). Imperialism for EDA, in all of its aspects (economic, military, political), held the country captive, and made it unable to exercise an independent foreign policy that would set Cyprus free from British colonial administration and the imperialist designs in general. The party argued that the country’s national independence was being removed, as demonstrated by US objections to Greece bringing the issue to the United Nations, or the lack of any direct or indirect reference there to Cyprus’s self-determination (EDA 1955).

Both the left and the right held that Anglo-Saxon imperialism provided extensive assistance and support to Turkey; a belief that gained additional credence in Greek political circles after the events of September 1955 (19), when the Turkish government organised a pogrom against the Greek population of Istanbul in response to the anti-colonial events in Cyprus a few months before. These events signified for the left the grave need for all agreements that had been made with the Great Powers and Turkey to be terminated



immediately (ASKI, EDA Archive, Box 478), because they ‘turned the situation in Cyprus to a critical state, [...] which could lead to genocide’ (CQGP: vol. 1, 267). The common politics and tactics of Turkey and Great Britain in Cyprus, and those of the US through NATO, were presented by the EDA as those of a ‘common imperialist camp’ which acted on the basis of a common agenda: the perpetuation of the imperialist system through Cyprus. The increasing US interference in the domestic affairs of the country marked also the dynamic presence of Greek youth, which in large part supported the EDA and its belief that ‘the restoration of its [the people’s] dominant rights and enosis with Motherland Greece’ (Avgı, 20 April 1955), would also mean the liberation of the country and Hellenism from its *par excellence* enemies the Americans and NATO; the ‘New Perses’ (the Titan god of destruction) that aimed at subjugating the people (Avgı, 6 December: 1958).

Following the bi-communal bloody events of December 1963, the Cyprus crisis re-emerged along with the vehemence of anti-imperialism/anti-Americanism, in which ‘the American imperialists and the Greek reactionaries organize in common a big conspiracy to close the issue of Cyprus, and overthrow democracy in Greece’ (Avgı, 23 September 1964). The US stance on the Greek positions, as well as the Johnson Letter, with which the Turkish invasion of the island to stop the atrocities was stopped by the US, and the Fulbright Mission that followed, were all perceived as a grand conspiracy targeting Greece and the people of Cyprus (Avgı, 5–8 May 1964); see also the centrist newspaper *Ta Nea*, 8 and 11 April 1964; a conspiracy that aimed at turning Cyprus into a NATO base (CQGP: vol. 3, 281) to control and fulfil the imperialist countries’ military designs in the region (CQGP, vol. 3: 200). The imperialist goal of transforming Cyprus into a NATO military base was a living proof that the Greek government wished to close the issue of Cyprus, while its propaganda tried to persuade the Greek people that only the US could ‘give her [Cyprus] to us [the Greeks]’, as happened with the London–Zürich Agreements of 1959. The government failed, however, to see that the interest of the Atlantic community came ‘above any national interest’ (CQGP: vol. 2, 262). As the party emphasised, the US always aimed at including Cyprus under the authority

of the ‘imperialist and colonialist NATO’, a fact that was revealed every time by the speedy US acceptance of any plan the British proposed (EDA 1959: 4–12).

For the EDA, the issue of Cyprus never stopped being an anti-colonial issue that could be solved through the united anti-imperialist struggle; a consistent stance of the anti-Western, anti-NATO, and generally anti-imperialist climate of the period. The anti-imperialist, anti-Western agenda of the EDA was not always expressed through an open support of the Soviet Union’s positions, mainly out of fear of the party being targeted for communistic actions, but there was a constant support of the Non-Aligned and Third-World countries and of the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist climate as this was taking shape during the Cold War. Indeed, the EDA was very often referring to the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist struggle in Latin America and the Third World as comprising those forces whose support Greece should seek in relation to the Cyprus question (Odysseos 1964: 49). By hitting Cyprus, the imperialists ‘wish to numb the morale of the liberation movements. They want to establish an offensive military base facing the “worrying” voices of the Afro-Asian shores’ (Odysseos 1965: 79–89). The imperialist conspiracy, one of the party supporters wrote, also managed to drag the Greek government in, because ‘the Greek government never realized that, behind the official declarations, enosis through the establishment of an independent Cypriot state and ensuring self-determination means a national and fortified solution’ (Diamantopoulos 1964: 3). This fortified solution was no other than the position of ‘Independence–Self-determination–Enosis’ (Avgı, 9 February 1967); the position that was shared also by the Greek Cypriot leadership.

### **Türkiye İşçi Partisi (TİP, Workers’ Party of Turkey, 1961–71)**

For Turkey, the Cold War realities and her alliance with the West was a realisation of her vision of belonging to the West, as this was envisioned and dictated by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his circle. Within the Cold War and following the NATO needs and ‘directives’, the Kemalist state adopted anti-communism and transmuted it into one of the main state ideology elements, appropriating at the same time those Cold War

elements that it deemed necessary to secure both national unity and the Western orientation of and identification with the nation. The result was a nationalist, anti-communist Kemalist right, adapted to the Cold War conditions, fighting the 'enemy' that came to be defined as 'the communist internal enemy that threatens the unity of the Turkish nation and as the external national enemy that threatens the security of the Turkish nation' (Anagnostopoulou 2004b: 180). The identification of communism with national threat, a common characteristic of Cold War, in the Turkish context meant 'nationalisation' of Islam, the Turkish pre-Cold War enemy, and putting it to the service of the nation.

The re-signification of Islam helped Turkey to Turkify the Ottoman past, or, at least, some aspects of it. In the case of Cyprus, being a former Ottoman territory, this meant that those elements deemed necessary were also attributed to Cyprus. It was expressed through an irredentism, in which the Turkish Cypriots were part of the Turkish nation. The Turkish Cypriots became, from that time onwards, part of the Turkish nation, who were threatened both by communism and by the national 'imperialist' enemy: the Greeks (182). The Greek threat of the early 20th century, during the Turkish National Liberation period (1919–22), was developed and adapted in the Cold War context. In this, the Greek irredentist agenda of *enosis* worked as a catalyst to prove that the Greek threat was still evident and imminent, and helped to elevate the Cyprus Question as *milli dava* (national issue). Finally, by providing a national content and dimension to Cyprus, Turkey managed also not to distance herself from the Kemalist principle of *Misak-i Milli* (National Pact), another significant element for the Turkish left during the 1960s.

The Turkish left during the 1960s, represented in the National Assembly by the TİP, was characterized by two distinct characteristics: anti-imperialism and Kemalism, the former gaining its legitimacy and impetus through the latter. The anti-imperialism of the Turkish left came to be identified with an independent Turkish foreign policy, having as its main point of reference the Cyprus question (Christofis 2015). As the party chairman Mehmet Ali Aybar argued, 'beneath the Cyprus question lie the interests of imperialism', and, therefore, Turkey 'is not able to pursue an independent foreign policy' (Aybar

1968: 322). Independent foreign policy, however, meant equal distance both from the Soviet Union and the US (97). Following the example of the Third World and Latin America (Ünsal 2003: 247–252), the TİP associated, anti-imperialism among other things with nationalism, the latter being 'the ideological expression of our [Turkish] people against the foreign yoke, against imperialism and capitalism. [Nationalism] is resolutely attached to the idea of independence' (Aybar 1963: 9).

The TİP's significance lies in the fact that it managed to become one of the main anti-imperialist voices in Turkish politics. The main argumentation of the party was based on criticising the bilateral agreements and friendly relations of the Demirel Government with the US, which was responsible for the '35 million m<sup>2</sup> of Turkish land [that] are under American occupation' (Aybar 1965: 176). Not only the Demirel Government and the Justice Party, but all Turkish governments, the *comprador* bourgeoisie as the party referred to them, were severely criticised for betraying Turkey's national interests since Mustafa Kemal's death.

The Cyprus question demonstrated, according to the TİP that Turkey was in a *déjà vu* situation, and that the crisis in the island after 1963, caused by Makarios's attempt to amend the Constitution, proved to Turkish people that their country was confronting the same imperialist powers that she had fought during the Turkish National Liberation Struggle. In other words, Turkey was confronting anew the Anglo-Saxon imperialism and the ambition of the Greek bourgeoisie to fulfil the imperialism of the *Megali Idea* (Boran 1965). The party referred to the dependency on foreign capital that the country had fallen into as the trap of Anglo-Saxon imperialism. This dependency, and the true nature of Turkish-US relations, became apparent with the Johnson Letter, and at the same time forced the Turkish government to acknowledge how far it had been drawn away from Kemalist principles (IISG, *Kemal Sülker Papers*, folder 558).

This feeling, that Greece had become the channel of imperialism, was verified and empowered by the Acheson Plan a few months later. The Plan was of US invention, promoting the *enosis* of Cyprus with Greece by vesting part of Cyprus to Turkey. The Turkish government should not accept the Acheson

Plan, the party claimed, because it signified another imperialist intervention. It was *enosis* in 'disguise' and acceptance of it would mean approval of a solution contrary to the national interest, by giving the false impression of a country orbiting around Anglo-Saxon imperialism (Boran 1965).

The TİP's reaction to the US president's Johnson Letter (which deterred a possible Turkish military landing on Cyprus) and the Acheson Plan was to call for a common anti-imperialist front of 'all the socialists and Atatürkists to unite their power for an independent foreign policy' (IISG, *Kemal Süllker Papers*, folder 551). Similarly, during the general congress held in the city of Malatya in 1966, it was decided that Turkey's primary agenda was to reach full independence by turning back to the foreign policy of Atatürk's Turkey during the National Liberation Struggle (TİP 1966). The national liberation war was portrayed by the TİP as the historical basis of its understanding of national independence. In the party's narration of that period, those years were depicted as ones of national awakening for the people living within the borders of the national pact. Aybar stated that 'forty-four years after the completion of the first one, we must begin a second National Liberation Struggle [...]. We are determined in the struggle until such time as the last American soldier has left our country' (IISG, *Kemal Süllker Papers*, box 610, folder 1). Atatürk's nationalism was the battle-standard against Western imperialism (Doğan 2010: 160).

Not a single government, TİP argued, 'had not realized, and did not want to realize, that Great Britain and the US, in relation with the Cyprus question, would be on the side of the Rum and the Greeks [Yunan]', because their interests are best served that way (IISG, *Kemal Süllker Papers*, box 610, folder 1). The British bases in Cyprus, and the support of *enosis* with Greece in order to make Cyprus a NATO member, were of prime importance to British and US interests: so what the Turkish governments called 'alliance' and 'friendship' was not a policy to be trusted by the people. With the Johnson Letter, the people realised this, and so participated in an anti-imperialist struggle in which, a party report notes, 'the Cyprus Question is the most tangible, the most scrutable and sensitive issue of the anti-imperialist struggle and the Second National Liberation movement for the masses and the public opinion' (IISG, box 558). 'The Cyprus

Question is the point of reference', the party report continues, 'and of highest importance for the anti-imperialist struggle', but the government seemed unable to realise this and to oppose the US. Therefore, the Cyprus question presented a lost cause for the party, especially, since the undisputed right of the Turkish people to 'define its own fate' was taken away by imperialism and its domestic collaborator. Since Cyprus could not return to its rightful owner (i.e. Turkey), and the 'double *enosis* – partition' would be stopped by the Greek and Anglo-Saxon imperialists, then the best solution for Turkey and other smaller states, including the Third-World countries, would be a demilitarised, federated Cyprus. This became one of the fundamental positions of the TİP throughout the 1960s (Boran 1967: 79).

## Conclusion

Since the end of the Second World War, the left had to operate in societies where nationalism was well entrenched and disseminated by powerful ideological state apparatuses (Althusser 2001), while Marxism was usually considered a non-patriotic foreign-driven ideology. Nationalism, in the distinct forms of *Ethnikofrosyni* and *Kemalism*, was the effective means by which the state was identified with society, and provided at the same time the fitting basis on which to construct the image of a homogenised will. The image of the national unity and the quest of the national interests proved to be substantially effective for parties that sought legitimisation. In the attempt to present the left also as patriotic, and gain credentials and popularity by presenting itself as the vanguard of the whole nation, it came to adopt similar, if not identical, ideological tools to those of the dominant ideologies, filtered of course, through a leftist discourse, most notably, anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. During that process, the concept of nation's primacy became basic also to the actions of the anti-imperialist movement. While, on the one hand, anti-imperialism becomes the means for the left to mobilise the people, the mobilisation took place in the name of nationalism, and not in the name of anti-imperialism, or internationalism. In other words, socialism was subordinated to national ends, placing the anti-imperialist values of socialism at the

service of the particularistic irredentist values of nationalism.

Thus, although always dominated by a consistent anti-imperialism/colonialism, the left aimed to fulfil the interests of the respective national centres. Furthermore, the goal of the left was not to acquire national independence for Cyprus that would lead to an independent nation state. Rather, in the Greek case, national independence would be a transitory stage to *enosis*; while, in the Turkish case, it meant that national independence was the necessary solution since Taksim (partition), or accession to Turkey, had been strongly opposed by Greece and the Great Powers. In other words, it seems that the left also got trapped in the anachronistic irredentism of the Motherlands; *enosis*, as demonstrated by the Greek and Greek Cypriot elite, was presented as the only national solution for the Greek Cypriot community. As a national solution, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot community adopted a federated, demilitarised Cyprus only because the other choices did not present a feasible alternative and would eventually have led, according to the party, to serious problems.

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## Australia's Colonisation and Racial Policies

### Introduction: the colonisation of the Australian Aborigines

The violent transition to the capitalist system over the centuries preceding 1778, the date of the first British convict ship to arrive on Australian shores, produced new criminalities to protect property and create the dependence on monetary exchange required for the widespread creation of a wage labour force. Extreme poverty amongst those dispossessed by the enclosures of land maintained a steady rate of crime and hence a steady flow of criminals sentenced to transportation. Given the loss of the North American colonies in 1776, and a disastrous attempt to set up convict settlements in West Africa, the British government sought new possibilities of colonization for both the transportation of criminals and for the emigration of its impoverished working classes. Captain James Cook's 'discovery' of Australia's eastern coast in 1770 provided the opportunity to set up penal/settler colonies in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), followed by Western Australia and Port Philip Bay (Victoria). South Australia became a colony in 1834, and in 1863 the area of the Northern Territory was included within its boundary, to be ceded to the federal government in 1911. Queensland was declared a British colony in 1859. Granted self-government from the

1850s, the several distinct areas of settlement remained colonies of the British Crown until they united as states of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901.

Cook had been issued secret instructions by the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty to search for the continent that was thought to exist to the west of New Zealand. Such a discovery, the instructions suggested, 'may tend greatly to the advancement of the Trade and Navigation' of the British Crown (Lord Commissioners 1768). Upon discovery of the continent, Cook was, with the consent of the natives, to 'take Possession of Convenient Situations in the Country in the Name of the King of Great Britain', unless the land was uninhabited, in which case Cook was to 'take Possession for his Majesty ... as first discoverers and possessors' (ibid). Cook observed indigenous natives, the Aborigines, but believed them too few in number and too primitive in development to be able to lay claim to ownership of the land, and hence he did so for the British Crown. Thus, from the earliest contact, Britain's view of Australia was underpinned by economic motives: extension of the Empire through possession, possibilities of trade and investment, as well as the protection of property, reduction of overcrowding in jails, and the relief of poverty at home. But more insidious than these explicit economic motivations was the way in which economic progress was understood in relation to different races or human types. Civilisation itself was an economic achievement consisting of a division of labour within production and within the family, property, and individual property ownership, and a political system which managed the protection of property and freedom of exchange (see e.g. the writings of Australia's first chair of Political Economy Edward Hearn 1863; 1883). The known peoples of the world were ranked within a hierarchy of civilisation, with the British race and its advanced industrial economy at the apex. Early descriptions of the Australian Aborigines focused on their simple and primitive lives, including their tribal and communal existence, nomadic tendencies, lack of cultivation or herding, and the absence of mechanisms of governance. The Aborigines lacked, therefore, precisely those attributes and capacities which explained Britain's economic success. From this perspective, they were always a problem to be managed in one way or another by government authorities.

Thus, while broadly similar (see McGrath 1995), the colonies', and later the states', administration of the Aborigines reflected a host of 19th and 20th-century discourses around civilisation, racial difference, and economic progress, all of which were underpinned by Western understandings of the civilised economic subject. Although in recent decades Aborigines have won some land rights and some semblance of self-governance, there remains within policy a strong element of this colonial problematic of the fit between Aboriginal people and the Western economic subject, evidenced most obviously in the management of the economic lives of the Aborigines of the Northern Territory under the so-called Intervention of 2007 and the Stronger Futures legislation of 2012 (see Harris 2012; Vivian 2010). From an indigenous perspective, Australia remains a colonising power, and Aboriginal people remain, on the whole, dispossessed (see, Cooke et al. 2007). This chapter charts the history of that dispossession, but it should be noted that despite this sorry story, the history of Australia's colonisation has also been one of Aboriginal resistance and tactical use of the colonisers, their laws, culture, and institutions; and one of humanitarian feeling and support for Aborigines, even if some of that support was offered from within a Western frame of reference.

### **Governance of the indigenous: dispossession**

The Aborigines' failure to develop the land in ways consistent with Western ideas of economic progress provided the British government with an economic justification for its assertion of ownership over Australian territory. Despite this dispossession, however, from white settlement until the colonies were granted self-government from the 1850s, interactions between the settlers and Aborigines were, according to British policy, to be guided by respect and fairness. Governors of the colonies were instructed:

To endeavour by every means in his power to open an intercourse with the natives, and conciliate their good-will, requiring all to live in amity and kindness with them; and if any of our subjects should wantonly destroy them or give them any unnecessary interruption in the exercise of

their several occupations, it is our will and pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment, according to the degree of the offence. (Colonial Office quoted in Reece 1974: 104)

In reality, the British government had little interest in the Aboriginal people until after the Reform Bill of 1832, which brought to office men of humanitarian sympathies (Foxcroft 1941: 22). And because all land had been decreed the property of the British Crown, Aborigines had no formal rights to remain within their traditional areas in the face of the expanding settlement as freed convicts were joined by British immigrants in demanding land grants. Frontier violence was rife, practised by both settlers and Aborigines (see Reynolds 1987). Such was the neglect of the orders of the Colonial Office that when the 1838 massacre of 28 Aborigines at Myall Creek led to the hanging of seven white men, following an initial trial in which they were found not guilty, the public was outraged (see Reece 1974: ch. 4). Settlers felt entitled to protect their property since the government refused to do so:

The lives of these men – the lives of all who have been slain in contests between the blacks and the whites, might not have been sacrificed, but for the successive Governments of this Colony, who have hitherto refused protection to the settlers, by means of an effective armed force; and by this refusal given rise, in all probability, to a war of extermination (Sydney Morning Herald 1838).

Thereafter 'it became almost impossible to prosecute whites for the murder of Aborigines' (Reece 1974: 191).

The first decades of Australia's colonisation saw the dispossession of the Aborigines around the coastal settlements as wool became the source of wealth both in Australia and Britain. The ability of the colonial governments to sell or lease land to graziers maintained the colonies' financial independence of the mother country, and cheap land lowered the cost of resources to Britain's expanding industries. Thus, despite official policy, both the colonial and British governments were committed to developing the pastoral industry, and encouraged, by omission or commission, the extension of the frontier further and further inland (Christie 1979; Dunn

1984). Cattle replaced sheep as the frontier extended into northern and inland regions, and frontier violence persisted well into the 20th century (see Reynolds 1987).

The early decades of Australia's colonisation were also, however, characterised by efforts to civilise the Aborigines. Most reports of these experiments were negative, leading the constitutional scholar, politician, and founder of the system of primary education in New South Wales William Wentworth to argue that:

The aborigines of this country occupy the lowest place in the gradatory scale of the human species. They have neither houses nor clothing; they are entirely unacquainted with the arts of agriculture; and even the arms, which the several tribes have, to protect themselves from the aggressions of their neighbours, and the hunting and fishing implements, with which they administer to their support, are of the rudest contrivance and workmanship. Thirty years intercourse with Europeans has not effected the slightest change in their habits; and even those, who have most intermixed with the colonists, have never been prevailed upon to practise one of the arts of civilized life (1820: 27–28; see also Woolmington 1988).

Nevertheless, with the tide turning in Britain in favour of the self-government of the colonies, and with the strength of humanitarian feeling toward the natives of the British Empire following the abolition of British slavery (see Aborigines Protection Society 1837), the period in which the dispossession of the Aborigines dominated was followed by one of protection within the context of pastoral labour shortages, a widespread belief that the Aborigines were doomed to a natural extinction, and a commitment within legislation to instil some form of work ethic within, in particular, the younger generations of Aborigines, a policy position which would continue until the 1960s.

### **Governance of the indigenous: becoming workers**

Shortages of labour in settler colonies was a major concern of Edward Wakefield's system of colonisation. The problem with the British colonies in the New World, he argued, was that land was so plentiful that new settlers could become landholders without the

need to become wage workers. A labour force could be ensured only if the price of land was high enough to force newly arrived settlers into the labour market. After saving for some time, workers would buy land from the government, and the government would use these funds to pay the fares of new emigrants. Wakefield's vision of the successful settler colony was a re-creation of the factors which had led to British economic growth: 'the greatest division of labour; the greatest production; the utmost excess of production over consumption; the greatest accumulation of wealth – in other words, the utmost prosperity of the colony – the greatest progress of colonisation' (Wakefield 1829: 21).

Wakefield's policies were adopted to various degrees by the British and Australian authorities, and systematic emigration from the United Kingdom to Australia began in 1831 (see Goodwin 1966: ch. 3). Consistent with the demands of the emerging economies, most likely to receive free passage were agricultural workers and their families, and single women in domestic service (see Haines 1994). Aboriginal labour was also a solution to the shortages of workers, as well as the expense of white workers, particularly in the expanding pastoral lands throughout the continent. Although frontier violence remained significant in these areas, Aborigines began to be seen more as potential workers, albeit a reserve army of labour to whom no long-term commitments needed to be made, than threats to property. Several factors bolstered this view. In eastern Australia the supply of labour fell from the 1830s as the assignment of convicts to remote settlers waned and finally ended with the 1840 ban on transportation to Australia's eastern coast. From the early 1850s, agricultural and pastoral workers were lost to the newly discovered goldfields. And Aborigines were superb bushmen, highly valued for their tracking skills, and Aboriginal women could be trained as domestics. They were willing to settle on the station as a means of maintaining connection to their ancestral lands, and were extremely cheap compared to white labour, frequently working merely for scant rations for themselves and their tribe until equal wages were legislated in the 1960s. By the early 1870s the employment of Aboriginal labour was widespread in the northern pastoral industry and by 1892 Aborigines made up the majority of station workers in the Northern Territory (May 1983: ch. 3; Reid 1990: 174).

In coastal regions, government reserves joined missionaries in trying to instill a sedentary lifestyle in order to civilise and Christianise the Aborigines. Rations kept Aborigines tied to these areas – it was not until formal ‘Aboriginal Protection’ legislation was introduced that many Aborigines were required to maintain residence on these properties. From 1850, the government of Victoria, for example, began to ‘vigorously’ form stations and missions ‘and every attempt was made to civilise the tribal derelicts and half castes’ (Foxcroft 1941: 101). A new attitude around rations had emerged: ‘Food and clothing was not to be issued gratuitously except in case of extreme emergency’ (102). As *The Empire* declared in 1854, ‘The sacred law – “If any man will not work, neither should he eat” – is at the very foundation of political economy’ (quoted in Goodwin 1966: 356). Children were also to be instilled with the work ethic. Although there were a variety of views on the efficacy of the formal education of Aboriginal children, rations were used to encourage school attendance (see Fletcher 1989; Christie 1979: 125).

While Aboriginal children (who by this time were frequently partially white) were being schooled, ‘full-blood’ Aborigines were increasingly thought of as destined for extinction. A mid-century reformulation of the notion of race cast Australian Aborigines as biologically incapable of modernisation (Anderson and Perrin 2008; McGregor 1997). This belief in the natural disappearance of the Aboriginal race persisted, despite evidence to the contrary, and it comforted white Australians to think that this was simply a ‘natural law’ of evolution: ‘reserves have been made and aids to soothe the sufferings of a dying race. ... Their disappearance is a natural necessity’ (Collier 1911: 129–130).

### **Governance of the indigenous: consolidation of the white breadwinning male**

The federation of Australia entrenched an imaginary nation of racial homogeneity. The Constitution excluded Aborigines from Australian population statistics, and the federal Immigration Restriction Act (1901), also known as the White Australia policy, articulated this vision of Australia as a civilised outpost of the Empire by excluding non-white

immigrants. The indentured Melanesian workers upon whom the Queensland sugar industry relied were deported (see Moore 1988). As John Watson, the leader of the Australian Labour Party, argued, the new nation ‘reserved the right to say who shall be citizens. We ask that they shall be on a moral and physical level with ourselves, and that they shall be such as we can fraternise with and welcome as brother citizens of what we hope will some day be a great nation’ (Commonwealth of Australia 1901: 5177). Clearly, this vision excluded the Aborigines.

In this vision, Australia’s development relied not simply on white people, but on white families. The economically productive family was one in which men worked and women kept house and looked after children (Hewitson 2013). In 1904, the federal government was alarmed at the falling birth-rate of white women, with a Royal Commission finding that the waning birth-rate undermined ‘the value of the family as the basis of national life; ... the character of the people; ... their social, moral, and economic progress; ... their national aims and aspirations; ... their capacity to survive in the rivalry of nations’ (1904: 53).

A host of related policies centralised the well-being of the white male breadwinner and his family as the basis of Australia’s economic progress. Immigration policy kept out productive Asian workers unused to Australian standards of living: ‘It is not the bad qualities, but the good qualities of these alien races that make them so dangerous to us. It is their inexhaustible energy, their power of applying themselves to new tasks, their endurance and low standard of living that make them such competitors’, argued Alfred Deakin, the Commonwealth’s first Attorney General (Parliamentary Debates 1901). Tariff policy provided protection to those businesses which paid ‘fair and reasonable’ wages (New Protection 1907–8). Wages policy formally defined ‘fair and reasonable’ wages in 1907, when a manufacturer of harvesters applied for tariff protection. The Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration found that unskilled white male workers would thereafter receive a wage sufficient to support ‘the normal needs of the average employee, regarded as a human being living in a civilised community’ (Higgins 1907: 3). The average employee was a white man supporting a family of five. To encourage population growth, the Maternity Allowance Act of 1912 granted



£5 to every new white mother. Assisted immigration targeted families and breadwinner family formation: 'Men for the land, women for the home, employment guaranteed, good wages, plenty of opportunity', claimed an Australian Government (1928) poster encouraging British emigration.

Aborigines, on the other hand, were subjected to more and more regulation and supervision under the state Aboriginal Protection Acts (see Rowse 2005a: 244–245). These Acts established that Aboriginal wages, which were in the region of 20 per cent of the white male wages established in the Harvester decision and less for Aboriginal women, would be paid directly to the Aboriginal Protector who would dispense funds as he saw fit. The Acts also controlled where Aborigines lived and whether and where they could travel. In keeping with the biological perspective on race which had become dominant in the second half of the 19th century, these Acts formalised systems of child removal which would keep young Aborigines from being incorporated into Aboriginal culture (see Commonwealth of Australia 1997). Another widely held and comfortable assumption on the part of many white Australians was that Aboriginal mothers did not miss their 'half-caste' children. As one Aboriginal Protector remarked in 1906:

The half-caste is intellectually above the aborigine, and it is the duty of the State that they be given a chance to lead a better life than their mothers. I would not hesitate for one moment to separate any half-caste from its aboriginal mother, no matter how frantic her momentary grief might be at the time. They soon forget their offspring. (Isdell, 1906, quoted in Commonwealth of Australia 1997: ch. 7)

Aboriginal families, then, were decimated, while white families were encouraged, supported, and centralised within Australia's vision of its national development.

### **Governance of the indigenous: becoming the productive economic citizen**

In 1937, the state Chief Protectors of Aborigines met for the first time to co-ordinate their administration of the Aborigines. A resolution as to the 'Destiny of the Race' was passed, wherein:

That this Conference believes that the destiny of the natives of aboriginal origin, but not of the full blood, lies in their ultimate absorption by the people of the Commonwealth, and it therefore recommends that all efforts be directed to that end. (Commonwealth of Australia 1937)

This policy of assimilation was further defined at a subsequent meeting of the states to include all Aborigines:

The policy of assimilation means that in the view of all Australian governments that all aborigines and part-aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community, enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influences by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians. (Commonwealth of Australia 1961; see also Rowse 2005b).

In keeping with these intentions, Commonwealth government welfare benefits (such as old-age and widows' pensions and payments to mothers) were extended to Aborigines over the post-Second World War period, though payments were usually made directly to state governments or managers of reserves and missions rather than to Aborigines themselves. Unlike white women, though, Aboriginal women eligible for government payments were subjected to intense surveillance by State Protectors and by the agents of the Commonwealth welfare system. Aboriginal women were visited by inspectors from Aboriginal welfare boards, and taught, through required attendance at clinics and the viewing of government-produced films, how to act like white Australian housewives. In the film *Why Clean?*, for example, Aboriginal mothers are shown appropriate standards of hygiene. A House in Town educated Aborigines about suburban nuclear family life (see Moore 1984). State governments introduced ways in which Aborigines could be exempted from the operation of the Aboriginal Protection Acts. This entitled Aborigines to freedom of movement and to white wages. These rewards again came at the cost of adopting the institutions of

white Australian culture to the exclusion of Aboriginal culture. The Western Australian Government (1944), for example, required applicants to have lived as a 'civilised' person and to have dissolved all relationships with Aborigines except for immediate family members for the two years before application for exemption. Thus, the adoption by Aborigines of Western marriage and nuclear family life, proper motherhood, and bread-winning status were essential components of the policy of assimilation into Western notions of productive economic citizenship, though missionaries and government reserves had long tried to impose this family form on Aborigines as part of their civilising and Christianising project (Attwood, 2000; Perkins, 1936: 196;).

### Conclusion

Throughout white Australia's history of interaction with Aborigines there have run themes of exploitation as well as compassion, fear, and ignorance as well as deep caring and appreciation, but these humanitarian impulses, and Aborigines' own agencies, were dominated by those which have sought the dispossession and disappearance of Aborigines. Aboriginal policy making reflected colonial and 20th-century Australia's visions of economic development and nation building, themselves premised in significant ways upon a Western imaginary of the productive economic agent. Although in recent decades Aborigines have won numerous battles for land rights and self-governance, many Aborigines, if not most, remain economically marginal and dispossessed. In short, for Aborigines, Australia remains a colonising power.

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## Class and Race Complexities in Understanding Large-scale Land Deals as New Forms of Imperialism in Zimbabwe

### Introduction

Zimbabwe has a historical land question, dimensions of which are interesting as a way to understand neo-imperial processes in post-colonial Africa. In this essay, we trace the land question through various epochs,

highlighting how the first encounter with colonisation in 1890 has led to the current land situation. Our analysis provides different ways of conceptualising land imperialism from the colonial to the post-colonial periods. In the post-colonial period, we highlight the various land-reform processes that precipitated indigenous forms of imperialism through land occupations and black political capture of land post-2000. We also use large-scale land acquisitions for biofuel production, mining, and agriculture by various foreign and local actors to further unpack the class and race complexities of the land question in Zimbabwe. Post-2000 Africa has seen the emergence of a wave of land acquisitions from old imperial powers and new emerging rich nations in the Gulf, Middle East, and Asia. Experiences of large land deals in Zimbabwe are different from other areas across Africa. In Zimbabwe, most land is owned by the state and the dynamics of land ownership mean that most communities have usufruct rights. Thus, the experiences of small-scale farmers in Zimbabwe (especially those who got land post-Fast Track Land Reform in 2000) are different from other smallholder farmers across the world. The Zimbabwean case illuminates the interplay of complex political and economic forces that intermix to relegate small-scale farmers in the interests of vast biofuel production. The presence of Chinese government and firms offers a new dynamic which reorients our understanding of 'neo-colonial processes' where it is emerging economic powers and not traditional Western ones that are taking the lead in land deals in Zimbabwe. We also reflect on the complexities of the neo-patrimonial state in an obscure environment where the notion of class and race plays a critical role in who gets what, when, and how in relation to land.

Large-scale land deals are not peculiar to Zimbabwe but rather have become a widespread phenomenon across Africa in the past ten years. They represent another phase of continued exploitation of Africa's natural resources. This phase, however, has seen the emergence of new actors including China and oil-rich Arab states competing with traditional imperial powers including the US. Large-scale land deals in Zimbabwe have to be understood within a long history of contestation along race and class lines. The large-scale land deals have been fraught with different class interests that have led to

the redefining of class in Zimbabwe, with a few black people entering into the wave of reacquisition of large tracts of land at the expense of the other poor blacks (Mutopo and Chiweshe 2014). Post-colonial Zimbabwe is imbued with contradictions concerning its survival as a nation state, and faces racial and class tensions which must be resolved through land-balancing policies that in close analytical modes reveal the different class dynamics that have led to a widening gap between the poor and rich. This has created new class configurations. Moyo and Yeros (2011: 7) argue that:

to clarify the historical trajectory of sovereignty, we must locate it in four forms of modern imperialism, the rise and fall of mercantile capitalism 1500–1800, the rise of industrial and monopoly capitalism 1800–1945 and the recent phase of systemic rivalry between an evolved monopoly capitalism and the planned autonomous modes of accumulation ushered in by socialist revolutions and national liberation struggles 1945–1990. The fourth being the epochal demise of planned autonomous development and the decline of the capitalist system.

It is crucial to understand how the land question in Zimbabwe has been treated during these four phases of imperialist notions of history. However, as our essay gradually unfolds, answers will be unearthed as to whether the large-scale land acquisitions have created an egalitarian society where class interests have been submerged, or rather the national question has re-emerged through the same subjugation of other classes of people at this historical juncture of correcting the colonial imbalances, becoming an addendum of the Zimbabwean policy-making fraternity when land issues are discussed.

### **Imperialism and the land question in Zimbabwe**

An important point to note is that the colonial experience created laws that made the question of land a social justice issue that could be contested in courts but with the whites being privileged to do so. This created animosity that led to Zimbabwe's war and liberation struggle, centred on solving the land question and removing unequal class interest.

Palmer (1990) points out that the failure of the Rhodesian government to solve the land question during the colonial period meant that post-independent Zimbabwe could still effect changes that could end white supremacy over land ownership. Mabaye (2005) traces the land question in Zimbabwe to the Berlin Conference of 1884, where major European powers met to partition Africa amongst themselves. In September 1890, the Pioneer Column made up of 700 English and Boer white colonialist settlers crossed into 'Rhodesia' as they named it after English colonialist Cecil John Rhodes, seizing land and cattle. This led to widespread dispossession of land from black people, as seen, for example, in the creation of the Gwaai and Shangani reserves after the 1893 invasion of the Ndebele Kingdom. By 1914, 3 per cent of the population controlled 75 per cent of the land, while blacks were restricted to a mere 23 per cent of the worst land in designated reserves (Chitsike 2003). The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 stated that white people were reserved 50.8 per cent and black people 30 per cent of total land area, mainly in poor soil areas. The 50,000 white farmers received 49 million acres while the 1.1 million Africans were settled on 29 million acres of Native Reserve Areas. This forced the blacks who had survived on agriculture to become cheap labourers for the farmers on the large settler farms growing tea, coffee, tobacco and cotton. In 1965, the name Native Reserves was changed to Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs). Mazingi and Kamidza (2010) argue that the white settlers explicitly expressed unwillingness throughout history to share the land equally with the blacks, despite the fact that the majority of them had to live and subsist in the communal TTLs. The colonial regime, and indeed the white settlers, had established the TTLs as essentially reserves of cheap black labour. It is in light of this thinking that the 1925 Morris Carter Lands Commission recommended that the members of the two races should live together side by side with equal rights. As regards the holding of land:

they were convinced that in practice, probably for generations to come, such a policy is not practicable or in the best interest of the two races, and that until the Native has advanced very much further on the path of civilization, it is better that the points of contact in this respect between the

two races should be reduced .... (cited in Yudelman 1964: 69)

The Commission's recommendations were taken into account in the enactment of the Land Apportionment Act (LAA) of 1930 and the Land Tenure Act of 1969. These pieces of legislation provided a platform for land alienation. Mazingi and Kamidza (2010) further point that, under these laws, white settlers seized the best of the land, about 18 million hectares in prime and fertile arable land which is mostly in agro-ecological regions I, II and III, with good rainfall patterns. The worst areas (remote, low-lying, in some cases tsetse fly-ridden, with poor soil, unreliable rainfall and less suitable for meaningful agricultural activities in agro-ecological regions IV and V) were left to black peasant farmers.

### **Post-independence land reforms: race and class dimensions**

At independence in 1980, whites (who constituted 3 per cent of the population) controlled 51 per cent of the country's farming land (44 per cent of Zimbabwe's total land area), with about 75 per cent of prime agricultural land under the large-scale commercial farming (LSCF) sector (Weiner et al. 1985). It was hence inaccessible to the black majority. Farms in the LSCF sector ranged between 500 and 2,000 hectares, with most of them located in the better agro-ecological regions I, II and III. The Communal Areas (CAs), which were home to about 4.3 million blacks constituting 72 per cent of the rural population, had access to only 42 per cent of the land, three-quarters of which was in the poor agro-ecological regions IV and V. In 1980, the new black government was faced with a crippling land question. According to provisions of the Lancaster House Agreement, which ushered in independence, the government could enforce changes in land ownership structure for ten years. Land policy in the 1980s followed a strictly willing buyer, willing seller policy. The government's plan initially targeted the resettlement of 18,000 households over five years; in 1981 the number increased to 54,000 and in 1982 it further escalated to 162,000 to be resettled by 1984 (Palmer 1990: 169). Palmer notes, though, that by the end of July 1989 only 52,000 families (around 416,000 people) had been resettled, which translated to only 32 per cent of

the 162,000 target. In terms of the land transfer, 2,713,725 hectares had been bought for resettlement, which was 16 per cent of the area owned by whites at independence. After the expiry of the ten years stipulated in the Lancaster House Agreement, the government was free to increase the speed of land reform.

The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (No 11) (Act No 30 of 1990) and Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (No 12) (Act No 4 of 1993) allowed for both commercial and unutilised land to be acquired for resettlement with 'fair' compensation being payable in a 'reasonable time' (De Villiers 2003: 17). This was a break from the Lancaster House Agreement which called for adequate compensation that had to be paid promptly. Although introducing the new reforms as a means of empowering the poor, 'the ruling elite have made little more than token resettlement of the landless peasant farmers on acquired land' (Makumbe 1999: 14). In 1992 the Zimbabwean parliament passed the Land Acquisition Act, authorising the government to buy land compulsorily. Two years later it was revealed that the first farms compulsorily purchased had been allocated to cabinet ministers, top civil servants, and army generals. Thus, land reform remained frustratingly slow. De Villiers (2003: 18) notes that, by the government's own statistics, of the 162,000 families that needed to be resettled by 1995, only 60,000 had been resettled on 3.4 million hectares. Reasons for the snail-paced nature of land reform are multiple and complex but include government's lack of will, funding, corruption, and class biases that increasingly favoured black business people rather than peasants. While the Land Acquisition Act 1992 seemingly marked a break from the market-based land reform programme, the structural adjustment programme implemented in Zimbabwe ensured the continuation of and further support for large-scale white commercial agriculture. Zimbabwe officially embarked on structural adjustment in October 2001. Since 1980, the World Bank has been Zimbabwe's largest donor and has thus been able to exert critical pressure on government policies (Goebel 2005: 16). The process of adjustment (backed by the World Bank) meant the withdrawal of state interest in land redistribution issues as neo-liberal policies which promoted commercial agriculture took root (Gibbon 1995).

### Native imperialism? *Jambanja* and the Fast Track Land Reform Programme

In 1997 there was an attempt by the state to acquire over 1,471 commercial farms (Marongwe 2008: 124). These farms were designated for acquisition by government, but were later reduced to 841 in number following the de-listing of over 400. Most of the remaining farms were removed from the designation list after owners appealed to the courts: government failed to respond to the appeals within the legally defined period and it subsequently discontinued the process. This, coupled with lack of funding, led to serious frustrations over the pace of land reform among the landless, especially veterans of the armed struggle. Britain began renegeing on its 'responsibilities' for land reform. For example, Claire Short (then Labour Government secretary of state), in a letter to Kumbirai Kangai (then Zimbabwe's minister of agriculture) in 1997 distanced the British government from the land issue in Zimbabwe. Part of the letter read:

I should make it clear that we do not accept that Britain has a special responsibility to meet the costs of land purchase in Zimbabwe. We are a new Government from diverse backgrounds without links to former colonial interests. My own origins are Irish and as you know we were colonised not colonisers. (quoted in Matondi 2007: 12)

The British government was not willing to fund any accelerated land reform programme and felt that it had no obligations to Zimbabwe. The Blair Government in fact claimed that it did not feel duty-bound to the agreements and obligations at Lancaster House; in the same vein, the Zimbabwean government was under no obligation to follow these agreements. In the face of this rebuttal, forced land takeovers without compensation became a viable policy option.

In 1998 the Zimbabwean government unveiled the Land Reform and Resettlement Phase II Programme (Matondi 2008: 18). Its objectives were spelt out as follows: acquire 5 million hectares from the LSCF sector for redistribution; resettle 91,000 families and youths graduating from agricultural colleges and others with demonstrable experience in agriculture in a gender-sensitive manner. A 1998 Donor's Conference in Harare saw the

government making an effort to speed up land reform through democratic means. Some 48 major countries (including Britain, the US and South Africa) as well as donor organisations such as the United Nations, African Union, International Monetary Fund and World Bank, attended. But Masiwa (2005: 218) notes that donor unwillingness to fund land reform in Zimbabwe was underscored at the Harare conference. Here, government unveiled a US\$1.9 billion (about ZW\$42 billion) fund for its Phase II land reform programme. To the disappointment of the Zimbabwean government, the donors only pledged about ZW\$7,339 million, just a drop in the ocean. By early 2000, Zimbabwe was facing an unprecedented social and economic crisis. The deteriorating economic situation adversely impacted on the pace of land reform. The food riots in 1998 were the beginning of open protest against the ZANU-PF establishment in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The economy was severely compromised by the costs of the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and war veterans' pay-outs in the late 1990s also took their toll. The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions took the lead as a conglomeration of civil-society organisations challenging the ruling hegemony. The formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 was the first real threat to ZANU-PF's political hegemony in Zimbabwe. The rejection of the draft constitution in February 2000 was a precursor to the land occupations in Zimbabwe in 2000 and 2001, a period popularly known as *jambanja* (chaos) due to the violent nature of the process.

Post-2000, land has remained an emotive issue in Zimbabwe. The government then took over the occupation by instituting the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. The former 5,000 or so white farm owners owning 29 per cent of Zimbabwe's land area were reduced in number to 400, now owning approximately 1 per cent of the land. By 2008 there were a total of 145,000 farm households in A1 schemes and around 16,500 further households occupying A2 plots. There are many debates that centre on the fast track land reform programme that occurred in Zimbabwe from 2000. Two categories of academic simulation exist with regards to the debate on native imperialism and its importance in understanding the land issue in Zimbabwe. Revolutionary scholars argue that the spontaneity of the land question

was prime because the liberation struggle centred on reclaiming lost land. The occupation of white commercial farms was inevitable as the blacks had to be accommodated in land spaces. They advocate that the fast track land reform was the best that could be attained in those circumstances (Hanlon et al. 2013; Moyo and Yeros 2007; 2011; Moyo and Chambati 2013). Evolutionary scholars argue that the land issue could have been dealt with systematically and following clear-cut policy-making processes that would have led to a sustainable land reform programme (Marongwe 2011; Zamchiya 2011; Zikhali 2008).

Academic debates in Zimbabwe as outlined above are polarised and tend to be pro- or anti-ZANU-PF. This creates a false debate that essentially turns political and is detrimental to any in-depth understanding of the complex character of land reform. In trying to grapple with the realities of the fast track programme in Zimbabwe, Derman (2006: 2) poses the following questions:

How will fast track land reform be understood? Are Sam Moyo and Paris Yeros (2005) correct that there has been a land occupier's social movement that portends, if handled correctly, a national democratic revolution? Will Zimbabwe serve as the warning bell for South Africa to rapidly achieve its own land reform ...? Can it be successfully argued that the land reform has been so fundamentally flawed and unjust that it should be undone or is it the case that no matter how unjust, it will become the new starting point for all new policies and programmes? Or has the mishandling of land reform in Zimbabwe made further land and agrarian transformation more difficult?

In trying to unravel the native imperialism question, we can point to Marongwe's (2008) thesis which specifically addresses who benefited from the land reform in Goromonzi District near Harare. He concludes that the political and social processes governing land allocation created particular classes of beneficiaries whose qualifying characteristics were divorced from agriculture in terms of farming experience, and commitment and skills possessed. Sadomba (2008: 168) reveals that war veterans presented a corruption document at a Mashonaland West

Provincial Stakeholder Dialogue meeting in 2004, accusing ZANU-PF officials of 'changing farms willy-nilly', leasing farms to former white farmers, and 'deliberately ignoring the mandatory twenty percent allocations for war veterans'. Selby (2006: 40) remarks that, in Matabeleland, land allocations among key ruling party and security elites were also strategically decided. For example, many A2 farms are along the course of the proposed Zambezi pipeline project. The spoils of 'fast track' have gone disproportionately to members and supporters of the regime. Virtually every senior party official, army officer, police chief or Central Intelligence Organisation officer has secured an A2 farm or part of an A2 farm. The war veteran leaders have similarly benefited from A2 farms, along with key individuals in the judiciary, the Church and state media houses.

Erlach (2011: 2), citing the two studies by Moyo et al. (2009) and Scoones et al. (2010), concludes that (contrary to popular belief) land reform in Zimbabwe benefited ordinary Zimbabweans. He denies the prevalent reports claiming that fast track land reform was a 'land grab' by 'cronies' bringing about a more unequal distribution of land than what had preceded it. The surveys conducted by the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (Moyo et al. 2009) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) (Scoones et al. 2010) found that most beneficiaries of land reform are 'common' people, whereas those who might be categorised as 'elites' constitute a small minority. According to the IDS study, this minority amounted to less than 5 per cent. Hanlon et al. (2013) show that in what has constituted the single largest land reform in Africa, 6,000 white farmers have been replaced by 245,000 Zimbabwean farmers, primarily ordinary poor people who have become more productive as a result. Scoones et al. (2010: 77) note that 'impressive investments have been made [by farmers] in clearing the land, in livestock, in equipment, in transport and in housing'. Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe has thus provided livelihood opportunities for many ordinary people who are now highly productive on the farms in spite of various structural challenges such as the lack of financing. The experiences of these farmers are, however, varied, and thus it is erroneous and simplistic to attempt to provide a singular picture of what life on fast track farms entails.



### Neo-imperialism and land acquisitions in Africa

The huge interest in 'land grabbing' discourse in Africa has sparked fierce debates over foreign ownership of resources on the continent. This is, however, a continuation of historical processes (from colonisation, the resurgence of the political and economic national question, to the rise of multinational companies) where resources in Africa have been controlled by foreign interests. This new wave of foreign ownership is just another phase in a long process of exploitation of Africa by foreigners. Africa's land and resources are not new to exploitation. Various historical epochs of foreign (mainly white) accumulators have for centuries scourged the continent to finance their own profligate lifestyles. The Berlin Conference in 1884 marked the zenith of this scramble as powerful men sat around a table and shared Africa like a piece of cloth. Olusuga and Erichsen (2010: 394) would have us believe that:

It is a common misconception that the Berlin Conference simply 'divvied up' the African continent between the European powers. In fact, all the foreign ministers who assembled in Bismarck's Berlin villa had agreed was in which regions of Africa each European power had the right to 'pursue' the legal ownership of land, free from interference by any other. The land itself remained the legal property of Africans.

The current discourse of land grabbing is specifically couched in language which claims that Africans remain owners of their land, yet the reality on the ground of communities fenced out and barred from their livelihoods tells a different story. European colonisation of Africa left in its wake a brutal legacy of land and resource conflicts, land litigation, loss of peoples' control over land and natural resources, exposition to alien land tenure systems and natural resources management. In the new dispensation, a neo-colonial agenda driven by transnational companies, oil and cash-rich countries, and Western nations provides a marquee era in which African political elites are willing participants in exchange for money. This new era sees the emergence of new players apart from the traditional white accumulators. Cash-rich nations such as China, Saudi Arabia, Japan, South Korea, and

some Gulf States are pursuing food-security strategies that seek to secure control of millions of hectares of fertile lands in target nations in the South, most particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

Globalisation and neo-liberalism have ably assisted this process, championing liberalisation of land markets and promotion of foreign direct investments. What is clear is that farm grabs and subsequent dispossession of land from people are promoting processes of depeasantisation as opposed to peasantisation processes. As land increasingly becomes commoditised, we see a transition from rural communities characterised by large numbers of peasants to a situation that is increasingly based on expansion of corporate capital-intensive production. Peasants are forced into wage employment or to migrate to urban centres for survival. Yet in Zimbabwe post-2000, re-peasantization has been occurring through the radical redistributive programme of fast-track land reform (Moyo and Yeros 2005). People are returning to settle on the land, and rely on farming as an important source of livelihood (Mutopo et al. 2014). Liberti (2013) argues that there is effectively the global 'proletarianisation' of farm labourers. Using evidence from Brazil, he notes:

I study the old man, the extended family around him, their lifeless expressions, their miserable cultivations, and can't help thinking that theirs is a lost cause. The prevailing model is all around them: the vast plantations. They have no part to play in this model, apart from providing labour as day workers, an agricultural proletariat who no longer control their means of production. Defeat is certain and there is no appeal: this old man and his group are residuals of a world that is bound to disappear. Extensive plantation is modernity, and it will brush them away. (146)

Poulton (2014), however, argues that this is fatalistic as land grabs are driven by an uneven, distorted, and new crisis-laden era of global capital which is subject to twists and turns. What we cannot escape, however, is that local communities have largely been displaced and excluded from their land.

Ferrando (2012) makes the distinction between 'public grabbing' and 'private grabbing'. Private grabbing comprises private

sales of land at market price which are not common given that in most African states land is owned by the state and can only be leased to individuals or companies. In public grabbing, the land at the centre of the deal is considered by the host state as 'public or national' on the basis of its own legal order, or is expropriated on the basis of a declaration of 'public interest' or 'public necessity'. Thus, sovereign nations have the right to decide and determine legal and illegal occupation, used and unused land, available and not available land, and of determining who has the right to see his/her property title formalized. For example, in Ethiopia the Federal Government has according to the constitution provided for a sovereign prerogative to expropriate and resettle people after having identified and declared the existence of a public purpose (Ferrando 2012). They have used this to expropriate 100,000 hectares leased by the Federal Government to Karuturi Global Ltd. Constitutional provisions giving the state power of land are problematic when the state turns into a predator. The predatory nature of the state in Africa has meant peasants and vulnerable groups are at the mercy of various forces without protection from elected officials. These land deals are just another occurrence in a long list of ways the state in Africa has become imperial and turned on its own people. Ferrando (2012) concludes:

Extending what Erik Hobsbawn had already affirmed in the '50s of the last century about public interest, we can thus conclude that in many circumstances sovereign prerogatives are 'no more than the forces of profit-pursuing private enterprise' which seek 'to turn land into a commodity', 'to pass this land into the ownership of a class of men impelled by reason; i.e. enlightened self-interest and profit', and 'to transform the great mass of the rural population into freely mobile wage-workers'.

Nation states are thus intertwined with global capital to further dispossess citizens of land. The global mechanism of land deals forms a complex web of partnerships and ownership without geography. The relationships between investors, lenders, bankers, and multinational companies are boundless and difficult to define in physical space. To illustrate this, Cotula (2012: 659) notes:

... the nationality of the land acquirer does not fully represent the geography of the interests at stake. A large Libyan deal in Mali reportedly involved contracting out construction work to a Chinese company, for example. Similarly, South African consulting engineers have been involved with contracts to build sugar mills and ethanol plants in different parts of Africa (Hall 2011). And some European or North American farmland investments in Africa involve leveraging agricultural know-how from Brazilian expertise (OECD 2010) ... several biofuels companies active in Africa are listed on London's AIM – which is 'the London Stock Exchange's international market for smaller growing companies' (AIM 2011); but capital invested in these companies may originate from all over the world. So different geographies of interests may be involved in a single investment project.

Land dealers across Africa are thus involved in complex relationships of global capital which provide a new era of imperialism based on transaction and not Western powers' military might. Imperial imperatives are negotiated within boardrooms and local elites are closely involved in selling away people's livelihoods.

### **Contextualising large-scale land acquisitions in Zimbabwe as a neo-imperial process**

In this essay we avoid a situation of universalising attractive concepts such as 'land grabbing' which might not provide detailed understanding of the peculiar situation in Zimbabwe. Matondi (2011) has referred to the 'wacky politics of biofuel', yet in this wackiness is a clear pattern of accumulation propped by a neo-liberal ethos. Chiweshe (2013), however, argues that the Zimbabwean case is unique in its context, organisation, and ultimate goals. Firstly, it goes against the tide of government policy of promoting smallholder farming. Secondly, whilst the mode of displacement was cruel towards households, they complain more about the lack of consultation and alternative resettlement or compensation. For example, in Chisumbanje farmers acknowledge they had always known the land belonged to the government but the company and government could have offered alternative land for

resettlement. At Nuanetsi Ranch, Scoones et al. (2010) described 'illegal settlers' who were not recognised by the government. Thirdly, most of the final products were meant for local consumption. Mujere and Dombo (2011) further highlight how Nuanetsi became a target for acquisition because it was defined as 'idle' land, yet families lived and worked there. They noted:

Governments usually identify what they call 'idle lands' which they then parcel out to private investors. For example in Zimbabwe one of the arguments in support of the Nuanetsi Bio fuels project has been that the area is arid and for a long time there has been little production on the Ranch. The land is therefore viewed as 'marginal' or underutilized in order to justify the displacement of people and biofuel production. The biofuel project is therefore projected to turn the hitherto arid area into a green belt thereby turning a formerly 'idle land' into productive land. (7)

This fits well into the overly used belief that there is vast unused land in Africa which can be turned into viable large-scale commercial products.

As we continue to understand the workings of international capital and its linkages with national capitalists, there is a need for a contextualised analysis which does not jump on the bandwagon. We require better research approaches that bring out clearly how government is implicit and complicit in whole communities losing access to resources. Such theorising should also begin to focus on agency amongst local communities and understand how they have responded to losing access to their land. Borrowed concepts will be useful up to a point but they may hide nuances of social networks, organisation and relationships that have been born out of these land deals. Analysis should go further to understanding the kind of communities that are emerging in areas affected by land deals. We need to ask about gendered relations, household dynamics; what type of productive and economic markets and relationships are informally emergent? Such an analysis needs to be rooted in rigorous fieldwork that takes into account the knowledge and experiences of people at the grass-roots level. We need to interrogate how valuable 'land grabbing'

is as a conceptual tool to understanding large-scale land deals. This is not to deny 'grabbing' per se but to situate this grabbing within a specific socio-historical context. Not all grabbing and grabbers. Motives and implications of land grabbing differ, and, thus, there is a need for a context-specific analysis that provides in-depth insights into how local processes feed into the agreements over land.

Chiweshe (2013) highlights that the land deals in Nuanetsi and Chisumbanje are confusing given the drive towards small-scale production through the Fast Track Land Reform Programme post-2000. He argues:

In Zimbabwe there remains no clear land policy to guide land administration. Large scale land deals provide an example of *ad hoc* land administration. There is no clarity how these two large investments fit into the wider context of land reform which supports small holder commercial agriculture. Are these two the beginning of a much wider speculative era of land acquisitions or are they anomalies which have no bearing on the future land policy? It is difficult to understand how the promotion of foreign funded large scale agriculture fits into the anti-colonization rhetoric of the 2000s. The deals signal a clear warning of how small holder and communal farmers' claims to land remain fragile. The state retains ownership of land, having the deciding power to influence and affect people's claims to land. (69)

The table below provides a comparison of the positive and negative impacts of Zimbabwe's two recent large-scale land deals. It highlights the purported positive impacts of large-scale land deals have for rural communities, including employment, investments, and access to support for smallholder farmers.

### **Neo-imperialists: Unmasking the politics of race and class in Zimbabwe's land deals**

#### **Billy Rateunbach, Themba Mliswa and ZANU-PF cronies**

The role of Billy Rateunbach in Zimbabwe's land deals remains murky and controversial. His story represents an interesting example of how race, class, and politics

## Comparison of Nuanetsi and Chisumbanje

## NUANETSI RANCH

## CHISUMBANJE

Positive impacts of Nuanetsi bio-diesel project on local communities

## i. Employment opportunities

The sub-activities done within the project area, besides biofuels production, include crocodile farming, cattle ranching, and gamekeeping. These activities have provided employment opportunities for some members of the local communities. For instance, in 2010, it was reported that the crocodile department alone had already created more than 2,000 jobs.

## ii. Potential exports?

Preliminary estimates suggests that once fully operational, Nuanetsi ethanol plant will produce about 500 million litres per year, far more than what the Zimbabwean market is able to consume, making it another ideal export product for the country to benefit from.

Negative impacts of Nuanetsi bio-diesel project on local communities

## i. Eviction of farmers

Although the project's activities (which include dam building, sugar mills and irrigation) are being discussed, all involving significant displacement of people (including perhaps up to 6,000 households from Nuanetsi), what is currently known is that soldiers and police were (in February 2009) given authority to evict a large number of farmers on Nuanetsi ranch so that the project could take off. Some farmers however continued resisting their evictions.

## ii. Boundary conflicts

The project has also caused serious boundary conflicts between the traditional leaders of the areas involved. It is believed that Chief Chitanga (who is also Chivi/Mwenezi senator and supports the project) is campaigning for the removal of people under the jurisdiction of Chief Mpapa. This has caused serious resistance from Chief Mpapa and his people and which has resulted in a lot of violence as the farmers try to keep what they have.

## iii. Destruction of livelihoods

The evictions of farmers in the area have destroyed the livelihood of most local farmers who lost the fields in which they used to plant both cash crops and food crops for their income generating and subsistence consumption

Positive impacts on Chisumbanje communities

## i. In-kind compensation

Whilst the local communities, especially farmers were not involved from the start, the company running the project at Chisumbanje has tried to involve and compensate the farmers meaningfully. For example, Macdom Investment Pvt Ltd did set aside portions of land for smallholder farmers to engage in horticulture projects to compensate for their losses. The company also provides the farmers with irrigation services and gives them logistical support. Furthermore, some farmers are also contracted by the company to grow sugar cane which they sell to the company.

Negative impacts on Chisumbanje communities

## i. Loss of farming land

Some local farmers had been using the now taken land as fields for their annual cropping in which they planted a variety of crops including maize, millet, sorghum etc. for their survival and livelihood. However, following the agreement between Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) and the private company, the land was no longer available to these farmers. As such, they did lose their farming land.

## ii. Displacement of households

A number of smallholder farmers who had been using the land, especially on a permanent basis, decided to settle permanently on some parts of the estate. Following the launch of the project, these local farmers were asked to leave to pave the way for the ethanol project.

## iii. Increased poverty

As reported by one newspaper, 'Thousands of families are wallowing in abject poverty after their displacement from their communal lands to pave way for a bio-fuel project by the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) and Macdom Pvt Ltd outside the knowledge of local leadership'. The displacement of local community households has pushed some of them into poverty as they lost their means of viable survival.

intertwine to produce a land-administrative system in which certain factions of the state can become imperial at the expense of poor people's livelihoods. The emerging large-scale land deals in Zimbabwe, including mining, all seem to be linked to Rautenbach who appears to enjoy huge political favour. This is interesting given his race and the anti-whites rhetoric publicly espoused by ZANU-PF. The excerpt below provides a brief description of Rautenbach and his relationship to Zimbabwe's political elite:

Muller Conrad 'Billy' Rautenbach, born on September 23 1959, is a controversial Zimbabwean businessman who has parlayed his closeness to the Zanu-PF government into a personal fortune and an aura of untouchability – despite being a fugitive for a decade. Rautenbach fled South Africa shortly after the then Investigating Directorate for Serious Economic Offences launched a raid in November 1999 on his Wheels of Africa (WOA) Group, which included Hyundai Motor Distributors .... Camec was key to his ongoing relationship with the Zimbabwean government. The company, through its purchase of Lefevre (an opaque British Virgin Islands company thought to be controlled by Rautenbach), got access to two platinum concessions in Zimbabwe that had been wrested away from their original owner, a division of Anglo Platinum by the Zimbabwe government. In return Camec granted Lefevre a US\$100-million loan 'to meet its obligations to the Zimbabwean government' – at a time, in April 2008, when the Mugabe regime was desperately short of cash. (Sole 2009: <http://mg.co.za/article/2009-11-20-rautenbachs-fast-and-furious-ride-to-riches>)

He is the face of large-scale land deals in Zimbabwe with vast influence on the political processes of natural-resource governance in the country. In 2014, his political connections were further exposed when ZANU-PF Mashonaland West chairperson and member of parliament, Themba Mliswa demanded US\$165 million as facilitation fees for introducing Rautenbach to key political figures who facilitated his land and mining acquisitions. The extract below outlines the story, showing how political corruption fuelled large-scale land deals:

Zanu-PF Mashonaland West provincial chair and Hurungwe West legislator Themba Mliswa yesterday said the ruling party's secretary for administration and Minister of State in the Office of the President, Didymus Mutasa, facilitated an out-of-court settlement for him in a US\$165 million plus dispute with Mr Conrad 'Billy' Rautenbach. The dispute stemmed from money Mliswa said he was owed for facilitating Mr Rautenbach's interests in Hwange Colliery, Unki Platinum Mine and the Chisumbanje ethanol plant. Mliswa said some of the deals guaranteed him shareholding in the projects ... At a Press conference in Harare yesterday, Mliswa reiterated that Arda board chair and former Zanu-PF Manicaland provincial chairperson Basil Nyabadza – and other unnamed politicians – were in the deals. He claimed Mr Rautenbach bought Nyabadza a house in Mutare and gave 'brown envelopes' to several politicians whose names he said he would soon reveal to oil his deals claiming Mr Rautenbach, who he described as Zimbabwe's biggest land owner, owned the Government. Nyabadza yesterday said he was contemplating legal action against Mliswa over the allegation. Mliswa said his multi-million-dollar deals with Mr Rautenbach were entirely verbal and there was no paperwork to confirm them. The politician demanded at least US\$165 million from Mr Rautenbach as facilitation fees and shareholding in the three projects after linking him to several senior politicians pursuant to landing the contracts ... On Nyabadza, Mliswa said: 'Basil Nyabadza benefited with a house in Mutare. You can call him and ask where he got the house from. His companies are not doing well. Billy Rautenbach bought a house for him, no wonder he has become a spokesperson for Billy when you talk about Green Fuel. (Maodza 2014: <http://www.herald.co.zw/165m-saga-temba-mliswa-digs-in/>).

### **International financing behind Rautenbach**

Further analysis of Billy Rautenbach and the various investment vehicles he represents provides a complex picture of shady international deals that further complicate the true

nature of actors in the Zimbabwean land sector. One report from a business news outlet highlights the intricate and complex nature of ownership and control. Simpson and Westbrook (2014) highlight the role of Wall Street hedge-fund firms in Zimbabwe's complex political picture, and allege that they have provided financing to ZANU-PF in exchange for mineral and land rights:

... a Wall Street consortium provided the \$100 million for the dictator's government. These millions secured the rights to mine platinum, among the most valuable of minerals, from central Zimbabwe. Several firms were involved in the investment, including BlackRock (BLK), GLG Partners, and Credit Suisse (CS). The most vital player was Och-Ziff Capital Management (OZM), the largest publicly traded hedge fund on Wall Street. (<http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2014-08-21/mugabes-bailout-och-ziff-investment-linked-to-zimbabwe-despot>)

Och-Ziff is owned by American Daniel Och and it has an estimated US\$45.7 billion in assets. The company is claimed to have had a stake in Central African Mining & Exploration Co (Camec), listed on the AIM exchange in London. Och-Ziff provided 75 per cent of the US\$150 million used by Camec to purchase a stake in platinum mines in a joint deal with the Zimbabwe Mineral Development Corporation. Billy Rautenbach is a shareholder in Camec and was involved in buying cars used by ZANU-PF before the 2008 elections. Och-Ziff later sold its stake in Camec, but what is interesting for us is this complex of ownership linked to Billy Rautenbach and how it relates to questions of sovereignty and neo-imperialism. Political elites and international capital are finding areas of convergence and it is the poor masses in Africa that suffer. Frantz Fanon (2002) offers a definitive statement of the economic and psychological degradation inflicted by the imperial powers on their colonies. This is the reason why, according to Fanon, the African state and its apparatus have in some instances become the worst institutions of colonialism rather than agents of development. The wave of large-scale land acquisitions being orchestrated by African governments and foreign capital provide further evidence to support this thesis.

### Chinese angle: growing threat to rural livelihoods?

Post-2000, the government of Zimbabwe embarked on a Look East policy which saw China emerging as the trading partner of choice. It centred on renewed, broader engagement with China and other Asian countries, which President Mugabe said could be an alternative economic co-operation partner to the West, which Zimbabwe had lost. He argued that 'In most recent times, as the West started being hostile to us, we deliberately declared a Look East policy ... We have turned east where the sun rises, and given our backs to the west, where it sets' (Maroodza, 2011). Trade between Zimbabwe and China has increased significantly in recent years, from ZW\$760 million in 1997 to ZW\$6.9 billion in 2000 (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung 2004: 4). This move coincided with increased Chinese investments across Africa. Liberti (2013: 23) notes that 'The war for influence (and market control) between China and the western powers that is being fought throughout the continent, especially in those countries that produce raw materials, unquestionably strengthens the hand of many African governments'. This is especially true for Zimbabwe, given the economic sanctions imposed by Western countries after 2000. Whilst China has seemingly concentrated on resource extraction rather than land grabbing in Africa, the Zimbabwean case shows an increased interest in agricultural land. In this section of the essay we highlight how this increased Chinese presence in Zimbabwe impacts on access and control over land. Chinese investments in agriculture highlight an emerging trend in land deals, which include direct ownership, lease agreements, and contract farming. The news report below highlights how the Chinese are taking over land which had been given to black farmers under the Fast Track Land Reform Programme:

The Zimbabwean government has signed a deal with the Chinese government which will mostly affect farmers on previously white-owned land in the Mashonaland East province. Reports indicate that under this so-called 'twinning programme' between Zimbabwe and China, affected farmers will sign a 25-year-renewable contract with their Chinese partners. In return the Chinese will give them money to help them develop farming operations

on their remaining farmland, and also buy the crops they produce. Some of these investors – reportedly from China’s Hubei Province – are already on some of the targeted properties, according to dispossessed white Zimbabwean farmer Ben Freeth. (Farmer’s Weekly 2011: <http://farmersweekly.co.za/article.aspx?id=6466&h=Zimbabwe-Chinaland-dealupsetsdispossessedfarmers>)

The Chinese have also adopted another model of land access based on government-to-government agreements over contract farming. In Zimbabwe the Tian Ze Tobacco Company represents the China National Tobacco Company. It came into being in 2005 following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Zimbabwean and Chinese governments. Its core business is tobacco contract farming, purchasing (from auction floors and contract farmers), processing and exporting to the Chinese market (Nyamayaro 2012). These contracts ensure the Chinese have unlimited access to tobacco without actually owning the land or being directly involved in agriculture. All this points to an increased Chinese interest in agricultural land which opens the way to new forms of unequal relationships in land between locals and powerful nations.

### Accumulation by dispossession

Large-scale land deals have to be understood within the historical processes of accumulation. There is a growing wave of capitalists who are manoeuvring to exploit the world’s looming food and fuel crises. They defy geographical categorisation and come from varied nationalities. Their form of capitalism can best be described as accumulation by dispossession. Local elites are part of this class of accumulators where land has become an important resource. As the poor riot over shortages in places like Senegal and Bangladesh, investors are racing to corner the market on the world’s dwindling farmland. Farmers in Mwenezi and Chisumbanje are being divorced from their means of production in a process Marx described as primitive accumulation. He defined primitive accumulation as:

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. (Marx 1977/1867: 85)

De Angelis (2004) has noted that primitive accumulation is not so much a historical event as a continuous process by which the institutions that protect society from the market are dismantled. Corson and McDonald (2012) highlight the commodification of spaces and processes hitherto outside the ‘circuits of capital’, including new forms of nature, and the role of institutions in creating the conditions for global capital accumulation through ‘extra-economic’ means of dispossession. Accumulation by dispossession is an alternative to Marx’s primitive accumulation. For Harvey (2005), accumulation by dispossession is a politically driven process which occurs simultaneously with capital accumulation. It works in a variety of ways from the subtle commodification of once communal property to outright theft. Large-scale land acquisitions are part of processes of commodification, privatisation and suppression of rights, appropriation of assets, and the creation of institutions to enable these processes. As people are dispossessed from their land it creates a reserve of unemployed labour without any source of livelihood other than wage labour. At a grand-scale large-scale land deals are characterised by people being robbed outright of their livelihoods.

The Zimbabwean case highlights the complex nature of understanding who these accumulators are. Billy Rautenbach’s presence is ominous in both Mwenezi and Chisumbanje land deals. In Chisumbanje, his company owns Macdom (part of the investment team); whilst in Mwenezi, DTZ has denied that he owns any shares, noting only that he has interests in projects that develop Zimbabwe. Rautenbach is a multi-millionaire Zimbabwean businessman with close links to ZANU-PF and President Mugabe. In Africa most deals on land require links to the government. Which is why political elites are intrinsically involved. These elites form part of a national bourgeoisie who have used political power to amass wealth, some of it through corrupt means. Elite capture is not a new process in

post-colonial Africa. The workings of international capital and local power interests in creating enclaves of accumulation are well documented. Large-scale land acquisition is part of a historical process that has seen local livelihoods being mortgaged for the benefit of the rich and powerful. The environmental costs of such accumulation are borne by communities that remain long after the companies, plants, and factories have left. Dispossession is also spiritual and emotional. Land is an important spiritual asset for local people. It is the link to their ancestors and its value is intrinsic to how they define themselves. The dispossession is thus both physical and metaphysical.

## Conclusion

In this essay we have investigated the phenomenon of large-scale land deals, and how they ought to be understood within the processes of historical accumulation and dispossession. We examined how the colonial vestiges in Zimbabwe throughout history have also been assimilated into the post-colonial state with the post-colonial state also perpetuating the dispossession of communities in Chisumbanje and Mwenezi. Our case study material reveals the complexities that result when large-scale land deals unfold and communities lose land to elites. These elites are continuously involved in the process of land accumulation, in a politically charged environment where issues to do with flexi crops and the political, symbolic, and economic importance of land in a post-colonial state are coming to the fore. We have also investigated how notions of race and class have contributed to the problematic nature of the large-scale land deals in Zimbabwe, with the less powerful black classes under threat of losing land to the powerful political and economic elites. We further suggest the need for policy alternatives that meet the needs of rural populations without undermining their citizenship engagement when large-scale land deals are organised even by the so-called black-led governments.

Manase Kudzai Chiweshe and Patience Mutopo

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## Cuba: A Historical Context to Anti-Imperialism, 19th century to the Present

The Cuban people began confronting social, economic, and political oppression long before the modern Cuban Revolution (1953–59) challenged autocracy and imperialism at home and abroad. The first people to fight for their independence, in what became Cuba, were the Taino Native Americans. In 1492 Christopher Columbus claimed Cuba for Spain. In 1511 the Spanish began to systematically exterminate the Taino people. The first hero of Cuba was a Taino chief named Hatuey, who fought against Spanish imperialism and aggression. Ultimately, in 1512, he was captured and executed by the European invaders. After Hatuey's death, the Spanish began enslaving the remaining Taino people, thus beginning a legacy of enslavement that would plague Cuba until 1886.

In 1526 the Spanish imported enslaved Africans into Cuba. By the mid-19th century, Cuba was engulfed by 'slave' insurrections and revolts. In addition, marginalised

Cubans of European and Asian descent began to challenge Spanish authority. These challenges began Cuba's long ascension towards freedom. In the Ten Years War (1868–78) and the Second War of Independence (1895–98), Cubans fought against Spanish hegemony and tyranny. During these legendary freedom struggles, many heroic leaders emerged who helped Cubans gain their freedom and security. Antonio Maceo y Grajales (1845–96), José Quintino Bandera Bentancourt (1834–1906), and José Martí (1853–95) were Cuban leaders who resisted foreign domination and control. These dynamic leaders gave their lives to ensure the eventual independence of Cuba.

The African Cuban, Antonio Maceo, also known as 'the Bronze Titan', was a brilliant and fearless leader who tirelessly struggled against Spanish domination. One of Maceo's best-known military feats occurred during the Second War of Independence. The East-West Invasion (1895), which lasted three months, was the first major battle of the war. Along with Antonio Maceo, José Q.B. Bentancourt was a Cuban revolutionary leader who fought against the Spanish. Bentancourt and his comrade Maceo led the Mambi Army of Liberation, which was primarily composed of African Cubans who chose to fight for freedom and against enslavement, racism, and despotism. José Martí, known by some as the 'Apostle of the Cuban Revolution', was a journalist, diplomat, and military leader who battled for Cuban independence. He also advocated against one class or group taking complete control of the country once the Spanish were expelled from Cuba. These are just a few of the 19th-century Cuban nationalists who opposed Spanish and foreign control of Cuban human and material resources. They also became examples of Cuban pride and resistance that would be emulated by future generations of Cuban revolutionary leaders.

The Cuban Revolution (1953–59) was inspired by Grajales, Bentancourt, and Martí, among others. The leaders of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro (1926–) and Ernesto Che' Guevara (1928–67), were inspired by Cuban revolutionary history and, as a result, co-ordinated a revolution that was concerned with suppressing imperialism not only in Cuba, but also throughout the world. In 1959 the Cuban people struck a blow against imperialism by toppling the corrupt regime of Fulgencio Batista (1901–73) and initiating

a socialist government. The success of the Cuban Revolution not only uplifted the masses of Cuban people, but, as importantly, began an effort of over 50 years to confront imperialism and oppression affecting African America, Angola, and Venezuela.

The relationship between African Americans and Cuba(ns) began in the mid-19th century. It was during this turbulent decade that the anti-imperialist struggles of African Cubans began influencing African Americans such as Fredrick Douglass, Martin Delany, Henry Highland Garnet, and Isabella Baumfree (Sojourner Truth). In an article titled 'Back to the Future: African Americans and Cuba in the Time(s) of Race', Lisa Brock (1994) examines the impact that the large number of Cuban slave rebellions had on many African Americans. According to Brock, 'African Americans increasingly saw Cuba through the prism of their own desire for freedom' (1994: 6). This desire to be liberated from enslavement and dread inspired the inter-connection between African Americans and their oppressed Cuban comrades. In addition, this call to action influenced the co-ordinated and intense responses of the American landed gentry. To this end, Brock writes, racial unrest in Cuba '... not only framed North American mobilization strategies, but became the standard against which Black nationalists, intellectuals, and activists measured freedom or lack of it in Cuba and the Diaspora' (ibid).

Many motivational Cuban leaders emerged during these significant 19th-century battles for freedom, justice, and equality. However, few Cuban revolutionaries of this period captivated African Americans to the extent of the poet Gabriel de la Concepcion. Brilliant, bold, and beneficent are adjectives that accurately describe this anti-imperialist/activist. The Spanish retaliated against Concepcion's abolitionism by assassinating him on 28 June 1844.

The proof of Concepcion's influence on 19th-century African American leadership can be found in the advocacy of Martin Delany, an early Black Nationalist and Pan-Africanist. Brock postulates that Concepcion, also known as Placido, was the inspiration of Delany's 1859 publication *Blake: or the Huts of America, A Tale of the Mississippi Valley*. According to Brock, this fictional story encouraged slave uprisings within Cuba and the US. She posits, 'In the novel, the central character Henry (Blake) travels throughout

the United States and Cuba organizing a general slave insurrection ... Henry, in fact, spends considerable time in Cuba where he receives encouragement from numerous rebels but most significantly from a “thoughtful poet of the revolution” named Placido’ (1994: 8). Delany was so taken by Concepcion’s heroism that he named his son Placido.

It is important to highlight the fact that African Americans have also had a positive impact on Cuban efforts towards securing self-sufficiency and self-governance. During the 19th and 20th centuries, African American institutions, movements, and leaders stimulated Cubans who aspired to create cross-cultural and diaspora linkages. In the book *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (2010), Frank Guidry submits that people of African ancestry in Cuba and America coalesced in order to combat racism at home and abroad. In the book, Tuskegee Institute’s thorough influence on many African Cubans is explored. Guidry discusses Booker T. Washington’s efforts to recruit and educate Cuban students who were interested in pursuing an education alongside African Americans. Moreover, the book probes the effectiveness of Marcus Garvey’s Pan Africanist Movement on the enlightened Cuban population.

Righteous African Americans and Cubans had been jointly interwoven in anti-imperialist struggles for a century, when the Cuban masses once again rebelled against domination and tyranny during the revolution (1953–59). All through this modern rebellion, the Cubans captured the attention and imagination of 20th-century Americans of African ancestry. The Cuban Revolution occurred simultaneously with the advent of the African American Civil and Human Rights struggles of the 1950s and 1960s. While many African Americans were involved with the integrationist struggles exemplified by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr, others were committed to eliminating racial subjugation through revolutionary means. It was the participants in the latter struggle who developed a conscious connection with the Cuban Revolution. In addition, these activists often struggled with their duality: being African and American. Black nationalists would often ask if they could be true to both of their realities, a quandary first addressed by W.E.B. Dubois.

Interestingly, the Cuban Revolution was the catalyst that forced some African Cubans to concurrently ask the same question which mystified their North American compatriots: Can we be both African and Cuban? Soon after 1959, some African Cuban intellectuals began secretly meeting in order to read the works of Malcolm X, Frantz Fanon, and Amiri Baraka. This was an act of solidarity, and an attempt to build a unified front that would more successfully challenge imperialism in both countries. Linda Howe, author of the book, *Transgression and Conformity: Cuban Writers and Artists after the Revolution*, speculates that during this period ‘... the connection between the radical black politics in the United States and in Cuba was solidly forged’ (2004: 77).

The aforementioned connection was further solidified when on 24 September 1960, Fidel Castro, while sojourning at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem, New York, met the African American nationalist leader Malcolm X. In the article “Review/Harlem Hospitality and Political History: Malcolm X and Fidel Castro at the Hotel Theresa”, Joy James writes, ‘The meeting of Malcolm X and Fidel Castro in Harlem came to symbolize an era of Post-World War II decolonization movements and human rights struggles of Black and Third World people on several continents’ (1994: 2). This historic meeting had a lasting impact on Castro. On 24 May 1990, at the Malcolm X Symposium held in Havana, Castro offered this recollection: ‘We have always been in solidarity with the struggle of Black people, of minorities, and of the poor in the United States. We have always been in solidarity with them, and they have been in solidarity with us’ (1994: 3).

After 24 September 1960, and the subsequent decades, Cuba continued to confront US-based imperialism and sow the seeds of African American solidarity by offering political asylum to freedom fighters who ran afoul of the US government. To this end, Howe asserts, ‘Unity between some North American and Cuban blacks continued when the “Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver and Assata Shakur, founder of the Black Liberation Army, were among the prominent black exiles given sanctuary in Cuba; Stokely Carmichael and Angela Davis made well-publicized trips there at the height of their fame.” Government officials invited US Black Panther members and politically controversial African American

figures, treating them as persecuted heroes' (2004: 78).

One of the politically controversial African American figures given sanctuary in Cuba was Robert Williams. Williams was the influential National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) leader from Monroe, North Carolina, who urged the beleaguered African American Community to defend itself from the unrelenting attacks they experienced from white people. In 1961 he was falsely accused of kidnapping a white couple, which led to his exile to Cuba. Williams, along with his wife Mabel, became the quintessential anti-imperialists when they launched their Radio Free Dixie (RFD) programme from Cuba. Radio Free Dixie (1962–65) was established to bring the plight of African Americans to a larger and more diverse audience. In his thesis titled, 'The Sound of Revolution: Radio Free Dixie, Robert Williams, and Music as Protest and Propaganda', Cory LaFavers labels Williams as a Cultural Nationalist and examines the RFD's format and programming. According to LaFavers, 'Robert and Mabel Williams employed a wide range of African American musical styles on RFD to help gain a listening audience and to support its protest agenda musically. Most of the music played had deep connections with African American protest and cultural history and proved fundamental in encouraging a cultural revolution' (2008: 18).

Furthermore, RFD broadcasts also included political editorials and conversations that encouraged African Americans to protest against their unfortunate social, political, and economic conditions. It is important to note that throughout the duration of RFD, it was supported and funded by the Cuban government. Williams's creativity was stimulated, while living in Cuba. In addition to producing Radio Free Dixie, he published the noteworthy newsletter *The Crusader*, which denounced imperialism, capitalism, and racism. In 1962 he also authored the bestselling book *Negroes With Guns*, an analysis of African America's fight against right-wing reactionaries.

Indeed, many Cubans and African Americans have coalesced to combat imperialism and oppression. From the earliest slave revolts, wars of independence, and protest movements, these comrades have provided each other with support, assistance, and encouragement. Cubans have not only provided assistance to their northern neighbours, but

they have also expended resources to thwart imperialist machinations on the African continent.

In 1961 Communist Cuba established its first humanitarian, diplomatic, and military relationship with an African country. The Cubans provided aid to the Algerian people as they fought a war of independence against France. Cuba supported the Algerians by giving them medical assistance, military training, and supplies. While Algeria was Cuba's first experience in Africa, it would most certainly not be its last. In late 1964, Castro ordered Che' Guevara to Angola and the Congo in order to support anti-imperialist revolts. In Angola Guevara fought with the Marxist-Leninist People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

While in the Congo, he aligned himself with the followers of the slain prime minister Patrice Lumumba, whose devotees were rebelling against the imperialist-backed government led by Joseph Kasavubu. Guevara's attempt at quelling imperialism in Angola and the Congo was unsuccessful. His efforts were thwarted by the Belgian and US-supported mercenary army led by the Afrikaner Mike Hoare. Eventually, in 1965, Guevara slipped out of the Congo, calling his botched foray 'a history of failure'.

Cuba's goal of suppressing imperialism in Africa was not damaged by its previous failure to end the subjugation of the Angolan and Congolese peoples. In both 1975 and 1988, Cuba deployed her army to Angola to assist its long-time ally, the MPLA, confront South African tyranny, racism, coercion, and violence. According to Piero Gleijeses, author of the book (2013) *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976–1991*, 'Cuba is the only country in the world that sent its soldiers to confront the army of apartheid and defeated the army of apartheid, the South African army, twice – in 1975, 1976, and in 1988'.

Castro, in 1975–1976, responded to South Africa's invasion of Angola by ordering 36,000 Cuban soldiers into the country. The communist forces pushed the South African army into Namibia, which was controlled by South Africa. This joint Cuban and Angolan show of force was significant because it effectively met the challenge of the 'White Giants', as Gleijeses explains: 'This was the first real contribution of Cuba to the liberation of South Africa. It was the first time in

living memory that the White Giants, the army of apartheid, had been forced to retreat. And they retreated because of a non-white army. And in a situation of internal colonialism, this is important' (2007: 1). The Cubans remained in Angola, thus preventing South African forces from recapturing important towns and cities. In addition, it was during this time that the Cuban Government and the African National Congress began their coalescence.

In 1987 the Cuban–Angolan coalition was, once again, challenged when the South African army intervened in an Angolan Civil War. By early November 1987, the South Africans had trapped Angolan army units in the town of Cuito Cuanavale. The imperialist forces were poised to destroy the beleaguered Angolan Military, until Castro deployed 1,500 soldiers, and his most sophisticated jets, to assist his allies. In the article titled, 'Remembering Cuba's Sacrifice for African Liberation', Gleijeses describes the battle, 'On March 23, 1988, the SADF launched its last major attack on the town.' Gleijeses continues, 'As Colonel Jan Breytenbach writes, the South African assault "was brought to a grinding halt" by the combined Cuban and Angolan forces' (ibid).

After their defeat at Cuito Cuanavale, the retreating South Africans returned to Namibia, which was unacceptable to the Cubans. Cuba was poised to invade Namibia and rid that country of the vanquished South African army. However, at that very moment, the US encouraged both sides to pursue a diplomatic solution to the battlefield quandary. Not only did the anti-imperialist forces of Angola and Cuba win a decisive military victory, but they also proved to be just as skilled at the negotiating table. 'The Cubans' battlefield prowess and negotiating skills', writes Gleijeses, 'were instrumental in forcing South Africa to accept black Namibia's independence ... This victory reverberated beyond Namibia' (ibid.).

Cuba's policy in Africa involved/involves developing strategic relationships and ties with African nationalists and socialists. This strategy was successful in preventing South African expansionism and hegemony. More importantly, it is Cuba's timely intervention in Angola (1988) that many scholars, including Nelson Mandela, assert was the event that ultimately led to the toppling of the racist South African Apartheid regime: 'The Cubans destroyed the myth of the invincibility of the

white oppressor ... [and] inspired the fighting masses of South Africa' (Mandela 2013).

Cuba's sphere of influence expanded beyond Africa into every corner of the world where the sting of imperialism was felt by innocent populations. In the Caribbean, the relationship with Cuba began in the early 1970s when Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados (the largest English-speaking countries in the region) normalised diplomatic, military, and business affairs with their communist neighbour. Initially, the relationship between these nations hinged on security and the sustaining of the revolution. Gerardo Nunez offers the following observation in the article 'Cuba's Relations with the Caribbean: Trends and Future Prospects': 'Cuban foreign policy toward the Caribbean has been primarily focused on protecting its national security and the survival of the revolution' (2002: 6).

In the future, as the relationship between Cuba and Caribbean countries matures, foreign policy issues will expand into more reciprocally advantageous areas. To this extent, Nunez writes, '... Cuba–Caribbean relations have room for further improvement in areas of common interest that have not yet been fully explored, such as migration, and narcotics, terrorism, and the environment. These areas could be the starting point for enhanced and mutually beneficial collaboration and for the development of a common agenda vis-à-vis third parties' (7).

Cuba's most important province of influence, particularly in its unending fight against imperialism, is South America. The earliest Cuban revolutionaries, such as Martí, extolled the virtues of South American freedom fighters. The great Venezuelan Simon Bolívar (1783–1830), also known as 'the Liberator', shared Martí's and Castro's intolerance of totalitarianism and domination. In fact, Bolívar's struggles against Spanish imperialism were emulated by many Cuban leaders of the Ten Years War and the Second War of Independence. In addition, Bolívar's suspicions of the US government's imperialist schemes in South America were also shared by many Cubans. In an 1819 speech in Caracas, Venezuela, Bolívar shared his distrust of the US by saying, '... the United States would seem to be destined by fate to plague the Americas with miseries in the name of freedom' (1829: 135). This sentiment was clearly shared by Martí who, while fighting against Spanish

imperialist forces in 1895, said, ‘... I am in daily danger of giving my life for my country and duty – for I understand that duty and have the intention of carrying out – the duty of preventing the United States from extending through the Antilles as Cuba gains its independence, and from falling, with that additional strength, upon our lands of America’ (Marti 1885).

Cuba has influenced many anti-imperialist efforts in South America such as Chile (1970s) and Nicaragua (1980s). However, Cuba shares its greatest affinity with Venezuela. Central to the contemporary relationship between Cuba and Venezuela is the unbreakable alliance, even in death, between Castro and the late Hugo Chavez (1954–2013). In 1992 Chavez led an unsuccessful coup against the regime of Carlos A. Perez. After serving a two-year prison term for his participation in the previously mentioned revolt, he became associated with Castro, a relationship that continued throughout the rest of his life.

‘At the root of the extraordinary close alliance Chavez built with Cuba’, postulates Francisco Toro, ‘was a deep paternal bond between two men ... Chavez’s extraordinary devotion sprang from Castro’s status as the mythical Hero-Founder of Latin America’s post-war hard left’ (2013: 1). For 20 years, Cuba provided sugar, military support, and assistance to the oil-rich nation. Moreover, Cuba became a major exporter of medicine, medical supplies, and physicians. Since the Cuban-Venezuelan Health Care Collaboration, an estimated 53,000 Venezuelans have received free medical treatment from approximately 30,000 Cuban physicians. In fact, Cuba has been practising ‘Medical Diplomacy’, as a method of confronting imperialism, since the 1960s. In response, Venezuela delivered to Cuba what it didn’t/doesn’t have: oil, natural energy, and financial support.

The seemingly unbreakable bond between Cuba and Venezuela is a source of immense discomfort for the US government. Nicholas Kozloff, in the article titled ‘Washington’s war on Cuba and Venezuela’ suggests that as early as 1973, the US was suspicious of the connection between these Caribbean countries. Kozloff says that, ‘In late 1973, US diplomats expressed concern about Venezuelan moves to end Cuba’s diplomatic isolation, and were particularly worried that Caracas might “put together Organization of American States [OAS] majority in support resolution permitting the reestablishment

relations with Cuba” Washington was also perturbed by reports that Venezuelan Navy vessels had departed for Cuba in order to load up on large shipments of sugar, and diplomats contemplated a possible cut-off of aid to Caracas in retaliation’ (2013: 2)).

To Washington’s chagrin, Cuba and Venezuela have continued to present a unified front in the fight against imperialism and degradation, even after the death of Chavez. The new Venezuelan president, Nicholas Maduro, has continued the relationship with Castro’s Cuba, vowing that the two countries ‘... will continue working together’ (2014: 1). Recently, Cuba and Venezuela have signed 51 bilateral agreements related to a multiplicity of activities including health care, education, energy management, and recreation.

Notwithstanding the angst, frustration, and distrust the US has experienced with Cuba, recently there has been a normalizing of relations between the hemispheric neighbours. On 17 December 2015, Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro restored full diplomacy between the two former advisories, ending over 50 years of hostility. The aforementioned Heads of State, on 11 April 2015, exemplified the burgeoning alliance by shaking hands and exchanging pleasantries.

In addition to the reestablishment of diplomacy, the new relationship between the US and Cuba has enjoyed the following accomplishments:

- Prisoner releases
- Establishment of new travel and trade regulations
- US companies allowed to invest in small Cuban businesses

Some people anticipate that this new era in hemispheric relations will have a positive impact on Cuba’s struggling economy. However, any attempt to lift the long standing economic embargo will face stiff opposition from Republican politicians such as Speaker John Boehner, Senate Majority Leader, Senator Mitch McConnell, and Senator John Vitter of Louisiana.

Moreover, some people fear that the new thaw in US-Cuba relations may encourage Cuba to return to its racist and fascist past. Only time will reveal if Cuba continues to confront imperialism, aggression, and despotism or if it returns to the corruption and

oppression its citizens experienced under the dictator Fulgencio Batista (1952–59).

From Cuba's earliest history, many of its citizens have struggled against imperialism. The Taino Native Americans, African Cubans, and righteous Cubans of European and Asian descent have fought to rid their homeland, and world, of subjugation and oppression. Throughout these heroic struggles, the names of the Cuban revolutionary leaders have changed; the places in which historic battles were fought are varied; and, of course, the outcomes of these struggles are diverse. What has been, and continues to be, persistent in Cuban history is its people's anti-imperialist fight at home and abroad.

Clyde C. Robertson

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## Darfur and the West: The Political Economy of 'the World's Worst Humanitarian Crisis'

### Introduction

During the peak years of violence in the mid-2000s, the Darfur region of west Sudan became a household word in the West, synonymous with human tragedy, carnage, and depravity. Indeed, at its height, dispatches from Western reporters at most unflinchingly referred to the Darfur conflict as 'the world's worst humanitarian crisis'. While violence in the region has declined, and the topic has largely disappeared from international headlines, a low-level conflict simmers on in Darfur, with a lasting political solution as distant as ever.

Though Darfur was the recipient of sustained Western interest during the conflict's



height, mainstream media coverage was at best superficial, and almost universally failed to provide necessary background information for understanding the conflict – let alone for understanding the role of outside powers in the country (except for the favoured villain, China), or in Africa more generally. That is, little to no attention was paid to critically analysing the dynamics of imperialism in the region, past or present, at least insofar as the West could be implicated.

This essay seeks to address this gap by delineating the involvement of foreign actors in the Darfur conflict. In addition to providing a basic outline of the conflict's origins and historical context, we review the lineage of colonial and imperial incursions into the region, with a particular focus on highly salient, though oft-forgotten, episodes in US–Sudanese relations. Further, we track the recent involvement of outside actors in the Darfur conflict and in Sudan more generally, from the US and China to the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU). As we demonstrate, the Darfur conflict is intricately linked to two foreign-policy doctrines that have elicited significant debate in both scholarly and lay circles: humanitarian intervention and the 'responsibility to protect' (R2P, in common parlance). Finally, we analyse the role of foreign actors in their efforts to mediate the conflict, and point to the paths not taken as a result of this outside involvement.

### **The Darfur conflict**

Darfur was an independent sultanate until as recently as 1916, when the British folded it into the cobbled-together nation of Sudan. Britain's manner of imperial rule, which based itself in Khartoum while largely ignoring the rest of the country, helped to lay the groundwork for the post-independence violence that has haunted Sudan for over five decades. Since it achieved the ouster of the British in 1956, the established pattern of unaccountable domination of peripheral regions like Darfur by the centre has continued. Power is concentrated resolutely in Khartoum and is wielded imperiously, prompting periodic separatist movements in a number of regions, including the ultimately successful breakaway of the south.

The proximate origin of the rebellion in Darfur lay in two uneasy groupings which

emerged publicly in 2003: the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA). The first has Islamist roots. Its then leader had once studied under Hassan al-Turabi, who had a long career as a sinister power-broker in Khartoum. The SLA by contrast was always less coherent and more secular in orientation. As the rebellion dragged on, the rebels splintered into dozens of smaller and typically hostile factions. Often rebel groups descended into mere banditry.

Periodic efforts at reaching a settlement with Khartoum that included most of the rebel forces have proven fruitless. Khartoum, despite having the full force of the Western propaganda machine turned on it, always had the upper hand militarily. Thus it pursued a war of attrition. The rebels, for their part, were bolstered with a false sense of empowerment by the fulsome rhetoric emanating from Washington, which championed the Darfuri plight. The effect quite probably led them to overplay their hand at the bargaining table, as they held out an illusory hope for US–NATO military assistance. Given the balance of forces, securing a just agreement with Khartoum was never on the cards. However, an accord that secured at least a few tangible benefits for Darfur might well have been possible if diplomacy had been conducted differently. The abortive Darfur Peace Agreement of 2006 was rammed through by the Bush Administration. Many rebels had not even been given a chance to read the would-be agreement, leading to a disastrous splintering of these groups. One rebel faction signed, while the others abstained. In the years that followed, the disunity and sectarianism of the rebel forces would worsen dramatically, obliterating hope of a settlement that would secure any tangible relief for Darfuris.

### **Darfur and the 'new' scramble for Africa**

Foreign attention – and meddling – is nothing new for Sudan. Indeed, the country was a key battleground during the Cold War as the US and Soviet Union struggled for regional influence and supremacy. Before the rise to power of the more independently oriented Islamist party, the National Islamic Front (NIF), Washington assiduously supported Sudan, particularly during the tenure of Jaafar Mohammed Nimeiri. By the mid-1970s,

Nimeiri's government was highly valued by Washington, both because it was a geopolitical ally in a strategically important area of the world and because oil had recently been discovered in Sudan.

The resumption of the civil war with the south, which had been raging off and on since independence decades earlier, occurred in 1983. For the next two years, until Nimeiri was overthrown by popular unrest in 1985 – a notable but oft-ignored forerunner to the Arab Spring – Washington provided his regime with crucial support as he waged a bloody campaign against the people of the south that would ultimately exact a death toll dwarfing that of the Darfur conflict. Such was the flow of military aid that, according to the regional specialist Douglas H. Johnson, 'Nimeiri's most senior officials warned a group of southern politicians that Khartoum had built an "air bridge" from America to the Sudan for the supply of arms, and the first place such arms would be used would be in the south. This turned out to be no idle threat' (Fate and Funk 2009: 32).

In waging its war against the southern rebellion, Khartoum also began enlisting and arming Arab-identified militias to its cause and promoting a racist, anti-African ideology. The strategy resulted in horrific atrocities against civilians and was revived decades later in Khartoum's repression in Darfur.

Concurrently with the brutal warfare, in the 1980s the southern and western regions of Sudan were repeatedly struck by grave famines. As Johnson observed (referring specifically to the 1984–85 famine, though the behaviour was repeated in 1988), during this period, 'The US co-operated in obstructing the expansion of relief to non-government-held areas' (Johnson 2003: 146). Some southern refugees would resettle in the US, where they became known as the 'Lost Boys of Sudan', producing flurries of anodyne, self-congratulatory profiles. Pertinent political context, including US efforts to obstruct UN humanitarian relief to the unaccompanied minors, went unreported save in the specialist literature.

Washington was keen to maintain Sudan as a bulwark of influence in the region against Mengistu's Ethiopia and Gaddafi's Libya. Thus mass starvation was regarded as an acceptable outcome to avoid providing any incidental support to the southern rebels. However, the election of Sadiq al-Mahdi in

1986 marked the start of a gradual decline in relations with the US. Khartoum strengthened ties with Libya and trumpeted Pan-Arab solidarity. After Sudan incurred massive debt under the Nimeiri dictatorship, the newly elected government balked at prescriptions by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The trend accelerated after Omar al-Bashir's 1989 coup. The leadership announced that it would not 'follow the dictates of the West' (Burr and Collins 1995: 251). When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, Sudan backed Saddam Hussein rather than the US position. It was not long before Washington began to consider providing support for the southern rebels. Suddenly the US 'discovered' that Sudan was a state sponsor of terrorism. The IMF suspended Sudan's voting rights. Washington had switched sides.

The veteran journalist Dan Connell (2003: 228) notes that relations with the US 'reached their nadir during the Clinton administration, which imposed strong sanctions on Khartoum and appeared to tilt toward a policy of displacing the NIF government, though it held back from providing more than token aid to the rebels challenging the regime'. In 1998, US missiles levelled the al-Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum, ostensibly in response to the (actually entirely unrelated) US embassy bombings in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. The pretext for the attack was erroneous intelligence suggesting that the facility was producing chemical weapons.

The strike came after Sudan had offered to extradite to the US two suspects it had detained in connection with the embassy bombings. The offer was ignored. Also ignored after the bombing were pleas for an apology from the US for its illegal act of war. In reality, the plant had UN contracts and produced a substantial portion of the nation's basic medicines, such as anti-malarials. Taking into account the resulting lack of access to medication, the German ambassador to Sudan at the time estimated that the loss of the facility may have caused some 'several tens of thousands' of deaths (Daum 2001). Only the year before, the US had imposed comprehensive sanctions upon Sudan. There is little doubt that the primary result was to increase hardship for the populace. The unpleasant consequences were of so little interest that no public studies of the impact of the sanctions were ever undertaken.

Sudan's strategic position along the Nile and a vital international shipping lane, once prized by Victorian Britain, is evidently well recognised by the US. Ann Mosely Lesch (1987), writing in *Foreign Affairs*, once observed that the nation's 'geostrategic location means that changes in Sudanese political orientations have repercussions on the entire African continent and the Red Sea littoral'.

As the *New York Times* noted, the new millennium augured renewed interest in Africa on the part of 'Washington policy makers, and one word sums up the reason: oil' (Dao 2002). Though long hampered by warfare, Sudan was finally able to bring its oil operations online in 1999. However, owing to the sanctions and the outwardly hostile relations between the two countries, the US was frozen out of participation in the country's oil trade. In 2006, reflecting Washington's neoliberal agenda and designs on Sudan's oil, President George W. Bush explained that 'The pervasive role played by the government of Sudan in Sudan's petroleum and petrochemical industries threatens U.S. national security and foreign policy interests' (Riechmann 2006). This vexing problem would be significantly ameliorated in 2011 with the breakaway of a US-friendly South Sudan. The prior decade, however, witnessed an oil-fuelled economic boom for north Sudan. Outside Khartoum, the evidence of this new-found wealth was slim, particularly in far-flung peripheral regions like Darfur.

Yet discontent in Darfur is hardly restricted to the last decade. Nimeiri's regime also faced popular unrest in the deliberately neglected region. Though uninterested in developing the impoverished area, Nimeiri was content to collaborate with the CIA in using Darfur as a staging ground for supporting the odious Hissène Habré in neighbouring Chad.

Unsurprisingly, in the post-Cold War era, Sudan's size, oil wealth, and strategic location at the crossroads of the Middle East and Africa have continued to pique the interest of foreign powers. Here, we consider the role of two such powers in Sudan – the US and China – and how their machinations in the country relate to the Darfur conflict.

Media coverage of the Darfur conflict tended to divide foreign actors with an interest in Sudan into two groups, with strikingly different rationales behind their postures towards the country. On the one hand were the benevolent Western countries (that is,

the US and European powers), which were said to be engaging in constructive efforts to resolve the conflict thanks to their deep-seated humanitarian impulses. On the other was China, whose insatiable demand for the country's oil resources was argued to be driving it into a strategic alliance with the al-Bashir regime; in turn, it protected Khartoum through weapons transfers and diplomatic foot-dragging. A number of other greedy spoiler (and non-Western) countries, such as Malaysia, were also lumped into the same group, though China was by far the most prominent. According to this narrative, China was essentially all that was standing in the way of Western-led international action that could finally resolve the Darfur conflict.

Yet the US's posture towards Sudan was of course much more complicated – and indeed, nefarious – than this dominant narrative suggests. Two primary camps wrestled over control of Washington's Sudan policy during the Bush years. On one side was a curious network of advocacy organisations that had mobilised against Sudan's human rights violations (such as the Save Darfur Coalition, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the International Crisis Group), evangelical Christian groups that opposed al-Bashir's self-styled Islamist regime, and neoconservatives who were seeking to remake the world in the US's image. All of them pushed for strong US action in Sudan, perhaps even military intervention.

The other consisted of foreign policy 'realists' who saw Darfur and Sudan primarily through strategic lenses. Consisting of major figures from the foreign policy establishment, this bipartisan group pursued quite different aims in dealing with Khartoum. Much like Bashar al-Assad's Syria or Gaddafi's Libya, Sudan was treated warily, but, for the moment, there was little interest in implementing Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's public call in 1997 for regime change. The point was to secure Sudan's continued co-operation in intelligence-sharing relating to the 'War on Terror', as well as to avoid upsetting the US-backed north-south peace agreement, and to impede further Chinese influence in the region (as well as its access to the country's oil resources). This camp – which included the leadership of the US State Department, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the CIA – shared the fundamental belief that Khartoum was

'too important to be harshly treated'. Thus, no matter how loud the protestations from Washington condemning its brutal activities in Darfur, the Sudanese government 'should at least be helped even if perhaps not fully supported' (Prunier 2005: 139–140).

While the first group was the loudest, and captured the most headlines, analysts indicated that the 'realist' side won 'every time' (Murphy 2006). Yet while the former camp was not setting policy, its advocacy implicitly helped to sell the notion that the Pentagon was merely, as some members of the punditry would have it, the 'armed wing of Amnesty International' (Hari 2005; see also Cohen 2003). This idle fantasy is sufficiently tenacious that it is worth devoting some words to debunking the delusion. In one telling indication that strategic and not humanitarian interests were guiding US policy in Sudan, according to the prominent Sudan specialist Gérard Prunier (2005: 138–140), 'the interest level of US diplomacy on the Sudan question dropped sharply as soon as President Bush was re-elected' in 2004.

In this vein, the Bush administration pressured Congress to water down the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act – signing into law this weaker version of the bill in 2006 – and enacted its 'Plan B' to address the Darfur conflict in 2007. This consisted of mild additional economic sanctions and financial measures while avoiding sanctions on a number of key government leaders. These were minor and largely ineffective measures, apparently designed for little more than domestic public consumption. A more realistic assessment of US policy is provided by the 2007 budget justification, which notes, 'The United States will maintain its strong support for countries on the front lines in the War on Terrorism, especially Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Sudan ...' (US Department of State 2007; emphasis added).

In concrete terms, this translated into a close relationship with the head of Sudan's intelligence agency, Salah Gosh – who also happened to be a chief architect of the Khartoum government's violent scorched-earth campaign in response to the rebellion in Darfur, in addition to having served as Osama bin Laden's former handler in Sudan. His human rights credentials appeared to make no difference to Washington. Indeed, the CIA flew him to the White House in 2005 for discussions on intelligence collaboration. In the

same year, a journalist witnessed a 'senior CIA agent' give Gosh a 'bear hug' at a counter-terrorism conference (Steele 2005).

Similarly, the US ensured that UN sanctions, which were to be targeted against key individuals within the Sudanese regime that bore culpability for the bloodshed in Darfur, would not include figures such as Gosh. As the Center for American Progress noted in 2006:

On the one hand, the United States pushed harder for the sanctions than any other country. On the other hand, U.N. Ambassador John Bolton successfully managed 'to keep top Sudanese commanders' from being targeted. Thanks to Bolton, the sanction list was whittled down to four from eight, only one of whom 'is a Sudanese government official, and a mid-level official at that.' (Fake and Funk 2009: 201)

By early 2008, the Bush administration was publicly offering to normalise relations with the al-Bashir regime, should it take sufficient steps to resolve the north–south and Darfur conflicts. For ideological reasons, initially it also openly opposed efforts to use the International Criminal Court to try human rights cases related to the Darfur conflict, and failed to take steps to facilitate the arrival of Darfuri refugees to the US.

In this latter regard, the record is even worse for two of the US's closest allies, Britain and Israel. Despite their militant verbal postures concerning Khartoum's crimes, both countries deported Darfuri refugees back to the region during the height of the conflict. Indeed, Downing Street actively collaborated with Khartoum in the refoulement of refugees back to Sudan, where they faced torture and death. Israel, which joined Washington in trumpeting the crimes of the 'Arab' government of Khartoum for political effect, subjected many Darfuri and South Sudanese refugees who had managed to survive the treacherous journey to indefinite detention. Given its well-documented demographic obsession, Israel's primary concern was to stop the unwanted immigrants, lest the country be 'flooded', as the interior minister reportedly warned (Fake and Funk 2009: 118–121). In sum, while public rhetoric indicated that Sudan was virtually a part of the famed 'axis of evil', the reality of US–Sudanese relations – and relations between

Sudan and the West more generally – was quite different.

With a new election cycle under way in the US, leading Democrats were openly calling for aggressive measures against Khartoum. Several key figures called for a no-fly zone over Darfur and even the introduction of US troops into the country. Yet no such strident action was forthcoming. By the time Barack Obama assumed the presidency in 2009, Darfur was fading from the headlines, though the afflictions facing the region were far from resolved. The 'armed wing of Amnesty International' was once again revealed as illusory window-dressing for Western publics. Darfur had become a stabilised, low-intensity conflict, precisely of the kind that normally fails to pique the interest of the US media and political class. Further, with the US-led occupation of Iraq 'winding down', Obama turned his focus to Afghanistan and to Asia, thus diminishing Khartoum's utility to Washington as a strategic asset. Finally, with independence for South Sudan then looming, US interests in Sudan revolved around preventing the outbreak of another civil war, and shoring up its alliance with the South, which would be home to the vast majority of Sudan's oil resources.

Throughout these years, blaming China for its more open and comprehensive strategic alliance with Khartoum, and for its failure to pressure the regime over the Darfur issue, became a national sport in Washington. This culminated in an effort to boycott the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. These were not unfair accusations, though they were also hypocritical. Washington itself had its own stable of brutal and authoritarian allies in Africa and elsewhere, and worked much more closely with the Khartoum regime than it was willing to admit publicly. Further, it failed to make common-sense efforts to address the conflict (such as providing sufficient humanitarian assistance, fully funding peacekeeping forces, and pushing for more inclusive peace talks). The larger context surrounding the Sino-US 'war of words' over Darfur was what we and several other authors have identified as a new 'scramble for Africa', as outside powers – primarily the US, China, and Europe, but also India, Brazil, and numerous Asian countries, among others – jockey to build political alliances and gain control of the region's resources (Carmody 2011). In this sense, recent decades have seen

more continuity than change on the African continent.

### **Peacekeepers, humanitarian intervention, and the responsibility to protect**

In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) released a landmark report on the 'responsibility to protect' (R2P). R2P became a favoured topic in liberal-interventionist circles in subsequent years, re-invigorating the 'humanitarian intervention' franchise. According to the report, 'humanitarian' interventions carried out under the R2P framework were to be based on four 'precautionary principles':

A. Right intention: The primary purpose of the intervention ... must be to halt or avert human suffering. Right intention is better assured with multilateral operations, clearly supported by regional opinion and the victims concerned.

B. Last resort: Military intervention can only be justified when every non-military option for the prevention or peaceful resolution of the crisis has been explored ...

C. Proportional means: The scale, duration and intensity of the planned military intervention should be the minimum necessary to secure the defined human protection objective.

D. Reasonable prospects: There must be a reasonable chance of success in halting or averting the suffering which has justified the intervention, with the consequences of action not likely to be worse than the consequences of inaction. (ICISS 2001: xii)

While these ideas have significant merit, it is unclear whether any real-world interventions – past or present – actually meet these criteria. The principle of 'right intention' is of particular note in this regard, for it suggests that powerful, intervening states should act on the basis of 'human suffering' instead of self-interest. The real world offers few, if any, examples of such high-mindedness (Walzer 1977: 101).

Instead, what have abounded are decidedly non-humanitarian interventions which are cloaked in humanitarian rhetoric. Indeed,

perhaps every intervention in history has been framed in this way by the invaders, from King Leopold's pillaging of the Congo (justified with anti-slavery rhetoric) to Hitler's conquering of Slovakia (which was said to be based on an 'earnest desire to serve the true interests of the peoples dwelling in the area') (Murphy 1996: 62).

In turn, according to dominant Western discourses, interventions are 'humanitarian' only when 'we' are the ones holding the guns. It is axiomatic in the West that the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan was based on a sincere desire to help the Afghan people, particularly women, even if reality has departed from the premise. In contrast, Cuba's sending of troops to Angola in the 1970s and 1980s to support anti-colonial forces is seen as an act of self-interest, and ineligible for consideration as a 'humanitarian' act. Stephen Shalom (2007) captures the double standard well by citing a hypothetical letter from a concerned citizen. It reads:

What's going on in Bosnia and Haiti is appalling. I often wonder why our government can't intervene to stop the killing. I know our government isn't pure – far from it – but nor was it pure during World War II and I supported its participation then against Hitler. It's certainly true that in that earlier war our government didn't get involved out of noble motives, but the clear consequence of its involvement was to defeat the Nazi killing machine. And that was good. Today our government's motives are still far from noble. But is that any reason for us not to demand that our government intervene when so many lives are at stake? The human tragedies in Bosnia and Haiti are so profound, that surely this is a time for intervention.

As Shalom asks, are our reactions to this letter the same once we discover that it was written from one Russian citizen to another? Must we not also be sceptical of Western invocations of humanitarianism to justify wars? Are 'we' the only ones with the 'right' to carry out such interventions?

Many left-leaning commentators and activists were content to point to such double standards as a reason to dismiss any sort of intervening force in Darfur out of hand – even UN or AU peacekeepers deployed with

Sudan's consent. Whatever one makes of the theoretical arguments surrounding such interventions, and in spite of the presumably imperial motives of the involved states, one must also look to a more practical consideration: whether the presence of peacekeepers on the ground will have positive humanitarian consequences. As Justin Podur (2005) frames the issue:

The real world demands not allowing genuine concern for victims of atrocities to be transmuted by interventionist hypocrites into apologetics for an imperialism that will ultimately produce more victims of more atrocities. But those same victims deserve better than mere denunciations of intervention and its apologists as hypocrites and warmongers.

So what are we to make of the AU, and later the joint AU–UN (UNAMID) force in Darfur? Peacekeepers in Darfur appear to have had mildly positive effects for the civilian population, leading to a moderate – though terribly insufficient – increase in the level of security in the region. Yet they were not the panacea that Western commentators and activists often suggested, nor were they able to compensate for the lack of a lasting political solution to the conflict – a missing piece of the puzzle that never attracted sufficient attention from the West.

Given that these peacekeeping forces were of some limited utility in putting a band-aid on the Darfur conflict, it is instructive to consider the Western, and particularly US, posture towards them. In short, it was to keep the AU and UNAMID forces on a starvation diet – sending along enough resources for them to subsist (barely), but never a sufficient amount for their potential to be fully realised. While US rhetorical support for the people of Darfur was ample, the provision of necessary funds and supplies never became a priority for the US. So extreme were the shortages that the AU force at times lacked, among other necessities, telephone lines and basic communication devices, properly coloured helmets, sufficient fuel to complete its patrols or food to sustain its troops, or the funds to pay its translators – who at one point as a result went on strike for five months. As the UNAMID force commander Martin Luther Agwai put it: 'We remain desperately under-manned and poorly equipped ... Our long shopping list of

missing equipment makes shameful reading' (Bridgland 2008). Yet here again, the West's humanitarian rhetoric would fail to materialise into meaningful concrete assistance for Darfuris.

In one particularly shameful episode, UNAMID was unable to persuade donor nations to supply the two dozen helicopters that it requested for its surveillance missions. Disgracefully, this transpired while – according to a report issued by more than 50 non-governmental organisations, entitled 'Grounded: The International Community's Betrayal of UNAMID' – European countries had more than sufficient numbers 'gathering dust in hangars or flying in air shows' (Withington 2008). Meanwhile, US helicopters were being used for decidedly non-humanitarian ends in the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Though China's role in the Darfur conflict was particularly shameful and unhelpful, China was far from alone, as we have seen, in serving as an obstacle to peace in the region.

## Conclusion

Though prospects for justice in Darfur were never bright, a more skilful diplomatic facilitation of the 2006 peace agreement might well have resulted in peace and some genuine concessions from Khartoum. Instead, the violence continued, and indeed still lingers, despite a 2011 agreement between the government and some rebel factions. Rebels are still active, though without any apparent hope of regaining what little political leverage they had in the early years of the fighting. Life in Darfur has been permanently uprooted and reshaped. Many of the millions driven from their homes may never return, having been forced to resettle elsewhere. Meanwhile, in 2011 the country of South Sudan was born, though it is deeply impoverished, and tensions with Khartoum remain high. Elsewhere in the north, in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, Khartoum is waging violent campaigns against restive forces, extracting a terrible toll on civilian populations.

It is doubtful that any genuine peace, let alone prosperity, will reach Darfur while the current regime remains in Khartoum. The National Congress Party (NCP), the successor to the NIF, has managed to successfully weather the Arab Spring, in part by using its much-feared secret intelligence apparatus to

arrest, torture, and 'disappear' dissidents. Small public demonstrations of dissent are truly brave but have not yet managed to attract a critical mass.

The people of Darfur, once the focus of so much attention, have been largely forgotten by the Western press corps and the White House. Washington is surely pleased to have secured an ally in the region with the formation of South Sudan – which is an ironic outcome after heavily bankrolling mass killings in the south during the 1980s, an episode now thoroughly forgotten. Khartoum, still under sanctions and receptive to China and Iran, remains a nation that the US holds at arm's length. Yet unfortunately, we are far from the day when the people of Sudan can decide their own fate, free from both local tyrants and the machinations of external powers.

Steve Fake and Kevin Funk

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## FARC in Colombia: 21st-Century US Imperialism and Class Warfare

Imperialism in Latin America is not a distant memory. No country is free of its new variations and developments. This chapter is about the armed struggle against US imperialism in Colombia waged for over 50 years by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army, FARC-EP).

Since the late 1990s, there have been significant developments within Latin America in the mass redistribution of wealth, the recovery of sovereignty, and moves to promote regional integration. Mass movements throughout the continent have risen against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Leaders in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Argentina have emerged bringing hope of greater independence from imperialism. US efforts to isolate Cuba have changed to incorporation within the imperialist chain. No longer are the Organization of American States (OAS) and FTAA reliable mechanisms for the imposition of US interests on the region. Most recently, the Colombian government and FARC have been engaged in peace talks since 2012. These important new developments have led to a readjustment of US domination in Latin America, not its ending. These changes were pivotal to the transformation of US imperialism in Latin America and are a reflection of the growing, global, inter-imperialist rivalries of the US, China, and Russia.

Colombia provides an extreme example of this unusual accommodation with US imperialism, described here as '21st-century imperialism', with a reimposition of the Colombian comprador bourgeoisie and its rapprochement with neighbouring Venezuela. In this



context, the FARC is the leading force resisting a 21st-century imperialism where the 20th-century counter-insurgency and destabilisation programmes continue through new forms of control and domination.

### Origins of FARC and US imperialism in Colombia

Since the Wars of Independence against Spain, the Colombian ruling class has fought for its title to land. Simon Bolivar's attempts to carry out a bourgeois-democratic revolution in Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador failed. Colombia's semi-feudal backwardness, historic formation, and geography preserved the hacienda system left behind by imperial Spain (Hylton 2006; Safford and Palacios 2002). In the 19th century, Colombia was composed of small agricultural communities widely dispersed and often isolated by mountains, rivers, jungle, and savannah.

From the time of the Spanish departure in 1823, the fundamental problem in Colombia was that all land was owned by a small but powerful oligarchy. Colombia's land problem and the failure of the Liberal and Conservative Parties to resolve it after nearly 125 years unleashed a civil war, *La Violencia*, from 1948–58.

In the 1946 Colombian presidential election, a Liberal Party candidate, Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, attempted to unite the majority of Colombians against the landowning oligarchy. Conservatives saw Gaitan as a threat to the social order (Pearce 1990). The Liberal Party and the leadership of the Partido Comunista de Colombia (Colombian Communist Party, PCC) presented Gaitan as a political rival. When Gaitanistas won control of the Colombian Congress in 1947, there were strikes and protests in the cities and land seizures in the countryside (LeGrand 1992). When right-wing paramilitaries killed 14,000 protestors, Washington saw an emerging revolutionary situation (Federal Bureau of Investigation 1945; National Archives of the United States 1948; US State Department 1943). On 8 February 1948, Gaitan led a silent protest in Bogotá of 100,000 supporters demanding peace (Márquez 1978). Two months later the populist leader was shot dead in a Bogotá street, instigating *La Violencia* (Idels 2002; Weiner, 2008).

In the capital, Bogotá, Gaitanistas and Communists blamed the new Conservative

government for Gaitan's murder (FARC-EP 2000). Radicalised students called for *juntas revolucionarias* similar to those formed during the Wars of Independence (Hylton 2006). The urban masses attacked police stations and government offices during the *Bogotá* uprising. This popular upsurge failed to bring about a revolutionary transformation (Braun 1986). Conservatives formed paramilitary groups in the cities uniting with wealthy landowners' paramilitary forces in rural and remote areas to crush the rebellion. The army and police were purged of Liberals. All public officials were appointed by Conservatives (Hobsbawm 1963). Paramilitary groups of citizens and police carried out military operations against Communists and Gaitanistas (Sánchez et al. 2001).

The PCC called for the 'people's mass self-defence' to resist the rising level of violence (Partido Comunista de Colombia 1960). Reviving a guerrilla tradition dating back to the Independence Wars, the PCC established a guerrilla base and organised a peasant armed resistance (Bailey 1967). *La Violencia* – which cost the lives of approximately 300,000 Colombians, with 600,000 wounded, maimed, and traumatised – came to its official end in 1958 with the National Front's election (Campos et al. 1963; FARC-EP 2000; Hecht 1977). The social conflict did not end. Instead, 'the violence' was largely concentrated in the countryside (Campos et al. 1963).

When *La Violencia* ended, Washington found in Colombia a willing Cold War. The National Front blamed *La Violencia* on communism. Information on the state's enemies, known or suspected, was centralised. Pacification programmes or 'military civic action' forced poor peasants into 'rehabilitation programs', as Communist guerrillas remained at large (Gomez 1967). These operations would be constructed under the direction of President Kennedy's Alliance for Progress (AFP) programme of 1961 (Vieira 1965). The 'land problem' was replaced by the communist problem as the root cause of Colombia's disorder.

With US aid and assistance Colombia became a 'showcase state' in the Latin American Cold War. The commercial export-oriented agriculture of bananas and coffee was the dominant sector of Colombia's economy and major landowners controlled the government. The AFP made Latin America more reliant upon the US and attempted to negate the radicalising effect of the Cuban

Revolution (1959) through military, technical, and economic aid (Randall 1992). In Colombia's Communist-held regions, selective agrarian reforms were implemented.

In April 1955, the Colombian security forces led by General Rojas Pinilla launched a ground and aerial assault on a guerrilla stronghold at Villarrica in Tolima Department, forcing them into a strategic withdrawal and displacing 100,000 peasants (Hylton 2006; Ospina 2008; Pérez and Lenguita 2005). At Tolima, several hundred guerrillas defended 20,000 peasant families fleeing the government's extermination campaign (FARC-EP 2000; Pérez and Lenguita 2005). In their withdrawal, the guerrillas formed two fighting columns and embarked on a long march over hundreds of miles (FARC-EP 2000; Ospina 2008). Under attack by the army and air force, half the Communist guerrillas retreated to Sumapaz. The other half trekked towards the cordillera, crossing the Magdalena River to establish settlements in El Guayabero in western Meta and El Pato in north-western Caqueta. The number of guerrillas and peasants killed on this march numbered several thousand (Partido Comunista de Colombia 1960). Those captured were interrogated, tortured, and killed (ibid.; Pérez and Lenguita 2005). The surviving guerrillas became guerrilla commanders and founded Marquetalia, rebel agrarian communities at Marquetalia, Rio Chiquito, El Pato, Guayabero, and Santa Barbara (Arenas, 1972; Kirk 2003). The attacks on the guerrilla forces led to strikes and street protests in Bogotá, forcing General Rojas Pinilla's resignation.

On 18 May 1964, a US counter-insurgency force of 16,000 troops, tanks, helicopters, and warplanes attacked Marquetalia (Black 2005; Colby 1996; Osterling 1989). US advisers and Colombian veterans of the Chinese Civil War (1945–49) and the Korean War directed the operation (Grandin 2006). The surviving guerrillas retreated into Amazonia's agricultural frontiers (Schneider 2000). The Cuban revolution and the growth of guerrilla movements throughout Latin America marked the beginning of Colombia's geo-strategic importance to US hemispheric domination (Petras 2012). The FARC was considered a greater threat to US interests than the Vietcong in Indochina by Kennedy's policymakers (Grandin 2006).

On 20 July 1964 the FARC issued a 'revolutionary agrarian policy to change the root

social structure of the Colombian countryside, integrating the land completely free to campesinos working or wanting to work the land' (FARC-EP 1964). At its 10th PCC Congress, the FARC was officially recognised as a revolutionary movement by Castro's Cuba, the Soviet Union, and People's Republic of China (FARC-EP 2000; Gott 1970).

The Liberal Gaitanistas and the Movimiento Revolucionario Liberal (Revolutionary Liberal Movement, MRL) left the Liberal Party in 1959, when Gaitanistas and former Liberal guerrillas, opposing the PCC, formed the Frente Unido de Accion Revolucionaria (United Front of Revolutionary Action, FUAR), a coalition of primarily left-wing intellectuals. Until 1964, the official PCC did not support armed struggle. The FUAR and a group of Bogotá students called the Movimiento de Obreros, Estudiantes y Campesinos (Movement of Workers, Students and Peasants, MOEC) failed to build an urban guerrilla movement (Bethell 1995). The FUAR and MOEC members were devoted to 'Gaitanismo' (Hobsbawm 1963). Through the 1960s and 1970s, the broad Colombian left remained MRL Gaitanista (ibid.).

In 1965, militants from the FUAR and MOEC formed the Cuban-inspired National Liberation Army (ELN), combining Marxism-Leninism with Christian Liberation Theology. In 1968 the Maoist-oriented Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army, EPL) was also established to wage revolutionary war in the countryside against the National Front dictatorship. (Richani 2002). The EPL emerged because of the Sino-Soviet split and the ELN remained opposed to the PCC despite the party supporting rural insurgency. The PCC's change in policy occurred because of the increasing prestige of the Cuban regime among left-wing forces in Latin America and its friendship with the Soviet Union. Widespread opposition to the National Front by the Colombian left compelled the PCC to endorse the FARC's revolutionary army of 3,000 peasant fighters (Bethell 1995; FARC-EP 2000).

### **The war of position and development of 21st-century imperialism**

Since the mid-1960s, the revolutionary forces have maintained a 'war of position' against

the Colombian state and Washington. As a consequence, two different 'Colombias' emerged. Defended by US imperialism, the first Colombia represented the coffee and manufacturing interests in Antioquia, the Western Andean Departments of Valle, Caldas, Risaralda, Quindio, and the Caribbean port of Barranquilla. This 'richer' Colombia received government assistance and direct American investment through the AFP programme (Hylton 2006). Those 5 per cent of Colombians owned more than half of the land, received half of the national income, and represented the 'developed Colombia' (Ospina and Marks 2014). The FARC's 'Colombia' covered 70 per cent of the remaining territory. Blacks, Indians, frontier settlers, the poor, and landless lived and worked in this second undeveloped Colombia of the southern and eastern plains, lowlands, the Pacific and Atlantic coasts (see Map 1.1). This Colombia received no electricity, few public services, and minimal infrastructure from the state (Richani 2002). In this second 'undeveloped' Colombia the FARC emerged as a virtual state-making force.

In 1974 the National Front period ended when the Liberal Alfonso Lopez Michelsen was elected president, promising to make Colombia the 'Japan of South America' (Zamosc 1986). During the Lopez presidency, Colombia's growing cocaine trade channelled funds to the political campaigns of both Liberal and Conservative Parties (Strong 1995) by money-laundering its drug money through the Banco de la Republica (Hylton 2006). Lopez promised land reform but sacked many public-sector workers and responded to trade-union action with repression. In September 1977, a national strike of over 5 million workers by Colombia's four largest trade unions (the Conservative Union de Trabajadores Colombianos [UTC]; the Liberal Confederacion de Trabajadores Colombianos [CTC]; the Communist Confederacion Sindical de Trabajadores de Colombia [CSTC]; and the smaller Confederacion General del Trabajo [CGT]) paralysed the nation for several days (Hecht 1977). The strike was the first general strike in Colombia's history. Falling wages and growing popular opposition to the government's imposition of structural adjustment and privatisation programmes fuelled it (*ibid.*). Lopez saw the mobilised working class as a catalyst for another *Bogotá*zo,

responding with armed repression leaving 80 workers dead and 2,000 injured (Hanratty and Meditz 1988, Hecht 1977). Plans for land reforms were abandoned.

The Lopez regime faced a resurgence of FARC and ELN activity throughout the countryside and an urban-based insurgency. After the FARC's 'final eradication' by Conservative president Misael Pastrana Borreo (1970–74), Washington shifted its attention from communism to drugs. Under pressure from US secretary of state Henry Kissinger, the issue of drugs became paramount in Bogotá. After Kissinger's fact-finding trip to Colombia, President Nixon believed that Lopez was 'totally committed' to 'go to war' against drugs (Friman and Andreas 1999). Lopez's neo-liberal policies created 'the informal sector' which, by 1980, employed more than half of the urban workforce in the 'narco-economy' (Hylton 2006).

President Reagan declared a war on 'narcoterrorism' in Colombia, linking the 'drug war' to the FARC, the Soviet Union, and other left-wing forces (Scott and Marshall 1998). The US 'War on Drugs' in the 1980s occurred during Colombia's 'cocaine decade' when the Medellín and Cali cartels fought for supremacy. The drug cartels along with the largest landowners maintained repression in the countryside and the continuous supply of cocaine to the huge American market (Lee 1998; Richani 2002). The CIA worked with Colombian military officers to reorganise Colombia's intelligence network, strengthening the anti-guerrilla death squads with direct links to drug cartels, to wage a counter-insurgency war against the FARC (Scott 2003; Stich 2001).

Deepening unrest threatened the peace of the 'first Colombia' as urban workers took strike action in the major cities throughout the 1980s. A paramilitary organisation called *Muerte a los Secuestradores* (Death to Kidnappers, MAS) was established to kill guerrillas who kidnapped members of the national business class for ransom. MAS murdered leftists, trade unionists, civil rights activists, and peasants working with the FARC (Scott 2003).

Conservative president Belisario Betancur (1982–86) extended the internal repression. In contrast, the Liberal Party found new sources of funding and support from an emerging narco-bourgeoisie which, by the end of Betancur's presidency, ended Conservative rule



Map 1.1 Map of Colombia

Source: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/colombia\\_rel\\_2001.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/colombia_rel_2001.jpg)

in Colombia (Strong 1995). In 1985, the FARC founded the Union Patriótica (Patriotic Union, UP) as part of a strategy to combine ‘all forms of struggle’ with peace negotiations that the guerrillas and other Colombians sought with the Betancur Administration (Dudley 2004). From 1985–95, 5,000 activists and leaders including elected officials, candidates, and community organisers of the UP were assassinated (Amnesty International 1988).

A virtual ‘narco-state’ subservient to US interests controlled the ‘first Colombia’ (Villar and Cottle 2012). Since the 1980s, elected regimes in Bogotá rule ‘stable’ Colombia where paramilitary death squads arrest, torture, and kill those identified as ‘enemies’ (Robles 2012; RPASUR 2012). In 1985, the FARC and ELN formed the Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar (Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Co-ordination,

CGSB). Together with M-19, a short-lived indigenous rebel group named the Quintin Lame, and the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Workers Revolutionary Party of Colombia, PRT), the CGSB formed an armed united front (FARC-EP 2000). In 1980, the EPL announced it had abandoned Maoism and prolonged war (Richani 2002). By 1991, EPL had been infiltrated and absorbed into MAS's successor paramilitary organisation the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, AUC) (Hylton 2006). The AUC were death squads formed by landlords and cattlemen with links to politicians and businessmen who wanted rebel forces killed. In response, FARC moved to eliminate the EPL. In 1991, the EPL initiated 'peace talks' with the Cesar Gaviria Trujillo Government where 2,000 EPL fighters 'demonobilised' to form the political party Esperanza, Paz y Libertad (Hope, Peace and Liberty).

In 1989, as the Cold War and the 'cocaine decade' ended, progressive Latin American writers and intellectuals including Gabriel Garcia Marquez urged the FARC and ELN to lay down their arms and to pursue reform through peaceful means (Bergquist et al. 2001). With the end of the Cold War, the US devised and sponsored the 'Central American Peace Accords' (Fukuyama 1992; Huntington 1991), which demobilised leftist insurgencies and armed struggles against the US-backed juntas in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala (Huntington 1991). Contradicting the expectations in Bogotá and Washington, the revolutionary war in Colombia continued.

In 1991, a US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) report identified the Liberal senator Alvaro Uribe Velez as one of the 'more important Colombian narco-traffickers contracted by the Colombian narcotics cartels for security, transportation, distribution, collection and enforcement of narcotics operations in both the US and Colombia' (National Security Archive 2004). As governor of Antioquia, Uribe established a 'civilian-military force' known as Convivirs (meaning to 'cohabitate') which were absorbed by the AUC. By 1995, over 500 Convivirs existed throughout the country coercing rural civilians to act as paramilitaries under its local military command (Aviles 2006; Tate 2002). Thousands of trade unionists, students and human rights workers were murdered, disappeared or displaced (Feiling 2004). The creation of 'civilian militias' was endorsed by the RAND study,

'The Colombian Labyrinth', which argued for the restructuring of US counter-insurgency operations (Rabasa and Chalk 2001). A DIA 'top secret' report concluded that the FARC could defeat Colombia's military within five years unless the armed forces were drastically restructured (Farah 1998).

Responding to this conclusion, President Clinton authorised 'Plan Colombia', a \$1.3 billion US package to fight the 'War on Drugs' in 2000. The plan provided greater military assistance, including helicopters, planes, and training, a massive chemical and biological warfare effort, as well as electronic surveillance technology (Storrs and Serafino 2002, Villar et al. 2003). Plan Colombia's budget expanded to \$7.5 billion, of which the Colombian government pledged \$4 billion, the US \$1.3 billion, and the European Union and other countries \$2.2 billion (Livingstone 2003). Colombia ranked second to Israel and Egypt in US military aid and assistance, reflecting the sense that, as stated in the RAND study, the US needed to prevent FARC from taking state power there in the 21st century: 'The Colombian government, left to its own devices, does not have the institutional or material forces to reverse unfavourable trends' (Rabasa and Chalk 2001). President Pastrana described the American penetration and concentration of Colombia as a 'Marshall Plan', involving greater investment by developed countries and an official document which could serve 'to convene important US aid, as well as that of other countries and international organisations' by adequately addressing US concerns: the FARC and growing leftist forces in the region (Pastrana 2005; Petras 2001b).

Plan Colombia involved a close relationship between the CIA and paramilitary death squads which carried out most of the political killings in Colombia (Amnesty International 2001; National Security Archive 2008). Regionally, the Clinton intervention equipped Colombia to become a launching pad for future military interventions and destabilisation programmes in the hemisphere. Internally, Plan Colombia completely militarised the nation with a focus on southern and eastern areas of Colombia, two of the country's main coca-producing regions (Martin 2012). By the late 1990s, 30 per cent of Colombia's total wealth derived from the cocaine trade, according to Colombia's Central Bank, thereby strengthening the

growing influence of the drug trade's operators (Villar 2007). Plan Colombia prepared right-wing forces to fight FARC and other left-wing forces in the 21st century.

During Pastrana's presidency (1998–2002), FARC controlled San Vicente Del Caguan, known as the *zona de despeje* or the demilitarised zone (DMZ). The DMZ consisted of five municipalities the size of Switzerland, where tens of thousands of workers and peasants lived and participated in its daily management (Leech 2002). San Vicente Del Caguan was described as “‘FARClandia,’ the world's newest country’, where negotiations between the FARC and the government took place (Lamb 2000; Novak 1999). On 21 February 2002, Pastrana accused the FARC of drug-trafficking and hiding kidnapped victims (Ruth 2002). Under pressure from US President George W. Bush to wage ‘War on Terrorism’, Pastrana ordered the Colombian military to invade the zone and the Colombian air force to bomb its communities (Hylton 2006). Anticipating a military attack on San Vicente, FARC ordered residents to evacuate and retreat to mountain hideouts.

In 2001, President Bush added \$550 million to Plan Colombia, to terminate ‘narcoterrorism’ (Giordano 2001). Between 1996 and 2001, US military aid to Colombia increased from \$67 million to \$1 billion (Tickner 2003). Pastrana's support for the ‘War on Terror’ prepared the way for Alvaro Uribe, who became president from 2002 to 2010. Uribe had run as an independent Liberal presidential candidate on a war platform to defeat the FARC and ELN. ‘Uribismo’ found its coherence in Colombia Primero (Colombia First), a political movement of the far-right which campaigned for Uribe in the 2002 and 2006 presidential elections (Ospina 2008). Uribe declared there was no ‘conflict’ in the country, whereas past presidents acknowledged that FARC and ELN were an inherent part of the nation's troubled history (Gardner 2000). Uribe declared that ‘narco-terrorists’ were attempting to overthrow a democratic state. ‘If Colombia [did] not have drugs, it would not have terrorists’, Uribe told the Organization of American States (OAS) Permanent Council (2004).

In October 2002, US special operations teams were ordered to eliminate ‘all high officers of the FARC’, and ‘scattering those who escape to the remote corners of the Amazon (Garamone 2004, Gorman 2002). In

March 2008, FARC's chief negotiator, Raul Reyes, and another senior member, Ivan Rios, were murdered. On 3 March, in the mountainous area of Caldas, Rios was shot dead by Pedro Pablo Montoya ‘Rojas’, his body-guard. Rojas stated that he was ‘betrayed’ by state authorities who had offered a reward for Rios's death. Rojas was imprisoned for 54 years for kidnapping and rebellion but not for the murder of Rios and his partner (RCN Radio 2011). Reyes was slain in a targeted killing by army and air force personnel.

In 2010, US President Barack Obama praised Colombian security forces for the murder of FARC Comandante Jorge Briceño (Mono Jojoy) (Feller 2010). Obama compared the death of the FARC leader to killing Osama bin Laden, stating that Colombia had come ‘180 degrees’ from being a failed state to a country ‘exercising leadership’ in the region (Burns 2010). In 2011, Alfonso Cano, who had replaced the 84-year-old veteran Manuel Marulanda on his death as the FARC leader in 2008, was also murdered in a military raid. It was concluded that these deaths weakened the FARC, causing ‘desertions’ and ‘organisational decay’ (Brittain 2010). Uribe and his deputy Santos claimed victories over the FARC which involved false body counts or Falsos Positivos in which thousands of young men from slum districts were murdered by the Colombian military then dressed as guerrillas killed in combat (National Security Archive 2009). Uribe dismissed these revelations as ‘false accusations’ invented by the FARC (McDermott 2009; Terra Colombia 2008). President Uribe was hailed by his Western supporters as winning the war against narcoterrorists (Shifter 2010). In reality, it demonstrated that a military approach was incapable of bringing peace to a country riven by war. With Plan Colombia's work to hold back FARC in the countryside accomplished, ‘the evil hour’ had passed with cocaine seemingly no longer a state-security problem. Colombia's leaders and the US were prepared to face a new century of challenges.

### **The impasse: social imperialism and the FARC**

In contrast to the restoration of liberal democracy in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Central America in the 1990s, Colombia's political system remained unchanged under the presidencies of Uribe and his successor

Juan Manuel Santos (Petras 2012). Plan Colombia set out to militarise the country by consolidating the extreme expression of oligarchic rule (Ospina 2011). 'Uribismo' and its 'war on terror' exposed Colombia's two-party system with far-right extremism and narco-paramilitarism. In 2005, Santos co-founded Partido Social de Unidad Nacional (Social Party of National Unity), composed of former Uribistas, power brokers, and leading members of the Colombian elite. Since the inauguration of President Santos, political differences between himself and Uribe have surfaced reflecting the divisions within the elite. Santos promised reparations to victims of the conflict and the restoration of lands seized from peasants by right-wing paramilitaries and landowners. Unlike Uribe and the narco-bourgeoisie, Santos represents Colombia's urban, cosmopolitan bourgeoisie and is more closely intertwined with the interests of US finance capital and the Colombian comprador class (Justice for Colombia 2014b; Wilpert 2012.). Uribe argues that Santos has weakened his opposition to the FARC and has criticised him for strengthening diplomatic relations with Venezuela (Boadle 2011). According to Santos, Uribe sought peace negotiations with FARC for five years during his term in office (Edling 2012). Their main area of disagreement is Santos's new counter-insurgency approach, based on the recognition that the FARC cannot be defeated militarily (Ince 2013).

Uribe's military focus kept Colombia back in the mid-20th century. On 1 March 2008, relations between Colombia and Venezuela broke down when Uribe ordered the Colombian air force to bomb a FARC encampment near the Ecuadorian border. The FARC emissary Raul Reyes and 24 foreign sympathisers (including four Mexicans and an Ecuadorian) died in the bombing raid, provoking the worst crisis of inter-American diplomacy of the last decade (Marcella 2008). Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa ordered his army to the border and suspended diplomatic relations with Colombia. Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez mobilised troops on the border. Chavez had begun mediations between FARC and Colombian government representatives before Uribe terminated the talks and launched the bombing raid (Marcella 2008). After the raid, Chavez urged the FARC to free its prisoners of war and end the armed struggle (BBC News 2008).

Chavez's announcement was welcomed by all Latin American leaders including Fidel Castro, who offered a critique of the FARC. He argued that US military interventionism was imposed on Colombia from outside the country and not from the class struggle within Colombia. Castro called for peace without US military intervention (Petras 2008; Ruiz 2009). This reconfiguration of the Latin American left was immediately registered in Washington, with Republican presidential candidate John McCain hoping 'the FARC would follow Chavez demands to disarm' (Petras 2008). For the leftist forces which followed Chavez's parliamentary road to 21st-century socialism, Latin American capitalism reflected a shift in the balance of power that promised state survival with diplomatic and economic ties to Colombia. It would also strengthen ties with America's imperial rivals China and Russia. It would require an accommodation with US imperialism by opposing all guerrilla movements and refraining from criticising the Castro-Chavez vision for regional integration. By 2005, 21st-century imperialism was undeniably imposed on Latin America by the US, the European Union, the rise of China and a reassertive Russia through competing trade agreements and security arrangements penetrating the entire continent. Despite the social developments in Latin America and multilateral changes in international relations through the growing opposition to US intervention in the Middle East and the formation of the 'BRIC' countries, these developments could only be 'progressive' or 'socialist' in name, not in actuality.

In 2005, a centre-left social-democratic party, Polo Democrático Alternativo (Alternative Democratic Pole, PDA), emerged to oppose the Uribistas in the Colombian electoral system. The PDA sought to reform Colombia but could never challenge the power of the oligarchy or US imperialism (Leech 2011). In a country where 60 per cent of the population did not vote in recent presidential elections, a parliamentary resolution to Colombia's internal conflict remains unachievable, despite growing support for peace and reconciliation with the FARC from Colombian society. Among those supporting peace are: the former Bogotá mayor Gustavo Petro, banned from public office; the former Liberal senator Piedad Córdoba, who has been banned since 2010; and the *Marcha Patriótica*

(Patriotic March) movement which opposes the Colombian oligarchy. This movement stands for a 'second and definitive independence' from colonialism and imperialism (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 2010; Marchapatriotica.org 2012; Colombia Reports 2013). The revolutionary left has campaigned to reinstate the Patriotic Union (UP) Party into the electoral process from which it was eliminated in the 1980s through state terror. According to UP spokesperson Nelda Forero, the party will serve as a 'political platform for the results achieved in Havana' which, under the auspices of Cuba, Venezuela, Norway, and Chile, the FARC has been demanding land reform for peasants and an opening of democratic space for workers (ABC News 2012; BBC News 2013b; Hansen-Bundy 2013). Despite the survival of the left, political assassinations and arrests targeting FARC supporters, unionists, and human rights workers continue throughout Colombia (Jordan 2012; Justice for Colombia 2014a; Leech 2011).

### **The reimposition of the Colombian comprador bourgeoisie**

Santos inherited Uribe's war. Plan Colombia set out to eliminate the FARC and secure foreign capital investment. A focus on the latter through an accommodation with the FARC has underlined Santos's counter-insurgency approach. The failure to defeat the FARC is, in part, caused by the insurgency's Plan Rebirth of 2008 which switched to more frequent 'hit and run' tactics with smaller units, improvised explosive devices, and 'nomadic leadership' (Martin 2012; Willis 2012). In 2011, the Colombian state's complete intelligence database was leaked to the public, prompting Santos to replace his entire military command except the National Police director (Alsema 2011; Noto 2011). Uribe's militarist strategy toward the FARC actually reminded the insurgency of the strategic value of fighting as guerrillas and not as a regular army. A 2011 RAND study, reported:

Until the 1980s, the FARC engaged in small-scale attacks on military and police units in remote areas of Colombia. In the late 1990s, the FARC attempted to make a qualitative jump to a higher stage of military operations by engaging and defeating battalion-sized units of the Colombian

army (Las Delicias in August 1996 and El Billar in March 1998). However, the sequence of successful large-scale attacks on isolated army units was broken toward the end of the decade when the Colombian military learned to combine air power with land forces to defeat FARC attempts to overwhelm local garrisons. Since then, the Colombians have used air-land synergies to prevent guerrilla concentrations. (Rabasa and Chalk 2011)

In 2012, the British multinational Emerald Energy shut down operations in San Vicente del Caguan, and other companies, including the American Occidental Petroleum, threatened to follow suit unless security was maintained (Martin 2012). Attacks against Colombia's oil industry increased 300 per cent in the first six months of 2012 compared to the same period in 2011, limiting oil production in the departments of Putumayo, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Arauca, and La Guajira (Pettersson 2012b). Reports of closures by petroleum and energy companies reflect 'growing industry concerns' of a deteriorating security situation in Colombia (Kraul 2011). According to Colombia Reports, the security environment deteriorated following the FARC's two-month unilateral ceasefire on 20 January 2013. FARC attacks against security forces and infrastructure reportedly exceeded pre-peace talk levels, with 33 attacks following 20 January, eight being directed at oil and mining companies (Pettersson 2013). Both the FARC and the Colombian government maintained that negotiations in Havana were advancing with FARC pressing for land reform, rural development projects, legalising coca, regulations on multinationals, and greater autonomy in relations with the US (Alsema 2012; BBC News 2013a).

Amid the talks in Havana, the war continued as Santos sought to secure infrastructure for foreign investment rather than the defeat of the insurgency. Plan Colombia's militarisation of the country led to a huge increase of police and military resources which never neutralised FARC's strategic capacity. Traditional FARC strongholds in remote and border regions were maintained (Martin 2012). Military patrols have attempted to capture these regions of hundreds of square miles of inhospitable jungle (Center for International Policy's Colombia Program



2009; DeShazo et al. 2007; Giugale et al. 2003; GlobalSecurity.org 2010). A temporary military presence in the Amazonian war zone demonstrated that the Colombian state was capable of only a limited security and sovereignty.

On May 2012, Obama rewarded Santos with a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), whose main beneficiaries were the landlord and business classes (O'Hagan 2014). Plan Colombia's goal of capturing land through state terror for neo-liberal trade had succeeded (El Espectador 2012). Colombia's former minister for mining and energy, Carlos Rodado Noriega, described it as a 'piñata of mining concessions', which allowed compradors, landowners, and narco-traffickers to buy up mining concessions to speculate on their price rising with the arrival of US and Western multinational companies (El Espectador 2012). The FTA has opened the door to foreign extractive capital, favourable treatment, guarantees and protections to safeguard investments aligned with US finance capital and the elimination of tariffs and trade barriers. These companies included Harken Energy (US), Drummond (US), Exxon Mobil (US), Occidental Oil (US), Conquistador Goldmines (Canadian/Colombian – subsidiary of US Corona Goldfields through front company San Lucas), Sur American Gold (Canadian), BMR (Canadian), Barrick Gold (Canadian), Greystar (now Eco Oro, Canadian), Pacific Rubiales (Canadian), Anglo American (UK), Rio Tinto (UK/Australian), Xstrata (Swiss), B2 Gold (South African) (Ismi 2012; Leech 2004; O'Connor and Montoya 2010; Richani 2010).

Santos's 'Law 1148' promising the restitution of lands to victims of cattle ranchers, narco-traffickers, landowners, military and paramilitary officers and multinationals has proven to be a chimera (El Universal 2012). Some 40 per cent of Colombian land has been licensed to or is pending approval for 'multinational corporations in order to develop mineral and crude oil mining projects'. US and Western transnational monopolies own the rights to mine over 12 million acres of land with South African AngloGold Ashanti holding the largest share. Eco Oro trails behind with nearly 100,000 acres of land. Oil companies have been granted over 90 million acres for oil exploration and production across Colombia. The American corporation Cargill, the world's largest agribusiness, recently bought 220,000 acres (Richani 2012b). The Israeli company Merhav

has invested \$300 million in 25,000 acres for the production of sugar cane to produce ethanol. Over 280,000 acres have been sold to foreign companies for biofuel crop production (Ahumada 2012; Dominguez 2012; Semana 2012). If land 'reform' is to be taken seriously, it would mean having to reverse decades of neo-liberal underdevelopment rivalling Brazil and Guatemala in land concentration. On a scale of 0 to 100, Colombia ranks 86 which, according to Colombia's GINI index, is close to complete inequality (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo 2011).

Santos's economic success, under the banner of 'desecuritisation', has meant waging Uribe's war without holding any expectations. Santos is silent about the 'war on drugs' and 'war on terror' without any change in its violence against the insurgents. In January 2012, Santos launched Operación Espada de Honor (Operation Sword of Honour) to reduce the FARC's capacity by half in two years. His aim was to repel the insurgency's repeated attacks on mining, energy, and oil companies (Martin 2012; Murphy and Acosta 2012). According to intelligence analyst Colby Martin, Espada de Honor, was not a major strategic shift in the war against insurgency and crime but an admission by the Santos Government that 'the end of the violence in Colombia is not around the corner'. Santos has 'put aside the goal of completely defeating the FARC and other groups, instead focusing on strategically defending its interest by disrupting the enemy through tactical offensives' (Martin 2012). Generals David Patraeus, the former CIA director, and Stanley McCrystal, former commander of Joint Special Operations in Iraq, have advised Colombia on a new strategy to restrain the insurgency, which continues to attack comprador businesses (Richani 2012a).

During the Summit of the Americas in April 2012, the US Army's General Martin Dempsey and President Obama visited Colombia. Dempsey recommended that US Army and Marine Corps colonels who commanded combat brigades in Iraq and Afghanistan should be sent to Colombia (Richani 2012a). Obama and Santos discussed a new military regional action plan to include training police forces in Central America along the lines of Plan Colombia (US Office of the Press Secretary 2012). This ongoing US military intervention in the region occurs when there is increasing support for the current peace talks in Colombia. Supporters of

the peace process include Luis Carlos Sarmiento Angulo, the first billionaire in Colombia and ranked 55th in the world by *Forbes Magazine*, over 70 per cent of Colombians, the Castros in Cuba, and Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro (Forbes 2014; Ospina 2013; El Tiempo 2012).

Santos's efforts to secure foreign investment for Colombia has been achieved through low-intensity violence throughout Colombia, a massive PR campaign, and the logic of US counter-insurgency experts. Colombia has the worst human rights record in the Western Hemisphere with state forces linked to death squads responsible for 97 per cent of forced disappearances (Human Rights Watch 2007; 2010; United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2013; Vieira 2008.). Under Uribe and Santos, over 250,000 leftists have 'disappeared', according to the Colombian investigative journalist Azalea Robles. Wikileaks confirmed a total of 257,089 'disappeared' (Kovalik 2012). During Uribe's second term in office and the election of his successor, approximately 38,255 leftists 'disappeared'. Colombia's 21st-century *desaparecidos* outnumber the recorded mass murders committed by the military juntas of Guatemala (200,000), Argentina (30,000), Chile (3,000), and Uruguay (600) in the previous century, and was, according to Azalea Robles, lowered through unmarked mass graves and secluded crematoria (Robles 2011). Since 2005, 173,183 political assassinations of leftists have been carried out. Nearly 10,000 political prisoners ranging from academics, unionists, and students, to guerrilla combatants were gaoled without trial in Colombia and are subject to systematic torture and abuse (Peace and Justice for Colombia 2006; Robles 2012). With a population of over 46 million Colombia has 5.2 million displaced persons, mostly poor peasants, because of the Colombian state's war against them (Manus 2011).

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), foreign direct investment in Colombia increased from \$11.2 billion in 2000 to \$74.1 billion in 2009 (UNCTAD 2010). Most of the FDI inflow was concentrated in mining and quarrying for gold, coal, and oil extraction. The US is the largest source of FDI in Colombia's resources (Kalin 2009; Manchego 2011; Portfolio.co 2011; Proexport Colombia 2010; US State Department 2010).

## Conclusions? The imperialist chain of control and command for an American century?

As the Colombian war demonstrates, the comprador bourgeoisie reassert their power in Latin America with a policy of peaceful coexistence with US imperialism. The Colombian oligarchy maintains power through state violence and social immiseration. The post-Uribistas have unrestrained political and military power backed by an evolving 'War on Terror' which includes the extradition of FARC guerrillas from neighbouring countries (Bargent 2011; Greenwald 2013). Santos was forced to prosecute a different war against FARC to Uribe's 'total war' strategy. Colombia's position in the imperialist chain (from pro-US imperialist Latin American nations to the European Union to the US rivals China and Russia) makes it central to the US strategy by balancing the forces of 21st-century imperialism in one geostrategic pressure point. Latin American regional political and economic integration, unlike the FARC, is not opposed to US imperialism. Latin America's 21st-century capitalists (like their BRIC nation counterparts) have devised a strategy to compete in the world market by encouraging imperial rivalries for the best economic outcome. Plan Colombia had sought to turn the tide of social change on the continent with containment before rapprochement.

The Obama doctrine in the post-Bush era has developed a targeted killing policy. Leading commanders of the FARC secretariat have been killed. Latin American leaders who have criticised US policies have fallen ill (Gye 2011; Watson 2013). Venezuela has made frequent allegations of assassination plots against former President Hugo Chavez and has recently accused Uribe of ordering President Maduro's assassination (Mallett-Outtrim 2013; Marquez 2004). According to Venezuelan interior minister Miguel Rodriguez, a plot was thwarted on 13 August 2013 with the arrest of two Colombian hitmen on orders from the former Colombian president. President Maduro said it involved far-right Venezuelan opposition figures in Miami (Agence France Presse 2013). Reports of US destabilisation efforts in Venezuela have prompted officials in Caracas to allege that Uribe has played a role in recent disturbances and violence through the use of Colombian mercenaries (Bhatt 2014; Pearson 2014).

During the *Bogotázo* and throughout *La Violencia*, the Colombian oligarchy maintained its interests through parliamentary parties against Gaitanismo. Fearing the poor peasantry and sections of the urban workers would support the FARC, the Uribe-Santos regime combined infrequent elections and state terrorism backed by the narco-bourgeoisie (Lopez 2013; Villar and Cottle 2012). Paramilitary groups such as the ‘anti-land restitution army’ and *Aguilas Negras* known generically as *bandas criminales* (BACRIMs) are active throughout the country (Ospina 2013; Stringer 2013). The three largest are *Los Rastrojos*, *El Ejercito Revolucionario Popular Anticomunista de Colombia* (ERPAC) and *Los Urabeños*, which in the recent presidential elections urged citizens to support Santos as the ‘candidate of peace’ (Bedoya 2014; International Crisis Group 2012). One-third of Colombia’s newly elected senators are suspected of having paramilitary ties (Vieira 2014).

Colombian officials claim the FARC makes up to \$3.5 billion annually from drug trafficking. No irrefutable factual evidence has ever been provided to support this allegation (O’Gorman 2012). FARC is rumoured to have acquired surface-to-air missiles from the black market and Venezuela, but the insurgents have never used them (McCleskey 2013). According to the US, successful ‘anti-drug trafficking operations’ have forced the FARC to expand into other activities such as illegal logging, mining, and in Colombia’s oil and gas industries, which if true fund their war against US imperialism (Fox 2012). How the ‘war on drugs and terror’ in Colombia is exported to Mexico and Central America remains an unquestioned mystery in most analyses, allowing the Colombian narco-ruling class to fulfil their imperial obligations. The Colombian bourgeoisie are represented by two factions. The oligarchic rural elite composed of narco-traffickers, landowners, military and paramilitary officers, agribusiness and cattle ranchers. The most prominent representative of this narco-connection is Alvaro Uribe Velez (Villar and Cottle 2012). The other faction has been represented by the presidents of recent years: Gaviria, Samper, Pastrana, and now Santos. They are the modernising, transnational, urban elite of industrial and finance capital joined by some agro-industrialists and supported by President Obama. Their ‘candidates of peace’

and ‘smarter’ wars have replaced their narco-predecessors as Colombia’s compradors in 21st-century imperialism. The Fidelistas and Chavistas are wrong in their expectations for social change through adaptation and accommodation. Increasing incorporation into the global economy via China or any other imperial competitor does not put their revolutionary programmes on hold. Paradoxically, it risks losing them altogether at the expense of revolutionary transformation. US–China relations are central to the control and command structure of US imperialism globally, and the FARC in Colombia represents a 50-year old unresolved and unwanted problem. Those who benefit most from this imperial architecture are the rising business classes as in Colombia: mostly, but not exclusively, the agro-mineral, financial, and manufacturing elites linked to Latin American and Asian markets.

In 2011, Obama pledged his support to fight ‘narco-terrorism’ by providing \$600 million in military aid to Colombia and to protect ‘a potentially failed state under terrorist siege’ (DeYoung and Duque 2011; Shifter 2010.). Colombia’s military spending nearly doubled from \$5.7 billion in 2000 to \$10.42 billion in 2010, \$7 billion was funded by the US (SIPRI Military Expenditure Database 2012). Since 2000, Colombia’s military has almost doubled in size to over 350,000 soldiers (Petras 2013). Santos has announced plans to recruit 25,000 more soldiers into the Colombian armed forces and to allocate an extra \$5.7 billion in the budget to combat the FARC (Pachico 2012). Since 2013, efforts have been underway to consider Colombia a potential member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO 2014; Pearson 2013).

The Colombian insurgency is a revolutionary war of the 21st century. In the new millennium, the FARC’s ‘war of position’ has changed to a ‘war of manoeuvre’, through consolidating popular support amongst the poorest in Colombian society. The Santos Government has responded by promising basic services and jobs to large sections of Colombian society and reducing the endemic inequality (El Heraldito 2012; Pettersson 2012a). In regions under FARC control, land has been redistributed to the peasants (Brittain 2010; Leech 2011; Richani 2002). In the cities, FARC militias and support bases exist in an ephemeral clandestine form where

unions, NGOs, students, and intellectuals are violently repressed by the Colombian state through forced displacement, 'disappearances', or political exile (Brittain 2010; Petras 2001a; Villar 2012). Since 1993, the FARC has been building the Clandestine Communist Party (Partido Comunista Clandestino Colombiano, PCCC). It argues that conditions for open political work in Colombia remain dangerous for the revolutionary left. Since Plan Colombia was devised, the FARC's membership was reduced from 40,000–50,000 in 2005 to 6,500 and 10,000 at the end of Uribe's term according to some estimates (Brittain 2010; Mares 2012). Given the FARC's current fighting capacity and the Colombian state's change in counter-insurgency policy, these estimates are either exaggerated, manufactured, or speculation. The real number of the FARC is unknown as its members are condemned as 'narcoterrorists' while currently in peace talks with the government. By one estimate in 2013, the FARC operates in 25 of the country's 32 departments, which is consistent with the insurgency's actions against state forces (InSight Crime 2013).

The long Colombian war sparked by the Bogotá was never about Liberal and Conservative Party loyalties. Nor did it degenerate into terrorism. The National Front blamed *bandoleros* and *terroristas* as the 'national problem' to deny class justice and a solution to the land problem. Since *La Violencia*, the Colombian state has never totally controlled the country. Despite Santo's strategy of accommodation with the insurgency, the central state is unable to project its control and extend its authority throughout the country. The geography, ecological diversity, and population imbalance of the 'two Colombias' constitute obstacles to state normalisation and comprador peace. There have been regional elites which have historically preferred to defend their local fiefdoms over a nation under siege. As in most of Latin America, Spanish colonialism left a legacy which restored a wealthy, landowning oligarchy who both fear and despise the poor non-white majority, and, who are often in conflict with themselves.

Colombia's history of social upheaval has always been viewed by the Colombian state as a security threat. Defence minister Juan Carlos Pinzon has accused the FARC of 'infiltrating ongoing protests' and seeking

to 'rope peaceful farmers into their struggle against the government' (Murphy and Peinado 2013). In Havana, Cuba, the FARC has demanded a general constituent assembly to integrate the people in the peace talks. The oligarchy which Gaitan had opposed reject any such proposal. If the insurgency is too powerful to be defeated then so must its support base be which enables the guerrillas to negotiate from a position of strength. Between 1999 and 2003, the FARC maintained a military presence 16–50 miles from the capital (Brittain 2010). The remote regions of jungles, mountains, and plains are where the most severe social and economic inequality is present. The land problem will remain until Latin America breaks free from imperial-comprador relations shaped by 21st-century imperialism. It is argued (Bernard et al. 1973; Brittain 2010; Richani 2002) that the popular insurgency has consolidated 'political power at the local municipal levels instead of seeking outright military victory', choosing instead 'political consciousness', to build the Colombian revolution.

The FARC represents a dangerous idea like those of Che Guevara, who argued that not only is it just to fight imperialism but also that its defeat is possible. The FARC expects nothing and fights for the liberation of Colombia from US imperialism.

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## Greek Anti-Imperialism, Contemporary Era

Anti-imperialism was a crucial factor for the development of Greek left-wing party strategies during the democratic era (1974–2013) and it has been a distinctive feature of the left's political identity throughout Greek history and a successful tool for the expansion of its political influence in the post-war period. Three features of Greek anti-imperialism can be defined. It is: (a) in principle connected with a notion of 'national independence' which always gave the former a supra-class appeal, thus making it an effective party

strategy; (b) predominantly a left-wing cause, and especially a communist one; (c) in its various forms (anti-fascism, anti-Americanism, anti-Germanyism), primarily constituted as a public sentiment from below, mobilised through a political strategy from above. The Greek left, throughout its historical development, was closely connected with communist ideas and practices, something that affected the content of anti-imperialist strategies. The Greek context is characterised by the absence of a traditional social-democratic party; the first labour party in Greece, the *Σοσιαλιστικό Εργατικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος* (Socialist Labour Party of Greece [SEKE]), founded in 1919, aligned itself from its early beginnings with the Communist International and was quickly transformed into *Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας* (Communist Party of Greece [KKE]). Consequently, anti-imperialist strategies were inspired by Marxism-Leninism, thus incorporating the norms of official Soviet ideology on this issue. Nevertheless, the Greek left's adherence to Soviet norms was not one-sided but tended to reflect the real socio-political conditions in the country, something that made anti-imperialist discourse appealing also to non-communist political forces.

### Development of Greek anti-imperialism (1930–74)

Greek anti-imperialism is rooted in the inter-war years. In 1934, KKE described Greece's 'dependence on foreign capital' as the main reason for the 'feeble development of industry and productive forces'. Moreover, it pointed out that 'the dependence of Greece upon foreign capital, especially English and French capital, is expressed, first of all, by the existence of huge external debt' (KKE 2008a/1934: 70; all translations from Greek sources in the present essay are by the author). In that sense, 'socialist revolution' would be preceded by a 'bourgeois-democratic' stage of revolution that would achieve 'the liberation of the country from the yoke of foreign capital' as a prerequisite for socialism (23–24). This theoretical framework was reconceptualised during the Axis invasion of Greece in 1940–41 as patriotic; as put by KKE's general secretary, 'today all Greeks are fighting for our freedom, honour and national independence' (Zachariades, 2011/1940). Under the Axis Occupation of Greece, anti-imperialist struggle developed 'anti-fascist' features.

KKE created the *Εθνικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο* (National Liberation Front [EAM]) as its resistance organisation, and the *Εθνικός Λαϊκός Απελευθερωτικός Στρατός* (National Liberation People's Army [ELAS]) as its armed branch. In EAM's most publicised pamphlet, it is pointed out that its struggle was a 'national liberation struggle and only if it is understood and organised like that can it bring the desirable result' (Glenos 1944 [1942]: 39). EAM helped KKE acquire an extremely massive popular base after the end of the Occupation (500,000 members from a base of 18,000 in the mid-1930s) and praise as the most respected champion of 'national resistance' and 'social liberation'.

After liberation (1944), KKE, responding to the Greek right's growing aggressiveness, reiterated its inter-war anti-imperialist strategy by confronting British and (especially) American 'imperialism'. In December 1944, ELAS forces engaged in large-scale battles with British and right-wing forces in Athens; and from 1946–1949, its successor *Δημοκρατικός Στρατός Ελλάδας* (Democratic Army of Greece [DSE]), fought against the governmental army which was strongly backed and supplied by the US. In this context, anti-imperialism was primarily conceived as anti-Americanism, following the outbreak of the Cold War in the late 1940s. The defeat of DSE in 1949 was accompanied by the advance of a semi-democratic political system, which was grounded on the political exclusion of communists. Apart from the malfunctioning institutions of post-war Greek polity (parliament, elections, King and Army), the US Embassy played a particularly intrusive role in the domestic political arena in order to ensure the pro-US and anti-communist direction of Greek political life. Its interventions, sometimes aggressive and tactless, cultivated a rising anti-US popular sentiment which enabled the semi-legitimate Greek left to re-articulate its anti-imperialist appeals.

After 1951, the banned KKE formed, along with other left-wing groupings, the *Ενιαία Δημοκρατική Αριστερά* (United Democratic Left [EDA]) as its legal political front to run in parliamentary elections. EDA tried to take advantage of the growing social unrest against the semi-democratic regime by stressing the impact of the US interventions on the quality of democracy in Greece. Moreover, the management by the US and Britain of

the Cyprus issue (which in the eyes of many Greeks at the time was seen as 'pro-Turkish' and 'anti-Greek') enabled EDA to display its anti-imperialist credentials as 'anti-NATO'. In that sense and after the shift that Khrushchev initiated after the 20th CPSU Congress, KKE, through EDA, employed the strategy of the 'National Democratic Change', which highlighted anti-imperialism as the basic means for democratisation. This strategy strongly influenced the political forces of the liberal 'centre' (the *Ενωσις Κέντρον* [Centre Union] led by Georgios Papandreou) which gradually tended to endorse EDA's slogans and pursue coalitions with the latter in local-government and civil-society organisations.

The victory of the Centre Union at the 1963 and 1964 elections, after an 11-year period of conservative rule, was considered a major step for the country's democratisation; nevertheless, the clash between Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou and King Constantinos in July 1965 resulted in the fall of the former's government and the outbreak of massive and violent public demonstrations of an anti-royal and ultimately anti-US character which radicalised a large part of the Centre Union's party cadres and electorate. The formation of an informal centre-left within the Centre Union, under the prime minister's son Andreas Papandreou, paved the way for an approach to EDA. Andreas Papandreou, a US citizen and former professor of Economics at University of California, Berkeley, supported the view that Greece should pursue its independent path to economic development without being bound by US interests.

The military coup d'état on 21 April 1967 and the establishment of a military dictatorship (1967–74) halted this path of convergence but made the questions of democratisation and national independence for the anti-dictatorship political forces more urgent than ever. The Colonels' regime triggered a polymorphous resistance movement, not very massive at first, which resulted, in November 1973, in the Athens Polytechnic School uprising which was the most striking sign of the regime's lack of legitimacy (Kotsionopoulos 2009). In the eyes of many Greeks, the coup d'état had been orchestrated by the US, which resulted in the deepening of anti-US sentiment in parts of Greek society and pushed the resistance organisations to mere anti-imperialist discourse. It is characteristic that the main slogan written

on the gate of the Polytechnic School during the 1973 uprising was 'US Out! NATO Out!' revealing a diffused anti-US sentiment in parts of Greek society.

For his part, Andreas Papandreou chose to form a resistance organisation, the *Πανελλήνιο Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο* (Panhellenic Liberation Front [PAK]), inspired by liberation movements in the Third World, and he radicalised his theoretical perspectives by adhering to the 'Dependency School' and especially the group of theorists behind the *Monthly Review* journal (Tassis 2009). Papandreou developed his own theory of 'paternalistic capitalism' (Papandreou 1972) through which he connected US aggressiveness and expansionism with the domination of managerial elites and national security managers on economy planning that enhanced the paternalistic tendencies of the system. Imperialism in that sense (though he didn't use this term) was the inevitable consequence of the paternalistic character of US capitalism. In the case of Greece, 'all kinds of [US] corporations [...] invaded Greece' and imposed a longstanding 'procedure of economic colonisation' (Tassis 2009: 128) which called for national independence as a basis for a socialist and popular economic programme. In February 1968, the KKE experienced an internal split which created the Eurocommunist KKE *Εσωτερικού* (KKE of the Interior [KKE (int)]). The latter challenged, unsuccessfully in the end, the primacy of the pro-Soviet KKE in the left political space and extended its anti-imperialist rhetoric by downplaying the realignment of the country towards the East instead of to the West. In any case, anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism were defining the resistance initiatives of both parties.

### Anti-imperialism in democratic Greece: the 1970s and 1980s

The transition to democracy was accomplished by the conservative government led by Constantinos Karamanlis in 1974–75. One of the first moves of the new prime minister was to withdraw Greece from the military section of NATO, clearly a choice that corresponded with the ascending anti-US sentiment in the country. This choice by a political leader, known for his pro-US positions prior to the dictatorship, proved the readiness of the Greek public to embrace an anti-imperialist discourse. On these grounds, the parties that represented the

Greek left during the 1970s attempted to combine the goal of democratisation with 'national independence' and anti-imperialist struggle.

On 3 September 1974, Andreas Papandreou founded the *Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα* (Panhellenic Socialist Movement [PASOK]) as a new socialist party that aspired to dominate the centre-left political space. In its founding document, PASOK claimed to be a 'political movement' that struggles for four political aims: 'national independence', 'popular sovereignty', 'social liberation', 'democratic procedure' (Spourdalakis 1988: 291). Moreover, it declared that 'the seven dark years which passed under the gloomy military dictatorship and the tragedy in Cyprus are nothing but a particularly crude expression of Greece's dependence upon the imperialist establishment of the USA and NATO' (289). In that sense, for PASOK, 'real democratisation' passed through the total disengagement of the country from its relations with the US and its commitments to NATO. PASOK's anti-imperialist discourse appeared mainly through anti-right appeals opposing the New Democracy Party, with the latter being considered as the cardinal proponent of imperialist interests in Greece. Papandreou invested in this rhetorical construction to polarise party competition and enhance his own party's electoral fortunes. There was a single slogan that PASOK elaborated until its ascent to power in 1981: 'Greece belongs to Greeks'. This contradicted Karamanlis's long-time motto 'Greece belongs to the West'; meaning that, in PASOK's eyes, the Western world was not a source of well-being for the country but the root of its misery. For Papandreou, Greece was not an exclusively Western country but also a Balkan and Mediterranean one, and in this sense was more of a developing than a developed economy.

Therefore, PASOK's anti-imperialist strategy meant specific positions on foreign policy issues. For example, PASOK supported the cautious reorientation towards the Soviet Union; it rejected Karamanlis's moves for rapprochement with Turkey after the 1974 invasion as actions imposed upon him by NATO; it established friendly bonds with several Third-World liberation movements and socialist regimes such as the Syrian Baath Party, Gaddafi's Socialist Jamahiriya, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, North Korea etc.; it initiated the common-action South European socialist parties (Spanish

PSOE and the Portuguese PS) in opposition to traditional European social democracy; it disagreed with the country's accession to the European Economic Community (EEC), dismissing the latter as just more 'imperialist machinery' with the extremely popular slogan 'EEC and NATO are the same syndicate'; it asked intensively for the removal of the NATO military bases in Greece ('Bases of death out!'). This string of positions increased Western misgivings about a potential PASOK Government but at the same time created in the domestic political arena the image of a 'popular movement' that fought 'boldly' for the country's 'national independence'. In this context, PASOK's victory at the 1981 elections was considered a major step for a 'change' in the course of Greek politics and the consolidation of the young democracy, with a non-interrupted transition to power from a right-wing government to a non-right-wing one.

PASOK, while in government (1981–89), maintained its rhetorical stress on anti-imperialism, but at the same time favoured a more pragmatic approach to the actual issues of foreign policy. For example, while PASOK recognised the PLO as soon as it undertook governmental responsibilities and Andreas Papandreu welcomed Yasser Arafat in Athens in 1982, on the other hand, in 1983, it came to a controversial agreement with the US that NATO military bases in Greece would be removed only after a period of five years; without, however, ensuring that this removal would actually take place following the deadline. Papandreu chose to hold a rigid stance on issues not affecting directly the Greek state and a more compromising stance on major foreign policy issues such as the NATO bases or the country's accession to the EEC, which were nevertheless the peaks of PASOK's electoral appeals. Especially on the EEC issue, PASOK shifted from a non-negotiable anti-Europeanism to soft euro-scepticism in the mid-1980s and critical pro-Europeanism in the early 1990s. In that sense, PASOK managed to retain the symbolic value of its anti-imperialist appeals, without actually fulfilling its pre-election pledges, implementing a version of 'rhetorical anti-imperialism'. This shift, of course, was the result of PASOK's expansionary and distributive economic policies in the same period, which were supported by EEC funds. In any case, this highlights the retreat from

anti-imperialism as an election-winning strategy to Europeanism as a counter-measure to the country's decreasing dependency upon the US. The continuous presence of PASOK in government gradually altered its political scope from a popular movement with a clearly anti-imperialist orientation to a government party with a growing pro-Western allegiance.

On the other hand, the communist and Eurocommunist left seemed to become minor partners of PASOK's rapid march to power, preoccupied with their own internal competition. Their emphasis on anti-imperialism was unequivocal, just as their common assessment of an imminent crisis in the imperialist system (KKE 2008b [1973]; KKE (int) 1974). However, they had different approaches to what international allegiances Greece should pursue. KKE, following the Soviet Union's foreign-policy directives, demanded the country's immediate 'release' from its 'imperialist affiliations' and favoured the development of 'cordial relations' with the countries of the 'socialist world'. KKE was the main proponent of the anti-US spirit, and in some ways was 'idolised' in democratic Greece due to its long-time struggle against imperialism and its domestic 'defenders'. Its staunch pro-Sovietism became a distinctive feature of the political identity it attempted to carve, and probably resulted in it abandoning its aspirations for a more decisive role in Greek politics, something that reveals also the limits of anti-imperialist strategy, especially as re-orientation towards the 'socialist camp'.

This was a crucial point of KKE (int)'s differentiation from its 'orthodox' counterpart. Greek Eurocommunists found in the developing EEC project a new international political space that could disengage Greece from the bonds of 'US imperialism'. KKE (int) declared that it tried to foresee the various and multifaceted contradictions in the prevailing and resurgent international alliances, in order to locate Greece's position in a changing international system. Of course, this version of 'reformed communism' that KKE (int) was supporting, apart from a call for 'national unity' against the 'polarisation' that PASOK and KKE were betting on, was defined by an arduous attempt to create a political identity that could outdo some of the determinants of left politics in post-war Greece (anti-imperialism, anti-Europeanism, pro-Sovietism).

PASOK's victory in 1981 was apprehended by the two communist parties as a partial

'restoration' of the injustices Greek leftists had experienced in previous years. Papandreou's 'rhetorical anti-imperialism' was convenient for KKE's policy aims, but the former's back-and-forth tactics created animosity between the two parties, resulting in a clash in the late 1980s. KKE came to regard PASOK's anti-imperialism as a cover for the latter's intentions to loot the former's electoral base. At the same time KKE (int) gradually discarded its communist symbols, being rebranded as *Ελληνική Αριστερά* (Greek Left [EAR]) in 1987, and dismissed anti-imperialism as nationalism in the making. Both parties co-existed in a short-lived, abrasive political coalition. This was called the *Συνασπισμός της Αριστεράς και της Προόδου* (Coalition of Left and Progress [SYN]) and was strictly on an anti-PASOK basis. It eventually led to KKE's second internal split in 1991. Anti-imperialism seemed to be a secondary issue when it became apparent to all leftists that 'real socialism' was facing its historical decline.

### Anti-imperialism in democratic Greece: the 1990s and 2000s

The collapse of communism pushed the Greek left into a spiral of constant identity crisis and brought to Greece's doorstep a Balkan region shattered by ethnic strife and economic recession. Moreover, the country's accession to the European Union (EU) in 1992 made the process of 'Europeanisation' a national goal for the country's power elite while the social legitimisation of the Europeanisation project signalled the marginalisation of 'national independence' as a collective goal and 'anti-imperialism' as party strategy. These developments affected the strategies of the Greek left parties.

PASOK endorsed a 'Third-Way' kind of political programme under the term 'modernisation', coined by Costas Simitis, Andreas Papandreou's successor as leader of PASOK. Simitis dismissed Papandreou's 'rhetorical anti-imperialism' as 'populism' and emphasised the need for Greek society's 'convergence' with its European counterparts. Simitis Governments (1996–2004) have been linked with several foreign-policy choices that have provoked public outcry: the management of the Imia/Kardak crisis (1996); the capture of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan in Kenya (1999); the participation of Greece in the

Kosovo War (1999); the neutral stance it held during the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars (2001 and 2003). The fact that the abovementioned events were met with mass demonstrations in Greece with a clear anti-US orientation shows that anti-imperialism was still rooted in Greek political culture even when the political actors themselves did not employ corresponding strategies. Thus, the modernising and pro-EU PASOK still inclined towards the necessity of bringing back 'rhetorical anti-imperialism' by inviting Yasser Arafat to its 1999 Congress or letting its youth organisation participate in the mass anti-war rallies.

KKE, on the other hand, which, after the 1991 split, remained a hard-line Communist Party, still insisted on a traditional 'anti-imperialist' strategy consisting of the denial of Western (military) intervention in the Balkans and rejection of the EU as 'another imperialist formation'. KKE called for 'international solidarity' for 'movements and parties' that were fighting for their 'national independence' against imperialism; the party searched out in this version of 'anti-imperialism' a state of normality in the diverse and anarchical post-communist international system. Also it quickly diagnosed that anti-Americanism as a cultural frame of reference for anti-imperialism retained its stronghold in the Greek public sphere. KKE played a pivotal role in the demonstrations against Öcalan's capture and especially against the Kosovo War in the late 1990s, something that helped it ensure its electoral survival in a highly hostile socio-political environment.

SYN became a single party in 1992 by including the expellees of the 1991 KKE split and the former Eurocommunists of EAR. The distinctive feature of its political identity in the 1990s was its pro-EU stance, which distanced it from traditional anti-imperialist strategies. SYN held a pacifist anti-war stance during the Kosovo War, while certain elements inside the party kept up an old-fashioned left discourse though with no explicit communist appeals. In the early 2000s the party pursued a 'left unity' strategy with several radical left parties and groupings that resulted in the formation of the *Συνασπισμός της Ριζοσπαστικής Αριστεράς* (Coalition of Radical Left [Syriza]) in 2004 as an electoral coalition at first and a political coalition later. Syriza aligned itself with the growing anti-globalisation movement, co-organised with the Greek Socialist Workers Party (SWP) the



4th European Social Forum held in Athens in 2006, and embraced a notion of 'anti-imperialism' not grounded in Greek left political tradition but in international debates concerning global justice, alter-globalisation, neo-liberalism and grass-roots movements. In this context, Syriza attempted to present itself as the main proponent of a different kind of anti-imperialism that was disconnected from the traditional notions of 'national independence' and 'imperialism', and for this reason was highly criticised by the KKE.

### Anti-imperialism during the economic crisis (2009–14)

The arrival of the economic crisis is connected to the revival of a popular old-style anti-imperialist sentiment of a predominantly anti-German character. The management of the crisis by the European elites with the imposition of a memorandum between Greece and the so-called Troika (European Commission, International Monetary Fund, and the European Central Bank), that included severe austerity measures, resulted in the loss of national sovereignty since the Troika's representatives function as commissioners over the Greek government's agencies. This state of affairs, which could be defined as a 'colony of debt' (Kotzias 2013), triggered a wave of anti-Germanism that was presented with explicit references to the 1940s and Axis Occupation of Greece (Lialiouti and Bithymitris 2013), something that made it also plausible to right-wing pundits and audiences. PASOK, being blamed as the government that brought the IMF into Greece, eventually lost most of its electoral influence on its party base, as well as its political integrity. The radical left faced in an ambiguous manner this public sentiment: Syriza developed an anti-Troika discourse with references to 'national independence' that resembled the 'rhetorical anti-imperialism' of PASOK in the 1980s; the KKE tried to re-state 'anti-imperialism' as 'anti-capitalism' by not embracing the anti-German tendencies in public discourse. In any case, the reinvention of Greek anti-imperialism during the crisis demonstrates the persistence of a public sentiment converted into a political strategy, considered to be a relic from the past and a remnant of the nation state, in the context of a rapidly changing global environment.

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## Grenadian Socialist Anti-Colonialism and US Imperialism

Grenada is a group of three small islands in the southern Lesser Antilles Archipelago in the south-eastern Caribbean Sea in the western Atlantic Ocean, covering a land area of 344 square kilometres. In 2013, more than 80 per cent of Grenada's population of 105,900 were of Afro-Caribbean origin, 10–13 per cent of European and mixed racial origin, and 5 per cent of South Asian origin. About 2 per cent of Grenada's population are of Arawak, Carib, or Amerindian indigenous origin (World Bank 2015). In the 1970s, the vast majority of Grenadians were descendants of former slaves transported from Africa to the Caribbean by European slave traders from the 16th to the 19th century. They lived as peasants in small towns and villages in rural areas. In the 20th century, the Grenadian class structure was dominated by privileged Europeans and mulatto landholders who subordinated descendants of African peasants lacking access to higher education (Henry 1990: 51–82).

### Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement

Born in Aruba on 29 May 1944 to the son of a Grenadian nationalist and populist leader, Maurice Rupert Bishop was a revolutionary leader and prime minister of the island nation of Grenada. Growing up in Grenada in abject poverty, he was drawn to political life in the context of British colonial control and its disregard for the island's Afro-Caribbean majority working-class and peasant population. Like many other Third-World anti-imperialists, Bishop was drawn as a young adult to anti-racism, Marxism, and then Leninism. After earning his law degree in the UK, he returned to Grenada in the early 1970s to join forces with the growing number of anti-imperialist nationalists seeking to both end British colonial rule and to establish an egalitarian, anti-racist society through building a peasant and workers movement among the Afro-Caribbean majority. To achieve these goals, Bishop was a founder of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) in 1973, a socialist anti-colonial party organised by Grenada's Afro-Caribbean activists devoted to independence and socialism.

The NJM (New Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education, and Liberation) was a popular organisation for Grenadian independence and national revolution that mobilised the peasant majority for socialism and equality from its formation in 1973 to 1983, when it was overthrown by a US military invasion. In 1979, the NJM achieved national power through the popular insurrection and armed rebellion which overthrew the Government of prime minister Eric Geary, viewed as corrupt and subservient to British colonial rule. According to Henry (60), 'The emergence of peripheral capitalism in Grenada was accompanied by particular patterns of class exclusion, class inclusion, and distributions of authority ... The transition from colony to nation was ... a period marked by changes in the existing patterns of class relations, thus also demanding the generation of new symbols' which contributed to demands for both national independence and socialist re-distribution 'to resolve the illegitimate foundations of the colonial state'. The nationalists who obtained power in the 1960s were primarily beneficiaries of the entrenched system of class domination that was rooted in the control of the Grenadian state by European and mulatto landholders (60–62).

In the 1970s, the NJM transformed into a political party with a platform of nationalising the island's major infrastructure, redistributing land to peasants, and recovering a greater share of revenues derived from the tourism industry, which was providing a growing share of the national gross domestic product. The NJM struggled to break the dominance of the pro-British Government of Eric Geary, who served as Grenada's premier as the island archipelago transitioned to independence. The NJM gained a popular base among the majority of Grenada's peasant inhabitants, who were seeking to gain equality along with independence. In 1973, the NJM formed a military wing, the National Liberation Army (NLA), modelled after Third-World armed revolutionary fronts. It comprised an activist base of committed revolutionaries who were devoted to armed struggle to achieve independence and socialism. According to Joseph Ewart Layne, an NLA activist, 'members of the NLA could be called on at any moment to give their lives to the struggle (Ewart Layne 2014: 2). From 1973–74, the NLA mobilised popular opposition to remove Geary from leadership.

First elected premier with British support in 1967, Geary assumed the post of prime minister when Grenada gained independence on 7 February 1974. A trade union leader in the colonial era, he was widely viewed as corrupt and beholden to British and foreign interests. Independence was viewed by many Grenadians as a formal procedure which would continue British suzerainty and cement imperial domination over the island chain (1–6). Bishop played a decisive role in the NJM's growth through advancing a Marxist democratic political programme to nationalise the island's sparse economic resources and form an egalitarian society.

Bishop and the NJM tapped into the popular sentiment that independence from the UK also required redistribution and greater equality. Upon taking power, with popular support the NJM established a People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) modelled after the Cuban system of socialism in the 1970s. During its four years in power, the PRG /NJM enacted popular reforms including universal popular education (which allowed the peasant majority to attend school), social insurance, and health care. The revolutionary PRG mainly enacted reforms to expand social and class rights but did not depose the land-holding class from its position of privilege. While the PRG outlawed competing political parties, a pluralist opposition remained through the Church, a dominant bourgeois press which was highly critical of the PRG, and the active organisations of the upper class, which was able to activate dissent against the state with the support of the US State Department and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operatives. Meanwhile, the fledgling PRG did not have the resources for political education, and thus turned to Cuba for assistance in defending the revolution. As Henry (1990: 74) notes, 'the PRG had to engage in more extensive programs for political education than the nationalist leaders. They had to go beyond established styles of political education within Grenadian parties'.

Using this Cuban socialist model, the PRG vastly expanded the participation of women and youth to expand their rights in state and public affairs through the National Women's Organization, National Youth Organization, Young Pioneers Movement, and the Centre for Popular Education, which was responsible for increasing literacy among the masses. The bourgeois press and media and the Grenadian

Church leadership fiercely condemned the PRG's founding and nurturing of these popular organisations. They opened the door to foreign imperialist intervention on behalf of the upper classes (Henry 1990: 51–82). While the PRG admirably developed mass organisations which included thousands of members, including a People's Militia, it was unable to consolidate power in the four years it was in power before it was deposed in the US foreign invasion and coup d'état of October 1984.

### US military intervention in Grenada

The PRG and NJM were able to withstand the internal opposition but did not have the military strength to withstand an armed US invasion backed up by a political operation choreographed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Pentagon. Opposition to the PRG intensified with a greater level of covert support following the election of Ronald Reagan as US president. The popular backing and resilience of the PRG is demonstrated by the inability of the US government to dislodge its leadership from 1981–83 without direct military intervention. Behind the scenes, US military intelligence fomented dissent among PRG leaders which led to Bernard Coard, the deputy prime minister, seizing power on 13 October 1983.

Bishop was placed under house arrest and the Grenadian army took control of the major military and communication installations. However, popular support for Bishop broke into mass demonstrations which overwhelmed the military government. On 16 October, protesters overtook the beleaguered military guard, setting Bishop free. In the ensuing days the Grenadian army fired rounds of ammunition into large crowds shielding Bishop at Market Square and the Fort Rupert military installation in St George's, Grenada's capital. On 19 October, Bishop and five other Cabinet ministers in the NJM (Fitzroy Bain, Norris Bain, Jacqueline Craft, Vincent Noel, and Unison Whiteman) were executed without trial immediately after the military overpowered the masses protecting them at Fort Rupert. Nonetheless, since the majority of the population continued to support Bishop and the NJM, the military government stood on shaky ground. In the immediate aftermath of the US invasion, foreign critics charged that internal divisions in

the NJM leadership contributed to the loss of popular support for the government (Marable 1987). But these assessments did not account for the genuine support which the NJM had built among the peasant population or the significance of US covert operations which fomented division in the PRA and supported the coup d'état which installed Coard as leader of a military government.

While Bishop advocated unwavering opposition to US imperialism, his faith that the US working class was an ally in the struggle against imperialism proved highly overstated and mistaken: 'We certainly place a great deal of importance on the activity and the potential, and the possibilities of the American working-class movement ... in terms of the potential for doing mortal damage to the international capitalist and imperialist system from within the belly of the main imperialist power on earth' (Bishop et al. 1983: 10).

What Bishop failed to recognise was that US imperialism is supported by most workers, and certainly organised labour in the US, which has historically conspired with the State Department and CIA to counter authentic workers' movements and help install unions supportive of US imperialism. Moreover, as US imperialism relies on control over critical economic resources, the US working class benefits from foreign interventions which cheapen the labour costs and the price of raw materials produced by Third-World workers. Indeed, an ABC-Washington Post survey conducted shortly after the invasion showed that 71 per cent of the US public favoured it, while 22 per cent opposed it (Beck 1993: 2).

The US military invasion of Grenada, called 'Operation Urgent Fury', was a prototype of American imperialism in the Caribbean, utilising an admixture of covert operations and deceptive propaganda to establish the basis for overthrowing democratically elected governments with popular support in the region. The US Grenadian intervention also consisted of a spurious claim that US citizens were endangered by the NJM Government, which the US destabilised through arming and supporting opponents to Bishop. On 25 October 1983, two days after the bombing of the US government's military installation in Beirut, Lebanon, US president Reagan ordered an invasion of Grenada on the grounds that growing popular unrest and the presence of Cuban forces posed a threat to US medical

students (who were, in fact, known to be out of harm's way). This was the first overt use of direct armed intervention by US forces since the Vietnam War and indicated that the US was willing and eager to use military power to protect its economic interests worldwide.

In 1983, the Reagan Administration invaded Grenada with the US Rapid Deployment Force joined by a small delegation of troops from Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, St Lucia, and St Vincent. They routed all opposition, imprisoned activists, and killed leading officials in the NJM. Subsequently, the Grenadian government arrested 16 leaders of the military that had overthrown and killed Bishop and sentenced them to life imprisonment (Crandall 2006: 105–169). However, more than 20 years after the coup d'état, popular support remains among Grenada's working class and peasants for the legacy of Bishop, who sought to bring economic justice to the island where poverty is rampant and inequality continues to grow.

### **Shaping public opinion through media as organs of propaganda**

In retrospect, the US military invasion of Grenada can be seen as a decisive victory against a small and ragtag opposition. The US government used the intervention to build popular US support for a wider use of force in the Americas and throughout the world to secure economic and political supremacy over regional powers as the Cold War with the Soviet Union was coming to an end. The intervention occurred at the dawn of the Information Revolution, as cable television news broadcast services permitted 24-hour coverage of current events and instantaneous commentary and assessment of significant events.

US Armed Services and the CIA mobilised public opinion through directly feeding propaganda to news outlets, claiming that US medical student's lives were under threat. In addition, the military released a report noting that the intervention and defeat of the NJM were supported by a popular majority in Grenada. To this end they sponsored what they called 'the first scientifically-structured public opinion survey conducted in Grenada' in December–January 1983 and 1984 to exhibit public support for the invasion which removed the NJM (United States Congress 1984). The report to Congress about a pleased

Grenadian population does not reveal the deliberate distortion of events and indiscriminate attacks on civilians by the US military following the invasion. It includes mostly fictitious claims about US firefights with Cuban advisors defending Fort Richmond, a prison where Bishop had been taken and then assassinated. In addition, the US military conducted Psychological Operations (psy-ops) to calculatingly provide misinformation to the press and public and create the impression that its forces had already quelled all popular opposition and controlled key installations such as the harbour in St George's. Investigative reporters who managed to reach Grenada found these reports to be untrue. Bernard Diederich, a correspondent for *Time*, reported that he obtained more accurate information from the Grenadian People's Revolutionary Army than the US military:

The PRA soldiers who careened down to the 'Carenage' (waterfront) from Fort Frederick in their little jeeps had, as it later turned out, more accurate information. They informed us that the old folks home behind the town near Fort Frederick had been bombed and thirty people killed. Actually it was the mental hospital that had taken 250-pound bombs, resulting in the death of eighteen bedridden inmates. (Diederich 1984)

The US military shaped a general view of a population pleased with US intervention. However, most Grenadians viewed the troops as an occupying force of reckless marauders who had brazenly killed innocent civilians and endangered the general welfare of the population.

In fact, the Western media was prevented by force from entering Grenada during the invasion. According to Jacqueline Sharkey of The Center for Public Integrity, a liberal think tank:

The 1983 invasion of Grenada gave the Pentagon its first opportunity to try ... news-management techniques. Pentagon personnel, with the knowledge and approval of the White House, barred journalists during the first days of fighting. Reporters who tried to reach the island by boat were detained by US forces and held in *communicado*. Journalists who tried to fly in were 'buzzed' by a Navy jet and turned

back for fear of being shot down. Nearly all the news that the American people received during the first two days was from US government sources. White House and Pentagon personnel reported that the conflict had been enormously successful and, in the words of Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, 'extremely skillfully done'. (Sharkey 1991: 5)

While the international press was prevented from accessing Grenada to report on US military operations, in the days leading to the invasion, for all intents and purposes, leading foreign-news reporters for major newspapers like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* served as the mouthpiece for the Pentagon and White House. Both papers reported that the White House spokesman said the redeployment of naval ships to the south-eastern Caribbean was precautionary and possibly to protect foreign students studying in Grenada. Only after the US invasion did the two papers unsuccessfully attempt to cover the invasion, but their earlier general silence reflected a long-standing policy of non-interference in US foreign policy by major press outlets which continued into the early 21st century. Given that Grenada was the first large-scale, direct, military operation by the US since the war in Indochina, the debacle which ensued between the White House and press corps was quickly put to rest and a new policy of co-operation between the major media and US foreign policy was established to support US invasions in the Western Hemisphere and throughout the world (69–76). Since the 1983 invasion of Grenada, reporters for major newspapers which report on foreign policy are frequently reliable former operatives of the US military, with ties to the CIA and secret services.

The main purpose of a public opinion poll among Grenadian civilians held in the aftermath of the US armed intervention was to create the aura of support for the overthrow of the NJM. However, the main purpose of the military report was to persuade popular opinion to support US armed intervention. Grenada was the model for all future invasions. In subsequent examples, the military and State Department have falsified evidence to show heroic armies welcomed by the general populace, and have provided disinformation when reports have criticised their operations.

## Late-Cold War anti-Imperialism and US militarism

The Grenadian Revolution was quintessentially a late 20th-century anti-imperialist struggle against centuries of colonial domination and capitalist exploitation of the island's peasant population for the extraction of cloves and spices. According to Brian Meeks, the Grenadian Revolution bears striking similarities to comparable anti-imperialist movements of the late 1970s. Mainly, these revolutions were triggered by an aversion to post-colonial domination over economic resources and the failure to shift away from subjugation for the economic extraction of natural resources by the peasantry.

While Grenada was far smaller and less significant economically to the imperial ecumene than Iran or Nicaragua, it served as a crucial first object lesson of the potential consequences for Third-World revolutionaries in defying the system of US economic domination. In the aftermath of the Vietnam Wars from 1954-74, the US and UK were indifferent to the notion of formal democracy and sought to prop up corrupt and dictatorial governments that were of strategic economic importance to Western capitalism (Meeks 2001). The revolutions in Iran, Nicaragua, and Grenada were generated by growing peasant and working-class opposition to the pretence of the appearance of free markets and formal democracy in post-colonial states under the tight military and economic command of the Americans and British. Meeks suggests that the US defeat in Indochina in 1975 created an opportunity for popular movements to liberate themselves from de facto imperial domination. Correspondingly, in the late 1970s, popular movements for national liberation also broke out and won independence for their respective countries in the Portuguese African colonies of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. In each case, as in Grenada, the US and UK used proxies to undermine and overthrow popular governments, and funded mercenaries and rogue armies to foment inter-ethnic rivalries and civil disorder. Meeks notes that the 'international window of possibility' of anti-imperialist revolt of the late 1970s was short-lived and unsustainable for weak states like Grenada and Nicaragua (*ibid.*).

As a founder of the NJM, Maurice Bishop was a charismatic leader and dynamic orator who rallied the masses to support land

reform and generate economic resources in the island-nation, which was dependent on the export of cloves as a cash crop. In 1974, following 300 years of colonisation, Grenada had gained independence from Britain at the same time as the NJM was gaining wider support among the working class and peasants through Bishop's comprehensive plan to transform the country. However, Sir Eric Matthew Gairy, Grenada's first prime minister, engaged in political repression and violence against his radical opponents to undermine growing labour and peasant unrest on the islands. He formed an infamous internal security force known as the Mongoose Gang to kill workers and political opponents of the government. Bishop's own father, Rupert, was among those murdered by the paramilitary organisation. In the country's formative years of independence, the Gairy Government was charged with massive electoral fraud to prevent the NJM from taking power.

In March 1979, tens of thousands of the island's small population of about 100,000 were mobilising against Gairy, demanding an improvement in living conditions. To counteract the protests, Gairy mobilised the Mongoose Gang to kill the NJM leaders. The NJM discovered the plot, timed to take place during Gairy's visit to the United Nations in New York. To prevent bloodshed, the NJM seized power with the support of the majority of the country's population. Upon taking leadership, Bishop reaffirmed the party's commitment to democracy and egalitarianism. He promised protection of political and religious freedoms, elections without fraud, and that the people's revolution was 'for work, for food, for decent housing, and health services' for all Grenadian people (Crandall 2006: 126).

The NJM leaders sought to create a democratic society with greater equality through land reform and redistribution of wealth. As the Cold War was coming to an end, and neoliberal policies expanded in the US, United Kingdom, China, and a growing number of other countries, popular support for socialism in Grenada propelled Bishop and the NJM to power. Once in office, the NJM sought to align with ostensibly socialist countries such as Cuba, which provided vital technological and economic assistance, and the Soviet Union. In the 1980s, Bishop's political support expanded dramatically among the

island's working class and poor population as economic reforms were implemented by him and the NJM Government.

With a poor economy enjoying few natural resources, and isolated by the US, Bishop turned to Cuba to provide medical assistance and help in advancing the nation's economy through promoting tourism and trade. Immediately following the Revolution of 1957–59, the Cuban government had not overtly embraced a socialist transformation, but had primarily been motivated by opposition to US imperialism. It had gradually nationalised its economy, especially its sugar industry. The Cuban revolutionary government had been committed to removing the worst features of comprador capitalism manifested under the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista from 1952–59. This had been tied to powerful criminal organisations (mostly US-linked) and had turned Havana into a major centre for gambling, prostitution, and illicit drug trading. The revolutionary government had striven to improve the quality of life for the majority of workers and peasants in Cuba, and opposed US domination over Cuba's economy and society. In the ensuing years, the Cuban government provided military support to anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements in Africa, notably Angola and Ethiopia. The NJM primarily sought out Cuban military support as a means to prevent US foreign intervention, and posed no military threat to the region.

Cuba began assisting in building an airport capable of accommodating large commercial aircraft for foreign travel and tourism, while providing foreign funding through trade. While the airport included an airstrip that could accommodate military aircraft, as is the case in virtually any modern airport, Grenada did not possess military aircraft that could have been used for aggression against any regional state, and surely did not pose a threat to US interests in the region. Some worried that Cuban military aircraft could have used Grenada as a regional base. But Bishop and the NJM Government denied that the airport would be used for military purposes.

Grenada never posed a military threat to US hegemony in the Caribbean, but the NJM was considered a thorn in its side, especially as the country drew closer to Cuba for medical, educational, and military assistance. In 1981, in the wake of Reagan's election as president, steadfast critics committed to overthrowing

Bishop and the NJM were appointed to key posts in the US State Department. Indeed, historians have found documentary evidence that the CIA orchestrated a political crisis in Grenada in 1982 and 1983, staging a coup d'état against Bishop by arming military supporters of his former law partner Bernard Coard, who was also a former deputy prime minister. Coard seized power on 13 October 1983, and six days later mass demonstrations against the military putsch fomented a national crisis. To many observers at the time, it appeared that the US military was more intent on suppressing popular dissent than fighting against a dangerous foreign power. According to a study by Robin Andersen for *Fairness and Accuracy in Media*, 'When reporters were finally allowed onto the island, the warehouses they found were half empty. Some contained cases of sardines, and most of the weapons were antiquated' (Andersen 2006: 120). The report further documented that the weapons found were appropriate for small defensive operations in Caribbean island nations and that figures on the number of Cubans on the island 'were greatly inflated'. The report quotes Stuart Taylor of the *New York Times*: 'Over three days the Pentagon estimate of the number of Cuban fighters who had met the invading force seems to have plunged from more than 1,000 to fewer than 200, including the estimated 30 to 70 Cubans who were killed' (ibid.; Taylor 1983).

### **Conclusion: Legacy of Grenadian radical anti-imperialism**

The legacy of the Grenadian revolution and the overthrow of Bishop during a US-sponsored military intervention and coup d'état demonstrates the subservience of countries in the Caribbean Basin to US imperialist domination, especially if they seek an independent path. Even Cuba could not defend the NJM Government from US military intervention. While the US government dominates the island chain, popular majorities in Grenada are proud of the legacy of Bishop and the NJM. In 2015, more than 35 years since the Revolution, Grenadian citizens continue to honour the tangible inheritance of Maurice Bishop's revolutionary anti-imperialism in both popular lore and benefit from the concrete improvements that were enacted during his short tenure in government leadership. Historian Shalini Puri finds:

... even as leftist leaders across the region renounced the strategy of armed seizure of state power, armed uprising as a political solution remains an active popular discourse. Like the stubborn rumors of arms caches hidden throughout the countryside, it persists. It is no coincidence that the 2008 and 2003 elections were replete with references to the Revolution [and] to Bishop as an iconic figure. (Puri 2014: 260)

Under the NJM Government, Grenada instituted major health and education programmes, including the National Insurance Scheme, maternity leave law, and free primary school education. Puri notes: 'It is doubtless such policies that lead to even some of those who were imprisoned by the NJM to cite the People's Revolutionary Government as the government that had most helped the country' (260).

This admiration for the revolutionary legacy is supported by Joseph Ewart Layne, a leading activist in the NJM Government who was imprisoned for more than two decades after the US-sponsored coup in 1983. He aptly writes that the NJM was 'the first successful revolution ever to take place in the English-speaking Caribbean' (2014: xii), and was only defeated by a four-and-a-half year campaign of external destabilisation. To defeat the Grenadian revolution, the Reagan Administration orchestrated a coup and assassination of Bishop and dispatched more than 6,000 US marines and two aircraft carrier groups, and yet 'it still took six days of fighting before the US Goliath could silence the Caribbean David' (ibid.). Given the array of imperial military forces lined up against the small island nation, which sought to chart an independent course, the NJM can be viewed as exemplary in demonstrating that a sparsely populated small nation with few natural resources can resist the dominant world imperialist power.

What seemed correct and certain in the aftermath of the US invasion of Grenada in 1983 has been proven to represent disinformation in the three decades since. Grenada never posed a threat to US regional hegemony and its invasion demonstrated that the White House and Pentagon would use manipulation and force to overthrow governments in the Third World.

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## Imperial Tastes and Imperial Rule in 19th-Century India

This essay attempts an analysis of how imperial expansion was intertwined with the dynamics of trade and networks of production, consumption, and exchange of psychoactive substances. The intake of psychoactive substances has encoded meanings with cultural, social, spiritual, metaphysical, and transmutative effects. Exploring this vital dimension of the impact of addictive commodities in shaping patterns of dominance (in this context, sugar, tea and opium), this essay explores the economics of opium, the politics of the Empire and its role in effecting a metamorphosis of landscapes and livelihoods in the Indian subcontinent.

It was through the networks of distribution that the stories of sugar, tea, and opium were set to intersect and entwine the colonial British Empire in Asia. What linked the commodities were the shifting patterns of dietetics that sugar and tea fostered first in England and later Britain. The adding of milk to tea was reported in France around 1680 but that practice was not originally connected with adding sugar. The physician and philanthropist John Coakley Lettsom (1744–1815), in an essay of 1772 titled ‘Natural History of the Tea-Tree’ (about the various benefits gained from drinking tea), recommended it as an alternative to ‘vegetable infusions’ on the grounds of superiority in ‘taste and effects’.

Soon, tea drinking began to be associated with wide-ranging discourses from culture of health to culture of respectability, to becoming a symbol of patriotic zeal. In 1783, the annual consumption of tea in England was about 5,000,000 lb and the tea duty was 27 per cent. In 1784, Pitt, lowered this duty to 12

per cent, thus, extending the use of tea among the poorer classes of society. Tea and sugar consumption were considered to be patriotic as they supported the British Empire. There exists sufficient evidence to document the enormous increase in sugar trade in consequence of the increased consumption of tea. Medical articles of the early 19th century hailed sugar as a most valuable article of diet, as a ‘restorative’ and capable not merely of supporting but strengthening life. Superintendent of agriculture Charles Alfred Barber, a botanist and taxonomist (in his essay titled, ‘Sugar Cane and Health’, *Knowledge* [1892]) reported that 72 lb of sugar per head was consumed annually by the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland, 52 lb in the US, 25 lb in France, and only 17 lb in Germany.

The ‘Psychoactive Revolution’, which Courtwright (2002: 1) mentions is what triggered the mass consumption market, was followed first by massive mercantile pursuits and later by an advocacy of imperial dominion in Asia and Africa. Consumption mannerisms have been significant indices of power relations, a view echoed in Sidney Mintz’s classic study of sugar where he has explored the impact of commodities in shaping patterns of economic dominance and also as ‘platforms’ in challenging and, in many instances, reverting the prevailing order. Mintz claimed that sugar in 19th-century Britain pioneered the principle of mass consumption. The growth of sugar plantations in the Caribbean islands acted as a catalyst in propelling the demand for tea. Interestingly, in the period 1600–1800, to quote Robert William Fogel (Fogel and Stanley Engerman 1974), ‘slave produced sugar was the single most important internationally traded commodity, dwarfing in value the trade in grains, meat fish, tobacco, spices, cloth or metals’. Tea was introduced in the second half of the 17th century, and its general employment was not adopted without bitter opposition. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to gain the right to trade with China, and the first to drink tea. Around 1514, they reached the South China coast and were the first to introduce tea to Europe. In 1643, an attempt had been made in the English parliament to forbid its use. Over time, however, it came to characterise British ideas of gentility and respectability in the 18th and the 19th centuries; a historical incident attended by wide-ranging ramifications. The therapeutic properties of tea were being widely

recognised in France and England where it was believed to be a preventive against cholera.

Tea came to be regarded as 'necessary for life', the enhanced consumption of which was upheld in great measure by custom and was essentially dependent on the use of sugar for enhancing its flavour. By the early years of the 19th century, tea drinking was no longer a luxury. It was eulogised as a 'national drink', the consequence of which, as Sidney Mintz observed, was that 'the production of tea was developed energetically in a single vast colony and served there as a means not only of profit but also of the power to rule'. Consumption triggered production and trade. Incidental to the increased demand for tea was an upsurge in the demand for exotic Chinese ceramics for the tea and sugar ritual. Its widespread adoption in Britain and Europe led in large part to an upsurge in the demand for both the products (tea and sugar) fuelling the need for economic expansion in Asia and the Indies.

While the Orient was exotic (early European explorations and maritime contacts creating a spectacle of material indulgence and economic prosperity with the discovery of spices, silk, Chinese wares, cotton, and tea), the Occidental goods did not appeal to the Chinese. This lack of interest in European goods was to continue through the 19th century and its effects profoundly shaped the contours of the East India Company's trade. This lure of the 'riches of the East' was to lead to a severe drain on resources, a reverse flow of precious metals, particularly silver from Europe to Asia, in particular China, from whom the British imports included silk, ceramics and tea.

The East India Company used capital raised from sales of Indian cotton in Canton. A system of credit was developed whereby the Company sold bills (redeemed in London) and used this silver to buy Chinese tea. Expenses on tea from China were annually draining England of its precious metals, including silver, from the Spanish colonies. By 1813, Britain was buying about 32m lb (14.5m kg) of tea. China accumulated vast amounts of silver, which became the standard global trading currency of the period. During the first decade of the 19th century, China gained about \$26m in her world balance of payments. An effective solution to the drain of metals from Europe was revealed in the export of two Indian commodities: raw cotton

and opium. Opium sales to China rocketed year after year to serve, after Carl Trocki, as 'incubators of capitalism'. Opium proved an amazing commodity. In Montgomery Martin's work entitled *Colonies of Great Britain* (Martin 1834) it appears that the East India Company alone sold the following quantity of opium: in the year ending 1800: 4,054 chests for 3,142,591 Sicca Rupees (hereafter s); in 1810: 4,561 chests for 8,070,955 s; in 1820: 4,006 chests for 8,255,403 s; in 1830: 8,778 chests for 11,255,767 s and in 1837: 16,916 chests for 25,395,300 (Martin 1834).

The pattern of economic growth and capital accumulation in the East and the West was reversed towards the end of the 18th century with opium making a significant contribution towards reshaping the trade balance. In fact, drugs and the trade in intoxicants like coca, tobacco, and opium have acted as facilitators in the formation of the British Empire and in the creation of a global capitalistic economy. However, the conjunction of 'relentless commodification' of drugs, their redefinition and appropriation as powerful symbols of exploitation, and domination provides an interesting insight into the basis of intentional intoxication, where the 'Addiction' of one leads to 'Corruption' of the other. Herein, lay the crux of the economics of opium: politics of the Empire and its role in effecting a metamorphosis of landscapes and livelihoods.

In his pioneering study *Phantastica: Narcotic and Stimulating Drugs*, published in 1924 during the Prohibition Movement, the renowned German toxicologist Louis Lewin divided drugs into five categories. His work was the first effort ever at studying drugs by their effect. The categories are euphoriants, excitants, hypnotics, inebriants, and phantastics. As per his classification, tea and caffeinated products (of which sugar was an important constituent) were grouped as 'Excitantia', and opiates, including cocaine were 'Euphorica'. Nevertheless, they were all psychoactive substances, consumption of which was capable of inducing significant physiological and psychological changes in mind and body over a period. Moreover, the three linked commodities (sugar, tea, and opium) share a similar trajectory of attraction and repulsion (Lewin 1924: 23–27). They began their careers as exotic, but with significant therapeutic properties. Contemporary medical journals such as the *British Medical Journal* carried articles which hailed sugar as

a 'muscular food', a nerve restorative, a most valuable article of diet'. Tea was regarded as a preventive against cholera; its stimulative properties being upheld all over Europe. The protagonists of the Temperance Societies in England even urged people to replace drinking gin and whisky with tea. Opium also went from being a medicine to mass drug food.

It was their 'downward filtration' as articles of mass consumption which led to their being denounced as potent agents of physical degeneration, social turmoil, and moral failing. It is recorded that sugar was the first luxury indulged in 'next to the actual necessities of life'; its use being limited by the price. The 'use/abuse dichotomy', the demarcation between 'pleasure and aesthetic qualities' and 'medicinal side' and 'euphoric side' were all located within the 18th-century European discourse of science and medicine, assigning to the commodities meanings within the prevailing discourse.

The consumption process from elite to mass is suggestive of geographic and cultural fluidity, with symbolic connotations attending each mutation. Although trade was a prime carrier in the 'Europeanisation' of commodities, the tentacles of the Enlightenment era's prosperity and the notion of progress which it spawned provided a thrust to the desire for control, over both distribution and production of commodities to ensure their constant availability. The medical/botanical debate, motivated by the necessity to control production, further spurred the demand for exotic commodities. Along with the movement of plants, which followed the growth of botanical sciences, it was peasant agriculture and tropical plantations that were patronised to ensure an increasing supply of crops for the world market.

Europe was enriched by a range of products (tobacco, maize, potato, cocoa, and beans) from the New World. Tea took them towards Asia, where China was the home of the brew whose lure proved more enchanting than either spices or textiles. The English East India Company outmanoeuvred the Dutch to monopolise the entire tea trade with China, which was to inaugurate a long phase of confrontation between the two countries. The English had after a slight skirmish managed to establish a small base at Canton in 1637, and continued there for 150 years till 1664. This was in stark contrast to their spirit of commercial enterprise. Attempts

to establish free and direct access to the tea trade via diplomatic relations were met with stiff resistance from the Chinese, who viewed all foreigners suspiciously and likewise the expansionist policies of Europe in Tibet, the East Indies, Philippines, Burma, and Nepal.

As British mercantile interest in China swelled, in opium, the British finally found something that the Chinese would buy in large quantities. Prior to 1796, opium was admitted into China on payment of a duty when a few hundred chests were imported. Yet clandestine sales, of 20,000 chests imported towards the latter half of the 19th century, heavily drained the Chinese exchequer. Opium turned the balance, establishing itself as a powerful commodity financing British economic and political expansion. This was done by structurally linking the economies of China, India, and Britain in a trade triangle. By 1773, the establishment of an opium monopoly in India ensured and regulated supply, with profits from opium trade being ploughed into buying exports of tea from China.

### 'Opium made the world go round'

The Portuguese traders first realised and capitalised on the sale of opium, establishing a trade in the early 16th century. The Portuguese initially sold tobacco from their Brazilian colony in exchange for China's silk. Like other European nations, Portugal quickly discovered that opium provided a much better tool for trade. Dutch merchants were quick to enter the increasingly lucrative opium trade. Like the Portuguese, they focused their efforts on controlling the Chinese market. Hence, the British did not introduce the Chinese to opium but were more efficient in supplying it than previous importers.

In 1773, following the conquest of Bengal, Warren Hastings, the East India Company's governor there, redesigned the system of ensuring monopoly rights in opium. Nobody was allowed to cultivate the poppy except with a licence from the government, and every cultivator was bound by law to sell the opium produced from his crop to the government. It was to be administered by the Bengal government, although the operations extended into the North West Provinces, Oudh, and Punjab of British India and also into the native states in central India and Rajputana. Initially, the East India Company tried to prevent British

importation of opium into China since the illegal business interfered with its legitimate trade. Based in Canton, representatives of the Company asked Warren Hastings to halt exports from India to China. As a result of financial and political realities, Hastings allowed the export of 3,450 chests of the contraband in two ships. In 1773, opium earned the Company £39,000. Twenty years later, the annual revenue from opium sold in China alone had ballooned to £250,000. The popular drug was incrementally beginning to reverse the imbalance of trade between Britain and China. Between 1806 and 1809, China paid out 7 million Spanish dollars (*peso de ocho*) for opium. The East India Company kept the price artificially high, which meant that only the upper classes could afford it. It was not just profit motive that made opium expensive and beyond the budget of Chinese; the drug was officially illegal, and the East India Company did not want to antagonise the Chinese government.

- A technological innovation upset the equilibrium. This was the invention of the steam engine and the mechanised production of cotton by factories in the North of England. The surplus found a ready market in India, whose merchants paid for the product in cash. However, to pay for the ever increasing amount of cotton, the Indians needed to cultivate and sell more opium. As a result, opium flooded into China. Opium began as an answer to a crisis, but by the end of the 19th century it had itself developed into a major crisis. The Indian opium entering China in 1839 was enough to supply 10 million addicts. By 1900, there were an estimated 40 million addicts in China. The following statement exhibits the consumption of opium spanning a period of 20 years. In the year ending 1800: 4,054 chests for 3,142,591 *Sicca Rupees* (hereafter s)
- In 1810: 4,561 chests for 8,070,955 s.
- In 1820: 4,006 chests for 8,255,403 s.
- In 1830: 8,778 chests for 11,255,767 s
- In 1837: 16,916 chests for 25,395,300 s (Martin 1834).

Opium wrought havoc. Opium purchased from the cultivators was sent to the two factories at Ghazipur and Patna (in Bihar), to be manufactured into articles of commerce, the 'Excise (Abkaree) opium' and the 'Provision

opium'. Excise opium was the manufactured opium retained for consumption in India through vendors, and Provision opium was sold monthly by auction in Calcutta to merchants who exported it. The government issued advances to the peasants.

It was claimed that Indian opium maintained a high reputation in the Chinese market as the drug was admitted to be far superior to the drug produced in China. After 1833, when the monopoly of trading by the East India Company ceased, this operation had become too profitable to be shut down. Thereafter, opium traffic was run as a British government enterprise, and this included raising and harvesting the crop, preparing the opium, licensing the smuggling operations, and laying out necessary bribes in China. Thus was forged a structural trade link between the economies of India, China, and Britain which was to set on course a massive worldwide deliberation on the politics, economics, and significantly the ethics of Britain's Indian opium trade with China.

What did British India stand to gain? From 1870–1914, India ran an annual surplus of about £20m with China. In 1870, opium accounted for at least £13m: two-thirds of India's surplus with China. Europeans of this period preferred the 'informal empire' because it seemed to protect all interests that were really vital or profitable without the considerable cost of ruling over an alien society. John Fairbank has observed in his *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast*, has hinted on the centrality of the opium trade to the British commercial interests rather than tea (Fairbank 1953). In addition, opium was no 'cotton or molasses'. It was endowed with a power to create dependencies, destabilise societies, and sustain empires. The gigantic dimensions assumed by the opium trade led to the Chinese rebellion, the utter exhaustion of the imperial exchequer, and ultimately to the growth of tea plantations in the Indian colony.

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## Liberia: the Struggle for Territorial Integrity, Sovereignty, and Democracy

The conventional historical and political literature commonly associates imperialistic designs and anti-imperialistic resistance with European colonies in Africa and other colonised peoples around the world. Because Liberia was not formally colonised under the 1884–85 Berlin Conference regime, it is usually left out of the discourse. However, the fact is that Liberia was born and built out of the interplay of imperialistic and anti-imperialistic forces external and, ironically, internal to the country.

Liberia emerged out of the cross-currents of the Atlantic World: the slavery brought on by capitalist imperialism, anti-slavery movements, emigration, and the transplantation of African-Americans along the Atlantic corridor. The confluence of these three tributaries streamed into the founding of the Liberian state and the subsequent struggles, since the 19th century, to broaden its statehood and democratic space. Therefore, this essay focuses primarily on three interconnected phases of the shaping of Liberia, based on the dynamics of contending external and internal forces: (1) the historical roots and tension in the founding of the Liberian state in the American and the West African environments; (2) territorial sovereignty and security vs British and French imperialism on boundary issues; and (3) internal imperialism by the Liberian state itself vs the indigenous populations on the issues of slavery, effective occupation, and the politics of exclusion/inclusion. Discussing these central themes will reveal the critical role of imperialist and anti-imperialist struggles in the formation and building of the Liberian nation state.

### Historical background: The journey from enslavement to statehood

Although the conventional historical narrative does not explicitly indicate this fact, the origins of the Liberian colony and state began in reality with the uprooting and enslavement of Africans in the 1400s. Then 400 years later, the return of descendants of former slaves to the Grain Coast (West Africa) through the

policy of 'expedient deportation' of African-American and manumitted slaves began in 1820. Because African slaves were taken from the various regions of Africa, even if mostly from West Africa (Senegambia to Angola), it is reasonable to say that the African-American emigrants of the period represent Africa in microcosm. Comparative narratives reveal the experiences of the Black Loyalists from the Americas to England, then to Freetown, Sierra Leone in 1784; they are known as the Creoles. Some settled in Liberia as well. Afro-Brazilians returned to other countries in West Africa i.e. Dahomey, now Benin, Nigeria, Togo, etc. (Schick 1980: 4). Interestingly, the events of history are ever evolving, as protracted civil wars in Africa have brought descendants of emigrants, as exiles, to Europe and the Americas.

As kith and kin, the encounters between emigrants and indigenous Africans in Liberia and other countries are stories worth the telling and further research. Consequently, how to build a nation out of diverse emigrant and indigenous populations, estranged by 400 years of separation and radically different customs and physical environments, has remained the perennial task in Liberia's historical development. These communities are not monolithic. Although the American Colonization Society (ACS) was the premier national organisation, the emigrants were motivated by different reasons or attitudes and sponsored by various state colonisation societies (Sigler 1969, Clegg III 2004). Being the minority population, they forged unity out of necessity in the strange physical and human environments. In the case of the indigenous majority, comprising 16 different ethnic groups, then and now, it appeared united in the face of strangers on their soil who treated them as uncivilised or inferior and so excluded them from the body politic. However, the fact is that there existed intra-emigrant class struggles for power, the politics of colourism, and differences in settlement location (1820s–1980, the year of a coup d'état) vs the inter-ethnic clashes in the past, both after the coup and during the uncivil war (1989–2003). These realities exposed how tenuous the presumed unity in both communities was. Also, both communities read historical events differently. Further, both manipulated or were manipulated by internal and external forces, for better or worse, in the nation-building process. The

originally forced displacement out of Africa, then the encountering, and the singular task of nation building reveal the struggles and outcomes of contending forces and players of imperialism and anti-imperialism in Liberia.

Effectively, capitalist imperialism started the historical process of Liberia. Gleaning and summarising succinctly imperialism and anti-imperialism from the literature, a working definition is in order. Driven by the need for economic and non-economic advantage, imperialism is the ideology and policy of exercising asymmetrical power to attain such basic goals: the appropriation of foreign territory, labour/materials, and markets (colonialism), the export or transfer of social problems to foreign places (this is left out of the discourse), and cultural subversion and transformation (Bowman et al. 2007). Forces antithetical to imperialism/colonialism have taken different forms of violent and non-violent resistance throughout history, and the Liberian Experiment is no exception.

As a result of capitalist imperialism, an earlier form of globalisation, the four continents along the Atlantic corridor (Africa, Europe, and North and South America) have remained connected by the movement of people, materials, and ideas. First, most prominently, it was the legitimate trade in goods and services (up to 1400) and then the illegitimate slave trade (1400s–1800s). The largest and most ignominious of the 'Middle Passages' was the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Though the Atlantic Slave Trade is most often referenced, this essay recognises slavery across other land and oceanic 'middle passages' around the world. Discourse on slavery must include the evils of Arab-imperialism since Islamic hegemony in North Africa in the 7th century and the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade subsequently. This policy culminated in the horrific and terroristic pillaging of Eastern and Central Africa by Arabs in the Trans-Red Sea/Indian Ocean Slave Trade at its height in the second half of the 19th century. Hamed bin Muhammed (known infamously as 'Tippu Tip') and his African collaborators were perpetrators of Arab imperialism. Arabs and Europeans enslaved Africans, respectively from the East and West. This trade transplanted millions of African slaves, first in the Caribbean islands, South America, and then the US to meet the great demand for labour.

African slaves provided the critical labour that sustained plantations, mines, and other

industries that fuelled the economic development of Europe and the Americas. Accounting the devastation of the slave trade, followed by European imperialism and colonialism, Rodney would provide the conclusive assessment of Africa's general condition within the Trans-Atlantic capitalist system. Succinctly, it is that the earlier enslavement and the cheap labour and exploitation of natural resources contributed to capital accumulation abroad. Consequently, the development of Europe and America left Africa in a state of underdevelopment (Rodney 1982).

Africa's loss through the slave trade was America's gain, regardless of the smaller number of slaves on the mainland in comparison to South America and the Caribbean. Ironically, slave codes were first enacted in the New England colonies, the cradle of American liberty. Beginning with the slave codes in Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 1630s, slavery spread across the region and then South, where Virginia established the slave plantation model in the 1660s and slavery became commonplace.

In the crucible of America's Peculiar Institution (Stamp 1989), African slaves were burned in the fire and flames of dehumanisation and degradation, but they were unrelenting overcomers. They were battered and bruised by hard labour in the field from dawn until dusk as the field hands. Contrast is often made with the other group, the house slaves, enslaved to what is considered to be soft labour. So much has already been written about American slavery and belabouring is unnecessary. The sum of it all is the looming, grotesque contradiction of human bondage that co-existed with religious freedom and political liberty. African-Americans saw the antithesis of that contradiction and fought in the American Revolutionary War. Like the colonies seizing their freedom from British tyranny, they too were aroused by the stirrings of the tones of the Liberty Bell. Consequently, they claimed the freedoms associated with the self-evident truths of equality and the inalienable rights to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

Out of that contradiction, relentless struggles were waged. Like a mighty river, resistance flowed first from source (wars, captures, holding barracoons, and castle cells) in Africa through other forms of resistance (mutiny, suicides, non-co-operation, etc.) along the horrific Middle Passage. Then the waves of resistance onto the mainland as slaves on

plantations continued to rebel through various tactics. As one historian would say, the slave plantation was a battlefield, contrary to elitist and revisionist interpretations about the financial costs of slave upkeep and the positive impact of slavery (Blassingame 1979).

The indomitable human spirit, like the buoy, could not be submerged indefinitely. Open resistance was commonplace. In reality, slave resisters and Founding Fathers alike knew that true freedom is natural and spiritual. As such, it is neither derived from corruptible papers called constitutions nor guaranteed by political systems guided and guarded by fallen beings.

As the historical outcome reveals, the evil of slavery contained the seeds or antithesis of its own destruction. In fact, the negro spirituals carry the timeless message of the indefatigable human spirit to be free. For example, though actually physically bound in chains and wearing the social stigma of degradation, it was in the liberationist spirit of the slave to sing and live in freedom (Carawan 2007: 66).

Oh Freedom, Oh Freedom  
Over me, Over me  
And before I be a slave  
I be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord  
And be free.

The slave in mind and spirit never accepted his/her status as officially defined. The physically 'caged birds' could still sing and appropriate to themselves their inalienable rights of freedom. How profound and confounding the unwavering spirit of slaves must have been to the enslavers who claimed to be the bearers of civilisation and Christianity. Fundamentally, slaves knew in their humanity that they belonged to no-one but 'to their Lord'. They were God's Property, not the property of man. Consequently, they were daring and unrelenting in destabilising the slave system long before national declarations and movements formally abolished it.

Resistance to slavery was indeed an enduring strain. The struggles overflowed beyond the plantations in waves: slave networks, conventions, abolitionist movements, and (most of all) the presence of free blacks in the cities. (Huggins, et al. 1971; Meier and Rudwick 1971; Foner and Walker 1979). Also, as news travelled along the mysterious grapevine, the

slaves heard the echoes of the successful slave revolt of the Haitian Revolution (beginning in the 1790s). Defeating the French imperialists and enslavers, Haitians gained their independence on 1 January 1804.

Having knowledge of such a decisive victory, the slaves must have been encouraged and aroused by the hope of a similar revolt and freedom. Meanwhile, slavocracy was shaken by that possibility of the demonstration effects of the Haitian and other foreign revolutions. There was good reason for the tensions and fears, because major slave revolts on the mainland soon occurred: Gabriel Prosser (1800), German Coast Uprising (1811), Denmark Vesey (1822), and Nat Turner (1834). Despite the vigilance of local, state, and federal patrols, slavocracy was not absolutely secure in the face of unyielding slave resistance. In effect, these social upheavals demonstrate that slaves always created spaces of freedom by individual and collective acts. Slavocracy would not go unchallenged. Simply put, the slaves would not just let the slave system 'rest on flowery bed of ease' while they laboured in blood, sweat, and tears.

As the resistance spread and widened, abolitionist movements and the black conventions took to the cause. As could have been expected, there was convergence and disharmony of interests, strategies, and visions. The abolitionist movements sought primarily to challenge the evil of slavery and then to expose what they saw as the surreptitious scheme to maintain slavery by supporting the emigration of free blacks. The abolitionists regarded such an insidious plan as a way of undermining black solidarity (free enlightened blacks leading slaves against slavery). On moral and political grounds the abolitionists challenged the evil of slavery. In the tradition of earlier religious groups like the Quakers of Germantown (1688), the abolitionists denounced vociferously the ugly contradiction in a land founded on freedom from religious and political persecution in Europe. Joining the outcry were public officials and private citizens and their publications articulated their opposition to slavery. Some of the notables and publications of that era included the following: William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator*, David Walker's *Walker's Appeal*, Samuel Cornish's and John B. Russwurm's *Freedom Journal*, and vocal critics like Frederick Douglass, James Forten, Lydia Marie Child, and Robert Purvis etc.

Concerning the conventions, one may say that they served domestic and foreign agendas. Domestically, the conventions aimed at securing the freedoms of free blacks and uplifting other blacks from their plight (Foner and Walker 1979; Pease and Pease 1971: 191–205). Notably, even before the conventions, Garrison was highly critical of the ACS. He wrote a treatise against the expatriation of blacks. In his *Thoughts of African Colonization*, Garrison (1832) sought to expose the 'doctrines, principles, and purposes' of the ACS that he considered to be fundamentally duplicitous, hypocritical, and harmful towards blacks. With respect to foreign interests, the conventions debated the issue of emigration. Prominent abolitionists previously mentioned were against slavery but not in support of emigration. However, some were disillusioned with the issue of equality in America, and shifted their stance to become ardent (colonialists) like John B. Russwurm, who became governor of Maryland in Africa, now the county of Maryland in the Republic of Liberia.

Prominent emigrationists, like Martin Delany and Highland Garnet, supported colonisation, whether in Canada, Central America, Haiti, or West Africa, in order to establish a black state. Emigrationists felt that a state would prove that blacks could govern themselves and gain the respect of whites. Various colonisation schemes were undertaken subsequently, with varying degrees of success. While the colony at Haiti failed, Liberia stands conspicuously as the enduring black state that emerged out of that era.

Lastly, and most significantly, the presence of the growing number of free blacks was perceived as a creeping menace or perpetual social problem to white American society. The main concern was about miscegenation or 'mongrelisation' of white society (Schick 1980: 4). Also, free blacks were seen as troublemakers who would foment and encourage slave insurrections. Their presence in effect would destabilise slavocracy. Consequently, this social menace or social problem had to be excised and exported out of America. That led to the planting of the Liberian colony.

Emigration lingered as an issue, initially through private initiative. Notable was a prosperous free black of Bedford, Massachusetts: Paul Cuffe. He had actually transported 38 free blacks to Sierra Leone in 1815 at his own expense (Barnes 1980: 4). That bold initiative demonstrated the practicality of colonisation and inspired emigration ventures in the 1820s and thereafter.



After the Cuffe initiative, the issue resurfaced in churches, state legislatures, and on to the national scene. What was to be done with free blacks and manumitted slaves? Sermons extolled the virtue of sending blacks to Africa. They would be like missionaries to spread the light of Christianity and civilisation among their 'kith and kin' who were still dropping in the 'darkness' of slavery and non-progressive traditions. State colonisation societies were formed. All of these efforts culminated in a national meeting in Washington, DC in December 1816. The participants included religious leaders, state and federal legislators, slave owners, anti-slavery representatives, etc. This meeting established the American Society for Colonizing Free People of Color in the United States, abbreviated as the American Colonization Society (ACS).

In simplest terms, the idea and political project of Liberia emerged out of the long historical struggle of people and ideas. It is an historical journey from enslavement through emigration and colonisation into statehood. Effectively, the ACS was the principal private agency that implemented US public policy on race by the expedient deportation or resettlement of free blacks and manumitted slaves. Thus African-American emigrants left in the 1820s and subsequently on their 'journey of hope' sought a place of asylum, to be free from the 'deep degradation' in America. They were hopeful for a place of their own (Barnes

1980). They sought to attain freedom, equality, and the full stature of manhood and womanhood. That place on the Grain Coast, West Africa, would be called Liberia, from the Latin *liber*, meaning 'to be free'.

### Imperialist encroachments on Liberia's sovereignty and territory

Driven by the love of liberty, the emigrants began their torturous rebound down the Atlantic passage on 21 January 1820 aboard the *Elizabeth* from New York. This first voyage and transplantation was at Sherbro Island, near the colony of Sierra Leone (1787), the territory of repatriated Black Loyalists and other emigrants. The voyage was nearly abortive, as almost all the colonists died from malaria (Barnes 1980: 4). It was a fatal beginning. For further details on the conflicts and encroachments imperialists would impose on Liberia, see Table 1, constructed from events stated by Richardson (1959) and in Blyden's letters (Lynch 1979).

### Imperialist encroachments on Liberian sovereignty and territory

Although Liberia was established as a free and independent state on 26 July 1847, it was not immune to the flagrant violations of imperialist encroachments by the British and French (Akpan 1973). The grotesque irony is that these first recognisers of Liberia's

Table 1 Liberia vs imperialists: Conflicts and encroachments

Conflict/issue	Year	With whom
Dispute/slave trade vessel	1839	British
Dispute/sovereignty	1839	British
Preying on Liberia territory	1841–45	British and French
Dispute/vessel seizure	1845	British
Dispute/boundary	1852	French
Refusal to pay custom duties	1860	Trader John Harris with British support
Refusal to pay custom duties	1862	Trader John Harris with British support
Gunboat violates Liberian sovereignty	1860	Trader John Harris with British support
Attempt to declare Liberia a protectorate	1879	French
Dispute/boundary	1880	British
Dispute/boundary	1882	British
Dispute/land grab on SW border	1883	British
Dispute/land grab	1885	British
Dispute/land grab SE border	1891	French
Claim on mineral-rich N border	1899–1910	French
Annexation of NW border	1903	British
Financial adm./custom receivership	1912–1914	American advisor, British, French
Forced labour/slavery charges	1920s–30s	British, French, German-led League of Nations

independence later became Liberia's worst encroachers. Britain recognised Liberia (1848) and France did as well (1852). Despite the magnanimity of being the first two to welcome Liberia into the family of nations, that loftiness of international spirit was soon to be seriously debased by the malevolence of imperialist encroachments upon Africa's first fledgling republic.

Even before the Berlin regime of 1884–1885, the British on the western frontier and the French to the north and east boundaries were lurking and making inroads into Liberian territory. As for the coastal areas, independent traders (British, Cuban, and French) were violating Liberia's territorial waters and sovereignty by evading the payment of custom duties. Further, in the process of their illegitimate trading, they fomented and encouraged conflicts between the Liberian state and the indigenous groups. Meanwhile, these traders had the unfailing support of their colonial governments. As events unfolded, the poor and weak Liberian state was caught in the strait of rocks (colonial imperial power) and the thorns of brazen traders who smuggled, harassed, and hassled the very limited capability of the infant republic.

The violations by these independent traders and the colonial governments that constantly supported them significantly reduced the size of Liberian territory. Edward Wilmot Blyden provides a description of Liberian territory. Blyden is most eminently qualified on the boundary issues because he was intimately and tirelessly involved. He was Liberia's secretary of state (1862–70) and ambassador to Britain and France (1877–79). He also served as president of Liberian College (1880–84). Blyden was itinerant in Liberia's interior and West Africa (Sierra Leone and Nigeria). Meanwhile, he was a Presbyterian minister and educator. In his 4 August 1860 letter to the Rev. John L. Wilson, corresponding secretary of the Board of Foreign Mission, Presbyterian Church of America, Blyden wrote, 'The Liberian territory now embraces 500 miles of coast with an interior of 200 miles, forming an area of 100,000 square miles, with a population of 2,000,000' (Lynch 1978: 40). Today, Liberia is the significantly truncated size of 43,000 square miles, far less than half its original size.

This large land area was the result of land purchased or ceded by various ethnic groups, from the Sherbro Island/Gallinhas area at

the western end, to the San Pedro at the eastern. Regarding the Gallinhas area, the territory was purchased with money provided and raised by the British philanthropist Lord Ashley, the Earl of Shaftesbury (Johnston 1969). He was founder of the British Anti-Slavery Society and supported the infant republic's fight against the slave trade on the coast. Further, Lord Ashley and other friends of Liberia were interested in the spread of Christianity and civilisation in Liberia. Liberians felt it their mission to do so. With the financial support, the Liberia state enlarged its territory.

Between 1850 and 1856, the size of Liberian territorial limits had settled and was never contested by Britain, France or any other group. Consistent with Blyden's claim, the map below illustrates this larger size, which existed until areas were seized by the 'gangster tactics and subterfuge' of the British and French (Anderson 1952: 86, 88). If historical images and metaphors might be used to depict the nature of Liberia's struggle, the British ('the Lion') and the French ('the Cock') lurked along the coast and interior of Liberia, tearing and plucking away at Liberia ('The Pepper Bird'). The fact that this little, severely (defeathered) bird survived at all is providential and due to the relentless ingenuity and tenacity of Liberian statesmen's brinkmanship. What then explains the significant reduction of the size of the Liberian territory? Several factors apply: imperialist adventurism/expansionism, the role of independent European traders, and the Liberian state's weakness and lack of vision.

While it is true that the French and (especially) the British were not committed initially to expansion before the Berlin regime of 1884–85, they were interested in any opportunity that increased their chances of exploration and economic gain. In the case of Britain, having the Sierra Leone colony adjacent to Liberia motivated her curiosity and involvement in the internal affairs of the other little colony and young republic next door. For example, Elizah Johnson, one of the colonists on the first voyage on the *Elizabeth*, is supposed to have responded remarkably to the British captain who offered help to the emigrants in their struggle against the various indigenous groups: 'We want no flagstaff put up here that will cost us more to pull down than it would to flog the natives' (Richardson 1959: 302).

Meanwhile, the French were exploring and marking the interior (particularly the Nimba Mountain area with its rich iron ore deposits and other minerals) with the intent of expropriating it to their future territories (Guinea in the north and Côte d'Ivoire in the east). As it later turned out, the French would imitate the British by seizing territory under the guise of linguistic misinterpretation by the Liberian envoy (English-speaking) about riparian rights beyond the Cavalla River. Unequivocally refusing British help, emigrants contended with the indigenous groups over the issues of land and trade. The memory of American imperialism still fresh among the latter, Lieutenant Robert F. Stockton, USS *Alligator*, obtained the land sale for the emigrants through threat or coercion. The British knew of these ongoing conflicts and responded with ambivalence.

With respect to the European traders who operated independently initially, there was a convergence of interests between the colonial powers and the independent traders along the Liberian coast. After the formal abolition of international slave trade by the former enslaving nations, individuals pursued alternative business ventures. Those mentioned in Liberian history are Pedro Blanco (Cuban), Theodore Canot (French), and John Myer Harris (British). They were engaged in legitimate trade which also was a cover for slave trading.

Of the three, the role of Harris was the most detrimental and lasting upon Liberia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. With good financial means and schooners, he positioned himself strategically on the Liberian coast by 1860. Through various intentional acts, he settled in the Gallinhas territory, the area bought and ceded by the chiefs. Next, he intermarried into the families of powerful chiefs, like the Massaquois, and was then influential enough (through money, gifts, and rum) to be admitted into the men's secret society, the Poro, the cultural sanctum sanctorum of African/Liberian life. He therefore became very knowledgeable about the area and its customs, and was considered one of the prominent locals. Harris acted like a chief, an intermediary between the colonial representatives, missionaries, and the local people. Though he at times was the source of their conflicts, he even served as arbitrator among conflicting ethnic groups. Because of his means and big house on the idyllic oceanfront, it is said that Harris even hosted

meetings that dealt with the boundary issues (Smyke 2004).

Through calculating methods, Harris took advantage of the schisms and conflicts between the emigrants and the ethnic groups of the area. Further, because of his means and assimilation into the area, he exploited the divide by flagrantly violating laws regarding point of entry. He would trade in what he regarded as 'no man's land', between southwestern Liberia and southeastern Sierra Leone (the Gallinhas territory). In regular violation, the Liberian state seized his schooners. He appealed directly to British colonial governors from time to time, and got support without fail. Harris was therefore emboldened to even claim indemnity for losses to his 'business'. In response, the British colonial governors of Sierra Leone disregarded Liberian sovereignty by sailing to Monrovia, the capital, and seizing Harris's schooners and demanding payments. Liberia was coerced to pay, though a renegotiated lesser amount.

Perhaps even more critical, and having a more lasting effect than the encroachments, is the fact that Harris contested the claim by British officials and philanthropists which asserted that the Gallinhas was legitimate territory of Liberia. Ignoring this claim, he again appealed to the colonial governors to interfere and they did. They did so by discouraging Liberia's claim to the area. Boundary commissions were then set up, but the findings were repeatedly contested, and settlements were delayed and never conclusive. Meanwhile, the US observed from a distance, but only occasionally showed peculiar interest, when its naval vessel appeared in the contested area. Though the officer served as arbitrator, he was not authorised by the US to seek conclusive settlements. The British thus handled the boundary issue that they had encroached upon.

Despite Liberia's appeals and representations to these imperialist governments, as well as the intervention of prominent British individuals (former officials and private citizens) in support of her cause, the status quo on the colonial front was maintained. British and French governments eventually sanctioned the positions of their colonial agents. As the words of wisdom forewarn, 'The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth roughly' (Proverbs 18:23). Liberia was poor, needy, and weak (financially and militarily), and the British and French took advantage of this in order to violate her laws, invade

her territorial waters to seize vessels lawfully impounded vessels for illegal trading, and encroach wantonly upon her borders. Meanwhile, the country was suffering from constant tensions and conflicts between the Liberian state and the indigenous population.

As a result of Harris's behaviour and the support of the colonial governors, Liberia remained 'threatened, perplexed, and anxious' about the security of its territory and sovereignty (Lynch 1978: 54–81, 249–281). As secretary of state and Liberian ambassador to Britain, this was a recurring theme in Blyden's correspondence to the British government, the ACS and friends of Liberia who supported the establishment of the only Christian negro republic in Africa. The British and French charged that Liberia had mistreated the indigenous people by treating them as second-class and did not promote their well-being. Even more critically, they said that Liberia lacked the capability of effective occupation of the territories that it laid claim to. Meanwhile, when the Liberian state intervened against the independent traders, such as Harris, who were smuggling and not paying revenues, the colonial governors responded by force to protect their citizens.

Ironically, Liberia had to turn to British capitalists for its very first loan, which resulted in the infamous 1870 loan debacle. The £100,000 loan was negotiated by President Edward James Roye. Overall, the consequences were disastrous for Liberia because of the exorbitant interest rate, the terms of collection, and the political turmoil it caused that led to the resignation and death of President Roye (Anderson 1952: 85; Johnson, 1987: 92–93; Johnston 1969: 258–276). If that were not humiliating enough, the Liberian government accepted the British offer to set up a frontier force. That too was a huge mistake, because the Liberian government found out that the insidious British designed it to destabilise the fledgling state. To correct this ill-advised collaboration, the government quickly turned to the US government to send a military training officer. The response was tangled and an African-American was sent to assist Liberia.

### **Struggle for full citizenship and widening the democratic space**

Liberia is the reality of the journey between hope and the realisation of the envisioned 'Glorious Land of Liberty'. The beginnings

were very challenging between two peoples, the emigrants and the indigenous population. Though 'kith and kin', their relations were marked by sharp disharmony of interests. Table 2 sheds light on the issues (see also Richardson 1959).

In response, Elizah Johnson's infamous remarks towards the natives in 1820, about 'flogging' them, reflected the quintessential attitude of the young republic. It reflected paternalism and a lack of vision that would guide the dual policy of the Liberian state from the 1820s to 1964: 'Liberians vs the Natives', 'Class vs Tribe', 'Coastal vs Interior or Hinterland', and 'Civilised vs Country People'. This dualism was the defining feature of national policy for almost 150 years (Johnson 1987; Liebenow 1969; Fraenkel 1964).

In order to deal with the harsh physical environment and testy human conflicts, the Liberian colony and state became imperialistic and colonialist toward the indigenous population (Akpan 1973). Due to its non-progressive policies, essentially the policies of exclusion and privilege, the Liberian regime has been characterised variously as 'slavocracy', transplanted from America, 'oligarchy and the evolution of privilege dominated' by Americo-Liberians, 'kleptocracy' and 'rampant corruption', and 'autocracy' of one-party domination and circulation of elites from the True Whig Party since the 1870s to the 1980 coup d'état (Woodson 1990; Liebenow 1969; Cole 1968; Sawyer 1992).

Liberia has transitioned through three republics: 1840s–1980, 1980–90, 1990s–2005. Now into the fourth, the post-uncivil war republic marks a critical junction in the election of Liberia's and Africa's first female head of state, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2005. Since 1964, when the historic divide was officially declared nullified through the national policy of unification and integration, the full implementation and realisation is still weighed in the balance.

The fact that counties were constructed out of Liberia's interior, the formally neglected 'hinterland', and indigenous communities on the coast, was not enough. Even the election of representatives and senators or the appointing of their superintendents (county executives) still left more to be done. After all, policy impacts go beyond politics. Policy declarations and implementation have unintended consequences that politicians cannot imagine. The facts of the coup d'état (1980) and horrific

Table 2 Conflicts in environment, 19th-century Liberia: Americo-Liberians vs Indigenous People

Conflict/issue	Year	With whom
Battle of Crown Hill/land	1822	Deys, Mamba Bassa, Vai
War/land issue	1824	Bassa
War/land	1825	Bassa
War/slave trading	1826	Bassa
War/land and Trade	1832	Gola
War/land and trade	1835	Bassa
War/land and trade	1838	Deys, Gola
Assassination of Finley	1838	Kru, Slave Trader Canot
War/land and trade	1839	Gola
Dispute/slave trade vessel	1839	British
Dispute/sovereignty	1839	British
War/land and trade	1840	Deys, Gola
War/Land and trade	1842	Kru
War/land and trade	1843	Golas
War/land and trade	1851	Bassa
War/land and trade	1851	Gola
War/land and trade	1852	Kru
War/slave trading	1853	Bassa
War/land and trade	1855	Kru
War/land and trade	1856	Kru
War/land and trade	1857	Grebo
War/slave trading	1871	Vai
War/land and trade	1875	Grebo
War/land and trade	1876	Grebo
War/land and trade	1894	Kru

uncivil war (1989–2003) suggest that the belated unification and integration policy was not sufficient to avert the national tragedies.

Now, the fourth republic is faced with the onerous and momentous task of repentance, reconciliation, and reconstruction. It is expected that the process will not be an ‘evolution of privilege’ but widely inclusive so that all Liberians will belong symbolically and materially. This is also the beginning of the period for unprecedented transparency so that leaders, groups, organisations, and citizens can be held accountable. As visionary and committed leadership and people are being transformed and engaged daily, the journey of hope can continue into the earthly ‘Glorious Land of Liberty by God’s Command’.

Joe Jimmehr

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## Mexican Revolution and Anti-Imperialism

The Mexican Revolution (1910–20) was the first great social revolution of the 20th century, and a precursor to both the Russian and Chinese revolutions of 1917 and 1949. It also became a key referent for other revolutionary processes later in the Latin American context, including Cuba in 1959 and Nicaragua in 1979, and elsewhere in Asia and Africa in the context of processes of decolonisation.

Like all of these examples, the Mexican Revolution combined elements of nationalist, anti-colonialist, and anti-imperialist struggle with populist demands and support centred on peasants, working people, and the poor, including the convergence of such factors in the context of Mexico's and Latin America's indigenous peoples. A major focus of US policy during the 1920s and 1930s was to prevent the emergence of another Mexico elsewhere in Latin America, first through intensified intervention (including overlapping interventions and/or Marine occupations in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Cuba), and later through President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy.

The eventual defeat of the most radical currents within the Mexican Revolution led by Francisco Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata, and Ricardo Flores Magón, and those they inspired, culminated in the consolidation of an authoritarian one-party regime (headed between 1929 and 2000 by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] and its previous incarnations). As the Revolution's supposed guardian and successor, the PRI sought to legitimise its monopolisation of the ostensible ruling ideology of revolutionary nationalism and its own power, repressiveness, and corruption. It did so in a similar manner to that of other states that formed bureaucratic leadership structures in the 20th century.

### Protagonists, activists and leaders

The Mexican Revolution's key leaders (and martyrs) such as Villa, Zapata, and Flores Magón became symbols of its widespread and continuing influence on equivalent leaders and processes elsewhere in Latin America with similar characteristics in the 1920s and

1930s; such as those led by Augusto César Sandino of Nicaragua, Farabundo Martí of El Salvador, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre of Peru (founder of the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana [APRA] party, established during Haya de la Torre's exile in Mexico in 1924). Sandino was greatly influenced by the nationalist orientation of the Mexican Revolution and its emphasis on workers' rights as a result of his experiences in exile there as an oil worker in Tampico and Veracruz between 1923 and 1926. Much of this legacy is still evident today in contexts such as Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution and its equivalents in Bolivia and Ecuador, which identify with the framework of 21st-century socialism.

The origins of the Mexican Revolution lay in a popular revolt against the longstanding dictatorship (or Porfiriato) of Porfirio Díaz, which began to take shape between 1905 and 1907, and finally caught fire in late 1910, culminating finally in his overthrow in May 1911. Key initial steps which laid the basis for wider opposition later included the founding of the Mexican Liberal Party, in September 1905, in St Louis, Missouri, by political exiles led by Ricardo Flores Magón.

The Magonistas intensified the pressure on the Díaz regime from within, by consolidating a Mexican exile community in the US that continued to be engaged with opposition to Díaz, and by organising several armed incursions along the border with increasing regularity between 1906 and 1910. They also became in effect the founders of a left tradition within communities of Mexican origin in the US which became forerunners of the Mexican-American civil rights, Chicano, and contemporary immigrant rights movements.

Flores Magón was born in 1873, and died as a political soldier in Leavenworth Prison in Kansas in 1922, after his arrest in 1918 pursuant to the same repressive policies that led to the imprisonment of Eugene Debs and many others. Flores Magón lived in exile in the US for 18 years, from 1904–22, and was a fiery independent journalist and anarcho-communist activist of indigenous origin from Oaxaca who focused on the need for agrarian reform together with support for labour rights in key industries dominated by foreign capital (Lomnitz 2014).

Flores Magón's journal *Regeneración*, eventually based in Los Angeles, played a key role in spreading news of the intensifying efforts

within Mexico and from exile against the Díaz regime, and in connecting these struggles to similar struggles elsewhere in the world from a radical internationalist perspective. This included close collaboration between Flores Magón and his associates with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), key sectors of the US Socialist Party, fellow activists and theorists such as Emma Goldman, and independent journalists such as John Kenneth Turner and John Reed. Goldman and Reed were among those at various different stages between 1905 and 1917 who helped connect contemporaneous and ultimately convergent revolutionary processes underway under analogous conditions in Mexico and Russia; these potential convergences were also explicitly present in the writings of Zapata. Goldman eventually headed the campaign to free Flores Magón after his arrests in 1916 and 1918, prior to her own imprisonment and deportation to Russia along with hundreds of others in November 1919 during the initial stages of the Red Scare.

It was Flores Magón who coined *Tierra y Libertad* (Land and Freedom) as a phrase to summarise the demands of the popular revolution that he believed was necessary to overthrow Díaz, and who exerted great influence on Zapata. This influence included Zapata's adoption of this slogan as the framework for his Plan de Ayala, which in turn became the basis for Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 (one of the Revolution's most concrete achievements), which for the first time recognised and instituted protections for communal and indigenous forms of property.

### Foreign imperial domination

Díaz's ruling cabal was dominated by advisors with Social Darwinist pretensions known as *Científicos* (scientists), such as Franco-Mexican financier Yves Limantour (Díaz's finance minister from 1893–1911, who accompanied him in exile to France in May 1911), who were imbued with the positivist ethos of scientific racism promoted by Herbert Spencer that was very influential during the same period in Brazil and Argentina. Limantour played a key role in the alignment of the Díaz regime with European financial interests at the same time that US investment in Mexico was becoming increasingly predominant (with US control by 1910 of 27 per

cent of Mexico's land and 45 per cent of all industrial investment).

Henry Lane Wilson served as US ambassador to Mexico during some of the most conflictive moments in US–Mexican relations and came to epitomise recurrent US intervention in Mexico's internal politics and its worst extremes during the period of the Revolution, which included reiterated armed interventions between 1913 and 1917. As Lane Wilson himself noted in his testimony to the US Congress in 1920:

Practically all of the railways belonged to foreigners; practically all of the mines. Practically all of the banks and all of the factories were owned by the French. A very considerable part of the soil of Mexico, probably over a third, was in the hands of foreign-born elements, and practically all the public utilities were in the hands of the Americans or British. Naturally this foreign ownership excited hostility, which was not lessened by the circumstance that these interests, or whatever they may have been, had been honestly acquired. (Welsome 2006: 16)

Inter-imperialist rivalries played a key role during the Mexican Revolution and preceded it in terms of jockeying for position among US and European interests. These manoeuvres were also rooted in broader phenomena, as historian Friedrich Katz has emphasised in his classic book *The Secret War in Mexico* (1981: x):

The term secret war ... refers to a new strategy of alliances and understandings that the great powers and the business interests linked to them developed early in the twentieth century as a response to the wave of revolutions that swept some of what are now called the developing countries. The United States applied this strategy with great success in Cuba in 1898, when it used elements of the Cuban independence movement to obtain the expulsion of Spain's forces from Cuba and to establish American supremacy in their place.

Katz then situates the Mexican Revolution in a broader context:

The new strategy of exploiting social conflicts and anti-colonial struggles was

not adopted by European powers until World War I, when each side tried to aid revolutionary movements that were directed at its rivals. The Germans attempted to support revolutionary liberation movements against the British in Ireland and India; and they allowed Lenin to return to Russia through Germany. The British sent Lawrence of Arabia to lead an Arab revolt against Germany's ally, Turkey; and together with the United States, the British supported nationalist movements, above all the Czech nationalist movement led by Thomas Masaryk, against the Austro-Hungarian Empire ... (ibid.)

What forms did such stratagems take in the Mexican context?

Direct and indirect military intervention, diplomatic and economic pressures, destabilization, attempts to play off one faction against the other – all these tactics were used by at least one of the great powers in Mexico between 1910 and 1920. (ibid.)

Popular repudiation and resistance against foreign domination during the Díaz regime was exemplified by a strike in the mines of Cananea in the northern border state of Sonora in 1906, followed by massive worker resistance to an owner's lock-out in the textile factories of Rio Blanco (the largest of their kind in Latin America) in Veracruz in 1907; both outbreaks were violently repressed with direct involvement by Díaz, and hundreds of workers detained and massacred. These incidents led in turn to an intensification of repression throughout the country. Associates of Flores Magón played major roles in both of these struggles.

By March 1908 Díaz felt it necessary to signal his supposed acceptance of the need for him to finally leave office. He did this in an interview with US journalist James Creelman in *Pearson's Magazine* by announcing his promise not to seek re-election in the next round of presidential elections, scheduled for June 1910. He eventually reneged on this pledge, but meanwhile exiled civic opposition leader Francisco Madero, a wealthy member of the local landed elite in the border state of Coahuila, who had run against Díaz in 1910 in



elections widely recognised for their fraudulent character.

All of this laid the groundwork for Madero's call from his exile in Texas for a national uprising against Díaz on 20 November 1910 (to this day commemorated as a national holiday in Mexico, the Day of the Revolution). Villa and Zapata became key leaders of local rebellions in the north and south respectively which, together with initially convergent efforts by the followers of Flores Magón and several others, produced several key military defeats that finally convinced Díaz to leave power and depart for exile in May 1911. The tipping point was Pancho Villa's taking of Ciudad Juárez in support of Madero on 9 May 1911 (Katz 1998). Zapata quickly became disenchanted with Madero's reluctance to undertake any significant measures of land reform, and by his increasing reliance on the hated army inherited from the Díaz regime, whose commander Victoriano Huerta led Madero's attempted extermination of Zapata's forces in Morelos, which had refused to disarm. Huerta eventually overthrew Madero in a bloody military coup in February 1913 which included the murder of Madero and several of his key associates, and which was actively encouraged and supported from the US Embassy by Henry Lane Wilson, in a scenario which foreshadowed that pursued later by Nixon and Kissinger in support of Pinochet against Allende, in Chile, in September 1973.

Huerta's coup outraged Villa and helped spark the crucial alliance between Zapata and Villa and broader Constitutionalist forces during 1913–14 which intensified the popular turn of the Revolution from Madero's vacillating moderation towards much more radical alternatives which both Zapata and Villa came to embody and symbolise between 1913 and 1915. This alliance combined Villa's extraordinary military prowess at the head of the cavalry of his *División del Norte* (Northern Division, notable for its victories at successive battles during 1914 in Torreón, Gómez Palacio, and Zacatecas) with Zapata's political clarity and deep support among Mexico's poorest indigenous communities. Both Villa and Zapata implemented key social reforms in Chihuahua and Morelos respectively during this period which helped shape and influence those included later in the 1917 Constitution.

## US military intervention and resistance

Leading supporters of Villa and Zapata collaborated during the National Convention of the Revolution's most radical forces in Aguascalientes in October 1914. The National Convention (modelled after the body of the same name which played a key role during the French Revolution) in turn led to the high point of their convergence which was their joint taking and occupation of Mexico City in December 1914. This continues to capture and shape the imagination of Mexico's most radical sectors today as a glimmer of their still unfulfilled dreams. Much of this history and imagery was invoked by the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) during 1994 and thereafter, including their caravan to Mexico City in March 2001.

The vacuum left by Madero as a representative of northern élites opposed to Zapata and Villa's insistence on land reform eventually came to be filled by forces led by Venustiano Carranza of Coahuila (Madero's home state) and Alvaro Obregón of Sonora. Carranza initially became dominant during the period between 1917 and 1920 as a result of his success in exploiting Villa's and Zapata's failures to consolidate unity and co-ordinate military and political initiatives among the most radical sectors. Both Carranza and Obregón even exploited the cultural and political distance between Villa's and Zapata's rural bases of support and sectors of radicalised urban workers whom they successfully co-opted. This included their emphasis on incorporating carefully controlled sectors of organised labour into the PRI's governing corporatist coalition.

The emergence of Carranza and Obregón as more moderate alternatives to the much greater perceived threats to US interests represented by Villa and Zapata was also a consequence of increased US intervention reflected in the overthrow of Madero, and its aftermath. Neither Carranza nor Obregón inspired US confidence, but each time intensified US intervention weakened Villa and Zapata, it at least indirectly strengthened Carranza and Obregón. Diplomatic relations between the US and Mexico were actually severed between 1914 and 1917, during the period of greatest US intervention on the ground in Mexico.

These interventions included US occupation of the port of Veracruz for seven months

between April and November 1913, which also enabled US support to Carranza, who was based in that region during this period, which helped neutralise the potential strength of the emerging alliance between Villa and Zapata. The de facto alliance between the US and Carranza helped spur Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico in March 1916, which was the only attack carried out by a foreign foe on the continental US until the events of 9/11 (11 September 2001).

The US response included an invasion of Mexico by between 5,000 and 10,000 troops for 11 months between March 1916 and February 1917 as part of a punitive expedition in pursuit of Villa commanded by US general John Black Jack Pershing, who later became the commander of US forces in Europe following US intervention in the First World War in April 1917. One of his chief adjutants during this campaign was future general George S. Patton. Many of the units, officers, and soldiers involved in Pershing's expedition had combat experience in the War of 1898 and in the so-called Indian Wars. It is not surprising within this context that many Mexican civilians became the victims of US atrocities during this period that were shaped by racist assumptions as to their dangerousness, duplicity, and/or racial inferiority, along the same lines as numerous similar incidents during the US-Mexico war between 1845 and 1848.

Advance detachments penetrated at least 400 miles within Mexican territory, as far as Parral, Chihuahua (Villa's home base). Villa eluded capture repeatedly by employing classic tactics of guerrilla warfare which were later emulated by Fidel Castro in Cuba and by Mexico's EZLN in the 1990s. Villa lured Pershing's troops into several pitched battles with Mexican Army units (such as the Battle of Carrizal in June 1916) which, according to several scholars, might have triggered another full-scale war between the US and Mexico had it not been for the pressing distractions of the First World War. Similar skirmishes continued throughout the border region, especially in the environs of Texas and Arizona, between December 1917 and June 1919. Many of the tactics later employed by US troops in Europe in the First and Second World Wars were first tested in Mexico during this period.

There were also attempts at German intervention into the complex balance of forces

during the Mexican Revolution, including the role of the S.S. *Ypiranga* (the same German-registered vessel which had taken Díaz into exile) in bringing German arms to Huerta in Veracruz in April 1914, leading to US bombardment and occupation of the port later that same month. It also included the so-called Zimmermann Telegram, sent by the German foreign minister of that name to the German ambassador in Mexico City, which proposed an alliance between Germany and Mexico that would have included the return of the Mexican territory annexed by the US as a result of the war between 1845 and 1848.

### Neo-colonisation

By 1919, Carranza had succeeded in isolating and killing Zapata, and in neutralising Villa (who was forced to live under virtual house arrest from his surrender in June 1920 until his assassination with Obregón's complicity in July 1923). Carranza himself was ultimately betrayed by Obregón and murdered in May 1920. Obregón in turn became the country's president from 1920–24 and was assassinated following his re-election to the presidency in 1928. Carranza's murder in May 1920 and Villa's surrender to Obregón a month later together are generally recognised as moments which mark the end of the Revolution and the inception of its consolidation as an authoritarian regime under Obregón and Plutarco Elías Calles, and eventually Lázaro Cárdenas.

The president who best embodied the most classic expression of the revolutionary nationalist phase of the PRI was Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–40). Cárdenas, a general in Mexico's revolutionary army, became renowned for his extensive land redistribution programme, defence of the rights of the country's (and Latin America's) indigenous peoples, and armed support of the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War and granting of asylum to Leon Trotsky and to thousands of Spanish refugees fleeing the triumph of the fascist regime led by dictator Francisco Franco. This tradition was later reflected in Mexico's welcoming of thousands of political exiles fleeing dictatorships and civil conflicts in Latin America throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Sadly much of this has been betrayed recently as the PRI has become the most assiduous defender of US interests, such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) in Latin America from 1994–2015, including the

so-called drug war and ongoing state terror against migrants in transit heading north to the US from Central America.

Cárdenas is perhaps most remembered for his anti-imperialist defiance epitomised by the nationalisation of US oil interests in 1938. This led to very tense relations between the US (under President Franklin D. Roosevelt) and Mexico, including widespread speculation as to possible US military intervention, which was likely neutralised by Roosevelt's increasing concentration on the imminent Second World War in Europe and the Pacific Basin. The ambiguities of Mexico's PRI are reflected both in Cárdenas's own role in forging the corporatist unity of the PRI between sectors such as the military and official government-backed trade union and peasant federations, and in the fact that in 2013 it is the PRI which promotes opening Mexico's state-owned oil industry (PEMEX, founded by Cárdenas) to foreign investment for the first time since 1938.

There continues to be widespread scholarly debate regarding how to characterise Mexico's evolving regime during the period of its domination between 1929 and 2000, and about the extent to which the country has experienced elements of a still incomplete democratic transition since the PRI's acceptance of its first acknowledged national electoral defeat in July 2000. Unlike other such cases in Latin America (e.g. in Argentina, Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, Peru), Mexico has not taken meaningful steps to dismantle the PRI regime (e.g. a national Truth Commission and prosecution of serious human rights crimes) nor undertaken trials regarding key crimes or former leaders. All of this has been exacerbated by the PRI's return to power under current president Enrique Peña Nieto in a hotly disputed, closely contested election in 2012.

Key forces within Mexico's left continue to dispute the PRI's supposed legitimacy as an heir to the legacy of the Mexican Revolution. This includes some of the country's most radical movements such as the EZLN, based among some of Mexico's poorest Mayan indigenous communities in the jungle and highlands regions of Chiapas, which explicitly invokes the name and ideals of Zapata, and urban groups of slum dwellers in the environs of Mexico City who describe themselves as Villistas – followers of Francisco Pancho Villa. It is difficult to conceive of a

revolutionary movement today in Mexico that does not in one way or another position itself in terms of the legacy of the most progressive features of the Mexican Revolution and at the same time in terms of the critique of its most evident errors (e.g. authoritarianism, centralism, corruption, etc.).

The disputed legacy of the Mexican Revolution also includes much more moderate centre-left forces focused on the electoral arena such as the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) which was founded in 1990 as a fusion between nationalist sectors of the ruling PRI and several left parties and currents including the successor to Mexico's Communist Party. Its principal founder was Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, a major opposition presidential candidate in 1988, 1994, and 2000, and son of former president Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–40), who was himself the founder of the PRI. The PRD has recently split as the result of the founding of MORENA (the Movement for National Renovation) led by former PRD chair and presidential candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador, which has sought to draw on the legacy of Flores Magón by, for example, naming its journal *Regeneración*.

The PRI has taken a sharp neo-liberal turn from a longstanding at least rhetorical loyalty to revolutionary nationalism since its regime accepted the conditions of structural adjustment necessary for its rescue by the IMF and US Treasury following serious economic crises in 1982–83 and 1994–95. Meanwhile thousands of peasant, labour, indigenous, and human rights activists and independent journalists have been killed, forcibly disappeared, tortured, or exiled since the 1950s by the PRI regime and its initial successors from the rightist Partido de Acción Nacional.

### Historical influence of the Mexican Revolution

The Mexican Revolution's key elements included an emphasis on economic, social, and cultural rights such as agrarian reform and land redistribution, labour rights, and the expansion of public education, social security, and public health, combined with nationalism and anti-clericalism, which were reflected in the Mexican Constitution of 1917. These elements influenced and preceded similar provisions in the pioneering constitutions of Weimar Germany and

of the USSR in 1918. All of this in turn foreshadowed the national-colonial turn promoted among non-Western Communist parties by the Third International after the Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East in September 1920, which had great influence on anti-colonial movements confronting similar challenges in contexts such as China, India, and colonial Africa (particularly South Africa, for example), and the emergence of the Comintern-backed League Against Imperialism in 1927, whose international leadership included Mexican revolutionary and painter Diego Rivera.

Many of the key characteristics of the Mexican Revolution are also present to varying degrees in modernising, nationalist, and populist regimes (often classified as corporatist or even fascist-leaning) such as: that of Atatürk (1920–38) in Turkey; the presidencies of Gétulio Vargas in Brazil (1930–45 and 1951–54); that which came to power as the result of the 1952 Egyptian Revolution led by Nasser and was pursued by his followers elsewhere in the Arab World; as well as Mossadegh's nationalist regime in Iran which nationalised the country's oil industry in 1951 and was eventually removed by a US-backed military coup in 1953.

In the Latin American context, Guatemala's Democratic Revolution between 1944 and 1954 and that of Bolivia in 1952 sought to emulate many of the Mexican Revolution's principal characteristics such as democratisation, the promotion of land reform, and defence of workers' rights in the face of US domination. The Mexican Revolution's emphasis on agrarian reform and peasant activism was also reflected in experiences such as: the populist Gaitanista movement in Colombia between 1929 and 1948 (eventually repressed through that country's period of civil conflict between 1948 and 1962 known as *La Violencia*); and the Peasant Leagues of Francisco Juliao in north-east Brazil in the late 1950s and early 1960s, which in turn laid the groundwork for the emergence of contemporary expressions such as Brazil's Movement of Landless Workers (MST).

It is not surprising, given this framework, that Mexico became a key contributor to the International Brigades which fought on the side of the Spanish Republic during the Spanish Civil War, or that it was later the place of political refuge where Fidel Castro met Che Guevara in 1955 and from where

their expedition on the retooled yacht known as the *Granma* launched what became the Cuban Revolution in December 1956.

## Conclusion

The influence of the Mexican Revolution and its diverse interpretations are also evident in efforts on the left (and beyond) to theorise about the complexity of peasant and indigenous movements in Latin America and elsewhere. We see it in the work of historians such as Eric Hobsbawm (*Primitive Rebels*, 1959) and E.P. Thompson (in his conceptualisation of the moral economy, 1971), drawing in turn on analyses such as those of Antonio Gramsci regarding the ideological, cultural, and political dimensions of capitalist hegemony.

The impact of the Mexican Revolution and its internationalist implications are reflected in the journalism of John Kenneth Turner (*Barbarous Mexico*, 1910) and John Reed (*Insurgent Mexico*, 1914), whose books helped position the Revolution as a process with global implications, capable of awakening diverse expressions of solidarity and support in the US and beyond. John Reed's *Insurgent Mexico* focused on his experiences accompanying Villa, served as a precursor to his *Ten Days that Shook the World* (1919) documenting the triumph of the Bolshevik Revolution, and together suggest additional dimensions of the relationship between the Mexican and Russian Revolutions as historically and politically related phenomena.

John Kenneth Turner's *Barbarous Mexico* (1910), which dramatically conveyed the worst abuses of the Díaz regime, has been compared to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in terms of its analogous impact on public opinion. It was based on his research in Mexico during two trips in 1908 and 1909, vividly documenting the most repressive aspects of Díaz's dictatorial rule in Mexico. It played a key role in influencing US public opinion against Díaz's regime, and helped prepare progressive sectors in the US for active solidarity with Flores Magón, Madero, Zapata, and Villa during the next decade. Turner himself was co-ordinator of the English language version of *Regeneración*, and he participated directly in raising money and in purchasing and supplying weapons to Flores Magón's Liberal Party which helped make possible their seizure of Tijuana and several other towns in the northern states of Chihuahua and Sonora during 1910–11. This

included the establishment of an anarcho-communist commune by Magonistas in Mexicali in Baja California between January and June 1911. Dozens of active US members of the IWW participated in this takeover, including Joe Hill and Frank Little. Emma Goldman lauded this episode as the Mexican equivalent of the Paris Commune.

Initial instalments of Turner's book were published in *The American Magazine* (founded in 1906 by Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell, and others as an offshoot of the renowned McClure's Magazine, home of the original muckrakers), between October and December 1909, then throughout 1910 in seven additional instalments in journals such as *The Appeal to Reason* (based in Girard, Kansas; close to the Socialist Party, with a circulation of over 500,000 by 1910, the largest circulation of any socialist periodical in US history), *The International Socialist Review*, and *The Pacific Monthly*. The book was not published in Spanish, in Mexico, until 1955 (Turner 1910: xvi, xxii, xxviii). Turner returned to Mexico several times during the Revolution, which included his arrest in March 1913 as part of the generalised repression which followed Huerta's US-backed coup against Madero in February of that year. Mexican revolutionary painter and communist activist David Alfaro Siqueiros included Turner in his mural honouring of the most important heroes of the Revolution, along with Zapata and Villa (xxviii–ix).

The Mexican Revolution was also, and remains, an extraordinary cultural phenomenon. This includes its presence in chronicles such as *The Eagle and the Serpent* by Martín Luis Guzmán; in the novels of Carlos Fuentes; the poetry and essays of Octavio Paz; writings by José Revueltas; in music (as reflected in the specific narrative form known as *corridos*; in the nationalist movement in music projected in the work of Silvestre Revueltas, one of José's brothers); and of course in the country's renowned muralists Diego Rivera, Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco; the surrealist, feminist paintings of Frida Kahlo; and in the photography of Edward Weston and Tina Modotti, among many other possible examples. As in the case of Weston and Modotti, Mexico also became a place of pilgrimage for artists with social sensibilities from across the world, including: the film-maker Luis Buñuel and poet León Felipe (both Spanish exiles), D.H. Lawrence, Antonin Artaud, and

André Breton. Such influences transcend the physical boundaries of Mexico through the vital presence of communities of Mexican origin throughout the US, and of murals such as those by Rivera in Detroit and San Francisco.

Camilo Pérez-Bustillo

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## Nepal, Imperialism, and Anti-Imperialism

Resting on a fault line between the two emerging global powers of China and India, Nepal aspires to geopolitical neutrality. In reality it is subject to imperial interests. Modern Nepal was never officially colonised, but its economic and political dependence on imperial powers reveals a history that has been shaped by imperialism. The caste, ethnic, and regional discrimination that exists in Nepal today is a legacy of Gorkhali imperialism, which was accompanied by a unification process based on classifying social and cultural diversity along lines of caste hierarchy under the rule of the Shah monarchs. Challenges to this discrimination were revitalised as a result of the Maoists' People's War initiated in 1996, and were brought to the forefront of national politics following the 2006 revolution, the end of the 240-year-old Shah dynasty in 2008, and subsequent constitutional debates. But internal domination by an upper-caste hill elite has not been overcome and, at the same time, Nepal continues to endure external interference in political and economic affairs by the great imperialist powers. India remains the most interventionist power in the region and has a particularly charged relationship with Nepal, facilitated by the open border. Thus, the balance of forces between imperialism and anti-imperialism in Nepal must inevitably encompass India's role, its security and economic interests – and resistance to these interests – but also the complex interplay of imperial forces including the US, Britain, and China in maintaining and profiting from the status quo in Nepal.

The history of the Nepali nation state is itself one of imperial conquest. Prior to the unification of Nepal by Prithvi Narayan Shah, who ruled the small kingdom of Gorkha in

what is now central Nepal, and who eventually became Nepal's first king, the region was dominated by an assortment of petty kingdoms. Following the capture of Nuwakot, a strategic town lying between Gorkha and the Kathmandu Valley, Prithvi Narayan's army was able to assert control over the profitable trade route between Tibet and Kathmandu and other strategic points in the area, before declaring Kathmandu the capital of Nepal in 1768. Gorkhali expansion included the annexation of the Terai (the southern plains bordering India), which was one of 'the most valuable among the territorial acquisitions of the Gorkhali government' (Regmi 1999: 15) in the early 1770s. Prithvi Narayan continued to expand the Gorkhali Empire as far as Sikkim in the east and Himachal Pradesh in the west, until his death in 1775. The Gorkhalis had also challenged Chinese suzerainty in Tibet between 1788 and 1792, without success (Joshi and Rose 2004/1966: 3), before engaging in a border war with Britain's East India Company from 1814.

### British imperialism in Nepal

The growing power of the East India Company was the harbinger of deepening British control of South Asia, shaping Nepal's fortunes until Indian independence. The British never occupied Nepal, but it was vital to their imperial calculations. Bhimsen Thapa, who had seized power in Nepal in 1806, the son of a loyal soldier of Prithvi Narayan, had provoked the war with the British. While the Gorkhalis had 'better knowledge of the ground and inflicted several reverses on the East India Company's forces' (Whelpton 2005: 42), and the British found it difficult to break them despite the Gorkhalis' inferior weaponry, the Gorkhalis eventually capitulated, negotiating an end to the war in 1816 with the signing of the Sugauli Treaty. Viewing the Gorkhalis as encroaching on British territory by continually shifting the frontier line, at the end of the war the East India Company demanded that the border dividing Nepal and British India be carefully demarcated by stone pillars (Burghart 1984: 114), which remain in place today. The signing of the treaty had several advantages for the British: territory along the western, southern and eastern borders of Nepal was annexed, preventing direct contact with the

princely states of Lahore and Sikkim, which Nepal had ambitions to conquer; raw materials such as iron, copper, and lead mines, forests and hemp; and a trade route through to Tibet (Sever 1996: 87). These gains reinforced Britain's imperial role in the region.

The Anglo-Nepalese War resulted in the loss of one-third of Nepal's territory (Mojumdar 1973: 5), and although the British later returned part of the Terai, the current boundaries of Nepal are more restricted 'than at the apex of Gorkha imperial expansion' (Joshi and Rose 2004/1966: 3). The British returned territory that was deemed 'unimportant' (Mojumdar 1973: 83) after the Indian Mutiny in 1857, out of gratitude for the offer of military assistance, despite initial reluctance to accept it. The Sugauli Treaty not only put an end to Nepali territorial expansion but also to the economic development of the Terai, on which the future of Nepal's economic development depended (Stiller 1976: 50). The aim of the British was not to absorb Nepal but to make it smaller and weaker (Brown 1996: 3), providing a reasonable buffer with China. Moreover, as long as Britain's influence over Nepal was 'sufficient to exclude that of rival powers, a boundary on the plains was satisfactory; approaches to India could be guarded by obedient feudatories as securely as by British power itself, and far more cheaply' (Maxwell 1972/1970: 24). The terms of the Sugauli Treaty, including the presence of a permanent British resident, helped strengthen British hegemony in the country. The British resident 'was dreaded as an instrument of British imperialism and as a sinister agent of intrigue' (Mojumdar 1973: 6), intent on compromising Nepal's integrity. Following the war, the British began recruiting Gorkha soldiers into the British Indian Army (the word 'Gurkha' came to be accepted in English, but is a corruption of Gorkha). The Gurkhas helped crush the Indian Mutiny (78), fought in the two world wars, and continue to serve in the British and Indian armies today. Nepal had lost the war of 1814–16 and, while it retained formal independence, its economic and political dependence intensified in the following decades.

Rivalry between various powerful families culminated in a palace massacre in 1846, known as the Kot Massacre, which displaced the Shah monarchs and brought to power the Ranas, whose rule was to last for over a century. There are few legacies the Ranas are

remembered for other than inflicting misery on the vast majority of the population. But the internal stability of the Rana regime also depended on managing political and military relations with British India. The British needed Nepal to serve as a frontier to counter Chinese influence and subversion in the region, but it also needed the Gurkhas' military skill and influence in dealing with seditious forces in India, for example, during the Indian Mutiny. The mutiny was perhaps the greatest crisis the British faced in India. That Jang Bahadur Rana, one of the founders and first ruler of the Rana dynasty, refrained from exploiting the opportunity to challenge the British, is testament to the 'effective alliance of interests between the ruling class of Nepal and British imperialism in India' (Blaikie et al. 2001/1980: 38). Nepal, on the other hand, needed British recognition of its independence to keep Indian and Chinese intervention at bay, and to quell any internal challenges to the Rana regime. These mutual interests were recognised in the Treaty of Friendship, which Nepal and Britain signed in 1923, and which explicitly declared Nepal's independence. Ultimately, however, relations were not on equal terms: 'Nepal was, in fact, an Indian political and military outpost, serving the purpose of an outer strategic frontier; Nepal's internal autonomy was guaranteed by the British, but her external relations were subordinated to the considerations of British interests' (Mojumdar 1973: 12).

The treaty also discouraged the establishment of new industries because it allowed almost unrestricted imports of British goods into Nepal (Lohani 1973: 205), facilitating the growth of the British economy at the expense of Nepal's (Tamang 2012: 271).

Several factors account for the fall of the Ranas in the 1950–51 revolution: divisions within the regime itself; the role of the king in emboldening the political parties exiled in India; the insurrectionary activities of the Nepali Congress; mass demonstrations in the capital; and the British withdrawal from India in 1947. But two further factors stand out, both of which stoked anti-imperialist sentiments towards the British. First, over 100,000 Nepalis fought in the First World War for the British, with at least 10,000 killed and another 14,000 wounded or missing (Whelpton 2005: 64). Hundreds of thousands also fought in the Second World War in Africa and Europe, again for the British

(Joshi and Rose 2004/1966: 57). This exposed them to new ideas, and a small but significant number of Gurkhas became fiercely anti-Rana. Attempting to prevent veterans from spreading these ideas in the villages, the Ranas requested the British not to promote Gurkha recruits beyond the rank of sergeant, and enforced caste purification rituals on the Gurkhas when they returned from fighting (52). Many Gurkhas refused to be repatriated to Nepal, preferring instead to settle in India. A number of them joined the movement against both British imperialism and Rana rule.

Second, the Quit India Movement initiated in 1942 had a powerful impact on Nepali activists and intellectuals. The participation of Nepalis in the Indian movement created an anti-Rana movement within Nepal, however limited, that could not be ignored by the Ranas. The survival of the Ranas 'had depended on the submission of the subjects to medieval methods of oppression. But once the idea of defiance entered the public mind, the Rana system collapsed like a house of cards' (Gupta 1964: 49). Exposure to the Indian nationalist movement led many Nepalis to believe that the fall of the Rana regime could only be accomplished with the elimination of British rule in India, since the British had become a bulwark for Rana power (Joshi and Rose 2004/1966: 50). Nepalis began to participate in the *satyagraha* movements of the 1920s and 1930s in India, and to train in the methods of mass movements (*ibid.*). The eventual success of the civil disobedience movement in India instilled fear in the Ranas, and it was becoming increasingly clear that the strength of political opposition to imperialism in India was intimately bound up with the prospects for a resistance movement in Nepal.

The Ranas were surrounded: the post-1947 government in India – the powerful Indian National Congress – detested the Ranas because they had supported British imperialism; the Nepali monarchy, which had been deposed by the Ranas, also wanted the dissolution of the regime; the international community was becoming impatient with Nepal's trade barriers and concerned about potential communist influence from China; and various Nepali political parties, with a growing base of support, were being founded calling for democratic reforms. The Ranas finally conceded when sections of the army surrendered to the Nepali Congress's liberation

army, the Mukti Sena, and when India, Britain, and the US refused to recognise four-year-old Gyanendra, one of King Tribhuvan's grandsons, as the new monarch; the Ranas had crowned Gyanendra in the absence of King Tribhuvan, who had fled to India for safety in the midst of the crisis.

### India's sub-imperialism

Nepal's relationship with India has been more complicated and challenging for the Nepali ruling class than it was with the British (Rose and Dial 1969: 91). India's overwhelming security, economic and political interests, as well as its cultural and religious affinities with Nepal, have constantly raised the spectre of Nepal's potential absorption within it. When India gained independence, it continued with imperial pretensions in Nepal, inheriting Britain's strategic and political dominance in the region. In 1950, eager for continued recognition of Rana rule, Mohan Shamsheer Rana signed the India-Nepal Treaty, a bilateral agreement formally known as the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, replacing the 1923 Treaty of Friendship. The India-Nepal Treaty sanctions the free movement of people and goods over the border and outlines strategic questions of defence and foreign affairs, restricting the development of a diversified economy and an independent polity. The treaty remains in effect and while it officially acknowledges the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of each nation, it is widely perceived to favour Indian interests, particularly as Nepal continues to be aligned to India in foreign affairs (92).

But following independence India could no longer support Rana rule; popular disaffection with the Ranas was growing, and India did not want to encourage the potential for revolution. The government in India thus favoured Shah rule, believing it to be more stable, and believing also that there was a role for the Nepali Congress in providing the regime with democratic credentials. What became known as the Delhi Compromise involved an agreement between the Indian government, the Ranas, and King Tribhuvan. It was aimed at a smooth transfer of power from the Ranas back to the monarchy. A power-sharing government was formed in 1951 between the Ranas and the Nepali Congress, until the Congress decided to force the Ranas out of the cabinet (Joshi



and Rose 2004/1966: 89), prompting King Tribhuvan to invite the Congress to form the government. The Ranas had to accept the compromise, partly to protect extensive investments in India (Rose 1971: 285), and partly to avoid total humiliation. The situation suited the Indians because it meant the king was indebted to India for having restored the monarchy. India could also extend support to the Mukti Sena in order to put pressure on the regime when Indian interests were threatened. India cultivated this relationship with the monarchy over the following decades, and in the post-1990 context the constitutional monarchy formed one pillar of India's 'twin-pillar' policy towards Nepal, together with multiparty democracy.

After his death in 1955, King Tribhuvan was succeeded by his eldest son, Mahendra. In 1960 King Mahendra used his emergency powers to dissolve parliament, suspend the constitution, and ban the political parties, ushering in the panchayat system. The royal coup marked the restoration of direct rule by the king (Rose 1963: 16), more akin to the Rana autocracy that was overthrown in 1951 than the constitutional monarchy of the preceding decade. Initial misgivings on the part of India following the imprisonment of Nepali Congress prime minister B.P. Koirala, ending a decade of democracy and the 18-month stint of the country's first popularly elected government in 1959, were displaced by greater security concerns over China. India continued to provide economic assistance to Nepal to boost closer communication and transport links across the border in order to restrict Chinese influence there, revealing India's privileging of national security interests over questions of democracy. In any case, the 1962 Sino-Indian War necessitated a rethinking of relations with Nepal, particularly when Nepal was making overtures to China (Tamang 2012: 277) and Chinese authority in the region was reinforced by its victory in the war.

The panchayat government of the post-Rana era ostensibly viewed economic development as one of its top priorities. Nepal requested aid from India, which responded with technical and economic assistance in 1952, building roads, airfields, and communications networks (Khadka 1997: 1047). India became Nepal's largest donor from the mid-1960s until the 1970s, when Japan assumed the role (1048). Meanwhile, China offered

aid to Nepal in the wake of King Mahendra's coup in order to reduce Nepal's economic dependence on India; in general during the 1960s and 1970s, when Indian aid increased, aid from China and the Soviet Union also increased (1053). This economic integration and associated dependence continues. Landlocked and without easy access to ports, accessing the markets of the rest of the world other than through India is time-consuming and expensive for Nepal (Karmacharya 2001: 89). Sole reliance on India for trade and transit has inhibited Nepal's ability to develop commercial relations with other countries. While the long open border with India has enabled Nepalis to work in India, it has also created problems; India's superior infrastructure, technology, and skills, the unofficial and unrecorded movement of goods across the border (*ibid.*), and the economies of scale provided by its large domestic market have acted as disincentives to the development of industry in Nepal. Following the liberalisation of trade, imports from India have rapidly increased, creating a trade deficit for Nepal.

Nepal's integration into the global economy has been largely dictated by its dependence and integration into the Indian economy (Blaikie et al. 2001/1980: 49; Tamang 2012: 271). The importance of foreign intervention in the development of Nepali capitalism, which has 'taken the form of assertion of monopoly control by ruling families in alliance with transnational interests – a position analogous to that of the Birlas, Tatas, and other large houses of post-independence India' (Mikesell 1999: 186), cannot be overstated. This integration has reduced Nepal to a virtual colony of India, but with none of the benefits of infrastructural development that some other colonies experienced, and all the disadvantages of being subject to the demands of a sub-imperial power. The resulting diversion of labour across the 1580km long open border between Nepal and India continues. The poorest Nepalis travel to India to work in the informal economy, primarily as security guards, porters, miners, and domestic workers, not having been able to afford to travel to the Gulf countries or Malaysia (Sharma and Thapa 2013: 10). Estimates range from a few hundred thousand to a few million, though millions of Nepalis are now also migrating elsewhere. While seasonal migration is necessary for many agricultural labourers in order to survive, it has at times

weakened the economy of Nepal by reinforcing economic ties to India. Indian aid and investment, particularly early road projects, were geared towards expanding India's business interests and fortifying its strategic defence capabilities. India has long been the primary supplier of military aid and training to the Nepal Army (Adams 2005: 129). The supply continued throughout the Maoists' People's War and although it was suspended following King Gyanendra's takeover of absolute power in February 2005, it has now resumed (see <http://goo.gl/rIN5Rh> – last accessed on 29 January 2015). Notably, the India-Nepal Treaty also specifies Indian control of Nepali arms acquisition, serving as 'a definite mark of New Delhi's strategy of seeking a preminent position in Nepal' (Dabhade and Pant 2004: 163). When King Birendra negotiated a special arms deal with China in 1988, India imposed the now infamous trade embargo in 1989, preventing fuel and kerosene from entering Nepal (Mishra 2004: 633), damaging the Nepali economy and setting off the 1990 revolution. India argued that under the India-Nepal Treaty, Nepal must consult India before purchasing arms; Nepal argued that this provision was not applicable if the arms were not transiting through India (*ibid.*). India was not convinced. Post-9/11, India has supported an increased role for the US in providing arms and economic aid to Nepal, ostensibly 'to counter the menace of terrorism' (Dabhade and Pant 2004: 165) and curb Chinese influence. All of these factors have consolidated Nepal's dependence on India. While Indian aid has at times converged with the interests of the Nepali elite, it has not been provided on the basis of the interests of Nepal's population; rather it has served to strengthen India's hand in the Nepali economy.

### Chinese interests in Nepal

Nepal has always attempted to pursue a balanced foreign policy between China and India. While this policy of neutrality has been encouraged by China, and Nepal has often needed to use China to manage relations with India, India has unremittingly sought to reinforce its authority in Nepal, including countering Chinese influence. Thus, in practice, a balanced policy between China and India is impossible given the economic, cultural, and religious ties between Nepal and India

and the geographical barrier with China created by the Himalayas. Since China's invasion and occupation of Tibet in 1950–51, Chinese interests in Nepal have been fixated on repressing the organisation of anti-China activities from Nepal; indeed Nepali soil had been used to launch the Tibetan uprising in 1959. Regardless of the government in power, China's top priority has been to stifle protests challenging Chinese authority in Tibet, particularly since Nepal hosts a growing presence of Tibetan refugees. China has also been involved in aid politics in Nepal since the 1950s, building large infrastructural and road projects. These have been used to leverage security and foreign-policy interests, including countering US influence, and reducing economic dependence on India (Khadka 1997: 1047–1048). These goals have remained unchanged in recent years, and since the Maoists' entry into mainstream politics in 2006, China has stepped up aid and offered military training. In 2009, for example, China provided Nepal with US\$3 million in military aid, including training for the Nepal Army (see <http://goo.gl/27yusT> – last accessed on 2 February 2015). In 2014 China announced that it was increasing its overall aid budget by five times, and while its ambitions in Nepal are limited, it seeks to exert its interests in increasingly strident ways (see <http://goo.gl/e5OQhb> – last accessed on 29 January 2015). Apart from security concerns surrounding Tibet, China has also become preoccupied with expanding business and commercial interests in Nepal, seeking markets for manufactured goods and using investment to leverage influence. In this respect, China has now become a major player in Nepali political affairs.

### US foreign aid and imperialism

US interests in Nepal have been driven largely by geopolitical concerns. The overthrow of the Rana regime in 1950–51 combined with the perceived threat of communism following the Chinese Revolution led the US to establish a presence in Nepal, even before Russia, India, or China. Using its aid programme in a systematic and strategic way in order to achieve its foreign-policy objectives, the US was Nepal's first bilateral donor (Skerry et al. 1992: 1). Until 1965 it was also Nepal's largest donor (Khadka 2000: 83). US aid started to decline as Nepal's relations with China

began to normalise in the 1960s and the US became preoccupied with Vietnam; the relative decline of aid from the Soviet Union and the involvement of Western European donors, in addition to the Bretton Woods institutions, which could help counter any communist uprising, were also factors in the decline of US aid (84). There were two primary reasons for the US initiating its aid programme: the growing popularity of communist parties in South Asia in general and Nepal in particular, and the grinding poverty found across Nepal (77). But the question of poverty, arguably stemming from a century of neglect by the Rana dictatorship and weak governance following the rise to power of the nascent political parties, was also linked to the US's overall anti-communist offensive. Creating the economic conditions that could prevent the spread of communism, particularly the 'vulnerability of the peasantry' (Mihaly 2002/1965: 31) to communism was a major pillar of the US's aid programme. US officials were aware of the increased political consciousness of Nepalis, who appeared to be turning to communism and were becoming increasingly anti-Indian (Tewari 2001: 104). They reasoned that if aid could help Nepal achieve rapid economic growth, it would be able to repel any communist influence from either China or the various communist groups in India, and even the Soviet Union (Khadka 2000: 77). On a diplomatic level, having an aid programme that allowed US officials to travel throughout Nepal and assess socio-economic conditions first-hand was an important source of information for analysing the threat of external aggression and the level of ideological penetration by communist China or Russia. During the Maoists' People's War, the presence of numerous US-funded NGOs, including international and national NGOs working on development, human rights, democracy, and peace, often took on this role in an effort to mitigate the impact of the Maoists' ideas on wider Nepali society.

Driven by Cold War priorities, the US thus supported King Mahendra's coup in 1960, believing the monarchy to be a more stable force than the political parties, just as India did. King Mahendra's pragmatic foreign policy (i.e. professed neutrality between the regional powers) also coincided with US interests. But it is arguable that the US failed in its stated objective of fostering democracy.

This is because while it had always emphasised 'democracy, human rights and freedom whenever aid was questioned' (91), it lent indirect support to the absolute rule of the monarchy by financing its plans and maintaining close contacts with palace officials. During the panchayat era, the US position was that the regime was a form of democracy, 'a stepping stone to full democracy for which the Nepali people were said to be not quite ready' (ibid.). In 1990, the US supported the people's movement, but advised the Nepali Congress to co-operate with the monarchy in order to counter the expansion of communism (ibid.). During the People's War it took strong measures to communicate its displeasure about the political situation, including putting the Maoists on the second tier of the US terrorist list in 2003, despite ongoing negotiations between the government and the Maoists and a ceasefire in place. The Maoists had always opposed the terrorist label, arguing that they were a serious political force, not a terrorist group (see <http://goo.gl/I492Bs> – last accessed on 25 January 2015). The US also pursued a strategy that aimed to give the Maoists a 'bloody nose' by ensuring a steady flow of weaponry to the army; this would force the Maoists to negotiate from a position of weakness. Later, as it was becoming clear that neither side was making decisive military gains, the US's strategy changed. Although on one level it continued to maintain a hard line towards the Maoists, in 2005 when King Gyanendra staged his coup, taking power as dramatically as his father had done in 1960, the US began working with India to bring the Maoists into the mainstream. Between 2001 and 2005 the US also donated US\$29 million in military aid (Adams 2005: 130), and it continues to conduct training for the Nepal Army. The policy of containment remains the core of US interests in Nepal.

### The growth of anti-imperialism in Nepal

The two most significant political events that influenced the development of the communist movement in Nepal, including the spread of anti-imperialist ideas, were the independence movement in India and the Chinese revolution of 1949 (Rawal 2007: 30; Tewari 2001: 48). While the revolutionary upheaval in China was relatively far-removed from the communists in Nepal, the Indian experience

had a more direct impact. With the growth of educational institutions in northern India in the early 20th century, many young Nepali students began to study in India, particularly from the 1930s onwards. They quickly became influenced by the ideas of the Indian communists, who were operating in a relatively open political environment compared to Nepal. Based in Calcutta, Darjeeling, Varanasi, and elsewhere, they began to participate in various groups and study circles that explicitly professed socialist and anti-imperialist ideas. Following the participation of Man Mohan Adhikari, Pushpa Lal Shrestha, and others in the Biratnagar Jute Mill strike in 1947, they returned to Nepal as young leaders looking for an opportunity to form an organisation that could provide the basis for launching a struggle against the Rana regime (Upreti 2009: 15). The Biratnagar Jute Mill strike was a momentous event in Nepali history because it brought both Congress and communist activists together in joint struggle. But it was also the beginning of wider resistance to Rana rule. The strike began as ‘an economic struggle of the working class projected from India’ (Tewari 2001: 70), since the Indian left had helped to initiate it and most employees at the mill were Indian; when the Ranas repressed the strike with police violence and mass arrests, it had repercussions across Nepal (Chatterji 1967: 39). The strike moved beyond the confines of trade unionism and joined the mainstream of the democratic struggle. The leaders associated with the strike and others decided that a party separate from the Nepali Congress should be formed. The CPN was established in September 1949 in Calcutta with the advice and financial support of the Communist Party of India (CPI). The main objective of the party was to participate in the popular movement against the Rana dictatorship, together with the Nepali Congress.

The CPN was active in the movement against the Rana regime since its formation. Following the tactical line of the CPI, the CPN had recognised that the national leadership in India had a ‘collaborationist character’ (Gupta 1964: 200) that was susceptible to being influenced by imperialist forces and, as such, could not be trusted; it began to organise amongst peasants and workers, and held that peace in Nepal would require more than the overthrow of the Ranas (*ibid.*). The CPN was also conscious of the fact that the Delhi

Compromise had been engineered to diffuse the anti-Rana movement and prevent the growth of the communist movement in Nepal (Rawal 2007: 39). It publicly criticised the pact and declared that the Nepali Congress had betrayed the revolution. One of the main policy aims of the CPN was to minimise Indian influence and strengthen relations with China (Khadka 1995: 57); to that end it called for the defeat of national feudal lords, Indian capitalists, and imperialist forces (Gupta 1964: 63). But the CPN also suffered from a lack of ideological clarity. Following a revolt in 1952 in which parliament was stormed in order to secure the release of K.I. Singh, one of the leaders of the Mukti Sena who had been arrested for being involved in disturbances in eastern Nepal, King Tribhuvan called a state of emergency and banned the CPN for its involvement. The CPN was forced to organise underground, where it continued its activities by infiltrating other organisations and intensifying its work among agricultural labourers (202). The ban was only lifted in 1956 by the Nepali Congress government headed by prime minister Tanka Prasad Acharya on the condition that the communists accept the principle of constitutional monarchy.

### The Maoists and anti-imperialism

The 1990 revolution that brought about multi-party democracy in Nepal was a turning point in Nepali political history. If the 1950–51 revolution marked the end of a dictatorship, ushering in not an entirely new order, but a 40-year transition that steadily weakened the old structures of power, then the 1990 revolution, in contrast, set Nepal on a trajectory where everything could be challenged: the monarchy, upper-caste rule, ethnic disparities and the stark class divisions that had characterised Nepali society for centuries. It was the beginning of a new kind of revolutionary process – the birth of Nepal’s democratic revolution. The Maoists were crucial agents in this process because they pursued and advanced it from 1990 until the abolition of the monarchy in 2008, but then held it back and ultimately contained it. It was the Maoists, however, more than any other political force, who had recognised the objective possibility of fundamental social change in Nepal following the 1990 revolution. With the movement having forced the king to make major political concessions, the

Maoists sensed there was an urgency (amongst women, ethnic minorities, and the poor in the countryside) to take the movement further; for this they saw no other alternative to armed struggle (Mikesell 2001: 17). Whether this would democratise the economic sphere, in addition to the political one, was another question, but the rationale included an anti-imperialist element from the start.

Several days prior to launching the People's War in 1996, the Maoists had issued a 40-point demand containing a number of radical proposals under the labels nationalism, democracy, and livelihood. These included: the abrogation of the 1950 India-Nepal Treaty; the cessation of the work of NGOs and INGOs as agents of imperialism; the closure of Gurkha recruitment centres; an end to all racial and regional discrimination; and secularism (Thapa 2003: 189–94). In the letter accompanying the 40-point demand, the Maoists criticised the parliamentary parties for blindly adopting policies of privatisation and liberalisation, serving the interests of imperialism over the interests of Nepal. In developing the theoretical premises for the People's War, the Maoists concluded that challenging state power by uniting the anti-imperialist masses (i.e. workers and poor peasants) under the leadership of the Maoists was the principal goal (UCPN 2004: 25).

They also argued that Nepal essentially suffers from two forms of oppression. The first is its semi-colonial domination by India, manifested in unequal treaties such as the 1950 India-Nepal Treaty; Indian interference in Nepal's political affairs; Indian control of the vast majority of trade and industry in Nepal, including the exploitation of its water and other resources; and the promotion of Hindu nationalism in Nepal (Yami 2006/1996: 132–133). Other imperialist powers such as Britain (through the recruitment of Gurkhas) and the US (through its domination of the World Bank and IMF) exert 'neo-colonial' domination over Nepal. The second form of oppression was the subjection of weaker nationalities by the dominant nationality within Nepal, whose language, dress, and religion enjoys state patronage. These inequalities were systematised under the Ranas with the promulgation of the legal code of 1854, the Muluki Ain. The Maoists' defence of ethnic interests in particular, along with questions of class, were recognised as 'inevitable

components of the democratic revolution' (128). Questions of strategy were crucial to responding to both widespread poverty and inequality.

By the end of the war in 2006, not only had the Maoists achieved the military stalemate they wanted, but they had also succeeded in shifting the majority of public opinion in favour of a Constituent Assembly (CA) and a federal republic. If the Maoists did not lead a direct confrontation with the capitalist system as such, the People's War was effective in undermining the legal and ideological framework that was holding it together in Nepal. During the 2006 revolution, which emerged in response to the royal coup the previous year, the Maoists enjoyed mass support, the monarchy lacked authority, and the army ultimately refused to fight. The military stalemate forced the establishment to calculate that a political solution was unavoidable. But without a strategy for taking the revolutionary process beyond the parliamentary road, the Maoists' alliance with the mainstream parties became a way for the ruling elite to demobilise the movement. The consolidation of the alliance took the form of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA), signed in November 2006 between the Maoists and a grouping of political parties, prepared in Delhi and facilitated by the Indian government. Although it spelled the end of the monarchy, it also marked the official end of the People's War. The Maoists agreed to dismantle their parallel infrastructure outside Kathmandu, including people's courts and people's governments, return property confiscated from landlords, and confine Maoist fighters to cantonments under UN supervision. Since the CPA and their triumph in the CA elections in 2008, in which they emerged as the largest party, the Maoists' trajectory has been one of accommodation.

Whereas once the Maoists' agenda was pulling mainstream politics to the left, and divisions in society cut along class lines, following the end of the war the central divisions cut along ethnic lines. The mass protests in the Terai organised by Madhesi parties in early 2007, although they quickly turned violent and raised tensions between Madhesis and hill migrants, were successful in pushing for guarantees for federalism. The raised level of ethnic consciousness in Nepal is irrefutably progressive to the extent

that it destabilises imperialist influence. In recent years, however, the imperial powers have sought to use questions of nationality and ethnicity to support fragmentation along ethnic lines and divert energy away from challenging imperialism. Whether the Maoists facilitated a shift from class struggle to identity politics can only be judged by assessing their political trajectory in practice: they suspended the People's War through a negotiated settlement facilitated by India, and were at the helm of a coalition government with mainstream parties, which have a considerable record of neglecting the aspirations of the majority. After signing the CPA, the Maoists became central to rehabilitating capitalism, and national debates became focused on the nature of identity-based federalism as the starting point for restructuring the state. The ethnic movement, predominantly aided by NGOs and donors, now has a political course that is largely independent, and perhaps even contrary to, class struggle. In an international context where indigenous rights have been incentivised by the neo-liberal state, the anti-imperialist potential of these rights-based movements remains limited.

Although the Maoists managed to reorient the country towards a radical departure from the status quo (a secular, federal republic that replaced a conservative Hindu monarchy) and for a time gain immense popularity as communists, they were predisposed towards a peace process that would leave much of the Nepali elite in place because of their conviction that a new, more equitable society was impossible at the present stage of historical development. Participation in the peace process has had profound consequences: the Maoists have accepted the main tenets of capitalist development, entrenched themselves into the mainstream of politics in Nepal, and distanced themselves from strategies involving popular struggle. These consequences have been eloquently elaborated elsewhere (see <http://goo.gl/34gLqt> – last accessed on 2 February 2015). Moreover, the adoption of a parliamentary perspective alone has meant the abandonment of the struggle to transform wider structures in Nepali society and, with it, the acceptance of a framework of consensual, neo-liberal policies. In the process, it has meant accepting (and even embracing) the involvement of imperialist forces in Nepal's internal political affairs.

### Imperialist powers' response to the Maoists

Imperialist powers have responded to the Maoist challenge with both military force and a soft-power approach. While the purpose of early police operations was to crush the movement by sheer physical force, predictably, this had the effect of strengthening the Maoists' cause as family members and others sought revenge against the brutality of the police. The project of containing the Maoists needed to be extended to countering the Maoists' ideology. For much of the international community, particularly the US and Britain, this has taken the form of strengthening the role of NGOs and 'civil society' in development and conflict resolution, and in implementing the terms of the CPA. Alongside NGOs, military force was crucial in neutralising the Maoists. India, China, Britain, and the US, as well as Belgium and others, have all supported the Nepal Army with arms and other military equipment and have tolerated widespread human rights abuses committed by the army throughout the People's War. Only towards the end of the war, after King Gyanendra's seizure of power and when the army was losing popular legitimacy, was there a focus on human rights, which was made a condition for further military aid. This was a step forward for human rights defenders. One drawback of this focus by the US, British, and Indian armies, however, was that it suggested an equivalence between the Maoists and the Nepal Army and, moreover, has been used to argue for more monitoring and training by foreign militaries in general. Yet there is no evidence that engagement with foreign militaries improves human rights records (Adams 2005: 134). Military aid, particularly by India and China, has escalated in recent years. On a political level, India attempted to prevent the ascendance of the Nepali Maoists because this lent legitimacy to the Indian Maoists. Failing to prevent the Maoists' influence, they chose to pacify them, and succeeded in facilitating their entry into the mainstream. This has had two major benefits for India: the Nepali Maoists have served as an example to the Indian Maoists and extremist groups the world over; and, secondly, India has been able to increase business investment in Nepal, further reinforcing Nepal's economic dependence.

Dependence on foreign aid has also unquestionably made Nepal more vulnerable to coercion by the imperialist powers. Donors have been able to impose conditions, 'some of which could be interpreted as direct interference in recipients' internal affairs' (Khadka 1997: 1058). These include pressures to liberalise the economy, accept trade and transit restrictions, obtain arms and military training, and calibrate foreign-policy objectives according to imperialist interests. The neo-liberal reforms that Nepal has pursued since the mid-1980s, as a condition for loans from the World Bank and IMF, have created political and social costs (1057). From the late 1980s Nepal became even more reliant on external loans, leading to greater debt, which ultimately led to 'more stringent aid conditions to correct structural imbalances caused by the debt itself' (1056). Privatisation of state-owned enterprises and deregulation have been particularly severe, resulting in cuts in subsidies and social expenditure and an increase in the price of public services. In recent years Nepal was deemed the most unequal country in South Asia (Wagle 2010: 577), where reforms have created an 'overall policy environment providing a powerful impetus to create and sustain inequality' (573). Furthermore, increasing inequality coincided with the liberalisation policies of the 1990s, 'further intensifying integration of the national economy into the regional and global markets' (574). While foreign aid contributed significantly to a number of advances in development indicators over several decades, the experience of development in Nepal remains uneven and incomplete. One of the sources of stagnation can be directly attributed to the deepening of neo-liberal reforms, inextricably linked with the ability of imperialist powers to exert their interests in Nepal.

The response to the devastating earthquake that struck Nepal in 2015, in which thousands were killed and hundreds of thousands displaced, mainly consisted of an outpouring of funds for reconstruction and rehabilitation from donors, NGOs, and members of the public all around the world. The extent of the damage caused by the earthquake, however, must be traced back to the history of underdevelopment in Nepal by both national elites and international donors (see <https://goo.gl/7xoixt> – last accessed on 5 June 2015). For the imperialist powers in

particular, development has always been secondary; since the 1950s efforts primarily went into preventing the spread and influence of communism and promoting free-market ideas. Much of the infrastructure, which is particularly badly built in the rural areas that were hardest hit, was unable to withstand the force of the 7.8 magnitude earthquake and aftershocks, even though it had been anticipated for decades. While hundreds of thousands of people were still waiting for food, shelter, and medicines months after the tragedy, there were reports of massive corruption of funds and supplies, and distribution favoured certain groups over others. The progress made in distributing relief was largely done by Nepalis themselves. At the national level, the government ceded control of immediate relief efforts to the army and, again, while progress was made in pulling out survivors and concentrating relief near the epicentre, concerns were raised over the lack of civilian oversight of the army, and whether the army should be commanding the long-term reconstruction process. The earthquake did seem to create the conditions for limited agreement amongst the political parties over the constitution and restructuring the state, which had been postponed for over five years. But without ensuring that reconstruction favours those who are most vulnerable, poverty and inequality in Nepal will be compounded. There is also the risk that the disaster will be used to impose a regressive constitution and shock therapy economics, and it remains to be seen to what extent anti-imperialist and other progressive forces can resist the reinforcement of imperialist powers in the country.

The Maoists, unable to mobilise, remained relatively silent following the earthquake, making it clear that a new anti-imperialist alliance has yet to emerge. That the various anti-Maoist forces did reassert themselves in Nepal through the peace process, managing to violently (and non-violently) counter the Maoists' own use of violence during the People's War, does not negate the Maoists' case. Anti-imperialist struggle in Nepal has reached an impasse for the time being, but having overthrown two regimes and built an anti-imperialist tradition in the country, Nepal's experience remains a beacon for anti-imperialist struggles in the region and beyond.

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## Nigeria: Modern Economic Imperialism, (c.1980 to present)

### Introduction

The roots of the modern system of economic imperialism in Nigeria can be traced back to the advent of European merchants along the coastal areas of West Africa in the 17th century (Stone 1988). This early-stage mercantilism signalled the proclamation of the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria by the end of the 19th century, and subsequent integration of the new colonial territory into the world capitalist system (Smith 1979). Colonialism ensured the total peripheral subjugation of the geographical territory of Nigeria along with its markets and products (largely raw materials) to the dictates and vagaries of the markets in the metropolis (Lange et al. 2006). In particular, trade and profit making were the ultimate focus of metropolitan markets and local lumpenbourgeois at the expense of the pauperised producers in the colony. Forming the early set of the indigenous elite class, the local merchants and middlemen (lumpenbourgeois), merged with the educated elite to form the new ruling class at independence in 1960.

The economic policy in the immediate post-colonial period, from 1960–66, was largely modelled upon the economic foundation bequeathed by the former colonial masters. Primary emphasis was on the export of agricultural products and other raw materials to international markets, while multinational corporations dominated the nation's

economy (Turner 1976; Udofia 1984). The subsequent civil war of 1967–70 ensured a war economy which of course favoured multinational arms suppliers along with middlemen in the military, political, and economic circles. Meanwhile, the country groaned at the massive loss of human lives and material capital (Nafziger 1972). The post-war attempt of General Gowon's Government at participation of Nigerians in the mainstream of economic management through the promulgation of the indigenisation decree in 1971 achieved little (Ogbuagu 1983). The indigenisation process was riddled with mistrust. While the Igbo ethnic group which had suffered great loss and economic deprivation due to the civil war accused the Federal Government dominated by the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba of deliberate economic annihilation and side-lining, many of the indigenised companies were bought over by inexperienced government contractors and retired powerful and high-ranking public officers (Akinsanya 1994; Iwuagwu 2009; Nwoke 1986). Many of the companies, of course, subsequently collapsed. The failure of the indigenised companies, coupled with the oil glut and economic depression of the late 1970s, made the proposal of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) for economic liberalism a rational option.

### Austerity measures and structural adjustment (1980–96)

After a gruesome civil war and 13 long years under military rule, Nigeria was democratised again in October 1979. The civilian regime of Alhaji Sheu Shagari had a depressed economy and a huge debt burden. International financial experts, creditors, and Bretton Woods organisations attributed Nigeria's deplorable economic state to institutional corruption and waste which could only be addressed through austerity measures (Bienen and Gersovitz 1985). At this stage, austerity measures largely entailed the removal of subsidies. Sheu Shagari could achieve but little with his reforms before he was toppled in a military coup on 31 December 1983. The new military regime headed by General Buhari was sceptical about the economic impact of the reforms on Nigeria. It rather sought to reform through a programme it termed 'War-Against-Indiscipline' (Stock 1988). For the Buhari regime, indiscipline was the

problem with Nigeria. If tackled, Nigeria could improve its socio-economic indices. Buhari remained in power only until August 1985 when he was toppled in a military coup led by his army chief General Gbadamosi Babangida.

An intelligent military officer, Machiavellian, and very deceptive with his transition to civil rule programme, Babangida, who ruled Nigeria for 8 years, introduced an encompassing Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986, which has somewhat defined Nigeria's economic policy till now. The SAP entailed: withdrawal of government from the provision of social support, especially in education and health; downsizing the civil service; devaluation of the nation's currency the Naira; commercialisation and privatisation of government enterprises; an embargo on employment and salary increases; adoption of liberal trade policies; and prioritisation of debt servicing (Geo-Jaja and Magnum 2001; Roy 1993). The SAP resulted in massive inflation (which increased from 5.4 per cent in 1986 to 40 per cent by 1989) and mass pauperisation with about 70 per cent of Nigerians living below the poverty line by the year 2000, up from the pre-SAP figure of about 27 per cent in 1980 (Anyanwu 1992; Ogwumike 2002). Student enrolment and hospital attendance drastically declined with some communities recording up to 50 per cent increases in maternal mortality (Lingam 2006) and national child mortality of 191 per 100,000 live births (National Bureau of Statistics 2005). Likewise, there was massive retrenchment of workers in both the public and private sectors even as many industries also collapsed (Gbosi 1993; Okafor 2007).

Notwithstanding the socio-economic woes of the mass, SAP through the embedded policies of privatisation and trade liberalisation benefited a class of lumpenbourgeois and international capitalists who took advantage of the new fiscal environment. Here, a clear imperialistic manifestation of international capital alongside its local counterparts could be seen. General Babangida's Government promulgated the Privatization and Commercialization Decree of 1988 and instituted the Technical Committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation (TCPC), which was saddled with the responsibility of privatising 111 public enterprises. By the time the TCPC concluded its activities in 1993, it had privatised up to 88 public companies (Igbuzor 2003). Whereas, while the Nigerian

Telecommunications PLC (NITEL) and National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) were commercialised and retained under government control, the more profitable public enterprises in the banking, insurance, and oil sectors (including oil blocs) were sold and/or leased to government cronies among the economic elite (Lewis 1994; Ugorji 1995). Thus, there emerged new super-rich capitalists, many of whom hitherto had no capitalist and productive pedigree in the Nigerian productive and business sectors. Buyers of the profitable public enterprises are often accused of being agents for top military officers who may be the 'real' owners of the companies.

SAP's trade liberalisation policy emphasises international trade and open borders as against local production and protection of the local producers. Hence, while numerous local companies collapsed, the service and exploration industries in the financial and petroleum sectors, whose transactions are somewhat connected with multinational corporations abroad, thrived. Nigeria became a dumping ground for goods for which there was already productive expertise in the country. Facing difficulties to survive in the new 'competitive' environment that favoured foreign companies, local companies collapsed (Iwuagwu 2009; Noorbakhsh and Paloni 1999; Rogers and van Til 1997).

It is also important to note that the economic de-empowerment of Nigerians also provided a thriving market for the import of substandard goods from Asia and second-hand goods from the developed world (Omobowale 2012; 2013a; Pang 2008). This was (and still is) a sort of 'primitive' economic imperialism of Nigeria by Asian countries (particularly China) as well as developed countries. They extract surplus capital flight from Nigeria by dumping poor-quality goods and used goods, of course with the connivance of Nigerian officials and businessmen (Omobowale 2013b).

Capital flight is a major consequence of economic imperialism. Jimoh (1991) estimates that (aside from money lost to under-invoicing and 'fake trading') capital flight from Nigeria between 1960 and 1988 was worth US\$53.8 billion, (US) representing an average of US\$1.9 billion yearly. Likewise, Lawanson (2007) reports that annual average capital flight from Nigeria was US\$4.3 billion in the 1980s, reaching a peak of US\$10.1

billion in 1990, after which it declined to US\$ 1.4 billion in 1995 (see also Akinlo 2011; Ngwainmbi 2005; Olugbenga and Alamu 2013). The SAP was officially discontinued in 1996. It has been widely described as a monumental failure with most of the blame attributed to corruption and half-hearted implementation (Iwuagwu 2009; Rogers and van Til 1997). It should be noted that the huge amount that Nigeria lost to capital flight during this period due to trade liberation could have been used for local development. While the majority of Nigerians were impoverished, the country statistically experienced some economic growth that mostly benefited the local capitalists and multinational corporations.

### Post-1996 new economic order in Nigeria

The immediate post-1996 period marked some major milestones in Nigeria. General Abacha, who had seized power in a military coup in 1993, was preparing to transform into a civilian president through a fraudulent transition programme (Ehwarieme 2011). Abacha was a military ruler who was very critical of the Western world, and fraternised with China and North Korea. He was very much unloved both at home and abroad, and often described as a pariah. He had constituted a team of political and military cohorts to advance his plan for civilian presidency (Omobowale and Olutayo 2007), but his sudden death in June 1998 changed the political and economic landscape of Nigeria. The new regime of General Abubakar opted for a speedy transition to a programme of civil rule. Thus, Nigeria adopted liberal democracy with the assumption of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as civilian president on 29 May 1999.

The new liberal democratic dispensation of President Obasanjo favoured liberal policies. Olusegun Obasanjo's economic policy did not really differ from what had obtained during the SAP years. There was strong emphasis on privatisation and liberalism. Obasanjo's government keyed into the Washington consensus by designing the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) policy for Nigeria and influencing the African Union to adopt the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative as an African

home-grown initiative for economic development (Chabal 2002; National Planning Commission 2004). A close scrutiny of both the NEEDS and NEPAD shows they are very connected with neo-liberal recommendations of the Bretton Woods organisations, which had earlier been implemented through SAP (Olutayo and Omobowale 2005). Simply put, NEEDS and NEPAD are new nomenclature for SAP in the era of liberal democracy. Hence, the NEEDS and NEPAD are domestic policies for the continuation of economic imperialism through liberalisation and privatisation in the post-military era.

The first major wave of liberalisation and privatisation was in the telecommunications sector. The government of Olusegun Obasanjo licensed two multinational GSM companies, MTN and ECONET (an indigenous company, GLOBACOM was licensed much later) to invest in Nigeria's moribund telecommunications sector. For many Nigerians, this was a welcome development because the Nigerian Telecommunications PLC (NITEL) had failed to provide nationwide quality service. Even though NITEL had advanced telecommunications equipment, some of which MTN and ECONET had to rely on in the first few years of their operations, NITEL could not compete with these new GSM companies. Subsequent attempts at privatising NITEL have failed. NITEL's multimillion dollar investments remain abandoned; its staff has been laid off, while the company remains comatose (Olutayo and Omobowale 2011). A report credited to the Association of Telecoms Companies of Nigeria (ATCON) states that the telecommunications sector is the largest growing sector in Nigeria, but Nigeria lost 80 per cent of the US\$18 billion profit generated between 2001 and 2010 to capital flight (Okonji 2012). The steel and power sectors that are critical to industrial development have also remained moribund. Attempts at revitalising the steel sector by selling majority stakes to international companies have failed. In fact, the Nigerian government accused a major investor in Nigeria's steel company at Ajaokuta of pilfering critical machinery and equipment while it invested nothing to revive the company (Jumbo 2011). In addition, the power sector has virtually failed. Sarcastically described as 'Never Expect Power Always' (Olukoju 2004), the former National Electric Power Authority has remained inefficient in spite of privatisation

and huge bills that are charged by the new multinational owners of power transmission companies in Nigeria.

Finally, Nigeria's oil sector remains the most subject to international economic imperialism. The mainstay of Nigeria's economy, it is dominated by multinational oil companies that control exploration and pay royalties to the Federal Government. About 90 per cent of the crude oil produced is exported. Unfortunately, Nigeria's refineries are largely non-functional, so the country imports about 80 per cent of its local consumption of oil products. Between March 2010 and January 2011, Nigeria spent over \$7.6 billion to import about 8.1 million metric tons of petroleum products (Nwachukwu 2011). Still, Nigeria's local content policy is grossly disregarded in the petroleum industry. The industry relies principally on international technical and professional manpower while the technology is largely imported. This of course translates to huge capital loss for Nigeria.

Again, Nigeria is experiencing a new wave of economic imperialism in the tertiary education sector. Nigeria's universities (which counted as some of the best around the world in the 1960s and up to when SAP was implemented in the early 1980s) are at present lowly ranked globally. Faced with continual brain drain, poor infrastructures and equipment, limited student slots, unmotivated faculties, and incessant strike actions, due to SAP induced strains, Nigerian universities are unable to compete with universities in the global North. Hence, foreign universities (both in the global North and global South) attract candidates from Nigeria in droves. A report of the Committee of Vice Chancellors (CVC) of Nigeria's Universities claims that Nigerians commit about US\$500 million to tertiary education in European and North American universities (The Sun 2012).

Only a few examples from critical sectors of the Nigerian economy have been discussed above. It is important to note that the imperialistic tentacles of the industrialised nations, international financial organisations, and multinational corporations cover every sector of Nigeria's economy. Nigeria's economy remains subservient to the dictates of the imperialist powers that are able to guide the direction of its economic policy and system through the agency of neo-liberalism and the threat of international sanctions.

## Conclusion

The integration of Nigeria into the world capitalist system within the last 200 years has subjected the nation to sustained economic imperialism. Nigeria's post-independence economic policy advances the course of economic imperialism such that the country only appears to have political independence; it is very much dependent on the international economic powers and institutions in economic policy formulation and implementation. The limited attempt at economic self-determination in the early 1970s produced no positive result, with Nigeria emerging into the 1980s with a massive economic depression and policy disorientation. Hence, once again, the despised liberal policy of the Nigerian government in the 1970s (austerity measures) was presented as the panacea. Full implementation of the reform programme started under General Babangida's Government in 1986, with the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The SAP advanced unalloyed liberalism, favouring the withdrawal of government from the provision of social services, currency devaluation and free trade, frugal expenditure, and lean bureaucracy in order to save funds to invest in critical areas of the economy and debt servicing. The social and economic implications of SAP were overwhelmingly devastating for the populace. Many industries collapsed while many Nigerians fell below the poverty line. Notwithstanding this, SAP ensured a class of the economic elite profited through trade. While local industries collapsed, international trade boomed. The result of this, of course, was classic capital flight through debt servicing, massive imports, contracts to foreign contractors, and illicit siphoning of corrupt funds through international financial corporations. Thus, the money saved through SAP ultimately benefited the developed countries in the metropolis who received legally repatriated profit from Nigeria and/or whose banks also received illicit funds stashed in secret bank accounts. In spite of SAP's discontinuation in 1996, it is pertinent to note that the economic policies of Nigeria's post-1996 democratic regimes have followed the liberal lines. Nigerians remain impoverished, but huge capital is expropriated from the economy through unbalanced trade and illegal transfers. As long as Nigeria emphasises pro-trade liberalism as against local production,

processing, and marketing, it will remain a peripheral nation under the perpetual yoke of economic imperialism to the overall benefit of the world capitalist system. Nigeria will thus produce wealth that will be appropriated by the capitalist powers under the guise of liberalism and 'freedom'.

Ayokunle Olumuyiwa Omobowale

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## Nordic Colonialism and Indigenous Peoples

### From no colonialism to post-colonialism

Nordic colonialism of the land inhabited by Arctic indigenous peoples, although having earlier precedents in the region, came into full force with the mercantilism of 17th- and 18th-century Europe, and the subsequently confirmed dissolution in 1814 of the Denmark–Norway personal union as a result of their losses in the Napoleonic Wars. The colonial powers in the Nordic region from this point onwards were Sweden and Denmark, whose separate colonial policy making was 'often guided by regional competition over the Baltic trade and the control of the Sound' (Naum and Nordin 2013: 8). Dominating Arctic indigenous peoples and their land was a means to securing control over 'the mining industry and other assets such as fur, game and natural resources' (ibid.). Territories were charted, mapped out, and domesticated; the subordination of the land going 'hand in hand with [the] domestication of its dwellers' (Lindmark 2013: 133). There are approximately 400,000 Arctic indigenous people residing in the circumpolar

region, divided between eight Arctic countries; Canada, United States, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Denmark. There are over 40 different ethnic groups indigenous to the Arctic, including amongst others the Sámi [also spelled Saami] in circumpolar areas of Finland, Sweden, Norway, and north-west Russia; Nenets, Khanty, Evenk and Chukchi in Russia; Aleut, Yupik, and Inuit (Iñupiat) in Alaska; Inuit (Inuvialuit) in Canada; and Inuit (Kalaallit) in Greenland (Arctic Centre of Lapland 2010).

This essay will focus on two of the most prominent examples of Nordic colonialism of indigenous peoples in the Arctic region: the Inuit of Greenland and Sweden–Sámi relations. It will focus largely on the period from the 17th century onwards, and place significant emphasis on the recent history of the Sámi and Inuit, since de-colonisation in the region is a relatively late phenomena still in flux (or arguably, yet to begin). Both examples follow the distinctive characteristic of the colonial relationship in that neither of the colonised parties has chosen whom they have been dominated by for the past 500 years (Gad 2009: 149).

There are many specificities of the Nordic colonial context that denote its contemporary significance. As the scholar Lars Jensen has identified, what distinguishes ‘each and every European imperial power from the others, is the particular culture around imperialism that grew out both of the imperial experiences with the colonised world, and imperialism’s relationship to nationalism’ (Jensen 2008: 59). In the case of Sweden and Denmark, therefore, what is particular is the lack of acknowledgement: a strong element of denial exists in Sweden and Denmark with regards to the ownership of colonial holdings. As the sociologists Stan Cohen and Paul Gilroy have noted, denial in social, historical, political and psychological terms requires constant reiteration, and thus functions as a major site of repression. Even when the existence of colonies is acknowledged, the majority opinion seems to be that the Danish and Swedish empires were ‘smaller, less violent, and made less money than the other empires did from their colonies’ (60). For example, it is often noted in the context of the paternalistic relationship between Denmark and Greenland that the Danish administration never resorted to violent actions against the Greenlandic Inuit. It is worth noting that any ‘gentleness’ (Petersen

1995: 18) that may have existed on the side of the Danish and Swedish colonists was not necessarily the result of more liberal or humanistic values, but instead an indicator of their ‘small-time agent status, [and failures on] the very tenets of colonialism’ (Horning 2013: 298). Sweden, for example, never established a profitable Caribbean venture; accepting the near barren island of St Barthelémy, which it gave back to France in 1878 after less than 100 years’ rule. This prolific reworking of the past is heavily intertwined with the Nordic countries’ modern reputation, known throughout the world, for best demonstrating the practice of ‘social democratic principles’ (Gilroy 2006) and in the Swedish context also political neutrality and intake of political refugees. This reworking and creation of ‘national blind-spot[s]’ (Jensen 2008: 61) was fabricated in:

the twentieth-century [as the] Danish perception of its national identity was transformed from a multicultural, multi-ethnic seafarers’ nation involved in the worlds’ politics into the idea of an agrarian-based and mono-cultural society. ... Twentieth-century Denmark was deglobalized, i.e. seemingly detached from the ebbs and flows of colonial and global history. The development in Sweden was rather similar, only here the colonial past and the notion of colonial history played an even smaller part than in Denmark. The Swedish historic narrative is colored by methodological nationalism, meaning that the state, nation and history are three aspects of a common whole – one can hardly be separated from the other. (Naum 2013: 4)

The imperialist undertakings of the Danish and Swedish administrations are often described as internal colonialism, within which political and economic inequalities are inbuilt into the governing apparatus between regions of the nation state. It is significant, however, to bear in mind that such definitions tend to place more emphasis on the role of the colonisers and their vantage point, whereas the following definition from Sukarno of Indonesia explicates the perspective of those colonised: ‘a situation in which a people was governed by other people politically, economically, intellectually and physically’ (Petersen 1995: 119). As such, we must

place at the forefront of this entry the following enquiry from Kobena Mercer: '[H]ow is the temporal quality of belated recognition to be understood from the perspective of those, such as the Sámi, who are, in fact, historical survivors of such "internal colonialism"?' (Mercer 2006: 2).

### Greenlandic Inuit

Danish Constitution Day, 5 June 1953, marked the legal incorporation of Greenland as a county of equal standing into the Kingdom of Denmark, the decision to do so being voted upon by Danes in Denmark, not the Greenlandic people. Please note that the exceptions to this were East Greenland and Thule in northernmost West Greenland, neither of which was integrated until the early 1960s, as noted by Mette Rønsager (2008: 71). Alongside the award of two seats to Greenland within the Danish Parliament, this signalled the formal end of Greenland's colonial status and the official integration of its inhabitants as Danish citizens (Gad 2009: 136). This was then followed by: the Home Rule Act of 1979; favourable results in a non-binding referendum on self-governance on 25 November 2008; and the subsequent assumption of, and negotiations towards, self-determination. With self-rule and the possibility of independence advocated by Greenland's two most prominent political parties Forward and Inuit Ataqatigiit, it is planned that the annual subsidies made to Greenland by Denmark will decrementally diminish. These subsidies have served to alleviate any serious 'politics of embarrassment' (Kristensen 2004) that contemporary Denmark may have experienced with regard to its previous colony, but they have also resulted in a situation whereby it is a commonplace opinion in Denmark that the Greenlander is an 'ungrateful and somehow lacking citizen' (Jensen 2008: 59). Such revelations (along with statements such as the Danish prime minister's warning to the Faroe Islands in 2000: 'If you slam the door, I will slam the till' [61]) display the 'post imperial-colonial bind [as it continues] to be acted out today' (61). Greenland differed from Denmark's colonial holdings in the Caribbean, which were undertaken strictly for economic and strategic gains. Greenland was an 'inherited dependency', as the Danish vocabulary attests, to with the word *bilande* (in English: dependencies).

This term was used to describe Greenland, while only trading and mission stations were labelled 'colonies' (Petersen 1995: 119).

The passing of time has shown the granting of independence from Denmark to Greenland to be a pragmatic decision by the Danish government, made under duress from the United Nations. It also followed the failed 1946 attempt by the US government – pre-Cold War – to buy Greenland from Denmark for a sum thought to have been in the region of \$100 million (Miller 2001). The location of Greenland and the US desire for a military base there allowed Denmark to hold a disproportionate amount of influence within NATO and to have discounted membership. The decision not to sell Greenland was also based on Denmark's continued economic interests there, mining especially, and on the fact that by 1946, Greenland and the Faroe Islands were the only two remaining vestiges of Denmark's colonial empire, Greenland surpassing by 30 times in terms of land mass (Hoydal 2006: 1) the territory of Denmark. Prior to 1953, representatives of the Danish government had sought to counter the articulation of Greenlandic and Faroese desire for self-governance by claiming that both nations felt Danish, which the UN rejected (Poddar et al. 2008: 74).

The period between 1953 and 1979 has been referred to as the 'Danisation' period of modernisation (Petersen 1995: 121), which included: medical campaigns; improvements in housing conditions; and the remodelling of the school system, separating it for the first time from the (predominantly Lutheran) Church. As Robert Petersen has pointed out, the:

modernization of Greenland was planned in Copenhagen ... paid for by the Danish state and realized by imported Danish manpower. [Post-1953] Greenland was in fact more than ever governed politically, economically, intellectually, and physically by another people. (120–121)

Concurrent with this were the arguments that, in fact, the decolonisation process was still very much underway as membership of Greenland and the Faroe Islands within the Commonwealth of the Realm (in Danish, *Rigsfællesskabet*; in Greenlandic, *Naalagaaffeqatigiit*) continues to this day. Conversely, others assert that the process of Home Rule since 1953 has been legally void.



This challenge has been made by law academics on the basis of ‘nonfulfillment of the substantive and procedural prerequisites of exercising self-determination, as well as partial misinformation provided by the Danish government to the UN’ (Rytter 2008: 365).

Denmark’s colonial ventures began in the early 13th century with Estonia (Jónsson 2006: 4), then later acquisition of Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and the Northern Isles in the personal union of Denmark-Norway in 1524, following the demise of the 1397 Kalmar Union. Norse settlement in the west of Greenland was initially that of Icelanders and Norwegians from 986 CE (Langgård, quoted in Symonds 2013: 313), with these ‘independent Norse medieval communities in Greenland [agreeing] to pay taxes to the Norwegian king about AD 1260’ (Petersen 1995: 119). It was these Norse settlers who gave the nation the name of Greenland (which the Inuit themselves refer to as Kalaallit Nunaat, meaning land of the Kalaallit Inuit), and who ‘disparagingly referred to the Inuit as *skrællings*, or ‘small weaklings’. Paleo-Eskimo cultures are known to have entered Greenland as early as 2500 BC. Early Dorset culture emerged around 800 BC, and Thule culture (the direct ancestors of the indigenous Greenlandic Inuit population today) began to reach Greenland by 1000 CE. Although the Norse settlements disappeared, when the Danish re-established contact in the 18th century they interpreted the community ownership of land by the Inuit to mean ‘no ownership or “crown land”’ (120). This contact came in two particular forms: the first being Lutheran and Moravian missionaries, beginning with Hans Egede in 1711. A significant factor in the mental colonisation of the Inuit, it was largely the Church which was responsible for the transformation of the Inuit (oral) language into its written form, as ‘both the Danish mission and the Moravian Brethren wrote hymnbooks in Greenlandic (Poddar et al. 2006: 71). The second form of contact was through trade, which the Danish government monopolised in 1726. The Royal Greenlandic Trade Company (known as KGH: Det Kongelige Grønlandske Handelskompani) was founded in 1776, and ‘kept Greenland closed off from the rest of the world [;] even Danish citizens were not allowed to enter Greenland without a permit’ (70). As in other colonies around the world, ethnographic material and artefacts

were systematically collected in Greenland, particularly in the late 19th century, making their way into major public and royal collections in Denmark and the US. Following the Home Rule Act in 1979, ‘all matters relating to museums and protection of ancient monuments’ (Thorleifsen 2009: 26) were transferred to the home-rule government, a process which continues with the current building of the National Gallery of Greenland.

### Swedish-Sápmi relations

In the opening paragraphs of Kobena Mercer’s essay ‘Art as a Dialogue in Social Space’ (produced as part of the exhibition series *Re-Thinking Nordic Colonialism*), the author stresses the importance of examining ‘intra-Nordic territorial struggles [suggesting an analysis of internal colonialism with direct reference to the Sámi] as a First Nations people dealing with a colonial legacy that has not yet been recognized as such’ (Mercer 2006: 2). Curated by Kuratorisk Aktion for the Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art (NIFCA), the project combined exhibitions with workshops, conferences, hearings, and happenings in the locations of Reykjavik (Iceland), Nuuk (Greenland), Tórshavn (Faroe Islands), Rovaniemi (Finnish Sápmi), Copenhagen (Denmark), Helsinki (Finland), Oslo (Norway), and Stockholm (Sweden) from 24 March–25 November 2006. As Naum and Nordin point to in their analysis of Swedish expansionism, the ‘whitewashed and keenly reproduced picture of minimal or non-involvement in colonial expansion is [also] a result of adopting a narrow definition of colonialism, which reduces it to the possession of colonies in the far corners of the world’ (Naum 2013: 4).

Sápmi (the name assigned to Samiland) extends from Idre, Dalarna in northern Norway across to the Kola Peninsula in Russia. Spanning four countries, the area’s landmass has changed over time with the implementation of national borders. Following the colonial period, Sápmi measures in total 157,487km<sup>2</sup>, with an estimated population of 70,000 indigenous people. This population is divided into: 20,000 living in Sweden; 40,000 in Norway; 6,000 in Finland; and 2,000 in Russia. The definition of what constitutes being Sámi is currently experiencing a major political flux. Sámi are best known for their semi-nomadic livelihood of

reindeer herding, with other trades including coastal fishing and fur trapping. An estimated 20,000 of the population speak one of the three main Sámi languages, which are further subdivided into nine dialects, all belonging to the Uralic language family. In 2000, UNESCO declared each of the Sámi languages critically endangered, whereby the youngest speakers are grandparents or older, and who speak the language partially and infrequently (Sami – an indigenous people in Sweden). Formerly referred to as Lapps, Lapland and Lapponia (a term the Sámi consider to be pejorative, instead assigning the official name of Sámi and Sápmi), such terms continue to be used in the region for touristic purposes.

The 15th and 16th centuries marked the beginning of Swedish colonial activity in Sámi ancestral land, following the discovery of silver in Nasafjäll in 1634. Mining ensued in the region and eventually resulted in the Swedish state's determination to further foster mineral riches from the land, resulting in the 1673 Lapland Bill, which officially established colonial settlement in Sápmi. The perception of the Swedish state's expansion within the country's historiography is conceptualised as a mild intervention in agricultural terms, or at its most severe, internal colonisation. As Lindmark notes, in direct relation to the term *internal colonisation*, 'such framing of this expansion also contains the implicit perception of Sápmi as a purely Swedish region. Choosing to define Sápmi as part of the Swedish realm, one ignores the possibility of placing Swedish policy in Sápmi in a colonial context. Thus, the development of the Swedish Lapland becomes something essentially different from the colonialism practised by European powers on other continents' (Lindmark 2013: 132).

As Lindmark suggests, the asymmetrical colonial power relations put into place by the dominant forces of Sweden have been negated, and their actions grossly underrated by the term 'expansion' given to activity at this time. The mines reaped relatively little capital for the Swedish state and so lasted a mere 25 years. However, during this time, Sámi were subjected to indentured labour and forced migration to Norwegian soil ensued. Slavery in Sweden was banned in the early 14th century, with the exclusion of any Sámi who had not fully converted to Christianity. The land, rich in other raw materials such as ore and timber, continued to be mapped, measured,

and divided. Tax sanctions were placed upon each province, with some Sámi communities being forced to pay taxes to three separate states as a result of imposed borderlines.

Throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, the Swedish state conducted 'civilising' missions. Rendering Sámi identity and practices as 'primitive', these programmes were predominantly carried out through education involving young Sámi children being extracted from their families and communities by missionaries. The programme 'was essentially driven by the desire "for a reformed, recognizable other" and [the] creation of a class of interpreters between the colonial elites and the masses they governed, native "in blood and color" but European in "tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect"' (Bhabha, quoted in Lindmark 2013: 135). This educational drive forged a divide within the Sámi communities, and provided the foundations for political dominance followed by capital gain. Concurrent with Sweden's colonial activity in the North, the state developed missions outside of Europe including the colony of New Sweden in North America (1638–55), slave trading in Africa (1649–58), and the slave trade port of Saint-Barthélemy (1784–1878). Each of these colonial ventures was short-lived and ultimately failed (Ghose 2008: 419).

Perhaps informed by the prevalence of the Eugenics movement in Sweden in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Sámi were defined by the state as a separate, primitive racial group, 'which resulted in paternalistic policies circumscribing the Sámi's access to education, housing, choice of profession (they were deemed capable mainly of reindeer herding) and land ownership' (419). The prevalence of racial discrimination continued to make itself apparent in the form of Swedish state papers and reports, the last case of which is an official paper dated 1945, cited as the end of such rhetoric by Lennart Lindmark in his influential text 'Swedish State Sámi Politics in the Era of Racism' (ibid.). However, the Swedish state refused to acknowledge its treatment of the Sámi in a colonial context, providing the following reasons in a 1986 governmental report:

- (1) Sápmi is not located at a distance from the national states that established the borders cutting across Sámi lands;
- (2) the extent and influence of colonization

(meaning establishment of non-Sámi settlements) and assimilation policies have been much more radical and successful than, for example the Danish influence on the Inuit of Greenland; and (3) the Nordic states have claimed the area as part of their Kingdoms since the 16th century and have never expressly carried out a colonial program in this region. (Fur 2013: 26)

The Swedish state did not officially recognise the Sámi as an indigenous people and national minority until 1977.

Two moments yielding significance for Sámi autonomy include the creation of the Sámi Council in 1956, with the aim of strengthening cross-border solidarity, and the establishment of the Sámi Parliament in 1993, which consists of a publicly held elected body and state authority, with the overall task of achieving a living Sámi culture (Sami Information Centre n.d.). Whilst the parliament is not a body for self-governance and is ultimately controlled by the Swedish state, its presence marks progression for Sámi self-determination. Land and water rights, reindeer husbandry legislation, logging, military activity, tourism and debates about ever increasing climate change are amongst the challenges faced by Sámi in contemporary society.

## Conclusion

There is a distinct absence of scholarship surrounding about Nordic colonialism, with a particular lack of literature available in English. Furthermore, despite the 'remarkable continuity in the [manner] in which Denmark has looked differently at its tropical and Arctic possessions' (Jensen 2008: 60), the scholar Lars Jensen notes the difficulty in finding writers willing to elaborate upon these parallels. Challenging the common representations of untainted histories is critical not only for multicultural European societies living within the Nordic region, but also for post-colonial discourse as an academic field. Comparisons must be drawn and engaged with in order to counteract the cultural amnesia regarding Scandinavian imperial projects, crucially in this moment of increased European anxiety surrounding notions of nationalism, purity, and the rise of the right. As the cultural theorist Paul Gilroy asserts in his essay *Colonial Crimes and Convivial Cultures*,

the Nordic region is distinctive in that it is very much in the grip of what he calls the *new racism* (Gilroy 2006). Most importantly, as an historiographical project, it is essential to reinscribe indigenous peoples into a pluralised history of the region, and to acknowledge their 'formative influence' (both then and now) upon their colonisers (Jensen 2008: 59).

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## Philippines and Imperialism

The history of the Philippines as a colony and neo-colony can be divided into three parts. The first designates 300 years of Spanish domination of the archipelago from 1565–1898 after the subjugation of tribal resistance in the main island of Luzon. The second includes about four decades involving the annexation of the islands by the US following the Spanish-American War of 1898 and its pacification from 1899 to 1935, when it became a Commonwealth up to 1941. The ascendancy of US monopoly capital and finance at the beginning of the 20th century replaced that of Spanish merchant capital and its moribund feudal arrangements (Magdoff 1982).

From 1942–45, the Japanese militarily occupied the major regions of the country but left local governance to a 'puppet' regime of elite natives. The return of US forces destroyed the Japanese authority and restored the status quo ante bellum.

In 1946, the Philippines was granted nominal independence but not full sovereignty, given the presence of US military bases and effective control of key political, military, and economic institutions by Washington. With recent bilateral agreements such as the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the

Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) to buttress military and political dependency, the Philippines' status as a neo-colony of the US has been re-confirmed.

### Re-visiting Spanish hegemony

The Philippines came under the formal political authority of Spain in the time of European rivalry over control of trade with Asia and the Americas in the 15th and 16th centuries. Following Ferdinand Magellan's discovery of the islands in South-East Asia in 1521, Miguel Lopez de Legaspi claimed the archipelago (named the 'Philippines', after King Philip II of Spain) for Spain in 1565. Lacking any cohesive unity or common loyalties, the indigenous tribes based on subsistence agriculture fell victim to the Spanish strategy of 'divide and rule' and its use of superior weaponry for pillage, plunder, and, killing (Veneracion 1987).

Given the distance from Spain, the islands were ruled from Mexico approximately 10,000 miles away. Few lay Spaniards settled in the Philippines. The pagan natives were Christianised by missionaries of the religious orders (this had been the rationale given by the Spanish monarchy to the Pope for taking power) so the Roman Catholic Church virtually ruled territories that yielded foodstuffs, human labour, and timber needed for the galleon trade. This lucrative exchange of Chinese porcelain, Indian textiles, etc. for Mexican gold and silver required the Philippines as a trans-shipment point between Mexico and China.

The profit gained from the galleon trade offered the main reason for subsidising the 'civilising mission'. The Church's evangelical apparatus of catechism and sermons was mobilised to justify appropriation of land and other natural resources extracted via heavy taxation, enforced labour, and assorted tributes. This missionary salvific discourse portrayed native resistance to Church abuses and government impositions as pagan wickedness, not a legitimate defence against violence (Eadie 2005). Co-opting the village chiefs, the missionaries and civil officials reinforced the patron-client system of asymmetrical harmony. Cultural ties of reciprocity and indebtedness to the local leaders were manipulated to ensure the regular centralised routine of the accumulation process.

The lack of adequate civilian personnel to maintain ecclesiastical and bureaucratic

discipline compelled the state to develop a local agency, the *principalia* (principal personages), to manage the procedures of taxation, sexual/domestic conduct, civic projects, security, and indoctrination to reproduce the feudal-tributary social relations while producing food, shelter, clothing, and other means of survival. This also explains the theocratic dominance of the friars in mediating between the mercantilist state and the natives in the *cabeseras* (geopolitical town complex) which broke apart the kinship or *datu-sacop* system of the pre-conquest polity.

Colonial discipline of the native subjects involved coercive and ideological mechanisms to enforce extraction of goods/services for use and for exchange. Pre-capitalist forms and feudal instrumentalities dovetailed to constitute the political economy of the Spanish possession. Apart from the local chiefs and their extended families and retainers, the natives were thus reduced to serfs or even to virtual slavery. This excluded the Moros or Muslims of the southern islands of Mindanao and Sulu who successfully resisted Spanish military and religious incursions from the time the Muslim chiefs Soliman and Lakandula were subdued in 1572–74.

Despite reformist measures introduced in the mid-19th century, Spain never developed the potential for self-sufficient agriculture and sustainable industries. The archaic state's practice of imposing bonded labour for infrastructure projects, as well as the excesses of the friars, led to over 200 revolts of peasants and workers, from Malong's revolt in Pangasinan (1660–61) to the numerous revolts during and after the British occupation of Manila in 1762–64 (Constantino 1975: 112–114).

### Crisis of the mercantilist dispensation

With the termination of the galleon trade in 1813 and the abolition of government monopolies of tobacco and other export crops, the metropolitan city of Manila was opened to foreign trade in 1835. Liberal ideas entered the islands, a consequence of the exposure of Spain to Enlightenment philosophy before and after the Napoleonic wars (1808–14) and the South American wars of independence. Conflict between the absolutist monarchy and the forces of liberalism led to the republican interlude (from 1868 on) and the appointment

of Carlos Maria de la Torre, a prominent liberal (Zafra 1967: 157–163). De la Torre exempted from tribute and coerced labour the Filipino workers in the Cavite arsenal. They subsequently mutinied when his successor, the conservative Rafael de Izquierdo, restored the status quo. The Cavite revolt of 1872 and the execution of the three secular priests (Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora) signalled the resurgence of hitherto inchoate dissidence among urban intelligentsia and guilds in the islands.

Meanwhile, capital accumulation via commercial agriculture and export trade passed into the hands of Anglo-American merchant houses. To these were attached mestizo families, owners of sugar plantations and *hacenderos* (owners of haciendas or land grants from the Crown) of other cash crops (rice, hemp, tobacco, coconuts). An *ilustrado* (enlightened) stratum of these families emerged in the 1870s and 1880s; foremost were the ‘propagandists’ (Marcelo del Pilar, Graciano Lopez Jaena, Jose Rizal, Isabelo de los Reyes, etc.) who advocated peaceful reforms and representation in the Spanish Cortes (De la Costa 1965). These aspirations were all denied and their advocates punished by death, imprisonment, or exile.

Parallel to that assimilationist movement existed a separatist movement of the peasantry and mutual-aid co-operatives of workers and artisans inspired by millenarian agitations and the secularist movement among Filipino priests against the arrogant friars. This was led by Andres Bonifacio and the secret organisation, the *Katipunan* (Association of Sons of the People), inspired by freemasonry and the delayed impact of the ideas of the French and American Revolutions. Earlier insurrections, particularly instigated by indigenous cults and seditious anti-clerical groups of uprooted tenant-farmers, converged in the 1896 revolution that led to the establishment of the first Philippine Republic after feuds between the collaborationist elite factions and the grass-roots radical-democratic peasant-worker revealed basic contradictions among classes. This explosion of emancipatory desire by the disenfranchised rural folk was undeterred by sustained Catholic proselytising and the terrorist measures of desperate Spanish governor-generals. The decay of Spanish colonial domination could not be reversed by the end of the 19th century.

## The nightmare of Spanish colonisation

The Spanish destruction of the self-sufficient baranganic communities by taxation and forced labour (*polos y servicios*) disrupted the village economy of kinship-based clans. Population was reduced, farm lands laid waste, including whatever trade and industry flourished. The Spanish historian Antonio de Morga lamented that due to the despotic backward policies, the natives abandoned ‘their farming, poultry and stock-raising, cotton growing and weaving of blankets’ (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1970: 104). From the 16th to the 19th century, Spain exploited the natives to support the galleon trade that enriched the friars and local bureaucrats, the Chinese traders, and native mestizo families.

Whatever changes were carried out in the 19th century did not significantly improve the conditions of the majority since the specialisation in export crops (controlled by Anglo-American agents) prevented the growth of a diversified economy. The nascent capitalist sector benefited only a few propertied families and foreign merchants. In terms of Christianisation, very few Filipinos really understood Catholic doctrine, hence the mixture of miracles, idolatry, veneration of icons and images, superstition, and rudimentary Catholic rituals that constitutes the belief-system of ordinary Christian Filipinos today.

In general, the cultural development of the country reflected the bankruptcy of Spanish political and economic policies. It reflected the decay of the metropolitan order in a grotesque caricatured form. Spanish was not made the *lingua franca* of the colony, hence a bizarre ethnolinguistic multiplicity continues to distort Filipino efforts at national self-identification. Hispanisation survives only in certain customs and habits (fiestas, family rituals, etc.). The historian John Phelan observes that ‘although partially Hispanized, the Filipinos never lost that Malaysian stratum which to this day remains the foundation of their culture’ (1959: 26). Spanish colonialism, in short, ruined the indigenous life-forms and the supporting economy it encountered, while enriching a few oligarchic sectors and intensifying its own paralysis and decadence.

The American historian Nicholas Cushner concludes his account with the belief that Spain’s ‘more subtle influence on attitudes and social conventions remains part of the

fabric of Philippine society' (1971: 229). However, profound Americanisation of the collective Filipino psyche from 1899 to the present may have pronounced the final demise of this influence today despite superficial vestiges now extravagantly commodified for tourist consumption.

### The US conquest

President William McKinley's proclamation of the US 'civilising mission', also known as 'Benevolent Assimilation', emerged as part of global inter-imperialist rivalry in the age of monopoly-finance capitalism. US corporate industries and banks needed a market for finished goods and sources of raw materials as well as business for exporting capital. A guaranteed market for commerce and investments was an imperative for competitive capital accumulation. Maritime supremacy was needed to facilitate trade with China and South America and regulation over the US sphere of influence in those hemispheres.

The Philippine conjuncture then was unique because of the appearance of a nascent Filipino nationality in the stage of world-history. When the Spaniards ceded the islands to the US in 1898, the Filipinos had already defeated the Spaniards everywhere except the fort city of Manila. The army of the first Philippine Republic (proclaimed in June 1899) fought the US invaders from 1899 to July 1902. Apart from guerrilla resistance led by peasant-based leaders, the Moros continued to resist until 1913 (Tan 2002).

Given the advanced mode of industrial production and superior technology and human resources, the US demolished the revolutionary forces led by Emilio Aguinaldo. It was the first bloody war of imperial subjugation that opened the 20th century. From positional to mobile tactics to guerrilla warfare, the Filipinos suffered enormous casualties. Frustrated by the popular support for the resisters, the US engaged in genocidal destruction of villages and killing of civilian non-combatants. Torture, hamletting, mass detention in concentration camps, and other savage reprisals led to the death of 100,000 people in Batangas province in one campaign (Fast 1973: 75). General Franklin Bell estimated 600,000 deaths in the island of Luzon alone. These, added to the other 'depopulation' tactics in Samar and Panay where fierce resistance occurred, resulted in over a million

deaths (Francisco 1987: 19). On the victor's side, over \$300 million was spent; 4,234 died, 2,818 were wounded, and hundreds of soldiers returned home to die of service-related malaria, dysentery, venereal disease, etc. (Ocampo 1998, 249).

US monopoly capital distinguished itself from old-style colonialism by its systematic planning, its management of time-space coordinates for limitless capital accumulation. Even before the ferocious pacification campaigns were launched, the US already drew schemes for long-term exploitation of the islands. Geological explorations and anthropological surveys were conducted in advance to discover sources of raw materials and manpower. Compilations of immense data on history, ethnolinguistic groups, flora and fauna, etc. provided knowledge for the succeeding colonial administrators in establishing a centralised bureaucracy, civil service, and local governments. Unlike Spanish evangelism, the US colonial machinery was geared to using the country for the thorough exploitation of the newly acquired territory, envisaging the eventual expansion of multinational corporations and ultimate global hegemony.

### Knowledge production for profit

One example of how knowledge-production functioned to advance imperial hegemony may be found in the US handling of the 'Moro problem'. After thorough research and studies of the Moro people's history, customs, and values, the US negotiated with the Sulu sultan and his datus for acceptance of US sovereignty in exchange for preserving the sultanate's right to collect taxes and sell the local products. A monthly salary of Mexican dollars for the sultan was also included in the Bates Treaty signed on 20 August 1899 (Agoncillo and Guerrero (1970: 255–56). This neutralised the effective opposition of some Moro elites. But it did not prevent Generals Wood and Pershing, a few years later, inflicting a scorched-earth retaliation against sporadic intransigence, resulting in the massacre of thousands of Moro men, women, and children in the Battles of Bud Dajo (9 March 1906) and Bud Bagsak (11 June 1913) (Tan 2010: 130).

McKinley's policy of 'Benevolent Assimilation', translated into civil governor William Howard Taft's slogan of 'the Philippines for Filipinos', legitimised the physical occupation of the islands as a preparation

of the colonised for eventual self-rule. While brute force was used to destroy organised resistance by the Philippine Republic's army, the US deployed three non-violent instruments of subjugation.

The colonial programme was both traditional and innovative. First, by co-opting the *ilustrado* mestizo class (the proprietors of commercial land and the compradors), by offering them positions in local municipal boards, the military, and the civil service, the US drastically divided the leadership of the revolutionary forces. By promising democracy and gradual independence, the US won the allegiance of this educated minority who had fought Spanish absolutism. Aguinaldo himself swore allegiance to the US a month after his capture, followed by his capitulationist generals and advisers.

Second, by imposing a large-scale public education programme to train lower-echelon personnel for a bureaucracy headed by US administrators, the US answered the grievances of the peasantry, artisans, and workers against the monopolistic, hierarchical practice of the Spanish-dominated Catholic Church. As a pedagogical tool, the learning of English facilitated wider communication among widely scattered communities, transmitting bourgeois values and serving as the key to obtaining privileges and opportunities in careers and jobs. The massive dissemination of US cultural products (books and magazines, music, films, sports, theatre, etc.) reinforced the colonial mindset of the *indio* masses that continues to this day. It included the *pensionado* system of government-funded scholarships, the forerunner of fellowships funded by Fulbright, the Rockefeller and Ford foundations, and other privately endowed exchanges promoting the positive side of US 'compadre' or philanthropic colonialism.

Third, by propagating through schools and mass media the ideals of liberty, brotherhood, and meritocracy, the US cultivated among the masses the illusion of equal participation in government via elections, social-welfare programmes, and token land reform. This synchronised with the democratic ideals expressed by the nationalist propagandists Rizal, Mabini, and others, ideals already embodied in the republican constitution, thus gaining a measure of consent. With the final actualisation of these three modes of fashioning the colonial subject of US monopoly capital, the apparatus of the colonial state could

now be safely transferred to the mestizo elite and its clientele.

One symptomatic item of evidence for US-style pedagogical strategy during the war is the incidence of soldier-teachers and hundreds of civilian volunteers from the US who fanned out across the islands. Public schools were opened everywhere. The University of the Philippines (established in 1908) and the Bureau of Education spearheaded the training of 'Americanised' natives for the professions and the civil service. By 1907 the US had established the Philippine Legislature, composed mainly of mestizo elites and token 'nationalist' veterans. By 1916 the colonial bureaucracy was in the hands of the comprador and land-owning elite, with the US governor general exercising veto power.

The self-proclaimed nationalist leaders Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmena took turns sublimating the nationalist aspirations of the people by leading missions to Washington delivering pleas for immediate independence. This was a shrewd manoeuvre to calm down the turbulent peasant insurrections in the 1920s and 1930s, culminating in the Sakdalista insurrections from 1930–35. The Philippine Commonwealth, formed in 1935 with the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Law, marked the advent of US neo-colonial retrenchment.

### **Crafting a neo-colonial strategy**

After the hasty proclamation of the end of the Philippine-American War in 1902, the US began constructing its hegemony via popular consensus. Schooling, the civil service, and bureaucracy served as ideological apparatuses to accomplish that aim. Since the US, unlike Spain, did not claim to save the souls of savage pagans, its 'civilising mission' inhered in the tutelage of the natives for a market-centred democratic polity (insuring free trade and free labour) suited to the needs of finance-monopoly capitalism.

Even before armed hostilities ceased, President McKinley formed a civil government to replace the military officials who managed pacification. In July 1902, the US Congress passed the first Philippine Organic Act establishing the Philippine legislature as provided for by the 1916 Jones Law which promised eventual independence. But it was the 1909 Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act that guaranteed its export-oriented agricultural economy



even after formal independence in 1946. It tied the client Filipino sugar landlords and compradors, together with their political representatives, to serve US imperial goals. The Act eliminated the tariff on sugar and created a captive market for US products. However, not much foreign investment came in because earlier legislation had limited the size of land holdings, thus preventing US attempts to initiate plantation production of cash crops. This resulted in the conflict with the US sugar beet industry and US investors in Cuban sugar that led to demands for Philippine independence to eliminate US preference for Philippine sugar.

Beginning in 1924, the Filipino oligarchs had to manoeuvre and negotiate the terms of independence to insure the preservation of their wealth and privileges. In 1934, the Tydings-McDuffie Act was passed restricting the free entry of Philippine sugar while providing for the establishment of the Philippine Commonwealth, an interim formation which served as the blueprint for the post-war neocolony. From 1935–1941, the Commonwealth and its American stewards faced growing unrest from a politicised peasantry and impoverished urban workers not fully disciplined by the client–patron pattern of political domination.

Class war resurfaced with the 1935 Sakdalista insurrection on the eve of a general referendum on the ratification of the Philippine Constitution. This was a symptom of the failure of US colonial policies in eradicating the fundamental problem of land ownership and feudal practices. In 1903, 81 per cent of all land holdings were cultivated directly by their owners; by 1938, the figure had declined to 49 per cent, with the polarisation increasing in the post-war decade when, by the 1950s, two-thirds of the population were landless, working as sharecroppers (East 1973: 76). In short, US colonialism thrived on the social and political exploitation of the countryside where the majority of Filipinos lived, thus nourishing the source of anti-US imperialist insurgency from that time to the present (for more data on structural inequality, see Canlas et al. 1988).

### **Interlude: the Japanese occupation**

Japan easily occupied the Philippines in 1942 after the defeat of General Douglas

MacArthur's forces of Americans and Filipinos in Bataan and Corregidor. Historians now agree that MacArthur's incompetence in failing to prepare for the invasion explains the most humiliating defeat for the US on record (Agoncillo and Guerrero 1970; Rutherford 1971, 155;). Japan thus became the third imperial power to subjugate the Philippines in less than half a century. But its mode of subjugating the country in three-and-a-half years of occupation demonstrates significant features of the pattern already manifested in the way the US took over control from the Spanish colonisers.

Since the Second World War was basically a rivalry between two industrial powers, the role of the Philippines continued to be geopolitical (as a military base) and economic (a source of raw materials and manpower). Japan needed vital raw materials such as copper and food for its war effort. Just like the US, Japan carried out methodical reconnaissance of the cultural and sociopolitical condition of the Philippines many years before Pearl Harbor. In the 1930s and 1940s, Japanese military spies posing as workers worked in the construction of roads and bridges to Baguio City, the summer capital of the US administration. They also carried out social investigation of the political loyalties of the mestizo elite as well as the mass organisations opposed to US rule. They succeeded in gaining the support of General Artemio Ricarte, a respected official of the Aguinaldo Republic, and of Benigno Ramos, the intellectual leader of the Sakdalista Party, as well as nationalist politicians such as Jose P. Laurel, Claro Recto, and others, who served in the puppet government of the Japanese-sponsored Republic.

### **Liberating Asians for Japan's empire**

The ideological cover for Japanese occupation was the scheme of the 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere'. The Philippines would be a member of this grand union of Asian nations all united in emancipating themselves from Western domination, and (in the case of the Philippines) from 'the oppression of the United States' (Veneracion 1987: 69). Japan echoed Taft's slogan of 'Philippines for the Filipinos', and encouraged the use of the vernacular and other indigenous cultural forms of expression.

Although aided by local sympathisers of Spain's fascism (such as the Catholic Church and mestizo compradors), the puppet Republic confronted the underground resistance of the combined forces of the guerrillas of the USAFFE (United States Armed Forces of the Far East) and the far more effective Communist-led Huks (acronym for People's Army Against the Japanese). The Huk guerrilla army emerged from the peasantry's experience of dispossession and recalcitrance during the first three decades of US rule. They opposed the Japanese confiscation of rice harvests, administered local governments which distributed land and food, and punished collaborators. When MacArthur returned in 1944–45, however, despite their substantial help in crippling the Japanese defence and liberating large areas of the country, the Huks were disarmed, arrested, and even massacred (Pomeroy 1992).

The war was the most horrendous experience for the Filipinos. Aside from Manila being entirely destroyed by US bombing and Japanese atrocities, the country suffered over a million deaths, second to the number of casualties during the Philippine-American War. Some 50 per cent of Filipino prisoners died while the number of civilians killed in the capital city of Manila exceeded those killed by the Japanese in Nanking, China. If the US did not give priority to the war in Europe, the Philippines would have been freed from the Japanese much earlier. The people were told to wait for US relief, channelling all their hopes in the promise of MacArthur to redeem them from suffering. The brutality experienced by Filipinos from Japanese military reprisals, helped by long years of colonial education and tutelage, allowed the majority to welcome MacArthur as 'the liberator'. It also tended to glamourise the subordinate position of Filipinos as part of 'US–Philippines' special relations. MacArthur immediately promoted the representatives of the pre-war oligarchy to crucial positions, endorsing Manuel Roxas, a former collaborator, as president and installing pro-US bureaucrats and military personnel in charge of the state apparatuses.

### Colonialism refurbished

Under the Tydings-McDuffie Law which created the Philippine Commonwealth, the war-devastated Philippines was granted formal

independence. But certain conditions defined the limits of nominal sovereignty. The first condition required the Philippine Congress to accept the terms of the 1946 Philippine Trade Act, which provided some rehabilitation money to repair the war-damaged economy. More crucially, the Act required an amendment to the Philippine Constitution that gave US citizens equal rights in the exploitation of natural resources and ownership of public utilities and other businesses.

In effect, the colonisers retained their old privileged status. What was more decisive was the revival of the oligarchy's sugar industry via tariff allowances and quotas, the abrogation of control over import tariffs on US goods, prohibition of interference with foreign exchange (pegging the local currency to the dollar), and unlimited remittance of profits for US corporations. Free trade guaranteed the status of the former possession as a market for finished commodities and investments as well as a source of cheap agricultural products and raw materials. The Act was rammed through Congress by expelling left-wing legislators in line with the CIA-directed military campaign against the Huks (Woddis 1967: 38–40).

The second condition was the approval of the 1947 US-Philippines Treaty of General Relations. This empowered the US to exercise supreme authority over extensive military bases. It also guaranteed the property rights of US corporations and citizens, thus nullifying the sovereignty of the new republic. This was followed by the 1947 Military Bases Agreement, which guaranteed the US occupation of extensive military bases for 99 years. This included two major facilities (Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base), used as strategic springboards for intervention in Asia and the Middle East during the Korean War, Vietnam War, and the Iraq Wars. The Agreement also prohibited the Philippines from granting extra-territorial rights to any other country, and placed no restrictions on the uses to which the bases could be harnessed, nor the types of weapons that could be deployed to them (Labor Research Association 1958).

To reinforce its political and military ascendancy, the US also imposed the 1947 US-Philippines Military Assistance Pact to provide military assistance. Together with this, a US military advisory group (JUSMAG) was assigned to the Philippine armed forces that would exercise direct control by

supervising staff planning, intelligence personnel training, and logistics. All military hardware and financial backing must be cleared through JUSMAG. Meanwhile, the US AID Public Safety Division managed the tutelage of local police agencies. US-supplied weapons, training, and logistics were immediately used in the counter-insurgency campaign against the Huks in the early 1950s, and later on to support the parasitic elite and Marcos's authoritarian regime in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

In a revealing testimony to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1969, Lt General Robert Warren clarified the role of the US military in the Philippines: "To provide advice and assistance to the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the form of training material and services as necessary to assure protection of US interests in the Philippines and to promote US foreign policy objectives in the area" (US Senate 1969: 242).

In 1954, the terms of free trade that worsened Philippine dependency were modified in the 1954 Laurel-Langley Trade Agreement. This extended parity rights to Americans for all kinds of enterprises. Tariff rules were readjusted, thus shifting US leverage to direct private investments into manufacturing instead of raw-material production. Due to import controls imposed by the Philippines, the US established assembly and packaging plants to produce consumer goods, thus competing with local industries. This was the refinement of the elaborate apparatus of the multinational or transnational corporations that would dominate post-Second World War international trade. Meanwhile, the Philippine economy continued to rely on the US for selling raw materials and buying more expensive technology. In 1970, the US controlled 80 per cent of foreign investments in the country, approximately one-third of all the total equity capital of the 900 largest corporations. This represented 60 per cent of US investments in South-East Asia at that time (Bayani 1976: 18).

### **Crisis of the neo-colonial order**

At the height of the Cold War, with the US bogged down in the Indochina war, the Philippines underwent severe economic and social blockages that destabilised the Marcos regime, an instrument of US Cold War strategy but an ironic comment on the role of

the Philippines as a traditional showcase for democracy and freedom in Asia.

Marcos dispatched 2,000 troops to Vietnam at the request of Washington. But his economic base had been deteriorating since he won the presidency in the 1960s. The intense foreign stranglehold of the economy had led to an unchecked flow of capital, acute inflation, devaluation, and the rise of external debt. Exchange control was lifted in 1962, leading to capital outflow: repatriation of profits exceeded overseas investment. The over-dependence on basic exports (lumber, sugar, copper, coconuts, and other extracted products) of low value relative to imported finished goods led to a trade deficit of \$302 million in 1969 (Fast 1973: 89). In addition, the failure of the 'Green Revolution' and the alleged 'miracle rice' varieties (developed by the Rockefeller-funded International Rice Research Institute) aggravated the chronic shortage of rice as staple food, renewing the spectre of famine and unrest.

Meanwhile, the social contradictions between the oligarchic state and the majority of pauperised peasants sharpened. Although the Huks (renamed People's Army of Liberation) were violently suppressed by the CIA-backed Magsaysay regime in the 1950s, they enjoyed popular support in the extremely polarised countryside. Crippled by the arrest of its leaders in 1950, the Huks evolved into the New People's Army (NPA) when the Communist Party was reorganised in 1969 by Maoist partisans who matured during the resurgence of the nationalist, anti-imperialist movement evinced in massive student demonstrations, peasant and worker strikes, and agitation among professionals such as teachers, journalists, lay and religious workers, women, urban poor, and so on.

One of Marcos's justifications for declaring martial law in 1972 was the threat of a communist takeover. In actuality, it was an outgrowth of Cold War geopolitics and a US attempt to reassert its hegemony in Asia after its Vietnam debacle. Increased US military and political support for the Marcos dictatorship was insured when he guaranteed US business 100% profit remittance as well as opportunities to exploit the country's natural resources, and also the right to engage in banking, shipping, domestic fishing, and so on (Javate-De Dios et al. 1988). Later investigations revealed that the bulk of US aid ended up in the foreign

bank accounts of the Marcos family and their sycophantic cronies (Bonner 1987).

Total US military aid for the Marcos regime exceeded all that given to Africa or to Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, or Chile. Napalm and fragmentation bombs, among others, were supplied through JUSMAG to be used against NPA and Moro insurgents in Mindanao fighting the dictatorship. US AID officials trained police in advanced techniques of riot control, interrogation, and torture tactics applied to political prisoners and detained suspects.

US 'Special Forces' were also directly involved in counter-insurgency operations disguised as civic action activities, operations which are still maintained under the terms of the VFA and, more recently, under those of EDCA. These two agreements have virtually legitimised the return of US troops despite the dismantling of all US bases in 1992. One can conclude that 'US imperialism, with its economic and military stake in the Philippines, is the instigator and mastermind of the Marcos fascist dictatorship' (Bayani 1976: 38). The US continues to mastermind the human-rights violations, extrajudicial killings and torture of the succeeding administrations, from those of Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos to Joseph Estrada, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and Benigno Aquino III.

### Aftermath of the 1986 February Revolution

President Corazon Aquino's regime (1986–90) was marked by the 1987 massacre of 18 farmers in a peaceful demonstration and by numerous human rights violations through hamletting, 'salvaging' (extra-judicial killings), torture, etc. (Maglipon 1987). Both Aquino and her successor General Fidel Ramos had the approval of Washington in maintaining a stable market for business and US geopolitical manoeuvres in the Middle East. After Ramos, both President Joseph Estrada and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo pursued the 'Washington Consensus' of abiding by the structural conditionalities of the World Bank-International Monetary Fund in its neo-liberal programme of deregulation, privatisation and dismantling of any large-scale social-service programmes for the impoverished and marginalised majority of citizens (Eadie 2005; San Juan 2008). All land-reform programmes initiated since 1946 have failed to resolve the age-old problem of

landless farmers and iniquitous semi-feudal relations between landlords and rural workers (Putzel 1992).

In 1992, the Philippine Senate voted to dismantle the US military bases, but did not touch the other Agreements that maintained US supervision of the military and police agencies. The end of the Cold War did not witness a decrease in US military intervention. In 2002, after the 9/11 Al Qaida attacks, the US State Department declared the Philippines to be the second front in the war against global terrorism (Tuazon et al. 2002) and so required special supervision and surveillance.

Secretary of State Powell categorised the Communist Party of the Philippines and the NPA as terrorist organisations (Fletcher 2013). While the major Moro groups, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), were not stigmatised as terrorist, the US singled out the Abu Sayyaf splinter group as a reason for justifying the 1999 VFA and the 2002 Mutual Logistics Support Agreement that allowed the initial troop deployment of 600 Special Operations forces to assist the Philippine military in counter-insurgency operations. The killing of a Filipino transgender in October 2014 by US Marine Private Joseph Scott Pemberton called attention once again to the impunity of US personnel in numerous criminal cases. The VFA gives extra-territorial and extra-judicial rights to visiting US troops, an exceptional condition banned by the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Thus, the Philippines could not detain the suspected killer, undermining its national sovereignty and its system of justice (Ayroso 2014).

Meanwhile, the MILF is in the process of negotiating a peace agreement with President Aquino under the auspices of the US Institute of Peace and the Malaysian government, while the MNLF has fragmented into various camps since the 1996 accord with the government, a conclusion to the 1976 Tripoli Agreement between the MNLF and Marcos (Graf et al. 2009). The government's dialogue with the National Democratic Front-Philippines remains frozen while the Aquino regime is plagued with corruption, disaster relief, energy shortages, and the stalemate with China over the Scarborough Shoal and Spratley Islands confrontation in which the US Navy and Air Force presence figures prominently (Heydarian 2013).

### From Cold War to War on Terror

Since 2002, the joint annual military exercises called 'Philippine-US Bilateral Exercises' have been held allegedly to give humanitarian assistance during natural disasters to victimised provinces. They also offer weapons, logistics, and other support to the government campaigns to secure peace and order in war zones, or in vital metropolitan areas (as in the 2012 exercise around the National Capitol Region). Just like the Civic Action programmes refined during the anti-Huk drives of the 1950s, these exercises supplement violent repression with psywar and other unconventional techniques to win 'hearts and minds', closely following the US *Government Counterinsurgency Guide* of 2009 and its associated field manuals.

President Arroyo's Oplan Bantay Laya and President Benigno Aquino's Oplan Bayanihan are updated versions of the counter-insurgency strategy and tactics applied by the US in Vietnam, El Salvador, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. They combine intensive military operations, Intelligence, and civic action or triad operations, conventional warfare methods, and counter-guerrilla tactics. The US learned as much from its tutelage of its colonial subjects as Filipinos did through a cross-fertilisation of security and espionage practices. The historian Alfred McCoy concludes his inventory of such practices with the remark: 'Empire has been a reciprocal process, shaping state formation in Manila and Washington while moving both nations into a mutually implicated postcolonial world' (2009: 522).

The 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty continues to legitimise US 'low intensity warfare', such as the sustained anti-NPA drives during President Corazon Aquino's tenure (Bello 1989). During the Arroyo presidency, the US maintained the official headquarters of the US-Philippine Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines (JSOTF-P) inside the Camp Navarro of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Western Mindanao Command in Zamboanga City, where Moro insurgents are active. Drones and other sophisticated equipment are handled by US Special Forces against the Abu Sayyaf, now valorised as an Al Qaida offshoot, with linkages to other recent terrorist groups such as the Jemaah Islamiyah and the Islamic State (ISIS) in Syria.

To supplement JUSMAG, a new agency called the Defense Policy Board was created

to handle issues of international terrorism, maritime safety, transnational crime, natural disasters, pandemic outbreaks, etc. Other 'cooperative security locations' (as these facilities are euphemistically called) are found in Clark, Subic, Mactan International Airport, and in other clandestine areas (Klare 2005). It is in these areas occupied by US advisers and staff where torture, enforced disappearances, and extra-judicial killings occur. One recent case was that of US health worker Melissa Roxas, who was kidnapped and tortured by military agents in 2009. Documenting the accelerated kidnappings and extra-judicial murders of activists already publicised by Amnesty International and UN rapporteurs such as Philip Alston, the Filipino group KARAPATAN noted the 1,111 per cent increase of military assistance to the Arroyo regime beginning in 2001 when the first Balikatan exercise was held (Lefebvre 2010). This aid continues indiscriminately with horrendous consequences.

### Provisional coda

In March 2007, the Permanent People's Tribunal based in Europe heard witnesses about government abuses and judged Presidents Bush and Arroyo guilty of crimes against humanity (San Juan 2007: Appendix C). The verdict reviews the US imposition of virtual colonial status on the Philippines via numerous military and security agreements that have ensured domination over the economy, state apparatus, and internal security.

Under the guise of the global 'War on Terror' against extremists, the US continues to deploy and station thousands of troops, at any one time, in the Philippines. They participate in combat operations against local insurgents, a gross violation of Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Tribunal observed that 'because of its strategic location, the Philippines is vital for the US projection of military force in East Asia and as far away as the Middle East', serving as transit points and refuelling stations in its wars of aggression against the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the people of the Philippines. President Bush was an accomplice of President Arroyo in the systematic violation of the rights of the Filipino people, which were also crimes against humanity. For these, US imperialism was indicted as an international scourge.

From the 16th century to the present, imperialism (whether in the mode of Spanish old-style colonialism, Japanese militarism, or US tutelage in modernisation/developmentalism) represents one of the worst manifestations of an oppressive system of exploitation of peoples that have been outlawed by the United Nations Charter and its Declaration of Human Rights. Nonetheless, it persists today in the Philippines where a people's national-democratic, socialist-oriented revolution, with a long and durable tradition, thrives in a collective project to eradicate this historic legacy (San Juan 2008). The history of the Philippines may be read as one long chronicle of the people's struggle against colonialism and imperialism for the sake of affirming human dignity and universal justice.

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## **Settler Colonialism: Regional Development and the Dispossession of the Negev Bedouin**

### **Introduction**

In an interview with the *Jerusalem Post*, Israel's minister of agriculture Yair Shamir declared his intention to find a resolution to the decades-long land rights dispute between the State of Israel and the Negev Bedouin. Shamir explained that, in

formulating his plan, he will consult the Bedouin and try to reach an understanding with them. However, Shamir went on to explain that, failing that, his plan would be carried out anyway 'by force' (Ben Solomon 2014). These comments are characteristic of the State's attitude towards the Negev Bedouins throughout the decades. Shamir was tasked with solving the decades-long dispute in early January 2014, after the Praver Plan was halted as a result of a successful campaign of protest by Bedouin activists, non-governmental organisations, human rights groups, and international condemnation of the plan. Shamir's goal is to make amendments to the Praver Plan before implementing it. It is unclear how many Bedouins would be dispossessed, but projected numbers are from 30,000–70,000 (Amara 2013: 42). While for the time being the Praver Plan is on ice, its revival or the introduction of a new similar plan for the relocation and dispossession of the Negev Bedouin is on the horizon, rendering their future uncertain. Even without the Praver Plan, the threat of dispossession for the Bedouin due to development plans in the Negev region is ever present (Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality 2014a).

Of course, the situation facing the Bedouin has a history and can thus only be understood in context. This means looking firstly at the historical context of the dispute between the Negev Bedouin and the State of Israel as well as the wider historical context of colonisation. Secondly, this also means looking at the contemporary context where other groups share a similar fate with the Bedouin in other development settings worldwide. In this essay I examine certain aspects of the history of the dispute between the Negev Bedouin and the State of Israel and I reach the conclusion that there exists a certain continuity and overlap between the projects of colonialism and economic development, and that the law and its interpretation are immensely important as a vehicle for the achievement of these projects. I conclude that the dispute between the Negev Bedouin and the State of Israel is in a sense unique because the genesis of the dispute happened at a unique historical juncture that provides a clear example of the intimate relationship between the projects of colonialism and development.

## The Negev Region and the Bedouin

Today, Israel's Negev Bedouin population numbers approximately 210,000, with 90,000 living in unrecognised villages (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013) and laying claim to 800,000 dunums of land of which the Praver Plan would recognise only 200,000 dunums as belonging to the Bedouin (Nasasra 2014: 50). Those living in unrecognised villages are under the perpetual fear of having their homes and other structures demolished (Human Rights Watch 2008: 54–88). A recent report by the Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality (2014b: 19) documented 1,261 home demolitions in Bedouin villages in the Negev between January 2012 and July 2013, with demolitions continuing through 2014 (Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality 2014c).

The importance of the Negev desert as a site for Zionist settlement and development was recognised early in the 20th century, even though this did not lead to the establishment of a significant Jewish presence in the area (Oren, 1989: 198). However, by the early 1940s, the Jewish National Fund, the most important vehicle for the acquisition and development of land in Mandate Palestine, placed the purchase and development of land in the Negev high on its agenda (Tuten, 2005: 22). For the Zionist leadership, economic, ideological, political, and strategic considerations converged and made the settlement and development of the Negev a priority. This was particularly true in the case of David Ben-Gurion, who would later become Israel's first prime minister (Oren, 1989: 197; Tuten 2005: 22). This is also evident in the fact that since the founding of the State of Israel, the settlement and development of the Negev has been used as a way for the state to assert its sovereignty, and in pursuing this goal the state has provided strong financial incentives to attract investment for development to the region (Evans 2006; 585).

## The ideology of economic development

The Bedouin have historically been seen as an impediment to economic development. This was the case even before the founding of the State of Israel, during the Mandate period. For example, in the Hope Simpson Report (Simpson, 1930), after the seemingly

indeterminate nature of Bedouin land rights was considered, they were described as 'an anachronism wherever close development is possible and is desired'. Similarly, the assistant district commissioner of Nablus (quoted in Atran 1989: 734) described the presence of Bedouin in the area as a 'nuisance and only serves to impede the proper development of a very valuable area'. In general, Zionist discourse during the Mandate period seeking to advance the cause of Jewish settlement in Palestine was dominated by arguments about the benefits of modernisation, development and progress that would be achieved by Jewish immigration and colonisation, and about how Arabs would benefit as well from these progressive changes and be freed from the fetters of traditionalism (Bisharat 1994: 484–486). Another significant and related part of Zionist discourse at the time bore a strong affinity to John Locke's labour theory of value: right to land ownership stems from the agricultural development of land, and while the Arabs neglected the land, according to this argument, Jews and Jewish settlers developed it (Kapitan, 1997: 20–21).

Shortly after the State of Israel was established, prime minister Ben Gurion called for the relocation of the Bedouin to the North of the Negev 'in order not to disturb development plans' (quoted in McGreal 2003). Not only were the Bedouins seen as an obstacle to development but, as former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir put it, at the same time they were to be made 'civilis[ed]' (ibid.). Similarly, Moshe Dayan in 1963, at the time serving as minister of agriculture, said '[w]e should transform the Bedouins into an urban proletariat ... this phenomenon of the Bedouins will disappear' (quoted in Shamir 1996). As Sa'Di (1997: 38) showed, themes relating to progress, modernisation, and development feature heavily in discussions on the relationship between Zionists and Palestinians, which portray the former as the benevolent and enlightened 'agents of modernization' and the latter as the beneficiaries of the resulting progressive changes.

Nisbet (1994: 334) has demonstrated that 'there has been close relationship between belief in the general progress of mankind and belief in the necessity of economic growth and development'. The origins of development theory, the so-called 'era of development', and the notion of development in general are commonly traced back to the



end of the Second World War (Arndt 1987: 49; Esteva, 2010: 1; Leys 1996: 5). However, Cowen and Shenton (2005: 26) dispute this standard genealogical account of the idea of development and instead trace it to the 19th-century notion of ‘trusteeship’ when ‘those who saw themselves as developed believed that they could act to determine the process of development for others deemed less-developed’. The fact that the history of the notion of development – even though it underwent many changes and redefinitions and at any given time had slightly different meanings – goes back to the period of colonisation merits more attention when it comes to considering the relationship between colonialism and development today. For example, Edward Goldsmith (1997: 69) finds a ‘disquieting continuity between the colonial era and the era of development’. Indeed, the old notion of bringing ‘civilisation’ to the colonised has now been supplanted by the notion of bringing ‘economic development’ to Third World countries (Collier 1998: 184).

### **Law, progress and development**

Interestingly, Western law has had a history whose evolution parallels that of the notion of development and embodies similar concepts and assumptions. The association of ‘Western-type’ law with moral and civilisational progress has a long history. This understanding of modern Western law and its association with notions of progress, order, development, and modernisation has its origins in the Enlightenment and has in fact had an enabling role in colonialism and was projected as a force of ‘civilization’ opposed to ‘savagery’ (Fitzpatrick, 2002: 72–111).

Law of course, played a central part in the processes of modernisation and development, and this can be seen in the prehistory of Israel, during the Mandate period. In his study of law during that period, Shamir (2000: 08) notes that ‘[t]he establishment of a functioning, “Western-type” state apparatus in general and the reconstruction of the legal system in particular, enhanced a general rationalization process that was perceived by most Zionists as a blessed mark of progress and order’.

When considering the dispossession of the Negev Bedouin by the State of Israel, the relationship between law, colonialism, and economic development is important for two

reasons. Firstly, it can be argued that the State of Israel can be placed within the colonial context and be properly understood as a settler-colonial state. Indeed, many academics have made this case convincingly (Rodinson 1973; Veracini 2006: 1–2; Yiftachel 2003). Secondly, as mentioned above, Zionist accounts of the relationship between the settlers and the state on the one hand and Palestinian Arabs on the other are guided by notions of modernisation. This also holds true particularly in relation to the Negev Bedouin. As Rosen-Zvi (2004: 50) explains, according to official accounts, which find support from planners and some academics, the state’s handling of the situation of the Bedouin is ‘based on notions of development, modernization’. Considering the above, the way in which the Negev Bedouin came to be dispossessed can only be properly understood if placed within the historical context of colonisation. To be more precise, the relationship between the State of Israel and the Negev Bedouin can be best understood as internal colonialism (Yiftachel, 2012). The reason why the colonial paradigm is important when studying the dispossession of the Negev Bedouin is that a particular mode of land acquisition of land using law, and the legal justifications, are characteristic of colonialism. These can be clearly seen at work in the dispossession of the Bedouin in the process of developing the Negev region.

### **The beginnings**

Traditionally, the Negev Bedouin did not hold formal title for their lands as they saw themselves as autonomous and they were wary of outside authorities (Kram, 2012: 141). Instead, their claims concerning ownership, use, and occupation of land emanated from traditional law and custom (Bailey 2009: 263–271; Shamir 1996: 235). This was the case under both the administration of the Ottoman Empire and later during the Mandate government when the British created the Department of Land in order to formalise land rights (Hussein and McKay 2003: 107–8). The Bedouins showed no interest in having their lands registered as their rights over the land they occupied had not been contested yet (113). The consequence of this was that the failure to register the land meant that it was classified as *mawat*, that is, state land (110). *Mawat* (Arabic for ‘dead’) was a land

classification under the Ottoman Land Law 1858 referring to 'undeveloped or unused land not owned or possessed by anybody' (106). *Mawat* land could be 'revived' through cultivation with permission, in which case payment was not required, or without permission, in which case payment was required before title of the land could be passed to the applicant (109). Even though the *mawat* classification was abolished by the 1969 Real Estate Law along with other antiquated Ottoman land classifications and all *mawat* land passed to the state, the classification was later resurrected by the State of Israel and used in such a way so as to deny the claims the Bedouin had over their lands partly by arguing that since the vast majority of the Bedouin had failed to register those interests, the land therefore passed to the state (Fields 2010: 73–74).

Following the creation of the State of Israel and after the War of Independence broke out, many Palestinian Arabs either escaped the hostilities or were expelled from their homes forcibly. The Negev Bedouin shared the same fate, with the vast majority of them either making their way to Jordan or to Gaza and the West Bank with only 11,000 of them remaining in the Negev (Abu-Saad, 2008: 1725). Eventually, the majority of those remaining were expelled as well and were transferred to a small area called the 'Siyag', a previous sparsely populated area in the north-east Negev, designated by the Israeli government (1726). Now, under military government, they were prohibited and cut off from most of the Negev and not allowed to visit their lands to tend to or cultivate them, nor to graze their herds (1725–1726).

Following the forced concentration of the Bedouin from most of the Negev to the 'Siyag', the state used the 1950 Transfer of Property Law and the 1950 Absentees' Property Law to nationalise their lands, and later the 1953 Land Acquisition (Validation of Acts and Compensation) Law placing them under the control of the Development Authority which was established in 1952 in order to manage them for state-initiated development projects (1729). While the military government came to an end in 1966, the Bedouin who attempted to leave the 'Siyag' and make their way back to their lands found that they were forbidden to do so, and those who tried found themselves to be trespassers on state land (Hussein and McKay 2003: 128). In their absence, the lands that the

Bedouin had previously occupied had begun to be developed by the state and with numerous development projects taking place the Bedouin were completely left out of the picture (*ibid.*). This process of exclusion continued immediately after with the development of a forced sedentarisation scheme in combination with the Planning and Building Law of 1965 which rendered construction that did not conform with the official planning zones (such as residential and agricultural zones) to be illegal. This meant that the Bedouin now lived in unrecognised villages (Hussein and McKay 2003: 258–259). Moreover, the application of the law discriminated against Palestinians, who were ignored by the planning authorities (259). The aim of the sedentarisation scheme was to concentrate the Bedouin and settle them in an even smaller area of the 'Siyag', in townships (Abu-Saad 2008: 1730–1734). It appears that the motive behind the forced sedentarisation schemes for the Bedouin was the acquisition of their lands by the state (Falah, 1983; 1989: 88). The provision of services in these townships is substandard compared to that in Jewish towns (Abu-Saad 2008: 1733–1734).

The state's policies led to a situation today where those Bedouins, approximately 70,000, refusing to settle by moving to these towns live in 'unrecognised villages' and are under the constant fear of having their homes demolished. The process of dispossession continues to this day and is as dire as it was, as they continue to be marginalised by and excluded from development projects (Humphries 2009: 511–512).

As mentioned above, *mawat* (dead) land was a legal classification of the Ottoman Land Law 1858 referring to land that is not cultivated and is neither owned nor possessed by anyone. The 1858 law provided that the cultivation of *mawat* land constituted 'revival' of the land and, thus, the persons responsible were eligible to acquire formal title to the land (Hussein and McKay, 2003: 109). However, as Forman and Kedar (2003: 502) argued, the *mawat* category during the Mandate was interpreted on the basis of 'Western concepts of land use and colonial exigencies'.

Not only that, the British Mandate government made a number of amendments to the Ottoman Land Law 1858. These included issuing the 1921 *Mawat* Land Ordinance which gave an unrealistic two-month deadline from the day of its passing for anyone claiming

any claims over *mawat* land to formalise them with the administration by way of registration. Once those two months had elapsed, title to the land in question would immediately pass to the government. However, in practice, this did not interfere with the traditional rights and usage of land for those who failed to register their claims (Forman and Kedar 2003: 514–515). But, as noted above, after the State of Israel was founded, in the process of dispossessing the Negev Bedouin, it seized upon this fact to argue that since they had failed to register their interests, the land had passed to the state.

Shamir (1996: 232), in his analysis of a series of decisions by the supreme court of Israel dealing with Bedouin land claims, argues that the process of dispossession cannot be explained solely by reference to conscious and calculated attempts to seize Bedouin lands by the instrumental use of the law. He emphasises the influence of British colonialism on the development of Israel's legal system, which was important in 'asserting Zionism's identity as a modern Western project that resists a backward-looking and chaotic East' (237). According to Shamir (232), in the Negev 'as in other colonial settings, a cultural vision complements the physical extraction of land and the domestication of the local labour force and ... the law of the colonizers creates an infrastructure for the advancement of such goals'.

Modern law, argues Shamir (233), is characterised by an obsession with order and as such its operation is premised on the idea 'that the most accurate and reliable way for knowing reality (hence 'truth') depends on the ability to single out the clearest and most distinct elements that constitute a given phenomenon'. He shows how the Bedouin have been conceived as 'rootless nomads' by the supreme court, with the effect of their claims to their lands being denied on the grounds that they had not registered them during the Mandate, thus causing them to fall under the *mawat* classification. As they had allegedly not cultivated the *mawat* lands, they were not revived, therefore remaining the property of the state (238–242). However, contrary to these claims, the Negev Bedouin had been cultivating their lands (Marx 1967: 18–23, 81–88, 91–100; Meir 2009: 826–827;). However, Israeli courts interpreted the notion of 'cultivation' of *mawat* land so narrowly as to cause all the horticultural or agricultural

activities engaged in by the Bedouin to fall short (Amara and Miller 2012: 86; Shamir 1996: 241).

Unlike Shamir, Kedar (2001: 964) finds more room for legal instrumentalism in the process of dispossession; as he explains, 'as in many other settler societies, the quest for land served as a major motivating force that influenced the law's development'. Indeed, it is hard not to notice the immense similarities in how the classification of *mawat* land was used in dispossessing the Bedouin with conscious colonial justifications based on John Locke's labour theory of value for dispossessing native populations from their lands, most notably in the Americas in relation to the Native Americans (Arneil 1996a; 1996b: 132–167; Fitzpatrick, 2002: 82). Bisharat (1994: 483) has noted how in the case of the Bedouin and their lands, the colonial justification provided by Locke could actually be applied (as it could not apply in the case of the rest of the Arab population), but he does not go on to consider how the *mawat* land classification and the fact that *mawat* land could only be vivified through cultivation were used to dispossess them and the similarities of the process with the Lockean labour theory of value.

### **Bedouin and dispossession in international perspective**

The legal arguments that the State of Israel and its institutions utilised in order to dispossess the Negev Bedouin bear a striking similarity to the doctrine of *terra nullius* (Champagne 2012: 278). The doctrine of *terra nullius*, a staple justification in the dispossession of indigenous peoples by colonial powers, was successfully challenged and rejected before the International Court of Justice in 1975 and more recently before the High Court of Australia in 1992 in relation to aboriginal land rights (Sheehan 2012). While significant progress has been made in relation to the land rights of indigenous peoples as a result of such legal developments, Sheehan (231) notes that 'the State of Israel has been unwilling to reach an accommodation similar to that demonstrated by other comparable jurisdictions, such as Australia'.

Changing focus from the colonial paradigm to the paradigm of development-induced dispossession, the experience of the Negev Bedouin is not unique and definitely

not the most severe. Development-induced displacement is a worldwide phenomenon with severe consequences. For example, in the span of four decades, 2,550,000 people were internally displaced in India due to mining projects (Downing 2002: 3). Another example, according to the World Commission on Dams (2000: 104) is the development of dams in India and China which may have dispossessed a combined 26,000,000–58,000,000 people. It is estimated that development-induced displacement accounts for the dispossession of 15,000,000 people per year (Cernea, 2006: 26).

However, in a sense it can be argued that the situation of the Negev Bedouin remains unique. The on-going land disputes between them and the State of Israel came into being at a historical juncture where in the process of their dispossession, the colonial paradigm and the development-induced internal displacement paradigm overlapped. In other words, there can be observed an immediate continuity in the method of their dispossession, which is identical and illustrates perfectly the continuity between the projects of colonialism and development.

## Conclusion

Considering the above analysis, it is not hard to notice the continuity and overlap between colonialism and development, especially in the case of the Negev Bedouin where regional development is taking place in a colonial context. Both colonialism and development advance similar claims as to the alleged benefits of their respective projects, and both justify and rationalise their actions by recourse to notions of progress, modernisation, and order. Additionally, both use the law in order to implement their goals. The law may appear neutral, but its interpretation is not neutral. As was shown above, legal categories and even everyday words like ‘cultivation’ are interpreted narrowly by the state and the courts so as to achieve policy goals relating to regional development. The history of dispossession of the Negev Bedouin serves as an example and a warning to approach claims of benevolent and beneficial development targeting an unwilling and reluctant group with a degree of scepticism, particularly when that group is marginalised and the balance of power is against it.

Valentinos Kontoyiannis

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## Settler Imperialism and Indigenous Peoples in Australia

'Settlers come to stay' (Wolfe 2006: 388). These four words characterise the central characteristic of a particular colonial formation: the settler colony. It operates within the larger framework of colonial projects, at times intersecting or overlapping with, at times subverting, other forms of colonisation or empire building. In contrast to other colonisers, however, settlers superimpose a new social, economic, and ecological order, aiming at the permanent transformation of their new home. Indigenous populations are therefore to vanish either by assimilation, dislocation, or physical annihilation. As such, settler colonialism is an inherently genocidal, open-ended process to establish and maintain settler supremacy.

Critical approaches to analyse the particularities of settler colonisation have varied over time. Recent understandings of the phenomenon developed in the context of the 20th-century anti-colonial movement, and strive for self-determination of Indigenous peoples. They have demonstrated that settler colonialism is as a larger, global phenomenon of imperialist expansion which manifests in multiple forms in different colonial situations: Algeria, Argentina, Manchuria, German South-West Africa, and Palestine are considered prominent examples (Veracini 2010). The interest in the topic has intensified over the last few years and crystallised into an academic journal, *Settler Colonial Studies*, first published in 2011.

Due to the extent and impact of 19th-century British overseas settlement, the analysis of past and present settlerism in the

'Anglo-world' (Belich 2009: 6), i.e. Canada, US, South Africa, Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand) plays a prominent role in current debates. Recent scholarship is led by a strong interest in the transnational aspects of the history of British settler colonies, investigating how colonial knowledge gained at different sites was exchanged, and the cultural, juridical, and political characteristics they shared. In doing so, many scholars focus particularly on the process of land acquisition, dispossession, and removal of Indigenous populations. Their findings stress the shared legacy of the common law and the vital role notions of individual proprietorship and improvement played in legitimising the appropriation of Indigenous land. They highlight the dynamic relationship between settlers, colonial administrations, and capital interests in the metropolises, such as Chicago or London, and emphasise the influence of common concepts of 'improvement', collective imaginary geographies of 'empty lands', and racist discourses of Indigenous peoples and cultures on settler policies and actions. Environmental and economic histories have made significant contributions to this debate. As Norbert Finzsch has demonstrated, it is vital to analyse the interconnectedness between economic, social, cultural, and ecological dimensions of Australian settlerism. Employing socio-ecological system theory, he argues that settler expansion is 'achieved in the context of a democratic and egalitarian society of white, predominantly Protestant Anglo-Saxon settlers organized in farms and family households', and is directed against an Indigenous Other (Finzsch 2010: 253). Economically, it 'rests on a link between agrarian home production on the frontier and rentier capitalism in the cities' and has thus 'no periphery and no core, since the capital-owning elites in the cities and the social actors on the frontier form one complex interactive community' (253–254). Finzsch chose the term 'settler imperialism' to designate this particular form of settler colonisation. Settlers play a vital role in this model: their small-scale, local, mundane actions such as squatting, clearing, fencing or tilling the land generated a rhizomatic series of events which transformed the landscape, driving Indigenous people into uninhabitable areas, destroying the material basis of their livelihood and culture (254).

### The Australian case

In 1788, when the 1,483 men, women, and children of the first British convict transport landed at Sydney Cove, the Australian continent was inhabited by approximately 750,000 people, who were organised in a complex network of nations, clans, and families. Their ancestors had migrated to Australia 45,000 years earlier and had cultivated and cared for the landscape ever since. Aboriginal societies had developed a multi-layered system of land ownership and usage based on the principle that different groups held custodianship for particular sacred sites, and with an intricate set of rules managing the access to resources by hunting, foraging, or travelling. Each group developed highly specialised technologies to secure food supplies in adaption to their specific environment. They were interconnected by long distance trade routes along which people, goods, and information travelled across the continent. This diversity is reflected by today's terminology, which explicitly addresses the variety of Indigenous communities living on Australian territory at the beginning of the 21st century as Australian Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, Papua New Guineans, and Timorese. Each nation, in fact each community, was affected individually by the European settlement. Yet, they all share experiences of violence, dispossession, resistance, and survival. In the following, I will focus on three select aspects of these shared experiences: land rights, violence, and assimilation. Each represents a particular moment in the double sense of the word: a historical moment in terms of a historical key situation or bifurcation and a momentum, the driving force of the unresolved conflict of colonial invasion.

### Taking the land: the doctrine of *terra nullius*

The captain of the First Fleet, Governor Arthur Phillip, had been issued very specific orders by the Crown concerning the management of the new British outpost. These included directions regarding British–Aboriginal relations: after landing, he had to protect the settlement from possible attacks. He was to establish 'an Intercourse with the Natives and to conciliate their affections'. If any of the Crown's subjects killed an Aborigine or unnecessarily interrupted 'the exercise of their several occupations', Phillips was to punish the perpetrator accordingly.

His instructions were less specific regarding the question of Indigenous consent to the establishment of a British outpost and the occupancy of Aboriginal territory. Phillips was informed that the Crown intended to provide the project with additional supplies and material which would enable Phillips 'to barter with the Natives either on the Territory of New South Wales, or the Islands adjacent in those Seas' (Commonwealth of Australia 2011a). Yet, the document did not mention Indigenous sovereignty, land occupancy, or tenure that preceded British claims.

This absence, regardless of whether it was by neglect or choice, opened the door for a divergence from established British colonial policy regarding Indigenous land rights that had evolved from the encounter with American Indians over the course of the previous 150 years. Starting with local trade and peace agreements, it had gradually become customary to negotiate with Indigenous inhabitants of a colonial territory for land cession, offering material compensation in return. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 enshrined this practice in British law, stipulating that only the Crown and her representatives were entitled to sign such a contract. It also aimed at limiting settler encroachment on Indigenous territory: colonists were forbidden to settle beyond contractual established boundaries. Illegal squats were to be abandoned. Although British colonial administrations often lacked the resources or the political resolve to enforce this stipulation, the Proclamation acknowledged the existence of Indigenous claims and land rights. In the newly established colony of New South Wales (NSW), by contrast, settlers and officials acted on the assumption that no Aboriginal land title existed since the Australian landscape lacked the most significant marker of proprietorship: agricultural usage or 'improvement' of the land, as for instance stipulated in John Locke's famous *Two Treatises of Government* (1689). The territory was considered 'desert and uninhabited' or, in terms of Roman law, a *res nullius*, a land supposedly without a sovereign or a proprietor which was taken into possession by the British Crown by right of discovery, not conquered or acquired by cession (Blackstone 2008/1765–69). By the beginning of the 20th century, it had become common in international law to refer to this notion as the doctrine of *terra nullius*.

Yet, from the early beginning of colonisation, settlers found ample evidence of Aboriginal land usage. But empirical observation did not suffice to question the doctrine of *terra nullius*. On the contrary, a series of juridical and political decisions bolstered the myth of the empty land. The most prominent among them was the reaction of Governor Richard Bourke when John Batman signed a treaty with a group of Wurundjeri elders on 6 June 1835 in which he acquired 600,000 acres around Port Phillip and along the Yarra River, today the location of the city of Melbourne. Bourke declared this treaty to be 'void and of no effect' in August 1835. The Governor reaffirmed the notion that all 'vacant Lands' were the Crown's property. Only governmental licence could establish a legitimate land title (Commonwealth of Australia 2011b). His decision was approved by the Colonial Office the following October, affirming the concept of *terra nullius*. It took until the end of the 20th century to overturn it.

Many Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders fought for the recognition of their traditional land titles since the 1940s. They employed strikes, demonstrations, and other forms of political protest to make their demands heard. One of the most effective tools of this struggle was the court procedure: in 1982, three activists (Eddie Mabo, David Passi, and James Rice) filed an action in the Australian High Court in response to the Queensland Amendment Act. They argued that their people, the Meriam, were the traditional owners and proprietors of the islands of Mer (Murray Island), Dauar and Waier, located in the Torres Strait and annexed by Queensland in 1879. These proceedings, *Mabo v. Queensland (No 2)* also known as *Mabo*, served as a test case to determine the land rights of Indigenous peoples throughout Australia. In a landmark decision, the court rejected the doctrine of *terra nullius* and recognised the Meriam people's land title on 3 June 1992. The juridical concept used to describe their proprietorship, 'native title', acknowledges the persistence of Aboriginal land rights after settlement. Conceptually, it draws upon earlier decisions in other British settler colonies concerning Aboriginal land rights, e.g. the US (1831) and Nigeria (1921), and was fleshed out in the Native Title Act, passed by the Australian Parliament in 1993 (amended in 1998, 2007, and 2009). The act regulates its recognition, protection, and



'co-existence with the national land management system', installing the National Native Title Tribunal to mediate conflicting interests and claims (National Native Title Tribunal 2013). Subsequent court decisions, such as the Wik case in 1996, established that in case of a conflict of rights, native title would be extinguished by privileges acquired by a pastoral lease.

Although a huge success in abolishing *terra nullius*, the concept and practice of native title were soon criticised, especially after the dismissal of the claims of the Yorta-Yorta nation in a series of trials between 1998 and 2002. During these proceedings, it became obvious that the burden of proof lay exclusively on the Aborigines' side. Continued land usage, according to traditional customs, the central criteria to establish native title, was interpreted within a rigid framework that did not allow for cultural change. According to this view, strategies of survival and resilience, such as adaptation or acculturation, are seen as abandonment and discontinuity, cancelling out all legitimate land claims. The 'tide of history', to use the words of Justice Olney in his original ruling of 1998, was presumed to have washed away traditional laws and customs. As a result, the doctrine of *terra nullius* was replaced by the 'doctrine of extinguishment' (Anaya 2004: 198–199).

### Slow violence and low-level warfare

Initially, the British settlement was boxed in between the Blue Mountains and the ocean. But as soon as, with the help of Aboriginal guides, a passage across the topographical obstacle was found in 1813 and governmental efforts to contain settlement within the prescribed 'Limits of Location' were dropped, the colonists quickly spread across the continent. In contrast to the US, the most commonly known model of settler expansion in the Angloworld, Australian settlement did not proceed unidirectionally from South-East to North-West but inwards, starting from several beachheads at the rim of the continent such as Sydney, Port Phillip, and Adelaide.

Based on the legal fiction of *terra nullius*, the Crown acted as the sole proprietor and its representatives handed out land grants to reward services or to encourage the emigration of wealthy and respectable free settlers during the early years of colonisation. After

1831, land titles were sold and the revenue used to finance a very successful scheme of assisted immigration: in NSW alone, the number of free immigrants rose from 8,000 persons during the 1820s, to 30,000 and 80,000 in the 1830s and 1840s respectively (Macintyre 2006: 73). As the Australasian colonies were successively granted responsible government, starting with NSW in 1855, the control of land policies and responsibilities of revenue from land sales transferred to the colonial legislatures. Concomitantly, landed property, the sign of social status, of wealth, of freedom and respectability during early colonial times, became the key to building a settler democracy as the franchise was linked to land ownership (as well as male gender and age). Thus, the financial interests of the ruling elite and the political interests of male settlers became intertwined with the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples. The strongest motivation, however, was the individual desire to gain wealth, be it as farmer, miner, or entrepreneur. The largest source of revenue throughout the long 19th century, the era of settlement expansion, was wool. In 1850, sheep pastoralists' sales exceeded £20 million per year, amounting to more than 90 per cent of all the colonies' exports. In NSW alone, sheep numbering 4 million in 1840 and 13 million in 1850 grazed on former Aboriginal hunting grounds (Macintyre 2006: 57).

The impact on local ecosystems was severe: billabongs were depleted and habitats of marsupials ruined by introducing new herbivores and pasture, massive overgrazing, and erecting fences. The ecologically highly integrated Aboriginal foraging practices were similarly affected as access to water and food was denied. Being cut off from sacred sites corrupted the social cohesion of Aboriginal communities. Thus, environmental changes resulted in a form of 'slow violence' (Nixon 2011: 2), which destroyed spiritual and cultural bonds, displaced communities, and killed Aboriginal people. In a similar manner, the destructive power of contagious diseases unfolded. The most important among them was smallpox. It travelled along trade routes, familial and social bonds beyond the limits of European settlement. Settlers often mistook the symptoms for an endogenic Aboriginal illness which rendered the disease and its effects invisible. We know from similar colonial scenarios that the average mortality rate of Indigenous populations lay

between one-half and two-thirds, with incidents of whole communities being wiped out. Smallpox also had devastating long-term effects for the survivors: causing blindness, sterilising women, and starving those who were unable to hunt, fish, or gather sustenance.

From the beginning, Australian Aboriginal nations fought against colonisation. As Henry Reynolds demonstrated, motivation, methods, and forms of indigenous opposition against the settler invasion were multiple and varied over time. One of its characteristics, however, stands out: in contrast to other Indigenous peoples, Australian Aborigines did not organise in larger political confederacies or alliances. Corresponding to their decentralised way of social organisation, they operated in small, independent groups on a local level. Aboriginal warriors adapted their tactics to the new circumstances, targeting cattle, farms, and infrastructure by relying on their tracking skills and the element of surprise. Instead of incorporating new technologies, such as the use of firearms, Aborigines developed a new form of economic warfare. They abandoned the cycle of foraging and fighting for a combination of raiding and securing resources: the 'Australian frontier warfare' (Connor 2003: 21).

During the early phases of settlement, Aboriginal attacks often posed a serious threat to the lives and economic success of the colonies. By the end of the 1820s, for instance, the attacks of the Tasmanian Aboriginal nations had engendered large-scale fear among the white population and provoked thoughts of giving up the colony entirely. James Ross, editor of the *Hobart Town Courier*, declared: '[i]f the outrages of the Blacks be not put down [...] we must abandon the island, we must look for safety only to our ships that will carry us to another shore' (Ross 1830: 3). In response to the Aboriginal resistance, Lieutenant-Governor George Arthur declared martial law in 1826 and organised one of the largest counter-insurgency operations in Australian history: the so-called Black Line. From 7 October to 30 November 1830, about 2,200 men (among them approximately 550 soldiers, 440 free men, 800 assigned convicts) joined up to form a line or rather several lines to drive the Tasmanian Aborigines out of their hiding places to the South end of the Island to be shipped to an offshore reservation. The outcome of the £30,000 operation

was unexpected: only two Aboriginal Australians were captured, two more reported killed. The overwhelming majority slipped through during the cover of night and/or hid in more inaccessible areas of the island. But it succeeded in forcing the Big River and the Oyster Bay nations to surrender in 1831 (Clements 2013: 21, 27–28).

As a form of governmentally organised violence, the Line was, however, the exception. Decentralised, local, low level acts of violence were much more common as the rhizomatic expansion proceeded: settlers shot Aborigines they considered to be 'trespassing' on their land, poisoned wells to murder clans living nearby, and organised counter-raids to kill Aborigines, exerting vengeance and striking terror into the hearts of those whom they believed to be their subhuman enemies (see e.g. the cases documented by Ryan 2008). Among the best-known cases is the massacre at Myall Creek in 1838. Here, 12 stockmen, in pursuit of Aboriginal warriors who had carried out a successful attack on the whites' cattle, encountered a group of Wirrayaay, mainly women and children, who had sought refuge with local hut keepers and shepherds. Under pretence, the stockmen led the Aborigines away and murdered them. Myall Creek is unusually well documented as seven of the massacre's perpetrators were not only convicted of murder but also executed; a singularity in Australian history.

Settler violence escalated in the second half of the 19th century once the army withdrew from punitive expeditions after 1838. Factors responsible were: the rise in immigrants increasing demographic and economic pressure on the land; land-consuming exploitation initiated by the discovery of valuable minerals such as gold or copper; self-governance giving settler interests more and more influence on politics. Additionally, new strategies and methods were applied to counter Aboriginal tactics and skills: rifles instead of muskets, and a fast, mounted pursuit assisted by Aboriginal trackers. In Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, and the Northern Territory, this took the form of establishing native police forces.

### Survival and assimilation

Violent resistance was not the only response of Aboriginal communities to British colonisation. Numerous instances of creative

adaption, co-operation, and acculturation are documented in the historical records. Their exact form depended on the economic and demographic circumstances Aboriginal people were confronted with. Aboriginal Australians were, for instance, part of urban life right from the beginning of settlement. Starting in the 1830s and 1840s, Aboriginal men and women worked as farm hands, shepherds, and shearers on pastoral farms. Often, they would accept only seasonal labour, 'going in' to obtain money or valued commodities, and leaving as soon as their interests had been fulfilled. The most lasting impact of Aboriginal adaptation, however, can be found in the Bass Strait area where Indigenous women from Tasmania as well as Southern Mainland and a group of sealers established a 'creole society' during the first three decades of the 19th century (Ryan 2012: 58). As 13 per cent of the men were of a non-European background, this community was not only bi- but multicultural in its origins. Initially abducted, or acquired from Aboriginal clansmen in exchange for the highly valued hunting dogs, the so-called tyereelore women were often sexually and economically exploited. Yet, they also gained considerable influence as the sealers relied on their hunting skills to catch seals and muttonbirds. They kept their cultural heritage alive and created new traditions by inventing their own corroboree songs and dances. Due to their cultural and economic influence, they became the guardians of a new and predominantly matriarchal society.

These forms of resilience were, however, overshadowed by the colonisers' relentless efforts to eliminate Aboriginal traditions and culture by forced assimilation. The means applied varied over time, but most often included governmental schemes to restrain their movement, to settle and compel them to subsistence farming. As in many other colonial contexts, missionaries played a crucial yet ambiguous role in these programmes, as did Christianisation. The most devastating effect on Aboriginal communities, though, was the continued practice of child removal. It began during the colonial era when children, who had been orphaned by European diseases or violent conflicts, were taken into settlers' homes. Some of them were kept in wealthy households as curiosities or, in the spirit of humanitarianism and enlightenment, as living experiments to explore the transformative

power of education. Other motivations were of a more prosaic nature: Aboriginal children were abducted and exploited as unpaid labour. Girls were often not only trained as household servants but also forced into concubinage. Government agencies employed removal on a large scale from the turn of the 20th century to sever the children's familial and cultural ties in order to integrate them into white Australian mainstream society. These policies explicitly targeted the descendants of mixed relationships. Raised in white foster families, they were encouraged to intermarry with non-Aboriginals to 'breed out' Indigenous cultural and genetic characteristics. According to the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, published in 1997, no fewer than 100,000 children were displaced in this manner between 1909 and 1969. The report also revealed that although the official programmes had been abandoned, Aboriginal children were still preferably transferred into the care of white families for foster care or adoption (Commonwealth of Australia 1997).

Forced assimilation can be considered as the biopolitical flipside of the 'logic of elimination' (Wolfe 2006: 387) that structured Aboriginal-settler relations. As the productive element of settler colonial governmentality, it complements dispossession and annihilation by paternalistic policies of protection, education, and amalgamation. On 13 February 2008, Kevin Rudd, as newly elected prime minister, apologised for 'the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on' Aboriginal Australians. His speech put particular emphasis on 'the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country' and 'the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind' (quoted in Barta 2008: 204–205). In his carefully phrased apology, Rudd focused on the human dimension of suffering, thereby, as critics point out, playing down the systematic, genocidal character of assimilation policies, including first and foremost child removal.

### **Ways of conclusion**

Despite this important gesture, Australian settler imperialism and its genocidal history

remain unresolved. Under the conservative administration of prime minister John Howard (in office 1996–2007), governmental support of the reconciliation process waned. A move away from what was contemptuously called ‘black armband history’ was encouraged and central findings of the Commission criticised. Conservative journalists, most prominently Keith Windschuttle, stipulated that the decline of Aboriginal societies was not the result of settler violence. Again, the fate of Aboriginal Tasmanians was utilised as a case study, echoing 19th-century ‘extinction discourse’ (Brantlinger 2003: 1). The resulting debate, also known as ‘History Wars’, has inspired an even more critical inquiry into the history of settler imperialism in Australia and has broadened our understanding of the dimensions of settler–Aboriginal interaction. Yet, as Larrissa Behrendt has emphasised, ‘the History Wars are not about Aboriginal history at all, but about a growing crisis in white identity in Australia’ in the face of economic globalisation and increasing non-white immigration (Paisley 2003: 5).

Access to land and its resources has lain at the heart of the conflict between Aboriginal peoples and settlers right from the beginning of colonisation. It generated a particular kind of violence, systematic in its aim to dispossess and dislocate the traditional custodians of the land, driven by converging economic and political interests yet without a master plan, executed in unspectacular everyday practices but also erupting in bursts of localised guerrilla warfare and vigilantism. Assimilation politics disrupted families and shattered identities. The repercussions of these events are still felt today: according to the 2006 Census, about three-quarters of the approximate 464,000 persons identifying as Aboriginal Australians live in urban areas. As a group, they are highly overrepresented in prisons, unemployment, crime, drug and alcohol abuse statistics. Simultaneously, however, more Aboriginal Australians than ever before have seized the opportunities offered by access to higher education and to modern media to reclaim their land and to improve the situation of their communities.

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## Trade Liberalisation in the Caribbean

Trade liberalisation is premised on the universalising assumptions of neoclassical economics, which provides a 'one size fits all' solution to all countries, regardless of their particular histories or their political and social contexts. It can best be understood as a series of policy reforms whereby free trade is encouraged through the reduction of tariffs, subsidies, and quotas which will in theory allow countries to focus on their respective comparative advantages. Yet, despite the insistence of the economists at the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank, and International Monetary Fund (IMF), trade liberalisation has not benefited the Caribbean, and because of the inherent imbalance in power relations in many ways it has become collateral damage. In contrast to the claims of the international financial institutions, the Caribbean provides a stark and troubling example how globalisation and trade liberalisation can play havoc with a region's traditional economic base, dismantling it and as a result tearing apart the social fabric in order to satisfy the interests of American multinational corporations such as Chiquita and Riceland Foods.

When contrasted with the modest but important developmental gains in the post-independence period, particularly in the areas of healthcare and education, the increases over the last 30 years in poverty, inequality, unemployment, and lack of opportunity and the erosion of social services as a result of

trade liberalisation have provided the conditions in which the majority of the population are leading lives of increased hardship. The impediments to the achievement of genuine, self-directed development are so numerous and wide-ranging that in 2012, the St Lucian prime minister, Kenny Anthony, remarked, 'Make no mistake about it. Our region is in the throes of the greatest crisis since independence. The specter of evolving into failed societies is no longer a subject of imagination. How our societies crawl out of this vicious vortex of persistent low growth, crippling debt, huge fiscal deficits and high unemployment is the single most important question facing us at this time' (Sanders 2012).

This essay will make clear using the examples of Haiti and the islands of the Eastern Caribbean that the current crisis facing the Caribbean is not one of hyperbole or exaggeration. Despite the grand promises made about the benefits of trade liberalisation, it has become an unfortunate reality that for many, survival in the modern Caribbean consists in three major strategies: migrating abroad (either permanently or for seasonal labour), dependence on remittances, and supplementing their reduced incomes by working in the informal sector – be it legal or illegal.

### Historical context

When neoliberalism made its initial contact with the Caribbean in the early 1980s, the region had just witnessed the ending of three important, differing, but ultimately unsuccessful experiments with socialism. In Jamaica, Michael Manley's attempt at building democratic socialism was undermined by massive capital flight, political destabilisation, and significant external debt due to the two oil price shocks in 1973 when Arab oil producers in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) cut back production in order to punish the US and Israel's allies for their support of the 'Yom Kippur War' against Egypt. This led to a quadrupling of oil prices, triggering fiscal crises throughout the world. For small, energy-dependent states like Jamaica, this crippled the domestic economy and led to skyrocketing debt. In Grenada, Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement's Grenadian revolution was violently cut short by an internal coup and US invasion. Lastly, Guyana's co-operative

socialism led by the high-flown rhetoric of Forbes Burnham became politically and economically isolated because of his descent into dictatorship fuelled by a mix of coercion, corruption, and racial violence.

While the commitment to revolutionary change varied among the three nations, there was an overall rejection of the possibility of self-determination and meaningful growth under capitalism. All three of these political experiments sought to reorganise their societies and economies in order to overcome the legacies of slavery, the colonial plantation economy, and imperialism which had kept them in a condition of economic dependence and persistent underdevelopment.

Despite their respective failures due to a myriad of internal and external factors, the Caribbean was still regarded by the administration of Ronald Reagan as a very real hotspot for 'communist subversion'. In his 1982 speech to the Organization of American States, Reagan remarked that 'A new kind of colonialism stalks the world today and threatens our independence. It is brutal and totalitarian. It is not of our hemisphere, but it threatens our hemisphere and has established footholds on American soil for the expansion of its colonialist ambitions' (Dallek 1984: 177).

In order to temper the revolutionary and nationalist sentiments in the region, in 1983, Reagan and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the 'Caribbean Basin Initiative' (CBI) whereby Haiti, Jamaica, and other islands were encouraged to start exporting light manufactured goods while accepting subsidised agricultural products from the US. True to neoclassical economic theory, the CBI argued that a reduction of tariffs combined with an increase in trade would allow for specialisation and lead to a more efficient use of resources. Thus the protections on agriculture were to be eliminated, and market forces would eventually remake the Caribbean in accordance with an export-oriented development model which would reproduce the 'Asian Miracles' of Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea (Rosen 2002: 132).

During this time, much of the Caribbean was still largely dependent on agriculture as a primary source of employment, government revenue, local food requirements, and exports. Thus trade liberalisation would displace significant proportions of the population which made their livelihood in the

agricultural sector. Evidence of this can be seen in the example of Haiti, where in the late 1970s an estimated 70 per cent of the population was engaged in agriculture (Dolisca et al. 2007). Furthermore, during the peak of banana production in the late 1980s, an estimated 50 per cent of the labour force of the Eastern Caribbean (St Lucia, St Vincent, Dominica, and Grenada) was directly engaged in the cultivation of bananas (Thomson 1987: 61). The CBI argued that those displaced from agriculture would be able to find employment in the new export processing zones, which were dominated by the textile and apparel assembly industries.

While the stated goal of the initiative was to reduce poverty through developing export-oriented economies and deeper economic integration with the US, it was primarily a way to combat and contain the 'growing influence' of progressive leadership in the region, as witnessed by the rise of Manley and Bishop. As a result, the stage was set for trade liberalisation with the eventual reduction of tariffs, subsidies, and taxes occurring across the majority of the Caribbean. While it is possible to generalise on the negative outcomes related to trade liberalisation, an analysis of Haiti and the Eastern Caribbean provides a much more detailed understanding of how each respective society was negatively affected by the implementation of policies which ultimately benefited US multinational corporations.

### **Trade liberalisation and Haiti's rice industry**

The grim statistics describing Haiti's poverty have been repeated ad nauseam to the point that the nation has become widely known as 'the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere'. Nationally, 76 per cent of the Haitian people live on less than US\$2 per day and 56 per cent on less than US\$1 per day (World Food Program 2010). The most recent reliable statistical data indicate that the average gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in 2004 was US\$400, nearly half of the US\$750 per capita reported in the late 1960s (Hallward 2007). Of Haiti's 9.3 million people, between 2.5 and 3.3 million are estimated to experience food insecurity, with chronic malnutrition affecting 24 per cent of children under five (FAO 2012). Despite the alarming situation, however, things were not always this way.

Despite Haiti's close ties to the US under the Duvalier dictatorships from 1957 to 1986, Haiti was similar to many Latin American countries in pursuing a mixture of import substitution industrialisation policies, with the agricultural sector largely protected behind tariff barriers. Because of the geopolitical climate of the Cold War, the agricultural tariffs were not seen as a hindrance as long as Haiti remained a political and military ally of the US and acted as a regional counterbalance to Cuba.

Because of this geopolitical situation, the Duvaliers were able to resist demands to remove the 50 per cent tariffs on imports of food, especially rice. These policies enabled Haitian farmers to continue producing the vast majority of the rice consumed in Haiti while limiting other food imports. Prior to the IMF's push towards agricultural tariff liberalisation in 1986, Haiti was largely self-sufficient in the small-scale production of major food staples such as rice, meat, cassava, beans, and corn (Chavla 2010). According to Alex Dupuy (2011), 'All that changed after Jean Claude Duvalier was overthrown in February 1986. The US government successfully pressured the government of General Henri Namphy to "liberalize" the Haitian economy by, among other things, slashing import tariffs and reducing subsidies to domestic agriculture.'

The results that these reforms had on the Haitian agricultural sector are horrific. Haiti imported 16,000 metric tonnes of rice in 1980 and 340,000 tonnes by 2009 – a 21-fold increase in 30 years (Chavla 2010). In 1987 Haiti met over 75 per cent of its domestic rice consumption, but today that number is reversed, with 80 per cent of the nation's 400,000 tons of consumption coming from the US, making Haiti the third largest importer of American-grown rice (Holt-Giminez 2009). Bill Reed of the Arkansas-based Riceland Foods Inc. (the world's largest marketer and miller of rice) regarded this as a logical situation, as 'Haiti doesn't have the land nor the climate ... to produce enough rice. The productivity of U.S. farmers helps feed countries which cannot feed themselves' (Katz 2010).

The matter of the Haitian rice industry was much more complex than what Reed was arguing. Because of the massive subsidies to producers in the US, Haitian farmers could not compete, according to a 2004 Oxfam

report; these subsidies totalled approximately US\$1.3 billion in 2003 alone, amounting to more than double Haiti's entire budget for the year (Oxfam International 2004). The former President of Haiti and agronomist Rene Preval stated, 'In 1987 when we allowed cheap rice to enter the country applauded "Bravo" ... But cheap imported rice destroyed the Artibonite rice. Today, imported rice has become expensive, and our national production is in ruins' (Lindsay 2008).

With the destruction of Haiti's rice industry and the accompanying loss of employment and income, there was a massive exodus from rural communities to Port au Prince, where the migrants sought jobs in low-wage garment assembly plants. With the passage of time it has become apparent that USAID officials actually knew beforehand that trade liberalisation policies would 'increase poverty and contribute to a decline in average Haitian income and health standards' (Chavla 2010). Despite this knowledge, the CBI went ahead, opening the door to the dismantling of the rural economy and the massive dependency that we now witness in Haiti. A Grassroots International report stated that:

As recently as 2007, a USAID agronomist told Grassroots International that there simply was no future for Haiti's small farm sector – a callous prognosis for the nation's three million-plus small farmers (of a population of 9 million). In a nutshell, USAID's plan for Haiti and many other poor countries is to push small farmers out of subsistence agriculture as quickly as possible. (Grassroots International 2010)

Thus it was decided in Washington that Haitian agriculture was to be dismantled, as self-sufficient agricultural practices would not lead to the growth of agribusiness markets or develop pools of excess cheap labour needed for industrialisation. To make matters worse, in 2009 a report from the World Bank-affiliated group, Nathan Associates, acknowledged that for low-wage factory workers, 'the costs of transportation to and from work and food purchased away from home eat up a substantial share of that minimum wage' (Nathan Associates Group 2009). Thus the implementation of trade liberalisation policies opened the floodgates to cheap, highly subsidised rice, known as 'Miami Rice', into

the country and to exploitative sweatshop jobs with minimal contribution to the domestic economy.

After the devastation of the 2010 earthquake, the United Nations Special Envoy to Haiti and co-chair of the Interim Haiti Reconstruction Committee (IHRC), Bill Clinton, admitted that US free market agricultural policy towards Haiti has not worked for the Haitian people, but had been profitable for US agribusiness. In a meeting with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 10 March 2010 the former president stated that '[i]t [Haitian trade policies that cut tariffs on imported US rice] may have been good for some of my farmers in Arkansas, but it has not worked. It was a mistake' (Dupuy 2011). Clinton further reflected on his role in undermining Haitian agriculture by stating, 'I have to live everyday with the consequences of the loss of capacity to produce a rice crop in Haiti to feed those people because of what I did; nobody else' (Chavla 2010).

In another interview at the International Donors' Conference in New York on 31 March 2010 the confession of lessons learned continued as Clinton told reporters that '... [w]e made this devil's bargain on rice. And it wasn't the right thing to do. We should have continued to work to help them be self-sufficient in agriculture' (Ives 2011). However, when asked how the Interim Haiti Reconstruction Committee planned to revive the Haitian agricultural sector and self-sufficiency, Clinton quickly reverted to the implementation of more of the very same failed policies which had devastated local producers, undermined the nation's food security, and called for increased employment in foreign-owned sweatshops.

### **Trade liberalisation and the Eastern Caribbean banana industry**

In 1957, a preferential trading system was established between the Windward Islands of the Eastern Caribbean (St Lucia, Dominica, St Vincent and Grenada) and the United Kingdom. This was expanded upon in 1976 when the Lomé Convention was signed between the European Community and ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) nations, in an extension of preferential trading policies to former colonies to serve as a form of aid and reparations to ACP nations for centuries



of European terror rooted in colonialism, exploitation, and slavery (Payne 2006). The Lomé Convention was the key article in the development of a European banana regime which would ensure that banana growers in the Eastern Caribbean and other ACP nations would have a guaranteed market for their produce in an industry that was otherwise dominated by Latin America.

With such policies in place, the banana industry quickly became the backbone of the Eastern Caribbean economy. The World Bank estimated that during the steady period of production in the 1980s, the banana industry injected almost €1 million into the St Lucian economy every week (Thomson 1987). This infusion of money into the hands of small farmers had a tremendous multiplier effect on the economy, in contrast to tourism or manufacturing based in export processing zones.

Despite being an industry historically rooted in highly unequal terms of trade, the banana trade did bring forth a degree of stability and genuine economic development to a significant portion of the Eastern Caribbean and supplied the governments with their primary source of income. Bananas affectionately became known as 'Green Gold' among the small farmers as the steady prices enabled them to raise their humble standard of living. For the first time, the state was receiving enough money to begin nationwide infrastructure programs, bringing paved roads, running water, and electricity to those located outside the capital cities.

Shortly after the introduction of the European Union's new banana regime in 1993, it was challenged at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) by five Latin American nations (Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, and Costa Rica) for contravening free trade rules. The Latin American nations claimed that the European Union was unfairly discriminating against them by implementing tariffs, which limited the competitive advantage of Latin American bananas. While the Windward Islands as a whole contributed only 4.6 per cent of the world's total banana exports in 1995, this did not prevent the US Trade Representative and corporations such as Dole, Del Monte, and Chiquita from continually portraying these tiny islands as a threat to the global economic order and the hegemony of free trade (Myers 2004).

Despite contributing only 2 per cent of the global banana trade, the tiny Windward Islands of the Caribbean and their protected trade with England became the primary battleground for sanctity of free trade with the WTO leading an all-out assault on the nearly 50-year-old protected trade arrangement (Myers 2004). The WTO's rulings turned the uncertainty surrounding the Eastern Caribbean banana trade into a foregone conclusion that despite being the economic backbone of the region, in the new era of free market fundamentalism it was too inefficient to exist. Therefore from 1993 to 2012, the Eastern Caribbean would become engulfed in the largest and longest-running trade war in the history of the WTO.

The key figure pushing for the dismantling of the protected banana trade was Chiquita's Carl Linder. Between 1990 and 1997 Linder donated over \$2 million to both parties to purchase as many allies as possible for his assault on the Caribbean banana trade. In order to set things right for Chiquita, Linder arranged for a meeting with Bill Clinton's trade representative and pleaded his case for trade sanctions against Europe in retaliation to their protected markets. Chiquita claimed that the protected trade 'establishes arbitrary and disruptive sourcing requirements; authorizes confiscatory and discriminatory licences and fees; and, since its signing, has worked a substantial incremental hardship on US commercial interests' (Myers 2004: 77). In order to prove this, Chiquita filed a petition under section 301 of the US Trade Act of 1974, claiming that the Hawaii Banana Industry Association had been negatively affected, even though Hawaii had never exported any bananas. This manipulation of the trade law was not based on knowledge of the law alone, but was also due to the significant power Linder had in the White House.

Finally, the influence of Carl Linder and his money also overpowered the statements of the Commander-in-Chief of the US Atlantic Command, General John Sheehan, who publicly expressed his fear of 'regional destabilization and increased drug flows if US policy on bananas did not change' (Myers 2004: 107). Furthermore, in 1996 an International Narcotics Control Strategy Report by the US State Department warned that 'the terrain in the Windward Islands was most attractive to South American transshipping of cocaine and that struggling farmers

had been turning to marijuana as a cash crop to replace lost earnings' (ibid.). By ignoring these statements, it revealed that the motivation for US policy clearly came from corporate board rooms, where profit maximisation and 'strategic geopolitical interests' were simply one and the same.

Over the course of the 21-year dispute the Caribbean has seen a dramatic decline in its agricultural output as the region can no longer rely on traditional markets for its produce. As Professor Thomas Klak of the University of Miami stated, the Caribbean banana trade has gone from 'riches to rags' (Klak et al. 2009: 34). For example, in 1988 Dominica and St Lucia produced 76,872 and 168,060 tonnes of bananas respectively; by 2011 Dominica produced 23,039 tonnes of bananas, with St Lucia managing 23,810 tonnes – a drop of nearly 70 and 85 per cent in 23 years (FAO STAT 2013).

In St Lucia, the unemployment rate stands at over 20 per cent, with the youth unemployment rate reaching a staggering 32 per cent ('Unemployed Youth can Take Hope' 2012). International financial institutions have openly stated that St Vincent's unemployment rate is difficult to discern, but agree that annually fluctuates between 25 and 30 per cent (IMF 2011).

One of the primary challenges of demonstrating the negative impacts of globalisation is that progress and development are measured simply by a rise or fall in the GDP. In St Lucia, by GDP alone, the country stands as a middle-income country with a per capita GDP of US\$6,626. However, this statistic – often the backbone of most neoliberal arguments – does not tell us anything regarding how income is distributed within the nation. A closer look at St Lucia reveals that while the GDP is steadily rising, so is the income inequality between different segments of society. In its 2009 Population Data Sheet, it was revealed that 41 per cent of the St Lucian population lived on less than \$2 per day, which put it second in the region only to Haiti, where 72 per cent of the population fall in this category (Population Reference Bureau 2009).

Commenting on the economic devastation that neoliberal trade policy had upon the island, St Lucia's minister of foreign affairs and international trade commented to the United Nations General Assembly in 1998: 'Mr. President, international terrorism can take many forms – to destroy a country's

economic base and thrust its people into unemployment, poverty and despair, is as horrendous as blowing up its citizens with bombs' (Odlum 1998).

## The Caribbean in the contemporary context

Because of their small size and the structural legacies of colonialism, the countries of the Caribbean were already some of the most vulnerable economies in the world and were marginalised on the periphery of the global economy. Despite the foundational assumptions of free trade, the spread of trade liberalisation to the Caribbean has revealed that the supposedly 'neutral' idea of free trade is used as a vehicle to further the interests of the most powerful nations and their respective corporations. While this essay has dealt specifically with the case studies of Haiti and the Eastern Caribbean, a similar narrative about the predatory role that multinational corporations have in the region has also played out across the region.

Indeed the economic restructuring of the Caribbean has taken on troubling neo-colonial characteristics. Despite reassurances that the region would find new and effective substitutes for the lost sectors, nothing comparable has emerged. Under the current global trading system, the Caribbean has been coerced into the liberalisation of trade; into the opening of its economies while at the same time the developed world – the same promoters of free trade – engages in protectionism and other unfair trading practices.

While tourism is now the largest contributor of income in the Caribbean, its current structure does little to stimulate the local economy, as links to other industries such as agriculture must be created. For instance a 2011 World Bank report on Jamaica revealed that as much as 80 per cent of tourism earnings do not stay in the Caribbean region, one of the highest 'leakage' rates in the world (Jackson 2012; World Bank 2011). According to Victor Bulmer-Thomas of London University, 'In all-inclusive Caribbean hotels it is common for only 20% of revenue to be returned to the local economy' (McFadden 2012). Thus as a result of trade liberalisation, the governments of the Caribbean have seen their primary sources of revenue disappear – with new industries such as tourism, garment manufacturing, and financial services

demanding low or no tax concessions. This has resulted in a decrease of government spending in healthcare, education, and infrastructure across the region.

Given the erosion of the region's economic base it should not come as a surprise that according to a 2006 study by the IMF, the Caribbean had the highest emigration rates in the world (Mishra 2006). In May 2013, the *Jamaica Gleaner* reported that because of a lack of opportunity on the island an estimated 85 per cent of university-educated Jamaicans migrate to find jobs elsewhere (Houghton 2013). While Jamaica's experience is shockingly high, it does not even lead the region, as Guyana occupies that position with 89 per cent. Haiti and Trinidad follow with respective rates of 84, and 79 per cent. Furthermore, most Caribbean countries rank among the top 30 countries in the world with the highest remittances as a percentage of GDP. The Caribbean is the world's largest recipient of remittances as a share of GDP (Mishra 2006).

Commenting on the inability of enclave industries such as tourism and garment assembly to bring about tangible benefits to the Caribbean, together with the increased rates of emigration and the higher cost of living, a 2012 report published by the Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean revealed that poverty and inequality were on the rise throughout the region, leading to increases in crime and social dysfunction (ECLAC 2012). Thus it is no coincidence that trade liberalisation and the resulting collapse of the Caribbean's agricultural industries have provided fertile ground for the drug trade to expand and intensify across the region. The scale of crime has coincided with the area being declared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in 2007 as the most violent region on earth (UNODC 2007).

Overall, the restructuring of the Caribbean's economic base has had a very sharp neo-colonial character to it, as the shift towards tourism and low-wage garment manufacturing means that once again the Caribbean is primarily a region organised in order to serve and cater to the demands of Western economic interests. Indeed given the experience of the Caribbean, trade liberalisation must be regarded as a negative economic shock from which the region has yet to recover almost 30 years later. Throughout

the region financially strapped governments lack the ability to fund social programmes or infrastructure, and are unable to effectively counter the increasing rates of poverty, inequality, and crime. The 2008 financial crisis and resulting decline in development assistance from the US and the European Union has threatened to accelerate the erosion of the important developmental gains made in the region. In many ways, the Caribbean is experiencing its own extended version of Latin America's lost developmental decade of the 1980s.

However, because of nearly two decades in which the neoliberal trade agenda has torn apart the social fabric and economic base of many Caribbean nations, the region is increasingly forging closer ties with non-traditional allies opposed to US hegemony such as Venezuela. The primary institutions which anchor this new relationship against US hegemony and free trade in the region are Petrocaribe, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), and the newly formed Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). While there are indeed undeniable pragmatic motivations behind the Caribbean's shift towards Caracas, it also highlights the potential of regional integration within the Caribbean and the benefits of increased South-South co-operation. Previously fragmented and highly vulnerable to external shocks, the Caribbean's new partnership with Venezuela has provided a progressive breathing space for re-imagining regional integration and the possibilities of national self-determination.

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## Ukraine and the March of Empire

The renowned writer, commentator, and theoretician of public opinion and propaganda Walter Lipmann defined the term 'stereotype' in the modern psychological sense as a 'distorted picture or image in a person's mind,

not based on personal experience, but derived culturally' (Lippman 1965). Lipmann's definition is as precise as it is incisive, clearly illustrating not only the nature of the stereotype, but its origins in collective and subjective cultural experience. It is especially this point – the culturally specific and subjective nature of stereotypes – that Lipmann applied to his epistemological inquiries into the construction and production of 'knowledge', 'truth', and 'facts'. And it is the stereotype – the image we see in our mind's eye – that, for most, forms their understanding of empire.

Indeed, for many contemporary political observers, imperialism seems an antiquated notion – a phenomenon relegated to history books that conjure images of the looting of natural resources by European powers, wars for territorial conquest in previous centuries, and a surfeit of other self-interested motivations. One might imagine Napoleon crowning himself the exalted emperor before rampaging across Europe in the name of the Revolution, or the Entente and Central powers brought to war by the competing interests of their respective empires. But these 'heaps of broken images' (Eliot 2001: 5) are just that, images, which merely reflect the political and economic interests of the powers of their day. Rather than using the image to define the idea, one must use the idea to make sense of the images.

And so, it is the *idea* of imperialism, and how it is manifested today, with which we are here most concerned. In particular, we must first examine what imperialism actually is, what it looks like (its political, economic, military, cultural attributes), and how it operates, in order then to correctly identify its contemporary qualities and manifestations. In other words, we must know what it is before we can speak its name.

The great revolutionary leader and theorist Vladimir Lenin recurrently defined imperialism as 'the monopoly stage of capitalism' (Lenin 1926), for he correctly noted that capitalist development taken to its logical extreme would obliterate notions such as free competition, as the power of finance capital was consolidated into fewer and fewer hands, in particular the conglomeration of big banking cartels and monopolist industrial associations. Naturally, the terminology today is slightly different, but Lenin's basic understanding remains as valid now as it was in 1917. Modern imperialism is, at its root, a

product of a worldview, and its subsequent policies, governed by the interests of private corporations and the national and supranational states which serve, protect, feed, and nurture them.

And it is here, the point at which interests and ideology converge, where we must begin our investigation of the current conflict in Ukraine: its origins and ideology, and how they relate to our modern conception of 'imperialism'. We no longer want to deal in the currency of stereotypes, of images. Rather, our analysis must be impelled by the objective fact that the crisis in Ukraine is the product of a Western imperialist agenda which seeks to expand its political and military hegemony while simultaneously succouring a desperately, and quite possibly mortally, wounded economy. Of course, those of us living in the West are force-fed an inverted reality by our media, one which characterises the conflict as the obvious product of overt and resurgent Russian imperialism which compels the West to react in a wholly innocent and utterly defensive way (Financial Times 2014; Guardian 2014a).

But, unfortunately for the imperial propagandists of the corporate media, the reality of this crisis cannot be entirely obscured. For, try as they might to portray the situation in Ukraine as an outgrowth of imperial ambitions emanating from the Kremlin, the historical and material factors which created the conflict are impossible to ignore. CNN would love to make Westerners forget that the protest movement against former Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich began with the rejection of an odious, and entirely one-sided, economic association agreement foisted upon him by the European Union: an agreement that would have forced Kiev to choose between Europe and Russia, a 'Hobson's Choice' that would have had tremendous negative repercussions for Ukraine had it been agreed to. CNN and its ilk had decidedly little to say of the possible ramifications of the association agreement, including the fact that Ukraine, like its neighbours in the former Soviet bloc, would have been transformed into yet another economic dumping ground for Europe and flooded with European goods in exchange for cheap labour – an entirely unsustainable economic model.

Of course, cheap markets were not the only motivations for Brussels and the West to get involved in Ukraine. Boasting some of the

world's most fertile agricultural land, Ukraine has long been seen as a tremendous prize for any Western agricultural, and biotech corporations. Additionally, Ukraine's untapped energy resources, in particular gas from shale and other sources, make it an enticing opportunity for the major energy corporations of the West. Moreover, the energy delivery infrastructure (pipelines and refineries, primarily) controlled by Ukraine since the collapse of the Soviet Union present an economic and geopolitical goldmine for the West, which has long sought to use this infrastructure as a means of leveraging Moscow and, simultaneously, decreasing Europe's dependence on Russian energy exports, thereby diminishing Moscow's political and strategic position.

It is precisely this drive to weaken a Russia that has been seen as 'resurgent' since President Putin assumed power in 2000 which also lies at the heart of Washington's agenda in Ukraine and the region. Though the US and its European allies have presented themselves as benevolent observers in Ukraine whose sole interest is the 'sovereignty' and 'territorial integrity' of the country, the reality is that the US and Europe have pursued a 25-year policy of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) expansion that has brought the Cold War era military alliance to the doorstep of Russia. The US-dominated NATO, whose eastern edge was once Berlin, has been transmogrified into a continental, and indeed a global, military force that has subsumed Poland, Romania, the former Soviet states of the Baltic (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia), and Georgia. It is this eastward expansion by NATO that predictably causes consternation in Moscow, leading many Russian policymakers to view the crisis in Ukraine as one of NATO's making, one that threatens to bring NATO into the historical homeland of the Russian people.

Such a balanced understanding of the crisis, one which recognises Western geopolitical and economic ambitions in Eastern Europe as central to the unfolding events in Ukraine, threatens to undermine the arguments of Washington and Brussels for various forms of intervention. And so, the vast propaganda apparatus of the corporate media has been employed to control public opinion, channelling it away from criticism of the West's leadership and instead focusing outrage onto the everlasting bogeyman of Russia. Though it may seem a Cold War

relic, Russophobia is deeply ingrained in the psychosocial fabric of the West, entrenched in a worldview that, though more than two decades have passed since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, is still deeply embedded in the public mind. Like a volcano lying dormant for centuries until it finally erupts, anti-Russian sentiment has suddenly become the demagogic currency of the day, turning US Democrats and Republicans alike into unabashed, unreformed cold warriors.

And this is no accident. Far from incidental, the renewed Russophobic sentiment is rooted in memes and myths such as 'Russian expansionism', 'Putin as the devil incarnate', and the crisis in Ukraine as a creation of Russia. Though these fallacies fly in the face of logic, evidence, and facts, they are easily digested by an unthinking public which, in light of an on-going economic crisis and endless wars, is much too comfortable using Russia as a scapegoat for the problems of its own society. And so, rather than introspectively interrogating the issue and the Western hands behind the conflict – the same ones voted into office by a public seemingly incapable of distinguishing fact from fiction – the discussion turns to 'Russian propaganda.'

While the US and Europe have had a near total monopoly on news media and information in recent decades, the mere presence of an oppositional Russian media unafraid to provide a counter-narrative, one that shines a light on the dirty deeds of the Western ruling class, has become intolerable to the media machine. So, Russian media is portrayed as disseminating lies in the service of the Kremlin, while the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, MSNBC, CNN, FOX and others continue to pose as interlocutors on behalf of truth and righteousness. In reality, these are the same outlets which dutifully printed and gave airtime to lies in the service of the US war agenda in Iraq, not to mention countries such as Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, and others. And so the media machine goes into overdrive to deflect attention away from its own service to power by portraying its Russian counterpart as the root of evil and lies.

Undoubtedly, one the most insidious aspects of the conflict in Ukraine is the nature of the groups and individuals that the West has supported and held up as 'protesters' 'patriots', and 'nationalists'. Many of these groups are outright Nazis whose ideology,

iconography, and worldview are appropriated directly from Nazi Germany. Groups such as Right Sector, Svoboda, Trizub, and others became the vanguard of the so-called 'protests' in the early days of the crisis when the West was still portraying events as 'peaceful'. Many pundits tried to downplay the fascist nature of these groups, going so far as to denounce arguments rooted in observable facts (i.e. that Nazi elements were the leading edge of the violence in Maidan and in the aftermath) as merely 'Russian propaganda'. Indeed, the notion of Russian propaganda has become a catch-all term used to marginalise any information or individuals deviating from the editorial line of Washington and Brussels.

Finally, the scope and scale of the political, economic, and diplomatic fallout from this crisis are as yet unknown, though their contours have gradually come into focus. Punitive sanctions imposed by the US and Europe against Russia for its annexation of Crimea and support for the rebels of East Ukraine have been applied and, as of September 2014, expanded. Not only do the sanctions target individual Russian policymakers and leaders, but also key sectors of the economy, in particular energy exports and banking. Such punitive actions have only further deepened the divide between Moscow and Washington, making the crisis in Ukraine one of global proportions as the economic ripple effect has been felt around the world.

Rather than responding only with tit-for-tat sanctions (which Russia has used in a limited way), Moscow has instead looked eastward and, in particular, to China. Despite nearly half a century of mutual animosity and distrust, the Russia-China relationship has emerged against the backdrop of the conflict in Ukraine as one of the most vital, dynamic, and globally significant partnerships of the last few decades. From energy co-operation to collective security partnerships, Russia and China have grown significantly closer as Europe and Russia drift apart. When Europe chose to stay attached to Washington's hip in terms of foreign policy, Moscow made a strategic decision that the time for closer co-operation with China was at hand. Naturally, this has caused great consternation in the halls of power in the West where governments and corporations see in China an economic beast of burden, a giant factory producing goods for a Western market.

Certainly, they have been forced to rethink their conception of China, Russia, and the relationship between the two.

Perhaps the most far-reaching and geopolitically significant product of the West's drive to isolate Russia has been the fostering of ties among the BRICS grouping (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). While BRICS certainly existed before the Ukraine crisis, the subsequent tensions between the West and Russia have driven Moscow to take a central role in initiating the creation of a BRICS Development Bank which will provide financing for infrastructure projects in the developing world, and act as an alternative to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, both institutions dominated by the US and the West more generally.

Essentially then, the crisis has become far more than simply a civil war in a former Soviet state; Ukraine's turmoil has taken on global proportions. As it has countless times in its long history, Ukraine has become a battleground between East and West. However, this time it is not the Mongol horde, or Napoleon's French Empire, or Hitler's Reich stampeding through the flatlands of the Ukrainian steppe. It is, instead, the empire of Western corporate and finance capital which has set its sights on the Ukrainian 'prize'. It is Wall Street, Washington, London, and Brussels which have determined that NATO expansion and Russian 'containment' is not only a necessary but a righteous cause. It is, once again, about profit, politics, and power. Put another way, the conflict in Ukraine is about empire, nothing less.

### **Ukraine and the imperial footprint**

When one thinks of imperialism and how it relates to Ukraine, it is imperative to recall that the country has long been situated between empires, and thus has been viewed as a great prize. Indeed, its rich, fertile soil, Black Sea coastline, strategic rivers, and energy and mineral deposits make it a highly sought after territory. But it is not resources alone that make it so desired. Rather, it is also the vast market of cheap labour and consumers that entices a Europe always looking for new markets in which it can dump its goods.

However, beyond these obvious economic motivations lies the greater strategic prize for the West – the continued dismemberment of the post-Soviet Russian sphere of influence.

Seen in this way, the conflict in Ukraine becomes far larger than Ukraine itself. Instead, it is merely the latest manifestation of a 25-year policy of NATO expansion for the purposes of containing and controlling Russia's economic and political development.

While post-Cold War triumphalism intoxicated the ruling class of the West's 'liberal democracies, strategic planners envisioned transforming NATO from a collective security alliance, meant to protect Europe from Soviet aggression, to a military force capable of enforcing and proselytising the twin gospels of liberal democracy and neo-liberal capitalism. As world renowned professor and international relations theorist John J. Mearsheimer wrote in the influential publication *Foreign Affairs* (2014: 1-2):

The United States and its European allies share most of the responsibility for the crisis [in Ukraine]. The taproot of the trouble is NATO enlargement, the central element of a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia's orbit and integrate it into the West. At the same time, the EU's expansion eastward and the West's backing of the pro-democracy movement in Ukraine – beginning with the Orange Revolution in 2004 – were critical elements, too. Since the mid-1990s, Russian leaders have adamantly opposed NATO enlargement, and in recent years, they have made it clear that they would not stand by while their strategically important neighbor turned into a Western bastion. For [Russian President] Putin, the illegal overthrow of Ukraine's democratically elected and pro-Russian president – which he rightly labeled a 'coup' – was the final straw.

Mearsheimer correctly places the conflict in Ukraine in the broad historical context, seeing it as merely the most recent, and most ambitious, attempt by NATO to assert influence, and indirectly control the post-Soviet Russian sphere of influence. His point – that Ukraine is the culmination of this NATO expansion process – is only understood against the backdrop of Russia's actions in response to this threat. Specifically, Russia's move to assert control over, and ultimately annex, the strategically critical Crimean peninsula represents a clear countermove by Moscow to protect itself, and its border, from what it correctly interpreted as encroachment by NATO.



In the West, policymakers and media pundits alike fell over themselves to harshly condemn and rebuke Russia's actions, describing Russia, and President Putin specifically, as closet imperialists whose sole goal was to resurrect and re-create the Soviet Union. However, despite the droning talking points from the corporate media machine and the so-called 'experts', many analysts remain lucid in their diagnoses of the real causes of the crisis. On this point, Mearsheimer (*ibid.*) notes that Putin:

Responded by taking Crimea, a peninsula he feared would host a NATO naval base, and working to destabilize Ukraine until it abandoned its efforts to join the West. Putin's pushback should have come as no surprise. After all, the West had been moving into Russia's backyard and threatening its core strategic interests, a point Putin made emphatically and repeatedly ... U.S. and European leaders blundered in attempting to turn Ukraine into a Western stronghold on Russia's border. Now that the consequences have been laid bare, it would be an even greater mistake to continue this misbegotten policy.

To Mearsheimer's analysis, a few points must be added. First and foremost, Crimea represents an absolutely essential piece of Russia's military apparatus, given that it has hosted the Russian Navy's Black Sea fleet for decades. This fleet, representing no less than half of Russia's naval power (and likely more), was undoubtedly a major prize in the eyes of NATO planners who fantasised about ejecting Russia's Navy from Crimea and the Black Sea, transforming the once powerful Russian base at Sevastopol into a forward command of NATO, one that would represent the front line in the continued low-intensity war against Russia. Seen in this way, Putin's move to seize control of Crimea and reunite it with Russia – it was part of Russia until Soviet premier Khrushchev transferred it to Ukraine in what was seen at the time as merely an administrative move (Kruscheva 2014) is a clear response to NATO encroachment on Russia, rather than a diabolical, imperialist manoeuvre to rekindle the Soviet Union or the Russian Empire.

Second, it should be added that Moscow pursued its policy of Crimean 'annexation' (or 'reunion with Russia,' depending on

whom you ask) for propagandistic reasons, sending a message to other parts of eastern and southern Ukraine – both predominantly Russian-speaking – that they should not be forced to accept a Nazi-oligarch coalition government that actively persecutes ethnic Russians (International Business Times, 2014), and that they could look to Russia to protect their interests politically and diplomatically, if not militarily. The importance of this message should not be understated, as many in the region rightly feared a resurgence of fascist nationalism the likes of which hadn't been seen in Ukraine since the Second World War under Stepan Bandera and his Ukrainian Nazi collaborators. Indeed, Bandera and Ukrainian fascism have seen a resurgence in popularity since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and in particular, since the Western-sponsored 'Orange Revolution' of 2004 which attempted to rehabilitate Bandera's (and by extension the entire Ukrainian fascist movement's) image.

The collective memory of the people of eastern Ukraine, a region drowned in the blood of their mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers who fought against the Nazis and their Ukrainian lackeys, could not possibly allow them to sit idly by and accept a West-sponsored government of corrupt oligarchs and Nazis seizing control of their country. And so, for many who now fight in Donetsk and Lugansk, Moscow's actions vis-à-vis Crimea were a signal that resistance against Kiev was not only just, but also possible.

Finally, Russia's action in Crimea should be understood as a strong message to Washington and Brussels that Moscow will never allow Ukraine as a whole to become part of the NATO sphere of influence. Putin was not so subtly intimating to his Western counterparts that, should they continue with their drive to assert control over Ukraine and pry it out of Russia's orbit, Ukraine itself would cease to exist, and in its place would be a chaotic country that would require every ounce of strength from the US-backed puppet government in Kiev to hold together. Unfortunately for the people of eastern Ukraine, Washington and Brussels didn't seem to get that message.

### **The Empire's economic agenda for Ukraine**

But of course NATO expansion, and the geopolitical ramifications of that policy, are only

one aspect of the West's imperialist drive in Ukraine; economic interests make up a large part of the motivation for the US, EU, and financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank which are dominated by them. In fact, Ukraine provides the US and European corporate interests with a considerable bounty of resources and other financial motivations.

One of the primary means by which the West seeks to control Ukraine and expand its economic hegemony in Eastern Europe is through debt. Specifically, Ukraine is now at the mercy of the IMF and World Bank, and all the pitfalls and dangers associated with such a relationship. Odious debt, a product of endemic and widespread corruption combined with predatory lending, is a phenomenon all too familiar to nations of the Global South, especially in Latin America which suffered for decades under the crushing weight of debt racked up by US-supported fascist governments in Central and South America. But of course, beyond simply the debt, IMF and World Bank loans always come with severe conditions attached to them. In particular, such loans are in almost every case conditional upon so-called 'structural reforms', including increased privatisation, erosion of the social safety net through gutting of social programmes, subsidies, pensions, health care, as well as a driving down of wages and living standards.

Indeed, it was precisely this sort of loan that the deposed former president Yanukovich rejected in November 2013, leading to the escalation of the initial Maidan protests (New York Times 2011). However, once the coup against Yanukovich was completed in February 2014, and the interim government handpicked by the US was allowed to take over the reins of government in Kiev the IMF loan, along with the EU Association Agreement which would effectively make Ukraine a de facto partner of Europe against Russia, was once again on the agenda. As the Oakland Institute noted in a critical report released in July 2014:

The IMF deal that Yanukovych spurned at the end of 2013 was not the first time he had rejected loans tethered to reform programs from international financial institutions (IFIs). ... The relationship with IFIs changed swiftly under

the pro-EU government put in place at the end of February 2014. Just a week after the reinstatement of the new government, the IMF rushed a mission to Kiev. Assessing the conditions of the \$17 billion loan, Reza Moghadam, the IMF European Department Director, declared at the end of this visit that he was 'positively impressed with the authorities' determination, sense of responsibility and commitment to an agenda of economic reform and transparency.' Announcing a \$3.5 billion aid package on May 22, 2014, Jim Yong Kim, the World Bank President, praised the Ukrainian authorities for developing 'a comprehensive program of reforms, which they are committed to undertake with support from the World Bank Group.' The package of measures financed by the Bank includes reforming the public provision of water and energy, but, more importantly, aims at addressing what the World Bank identified as the 'structural roots' of the current economic crisis in Ukraine, including the high cost of doing business in the country. The World Bank imposed neoliberal conditions to lend money to Ukraine, asking the government to limit its own power by 'removing restrictions that hinder competition and by limiting the role of state 'control' in economic activities.' (Oakland Institute 2014: 3)

As the Oakland Institute report, among many others, makes perfectly clear, the financial elites of the West, through their primary levers of the IMF and World Bank, have effectively seized control of the Ukrainian economy, remaking it in their neo-liberal image. Respected journalist and commentator Alec Luhn, writing in *The Nation*, explained that:

The IMF loan comes with demands for 'economic reforms,' i.e., austerity measures, that will be borne by the working-class Ukrainians, one-fourth of whom already live below the poverty line ... the IMF recipe hinges on cuts to subsidies and social services and a floating exchange rate that will sink purchasing power even further. Kiev has already started to implement all of these measures. According to economists, the result will be growing poverty,

reduced social benefits and an extended recession. In fact, the economic prognosis sounds a lot like Greece, which, four years after the start of an EU-IMF loan program, is suffering from 27 percent unemployment and rising risk-of-poverty rates. (Luhn, 2014)

Essentially then, like the scavenger bird feasting on carrion, the IMF and the financial elites are preying on the rotting carcass of Ukraine, seeking to strip its assets through privatisation and selling them off to cronies in the West. In addition, their stated goals of ‘opening up Ukraine’ and ‘making it safe for business’ are merely euphemisms for the addition of a cheap labour market to the Eurozone, as well as a new export market in which Europe can dump its cheap goods without fear of indigenous competition.

Of course, it should be remembered that the rampant corruption in Ukraine, which was by no means exclusive to Yanukovich’s Government, makes any loan from the IMF entirely suspect, and a likely catalyst for the dreaded odious debt. As highly respected Russia correspondent and analyst John Helmer wrote in September 2014, ‘of the \$3.2 billion disbursed to the Ukrainian treasury by the IMF at the start of May [2014], \$3.1 billion had disappeared offshore by the middle of August’ (Helmer 2014). Not only is this an illustration of the extreme corruption that exists in a Ukraine headed by US-sponsored oligarchs, but it also demonstrates the painful reality that it is the people of Ukraine who will pay for this crime.

Regarding precisely this point, world-renowned economist Michael Hudson (2014) succinctly wrote that ‘Ukraine’s main problem is that its debt is denominated in dollars and euros. There seems only one way to raise the foreign exchange to repay the IMF: by selling its natural resources, headed by gas rights and agricultural land’. Hudson accurately describes the precarious state of the Ukrainian economy now that the IMF and World Bank have become its creditors and, in effect, the de facto rulers of the country, with Poroshenko and his oligarch milieu as the nominal political leaders. But it is the issue of asset stripping by Western corporations that is of central importance, as the resource-rich country is sold piece by piece, just as Russia was after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

One critical sector that is at the top of the Western corporate agenda is energy. Not only are Washington and Brussels, along with the corporations they represent, interested in wresting control of the vital gas delivery infrastructure (pipelines, refineries, etc.), they seek to control the as yet untapped energy reserves of the country, including through the use of the environmentally harmful hydraulic fracturing process (commonly referred to as ‘fracking’). Since the outbreak of the crisis, major Western energy corporations have been licking their chops to get their hands on the untapped energy potential of Ukraine. So much so, that access to these reserves has become a focal point of the continued proxy war against Russia.

In a little publicised piece of proposed legislation entitled ‘The Russian Aggression Prevention Act of 2014’ (S. 2277), the issue of access to energy is of prime importance. Toward the end of S.2277 one finds a seemingly innocuous clause that, when read carefully, may just be one of the most important in the whole bill. S.2277:

Amends the Natural Gas Act to apply the expedited application and approval process for natural gas exports to World Trade Organization members ... [and] urges the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Trade and Development Agency, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the World Bank Group, and the European Bank for Reconstruction to promote assistance to Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova in order to exploit natural gas and oil reserves and to develop alternative energy sources.

It would seem then that the bill is not solely about Ukraine’s security, but also that of the major energy corporations which seek to make massive profits from the unrest in Ukraine. The above clause provides that energy exports could be expedited, ostensibly as a means to undermine Russia’s energy dominance in Europe. Naturally, major US officials and executives have been champing at the bit to get their hands on the lucrative Ukrainian gas reserves, as well as its pipeline infrastructure. In this provision, the US Congress would essentially provide the political cover for the major energy companies to do this. Hunter Biden, Vice President Joe

Biden's son who sits on the board of Burisma Holdings Ltd (Guardian 2014b), a major Ukrainian oil and gas company, as well as his high-powered colleagues from the energy sector, likely made sure that the legislation provided for the exploitation of the energy sector. Now, with the international trade obstacles out of the way, it should be an easy ride to the bank.

The energy sector is not alone in offering lucrative opportunities for profit for Western corporations; so too does the highly prized agricultural sector. With some of the most fertile agricultural land in the world, Ukraine is a prime target for the major agricultural and biotech companies. The aforementioned Oakland Institute (2014) report states:

The stakes around Ukraine's vast agricultural sector, the world's third largest exporter of corn and fifth largest exporter of wheat, constitute a critical factor that has been often overlooked. With its ample fields of fertile black soil that allow for high production volumes of grains and cereals, Ukraine is often referred to as the 'breadbasket of Europe' .... Whereas Ukraine does not allow the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in agriculture, Article 404 of the EU agreement, which relates to agriculture, includes a clause that has generally gone unnoticed: it indicates, among other things, that both parties will cooperate to extend the use of biotechnologies. There is no doubt that this provision meets the expectations of the agribusiness industry ... it is no surprise that Ukraine was selected in 2013 to be one of the 10 pilot countries in the World Bank's new Benchmarking the Business of Agriculture (BBA) project. Still in its preliminary stages, the BBA seeks to promote agricultural policy reforms and will rank countries according to ease of doing agricultural business, much like the Doing Business ranking but exclusively for the agriculture sector. By encouraging reforms such as the deregulation of seed and fertilizers markets, it appears to be an additional effort to open the country's agricultural sector to foreign investment.

Clearly, part of the corporate agenda for Ukraine is to transform the country from 'the breadbasket of Europe' to something akin to

a neo-colonial possession. Like the European colonies of prior centuries, Ukraine would become wholly dependent on the 'mother country', in this case Europe, for its very survival. It would serve as a producer of raw materials and staple foods for export to the European market, while serving as a dumping ground for European goods. Essentially, Ukraine would become a de facto colony of Europe.

Additionally, the introduction of genetically modified seeds will forever alter the balance of the ecosystem, forcing small and large farmers alike to buy both seeds and pesticides from Monsanto, DuPont, and the other biotech giants. And so, there is a clear win for the corporations, a win for the oligarchs enriching themselves on the fire-sale, a win for Europe and the US, and a clear loss for working people in Ukraine. A more obvious example of imperialism is unlikely to be found.

### **Kiev's war on the working class and the left**

While the economic assault on Ukraine by the organs and institutions of global capital and the corporate elite is quite well known, the attack on the working class and the left inside the country has gone mostly unexamined. Specifically, the post-coup period has seen organised and co-ordinated repression of political parties and trade union activists, a political witch-hunt designed to purge the Kiev government of any left-leaning or dissenting voices, violence and intimidation directed against elected officials and activists who break from the 'ultra-nationalist' (read fascist) camp, and much more. In essence, the tendency since the overthrow of the democratically elected President Yanukovich has been to crush dissent and opposition to the oligarch-fascist coalition government using whatever means necessary. It is precisely this quashing of dissent that led directly to the rebellion in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Lugansk, where the insurgency against the coup government coalesced after the fascist nature of the new dispensation became evident to all.

The day of 2 May 2014 will be remembered in history as a major turning point in the conflict in Ukraine, one that radicalised many anti-government forces in the East, precipitating the conflict that has been raging

ever since. On that fateful day, the militants of the fascist Right Sector organisation combined with right-wing hooligans to incite violence against peaceful anti-Kiev, anti-fascist activists in the Ukrainian port city of Odessa. In an attempt to defend and protect themselves, the anti-Kiev activists took refuge in the Trade Unions House, a city landmark located at the centre of Odessa. The fascist thugs then proceeded to descend upon the building, armed with Molotov cocktails and other weapons, attacking those inside, whether activists or simply employees working. The violent assault on the Trade Unions House culminated in Right Sector militants setting fire to the building, hurling projectiles at the windows, and mercilessly beating (in some cases to death) victims who had barely escaped the flames.

Although the entire episode was documented with videos, photographs, and first-hand accounts, the corporate media and other outlets have attempted to obscure the reality of the events of the day by euphemistically referring to the episode as ‘clashes’ between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian groups (BBC News 2014a). Not only is it misleading to describe a one-sided assault as ‘clashes’, but referring to the anti-Kiev activists as ‘pro-Russian’ is a red herring designed to immediately conjure in the minds of Western news consumers images of Russian agents or unpatriotic leftists acting against their own country. The obvious intention is to smear and demonise the anti-Kiev activists while, by contrast, glorifying the Right Sector as ‘patriotic.’ In addition, those who incited the violence and killed at least 43 innocent people were not merely ‘pro-Ukrainian’, but rather Nazi militants whose conception of ‘Ukraine’ is a monoethnic state where ethnic, racial, and religious minorities have been purged from the country, leaving it ‘pure’. Such an ideological outlook is typical of fascism, and Nazism specifically. Referring to these criminals as ‘pro-Ukrainian’ is a means of conferring legitimacy on their actions, whitewashing the criminality and inhumanity at the centre of the day’s events.

The symbolism of the incident should not be lost on keen political observers or students of history. The anti-Kiev activists sought safety in the building that was the symbolic heart of working-class activism and politics in Ukraine during the Soviet period. These activists, comprising almost exclusively

working-class youths and workers from Odessa and surrounding cities, were attacked not only because of their refusal to accept the illegal rule of fascists in Kiev, but because they refused to abandon their fellow workers who had, on numerous occasions, demonstrated on the streets of Odessa and elsewhere in the South and East of the country. Their resistance in the face of brutal attacks was a courageous act, but also a class-conscious one.

Of course, Odessa and the 2 May massacre is not the only example of such repression of working-class, grassroots activism. As Svetlana Licht, an organiser and activist with Borotba (Struggle), an anti-fascist left coalition, recounts:

We mainly engaged in propaganda activities. There were workers who undertook printing leaflets. We formed committees and organized people to campaign in the city [Kharkov, Ukraine’s second largest city], to spread the message. Together with Kharkov civil initiatives, we began to organize anti-war actions in early April, drawing many women anti-fascists. But in late April, the police attempted an illegal search of the Kharkov Borotba headquarters. Before that, there was a wave of arrests of those who took part in the second capture of the Kharkov Regional State Administration building – more than 100 people were arrested. Because of the repression, activities of Kharkovites began to fall sharply. Then came the May 2 Odessa ... . Fewer people came out onto the streets. On May 8 – just before Victory Day [anniversary of the Soviet victory over German fascism in the Second World War] – the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) illegally seized our headquarters, destroyed everything and took all the newspapers, leaflets, flags, sound-amplifying equipment and generator. This was done to prevent us from taking action on Victory Day. But we still participated in a citywide protest which attracted several thousand people. (Workers World, 2014)

Naturally, Svetlana’s story is one of many, as the Kiev Regime used its police and paramilitary fascist brigades to crush dissent, intimidate activists, and generally subdue the working-class opposition to the coup. Moreover, she and her fellow activists have been the victims of a concerted demonisation

campaign in the Ukrainian and Western media, which has attempted to conflate all anti-Kiev forces, both peaceful activists and armed self-defence forces, as being merely the stooges of Russia. Despite a total lack of evidence backing up such an argument, that remains the dominant narrative to this day.

The significance of the fact that fascist paramilitaries and local police have collaborated in such repression should not be understated. This is an inescapable reality of the post-coup Kiev Regime: it relies on a combination of the two in order to execute its orders. Therefore, it can never be claimed, though many have tried, that the fascist elements are merely 'fringe groups' not representative of the policies and actions of Kiev. Instead, the evidence suggests that these groups are part of a coherent strategy of repression upon which Kiev embarked as soon as the 21 February coup was complete.

But grassroots, local activism was not alone in being singled out for political repression. In fact, the Kiev regime targeted for destruction one of the most popular political parties in the country, the Ukrainian Communist Party. In July 2014, the unelected Ukrainian parliamentary speaker Oleksandr Turchynov took the extraordinary and illegal step of dissolving the Communist Party, a political formation that, along with the now defunct Party of Regions (former President Yanukovich's party), was the most popular party in the East of the country (Interfax-Ukraine 2014). Not only was the Communist Party a symbol of the Soviet past when working-class living standards were far higher, and when unemployment and lack of social services were unheard of, but it was also the party of miners, metalworkers, and other industrial workers. The Communist Party represented the interests of the working-class East, and by dissolving it, Kiev effectively deprived a significant portion of the country of its political representation. This move should be understood as a double-assault on the working class of Donetsk and Lugansk; Kiev attacked both collective memory and the opportunity for collective action and organisation. In this way, the coup government made any reconciliation or peaceful settlement impossible.

Nothing better illustrates just how vicious and barbaric the assault on Communist Party leaders and members has been than the horrific story of Rotislav Vasilko, first secretary

of the Lviv chapter of the Communist Party who was brutally beaten and tortured by fascist thugs at Maidan (PravdaTV 2014). His description of his treatment includes being beaten with a cane, punched, and kicked repeatedly, having needles stuck under his fingernails, and much more. When asked what he thought the motivation for the attack might have been, Vasilko explained, 'This is a political game, they needed to hold me up. They beat and released a friend of mine over there, but since I am the First Secretary of the Lviv city committee, they took me hostage and brought me to Maidan'. This incident illustrates not only the persecution of Communist Party members, but the degree to which such repression is used for propaganda purposes to intimidate other Ukrainians of the left into silence.

The persecution did not stop with the Communist Party and grassroots left activism, however. Rather, these tactics extended all the way to Kiev itself. In September 2014, the Ukrainian parliament passed a law that would essentially purge the government of dissenting voices, left-leaning politicians, Communists, and anyone else deemed unacceptable by the new dispensation in Kiev. According to then Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, 'About one million civil servants of different kinds will come under this law, including the whole cabinet of ministers, the interior ministry, the intelligence services, the prosecutor's office' (BBC News 2014d). Called 'lustration,' which is essentially a loyalty purge, the coup government embarked upon a political witch-hunt designed to intimidate, coerce, and destroy any leftist elements in the government.

The politics of the street went hand in hand with the politics of the parliament, as dissenting voices were threatened, silenced, and sometimes even beaten and publicly humiliated. In a shocking display that has become all too familiar in post-coup Kiev where fascists operate with impunity, member of parliament Vitaly Zhuravsky was harassed, publicly humiliated, and thrown into a dumpster for supporting a bill granting the rebellious eastern regions of Donetsk and Lugansk special status, while voting against the 'lustration' bill which likely would have ended his own political career (Firedoglake 2014). Though the incident was minor, it perfectly illustrates the political climate in Kiev, and the sort of intimidation and repression that

all political figures and activists who don't toe the fascist-oligarch line face. Of course, this information is almost entirely suppressed in the Western media which, from the beginning of the conflict, has tried to whitewash the actions of fascists while exaggerating, or simply lying, about the actions of the anti-Kiev forces. Indeed, the Western media has done much to advance the agenda of Kiev and its sponsors in Washington.

### Ukraine as propaganda war

In his seminal 1928 work *Propaganda*, Edward Bernays famously defined propaganda as 'The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organised habits and opinions of the masses ... [it] is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country' (Bernays and Miller 2005). Essentially, the central function of propaganda is not merely to disseminate misinformation, but to do it in such a way as to affect everything from thoughts and opinions to ideology and actions. And this is precisely the phenomenon at work when it comes to Ukraine and the way in which the issue has been represented by the US Government and Western media.

One critical aspect of the conflict is the way in which it demonstrates Western media complicity in the pursuit of the imperial agenda. Perhaps said another way, the conflict in Ukraine has provided an extraordinary example of the power and, somewhat paradoxically, the weakness of the corporate media juggernaut. While the crisis has been widely reported, with its many facets sometimes overblown and often times overlooked, there has been such an incredible deluge of lies, omissions, and distortions, that it can be rightly said that the coverage of Ukraine provides a case study in the use and abuse of propaganda. Moreover, it illustrates the degree to which the media is an appendage of the Western ruling class, advancing its interests under the guise of objective reporting and facts.

Perhaps one of the most egregious examples of this confluence between media and political agenda relates to the shaping of the narrative of Russian aggression and expansionism. Exploiting a deeply ingrained Russophobia – a vestige of Cold War era propaganda – the reportage on Ukraine has

been less about facts and evidence, and more about rhetoric and fear. It is precisely this fearmongering which is so dangerous, as it could quite easily provide the spark that transforms the new cold war into a hot one.

Respected news organisations such as the BBC and the *New York Times* filled newsstands and social media with accounts of a 'Russian tank invasion' of Ukraine, one that was, according to them, most certainly the opening salvo of a full Russian intervention. A closer analysis, however, reveals that there was no actual reporting of the alleged incident, but rather that the headline and story were derived from the unverified claims of the Kiev government's interior minister (BBC News 2014b).

Indeed, this same propaganda talking point was repeated by various high-ranking government officials, including then Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk who, on 6 March 2014 stated, 'Having Russian boots on the ground and Russian tanks is unacceptable in the 21st century ... . It would be very difficult to persuade foreign investors to invest in the country which has Russian tanks and Russian soldiers on its streets' (Yatsenyuk 2014). Naturally, one would expect this allegation to be plastered on every television screen and newspaper front page around the world, and yet it wasn't. Though difficult for the media machine to admit at the time, these claims have been thoroughly debunked and shown to be utter falsehoods designed for propaganda purposes. As of September 2014, there remains zero evidence of a Russian invasion, much less one involving tanks and other heavy weaponry. But of course, the point of such disinformation is not to make it true, but to insert it into the narrative, planting the idea in the minds of casual news consumers who will then use that to frame their understanding of the issue.

One of the more infamous examples of this sort of blatant disinformation used to propagandise the Western public and marshal support for a forceful confrontation with Russia in Ukraine was the media coverage of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17. En route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, MH17 was downed over eastern Ukraine under mysterious circumstances. Within hours of the tragedy, the media machine was already blaming Moscow for the downing, accusing the Russians of a 'provocation'. Days after the attack, and long before any investigation commenced, the White House was already attacking the

Kremlin, accusing Russia of being responsible (Huffington Post 2014). The airwaves were filled with talk of Russian anti-aircraft missiles delivered by Moscow to anti-Kiev forces in eastern Ukraine, and the allegation, without evidence, that this was the cause of the downing.

In a vain attempt to substantiate these allegations, the government in Kiev released pictures and a video which purportedly showed a Russian Buk missile battery with at least one missile missing moving in the direction of Russia from rebel-held territory. Unfortunately for Kiev, the videos were examined by many familiar with the region and exposed as distortions insofar as they actually show the Buk systems in Kiev-controlled territory, not rebel areas as Ukrainian president Poroshenko, and other officials in Kiev, alleged. In addition, on 15 August, 2014, the Russian Union of Engineers released their report on the incident which finds that there is a high probability that MH17 was shot down by an aircraft under the command of Kiev. And so, with this information, it raises the question not only of Kiev's lies regarding Russian involvement, but also the far more sinister likelihood that it was, in fact, Kiev's military forces, whether under orders or simply through irresponsibility and negligence, that actually downed MH17.

Additionally, one must examine the claims made and repeated ad nauseam by Kiev that it had no military aircraft in the skies when MH17 was shot down. From 17 July (the day of the incident) until 21 July (the day Russia's Ministry of Defence presented its intelligence), the Kiev regime continually denied allegations that its military aircraft were in the vicinity of MH17. However, once Russia's Ministry of Defence provided the international press with evidence refuting that claim and showing that not only were Ukrainian jets in the vicinity, but they were within firing range, magically that talking point ceased to be repeated. In other words, every aspect of the Kiev Regime's narrative has been thoroughly discredited.

And so, by 23 July, the media headlines which had, until that point, simply been reiterating the claims made by Kiev and using 'US assessments' began to finally admit that there is absolutely no evidence directly tying Russia to the incident. So, the US State Department, along with nearly all major media, were exposed as part of a comprehensive propaganda matrix designed to further

US foreign policy aims, rather than report information accurately and objectively. More to the point, just two days earlier, the US State Department made the claim that it had the intelligence to 'prove' Russian involvement but, when pressed by Associated Press journalist Matt Lee, refused to provide any hard evidence, be it intelligence or reconnaissance imagery, to support their claims.

While the coverage of the conflict in Ukraine has thoroughly exposed the Western media and its role in serving the political agenda of the West, it has also revealed the shameful way in which that same media attempts to silence dissenting and/or alternative voices through intimidation, character assassination, and outright lies. Perhaps the most egregious example is the public attack and smear campaign against renowned author, scholar, and contributing editor at *The Nation*, Stephen Cohen. In a widely disseminated speech Cohen delivered at the US-Russia Forum in Washington, DC in June 2014, Cohen (2014) stated:

I have been repeatedly assailed – no less in purportedly 'liberal' publications – as Putin's No. 1 American 'apologist,' 'useful idiot,' 'dupe,' 'best friend' and, perhaps a new low in immature invective, 'toady.' I expected to be criticized, as I was during nearly twenty years as a CBS News commentator, but not in such personal and scurrilous ways ... . None of these character assassins present any factual refutations of anything I have written or said. They indulge only in ad hominem slurs based on distortions and on the general premise that any American who seeks to understand Moscow's perspectives is a 'Putin apologist' and thus unpatriotic ... . Some of these writers, or people who stand behind them, are longtime proponents of the twenty-year U.S. policies that have led to the Ukrainian crisis. By defaming us, they seek to obscure their complicity in the unfolding disaster and their unwillingness to rethink it ... . Equally important, however, these kinds of neo-McCarthyites are trying to stifle democratic debate by stigmatizing us in ways that make us unwelcome on mainstream broadcasts and op-ed pages, and to policy-makers.

Cohen is here responding both to the attacks from media pundits, and from his colleagues



in academia. However, the salient point is that Cohen describes the climate of intimidation that he and others who share his views have been subjected to. His is a testimony to the power of the propaganda machine, one that is able to defame and make irrelevant America's pre-eminent expert on Russia, Soviet history, and the role of the Cold War in shaping the modern world. Indeed, Cohen has compared the climate for discourse and debate on the subject of Russia to that which existed during the later decades of the Cold War, and has unequivocally stated that the discourse today is far more narrow, shallow, and one-sided than it ever was before. This point, better than any other, illustrates the complicity of the media in executing the foreign policy agenda of Washington.

Perhaps the most perfidious of the propaganda talking points framing the discussion of the conflict in Ukraine is the myth of Russian expansionism. According to the mythos of this narrative, Russia has instigated the conflict in Ukraine, using it as a pretext for the rekindling the Soviet Union and/or the Russian Empire. Purveyors of this fallacy point to Moscow's annexation of Crimea, along with its support for the rebels of Donetsk and Lugansk, as merely the latest example of Putin's imperial ambitions. For corroboration, they point to Russia's long and brutal conflict in Chechnya in the 1990s and early 2000s as an example of that nascent Russian expansionism which, until Ukraine, lay mostly dormant. Likewise, the Russia-Georgia war of 2008 (begun by former Georgian prime minister Saakashvili's attacks on the breakaway Georgian republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia) seems to provide further evidence of this notion that Russia is the true imperial monster.

However, there is as little fact as there is logic in such arguments. First and foremost, such thinking ignores the obvious point that all of these conflicts, Ukraine included, have taken place either within Russia, as in the case of Chechnya, or along Russia's borders. Each conflict constitutes an undeniable national security threat to Russia and Russian citizens, including the killing of Russians in Georgia and Ukraine. For pundits and so called experts to bloat about alleged Russian expansionism while Washington prosecutes no less than seven wars (just those publicly acknowledged), none of which has a direct impact on the mainland US, its

borders, or its overseas territories, is utter hypocrisy.

It is the US, as the world's sole superpower and political, economic, and military juggernaut, which has the imperial ambition in this equation. It is the US which has promoted NATO expansion to the doorstep of Russia, forcing a reaction from Moscow. It is the US which has sought to make the world safe for Western business and so called 'democracy'. And yet, when Russia defends its territory and its people, and uses its legal military authority to guarantee the same for Crimea in the midst of a regime change operation in Kiev, somehow it is Russia that is branded an 'empire'. Naturally, such rhetoric only further exposes that, in Washington, the emperor truly has no clothes.

### **Truth and consequences: Fallout from Ukraine**

As the months pass and the conflict in Ukraine continues to evolve (or devolve, depending on one's perspective), the long-lasting ramifications of this crisis come into focus. Not only has Ukraine brought into stark relief the fundamental divide between the bipolar worldview predominant in the West, and the multipolar world order envisioned by the developing world, it has also highlighted the deeply flawed, and utterly dependent nature of the relationship between the two.

Essentially, the end of the Cold War was far more than the end of a global political and ideological conflict; it was also the end of an economic alternative to global neoliberal capitalism. With the demise of the Soviet Union, finance capital centred in New York and London, with its attendant political, social, and cultural power, became the true global hegemon, establishing firm control of nearly every aspect of global economic life, including every key financial institution. It is within this tightly woven fabric of corporations, banks, international lending institutions, and other financial bodies that Russia has attempted to recover from the disastrous post-Soviet period of the 1990s – a turbulent decade that saw a once great superpower reduced to a lawless, poverty-stricken shell of its former self. In its pursuit of political and economic resurgence, Russia became entirely dependent on a global financial system monopolised entirely by the US and its allies.

However, it is only in recent months, as the situation in Ukraine has led to a considerable cooling of relations between Russia and the West, that the true scope of this dependence has come to the fore. In response to Russia's actions in Crimea, the US imposed sanctions on key individuals in President Putin's Government (Washington Post 2014) in hopes that the token measures could help the Obama Administration save face in the wake of its political embarrassment over Russia's annexation of Crimea. After much arm-twisting and political intimidation, in late July 2014, the EU finally went along with its ally in Washington by expanding sanctions to cover key sectors of the Russian economy including banking, energy, and the military (Wall Street Journal 2014).

While the sanctions are intended as punitive measures designed to drive a wedge between the Russian people and the Kremlin, they have elicited a growing wave of solidarity with the government and its policies. Far more importantly, the Western sanctions inspired counter-sanctions by Moscow, including a ban on food imports from Europe, a particularly worrisome development for countries such as Poland which are heavily dependent on agricultural exports to the Russian market (Guardian 2014c). The growing sanctions war is troubling in and of itself, but its real impact extends far beyond the affected sectors. Indeed, the sanctions have brought into the open the question of Russia's place in the global economic system or, perhaps more concretely, whether or not Russia can continue to rely on the West, with its myriad financial and commercial institutions and corporations, for its economic development and survival. Rather, the question could be recast as: Does Russia need the West as much as the West thinks and hopes it does?

As the sanctions have taken effect, Russia has been forced to re-evaluate its position in the world. Rather than succumb to the dictates of Washington, Moscow has chosen to look east, working vigorously to shore up close economic ties with China, in addition to other key partners such as India and Brazil. In late May 2014, as relations between Moscow and Washington were reaching historic lows, Russia and China finally agreed to a historic gas deal representing potentially \$400 billion over three decades. The landmark agreement, which had been in the works for decades, was finally made a reality not by economic benefit,

but out of political necessity created by the West's antagonistic attitude toward Russia. In the end, it seems that Western sanctions provided the necessary impetus for Moscow and Beijing to overcome their significant economic differences and seal the deal.

However, the co-operation does not end there. In September 2014 (in addition to the eastern route already agreed to), Russia and China agreed to another 30-year gas deal to supply China with energy via a western route through the Altai Mountains (BRICS Post 2014b). This dual-linkage between the two countries only further cements their long-term co-operation. Naturally, Western energy corporations watch such developments with considerable nervousness as they witness the emergence of a new relationship with the world's foremost gas exporter marrying its economic future to the world's foremost energy consumer.

Seen from this perspective, Western sanctions against Russia have become the fulcrum around which Moscow's economic future has pivoted eastward. Indeed, the word 'pivot' here is fitting considering the high-profile military strategy espoused by the Obama Administration known as the 'pivot to Asia.' So, while Washington 'pivots' by reorganising military and naval capacity eastward in an attempt to check Chinese regional hegemony and maintain its own, Russia too 'pivots' eastward by forging closer ties with Beijing. While the long-term impact of this shift will not be entirely clear for years, the symbolic significance is unmistakable. After more than 20 years of Moscow's economic elites believing that Russia's prosperity and future lie solely through collaboration with the West, that orthodoxy has given way to a new geopolitical, economic, and strategic reality – the future is in the East.

China is certainly not the only avenue by which Russia seeks to buttress its economic and geopolitical position in the world. Recent months have seen a renewed drive from Moscow to create new multilateral forums and partnerships which it sees as emerging alternatives to the West's economic domination. One such important development was the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union – an economic partnership between Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus – which will both literally and metaphorically act as a bridge between East and West, making Russia an indispensable partner for all future overland economic activity between China and

Europe (Draitser 2014b). As China moves forward with its ambitious New Silk Road project, which will see the development of a series of infrastructure and development projects that will enable Chinese exports to reach the European market without having to traverse the US-dominated commercial sea lanes, Russia stands to become a major beneficiary. In this way, despite pursuing their own economic and political agendas, Russia and China once again find themselves in collaboration rather than competition. Such is the new reality in global politics.

Not to be forgotten, India has proven to be a reliable and profitable partner for Russia as well. While much of the attention has focused on the massive energy deal between Russia and China, India too has become a major source of future prosperity for Russia. A massive gas pipeline project which would bring all-important energy from Russia to the Indian subcontinent is in the works, and is estimated to be worth at least \$40 billion (BRICS Post 2014a). This deal, in addition to the billions in nuclear energy, military, and other crucial sectors in which Russia and India co-operate, makes India an essential partner for Russia, and an obvious irritant for Washington which, far from isolating Russia, seems to have driven it into the arms of others.

One of the most monumental developments that has taken place since the cooling of US-Russian relations is the establishment of the BRICS Development Bank (BBC News 2014c). Seen as a small-scale alternative to Western-dominated lending institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, the new BRICS bank will make financing for large-scale infrastructure projects available to countries in the developing world without the brutal conditions (i.e. austerity) imposed by the IMF and World Bank. In this way, the emerging giant economies of Russia, China, Brazil and India make themselves into a viable alternative to the nearly universally reviled and predatory Western institutions which have wrought so much destruction in the Global South over the last seven decades.

While the BRICS Development Bank is certainly not the equal of the IMF and World Bank, it is clearly the opening salvo in a reorganisation of the global economic order. No longer will emerging and developing economies be forced to succour themselves on loan conditions dictated by Western economic elites whose goal is to ensnare poor countries in endless cycles of

debt servitude. Instead, a multipolar economic order is emerging which will fundamentally alter the balance of power in the world.

Although it might be hyperbole to say that Western sanctions alone have led to this massive reorientation of the world economy, it is clear that they have provided the all-important, and very much needed, extra push. Were it not for the belligerent policies enacted by Washington, policies which seemed to be more about political face-saving than genuine diplomacy, it is unlikely that so much progress toward multipolarity could have been made in just a few short months. As is often the case, global events have accelerated the course of human history. Russia, China, and the emerging economies of the world intend to be on the right side of that history.

### **The Empire has no clothes**

When examining the course of events in Ukraine, most analysts and laypeople alike entirely ignore the issue of imperialism. If they do acknowledge it, it is usually only in the context of 'Russian imperialism' as the great menace against which Western democracies must struggle. Perhaps it is a lack of self-awareness, or perhaps it is pure narcissism, arrogance and hubris, but the inability to recognise Western imperialism lies at the heart of the misunderstanding of Ukraine. The sanctimonious way in which Western leaders describe the role of the West in 'building democracy' and 'protecting freedom' belies a complete ignorance of history. Somehow, they have come to believe that their empire, which they are careful never to acknowledge as such, is omnipotent and indestructible, that its hegemony is not ephemeral as has been that of every empire throughout history. They have internalised into the very marrow of their bones the belief that their power lies not in material conditions constantly shifting like desert sands, but in some immutable and universal righteousness that cannot be challenged. Needless to say, such thinking is not only ignorant of history and reality, it is also exceedingly dangerous.

Despite being, like Narcissus, mesmerised by their own reflections, Western leaders have missed the turning of the page of history. While they labour under a collective delusion of their own grandeur, the world is moving on without them. The Eastern giants continue to rise, and Russia seeks to feed

them and nurture their growth, along with its own. Moscow chose to make its stand in Ukraine, refusing to allow yet another country in its traditional sphere of influence to be made into a forward arm of NATO and the Western empire. It has exposed before the world the utterly cynical, imperial geopolitics of Washington, forcing the world's lone superpower to resort to bludgeoning it with sanctions which are more cosmetic than substantive. Regardless of what anyone's opinions of Russia and its motivations might be, it is objectively true that Russia has effectively stood up to the US, earning it the respect of countless millions around the world. But of course, the significance of this fight does not end with mere symbolic victories.

The crisis in Ukraine has once again cast Russia in the familiar and, for many, heroic role as the guardian and defender against Nazism and fascism. The rise of fascism in Ukraine, sponsored and promoted by the US (for detailed examination of the Nazi phenomenon in Ukraine, see Draitser 2014a), has rekindled not only patriotic sentiments in Russia, but also the feeling that the battle for Ukraine is far more than a territorial, or even a political, dispute. Rather, the re-emergence of Ukrainian fascism with its sordid history of racism, anti-Semitism, and Nazi collaboration has added a new dimension to the conflict, reuniting Russia with its former glory, forging emotional links between the generation today and that of its grandfathers 70 years ago. Naturally, none of this is considered newsworthy in the West, where analysts and pundits alike perform the most complex mental gymnastics to ignore the issue, choosing to depict it as some sort of Russian propaganda. Indeed, by doing so, the so-called liberal democracies once again ally themselves with fascists, as they have done everywhere from Latin America to Eastern Europe over the last half century.

Imperialism must always be understood in its proper historical context, with ebbs and flows, heights and depths within which fortunes are made and nations destroyed. Empires have only one goal, one enduring drive: to maintain and expand themselves. Empires care not for laws or rights, women or families. They take no interest in civilisation as such. Rather, empires (and the men and women who lead them) care only for themselves.

The famous opening line of the English translation of the classic of Chinese literature

*The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* reminds us that 'Empires wax and wane, states cleave asunder and coalesce' (Luo et al. 2002). Indeed, it is the waxing and waning with which human history is shaped. While we have witnessed the unparalleled waxing of the Western empire, we have equally looked forward to the inevitable waning, when the victims of empire would rise to become great powers in their own right. It is not that the world must replace one empire with another, but rather that all who are interested in peace and justice participate in shaping a better world, one in which no empire can subjugate humanity, in which no empire can truly rule the world. Perhaps then it will be Ukraine that, in the final analysis, becomes the Waterloo of the Western empire.

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## United States Expansionism and the Pacific

Pacific islands have long figured as idylls – a myth that conceals a history of Western entanglement ranging from voyages of discovery, competition for trade routes, and colonial expansion, to annexation, commercial exploitation, militarisation, population displacement, and dozens of nuclear weapons tests (as recently as 1996).

As early as the 16th century, Western encounters with Pacific peoples were marked by cultural misunderstandings and frequent violence, as is well documented in both Antonio Pigafetta's account of Magellan's major exploring voyage (1521) and Pedro Fernández de Quirós's journal relating Mendaña's failed attempt to colonise the Solomons (1595). By the 18th century, European voyages of exploration and scientific documentation, with their vivid accounts, established the South Seas both as a real site ripe for economic and territorial expansion, and an ideal space suited to the projection of desires for escape, spatial mastery, and sensual indulgence.

By the 1770s, the US had started to bring its free-market values to the Pacific, when ships from the East Coast sailed around Cape Horn, heading for the trans-oceanic Chinese trade routes laid down by Spain, France, and Britain. David N. Leff notes that the American flag first reached China in 1784, establishing a strategic goal that would dominate US–Pacific relations (Leff 1940: 3). Spurred on by an expansionism born in the 18th century and soon harnessed to the 19th-century ideology of manifest destiny, the roots of the 'American Pacific' were grounded in the interconnected forces of real politics and mythic invention.

One of first colonising gestures made by the recently decolonised US nation took place in 1791, when Joseph Ingraham of the *Hope* claimed the northern islands of the Marquesas, naming them after luminaries of the US Enlightenment such as Franklin, Adams, and Hancock. Just three weeks later, Etienne Marchand reclaimed all of the Marquesas for France. Significantly, the Marquesas would become the site of the first major US military conflict in the Pacific, when Captain David Porter – sometimes called ‘the first American imperialist’ (Rowe 2000: 83) – stopped at Taiohae harbour in Nukuhiva to refit his ship the *Essex* during the War of 1812. The 1812 war, as Thomas Walter Herbert notes, evinced a desire of the US to be recognised as a legitimate state, one of the ‘community of nations’ (Herbert 1980: 79), as Porter’s actions in the Marquesas seem to bear out. Following a breakdown of agreements with local people, Porter and his men became embroiled in ongoing conflicts between the Tei’i, Hapa’a, and Taipi peoples, and proceeded to raid Taipivai, burning whole villages and killing many of what Porter later described as its ‘unhappy and heroic people’ (Porter 1822: 105). Porter formally took possession of the island, demanding that its people swear allegiance to the American flag. His subsequent ‘Declaration of Conquest’ indicates the paternalism of a US Enlightenment vision:

Our rights to this island being founded on priority of discovery, conquest, and possession, cannot be disputed. But the natives, to secure themselves that friendly protection which their defenseless situation so much required, have requested to be admitted into the great American family, whose pure republican policy approaches so near their own. (79)

The US government never ratified Porter’s occupation, and 30 years later the French again claimed the island group. Still, Porter’s ‘Typee War’ marked the fierce impact of *haole* (outsiders) on Pacific locales, and it fascinated and haunted travellers in Polynesia (such as Herman Melville and Paul Gauguin) for years to come.

In spite of Porter’s failures, his published account, along with others that appeared around the same time (the German-Russian

circumnavigator Adam J. von Krusenstern’s *Voyage round the World in the Years 1803 ... 1806* appeared in English in 1813, and his chief scientist, Georg H. von Langsdorff, published *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World in English in 1813–14*, with a US edition in 1817) helped reinforce a notion that Pacific islands could serve US interests. However, while accounts such as Porter’s painted a relatively positive portrait of Pacific cultures and stressed connections between the Marquesas and the ‘great American family’, there were other, more derisive images of Pacific life that undermined any sense of familial inclusion. Missionary reports written under the influence of Calvinist doctrine commonly figured Pacific islanders as cruel, violent, and needing religious conversion. Publications that backed missionary societies (such as the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* and *Niles Weekly Register*) were dedicated to ‘evangelizing the heathen’, and they portrayed groups such as the Maoris and Society Islanders as indulging in warfare, orgies, cannibalism, and infanticide. These ‘hard primitivist’ notions of barbaric savagery thus accompanied, and in many ways played off, ‘soft primitivist’ concepts of noble savages inherited from European thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau; together they are emblematic of an underlying duality that has persisted in US representations of the Pacific.

Charles Wilkes’s US naval expedition of 1838–42 further manifested this contradictory stance: purporting to be objective and scientific, Wilkes would become better known for his strong-arm military tactics (much like Porter’s before him) than for his contributions to enlightened American progress. During an aggressive campaign in Fiji on Malolo, the villages of Arro (now Yaro) and Sualib were burned to the ground as revenge for the killing of two officers in the midst of a trading dispute. At Wilkes’s command, injured survivors crawled on their hands and knees, begging for his pardon. One of Wilkes’s crew, Charles Erskine, was so stunned by the events that he wrote: ‘perhaps I may be pardoned for thinking it would have been better if the islands had never been discovered by Europeans; not that Christianity is a failure, but that our [Western] civilization is’ (quoted in Perry 1994: 52–53).

The political and commercial contours of the ‘American Pacific’ era began to emerge with the help of the British-Chinese Opium War and the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. The

US found itself in a disadvantaged position regarding Pacific trade routes due to concessions granted to Britain, but lobbied for extended rights and therefore achieved a stake in the Pacific on a par with European powers. Soon after, the signing of the Oregon Treaty in 1846 signalled the coming of the 'American Pacific empire', when US free-market liberalism would supplant established European powers (Dudden 1994: xix). In 1850, California was declared the 31st state in the Union, and the vaunted ideology of manifest destiny effectively became a geopolitical reality. As the balance of power shifted west, California became central to Pacific trade, with the west coast now at the heart of 'the global space economy of capitalism that would continue for the next century and a half' (Soja 1989: 190). Closely linked to these economic shifts was the growth of US whaling routes, which Porter had staunchly defended. By mid-century, the importance of whaling was manifested in the US presence and investment in Hawai'i: the commercial plantation periphery to the emerging global centrality of the US.

The work of the literary figure perhaps most closely associated with the whaling industry, Melville, offers insights into some of the anxieties raised by US expansionism. Melville's *Typee* (1846) gestures towards anti-interventionism, and questions fundamental assumptions behind Western cultural hierarchies:

The enormities perpetrated in the South Seas upon some of the inoffensive islanders well nigh pass belief. ... We breathe nothing but vengeance, and equip armed vessels to traverse thousands of miles of ocean in order to execute summary punishment on the offenders. On arriving at their destination, they burn, slaughter, and destroy, according to the tenor of written instructions, and sailing away from the scene of devastation, call upon all Christendom to applaud their courage and their justice. How often is the term 'savages' incorrectly applied! (Melville 1996/1846: 27)

Melville's ironic reversals threaten to turn the logic of the imperial 'civilising mission' on its head. By the time of writing *Moby-Dick* (1851), Melville had outlined an even clearer sense that the growth of the American Pacific would engender not just tactical violence, but ongoing commercialism, culminating

in an Oceanic domination where 'new built California towns, but yesterday planted by the recentest race of men' would be directly linked to 'low-lying, endless, unknown Archipelagoes, and impenetrable Japans' via islands overrun by the demands of US markets (Melville 1994/1851: 456).

Driven by market forces, US expansion after the 1850s was largely linked to demands for guano, a highly profitable commodity used as fertiliser. With the 'Guano Wars' and Guano Act of 1856, Washington's leaders declared the legality of claiming territory in the name of commerce:

Whenever any citizen of the United States discovers a deposit of guano on any island, rock, or key, not within the lawful jurisdiction of any other Government, and not occupied by the citizens of any other Government, and takes peaceable possession thereof, and occupies the same, such island, rock, or key may, at the discretion of the President, be considered as appertaining to the United States. (quoted in Leff 1940: 7-8)

Unincorporated territories such as Baker, Jarvis, Nikumaroro (Gardner), Fakaofu (Bowditch), and Howland islands, along with Kingman Reef and the Kalama (Johnston) Atoll, were taken under this provision. At the same time, copra (dried coconut for producing oil) was emerging as the primary industry in the region, with Germany holding the greatest stake. Increasing commercial competition over the coming decades had substantial effects on Pacific and migrant labourers, with blackbirding (kidnapping indigenous peoples into slave labour) increasing through the 1860s.

As the commercial stakes got higher, a more clearly defined agenda emerged under Abraham Lincoln's secretary of state William Henry Seward, who envisioned the Pacific as central to the quest to develop a US 'empire' that could gain control of world markets. Seward argued that the US could achieve global power through commercial competition, 'depending not on armies nor even on wealth, but directly on invention and industry' (quoted in Paolino 1973: 4). Though Seward's wider ambitions were never realised during his lifetime, shortly after the end of the Civil War, in 1867, he was responsible for bringing both Alaska and the Midway Islands under US control.

It has often been argued that as late as the 1880s, Washington was still exhibiting an ambivalent attitude towards undertaking extensive expansion in the Pacific. The US stake could be seen as meagre compared to European colonial networks', and its interests were largely limited to those of private shippers and traders. Donald Johnson and Gary Dean Best note that in the 1860s, Apia, Lauthala, Suva, and Papeete had US consular representatives, but even these numbers began to dwindle as France, Britain, and later Germany assumed control of various island groups. Though this diminished presence might be attributed more to the recovery period after the Civil War and the economic crash of 1873, rather than to a lack of official interest, Johnson and Best (1995: 123) argue that 'there simply was no American colonial policy in the 1870s and 1880s, either in Congress or in the executive branch, although occasionally voices might be raised in favor of one or another expansive move'.

A closer look, however, indicates that the US was hardly turning away from Pacific speculation but instead shifting focus onto a small number of strategic island sites. For Walter LaFeber, the years 1850–89 can be viewed as the 'roots of empire', a period of preparation for the imperial acquisitions of the 1890s (LaFeber 1998/1963: 55). US representatives successfully negotiated in 1872 for the use of the harbour at Pago Pago, and the close involvement of Albert B. Steinberger (a self-styled 'special agent' of the US State Department who came to see himself as the future 'arch-manipulator' of Samoan affairs) in the formation of a Samoan government in 1875 assured ongoing US influence in the midst of subsequent governmental power shifts (Davidson 1967: 60). By 1878, US interests were officially entangled in Samoa, and by the late 1880s the secretary of state, Thomas Bayard, was explicitly linking the US interest in Samoa to the strategic construction of a canal across Central America. It is not really possible, therefore, to separate the interconnected US designs on the Pacific, Latin America, and the Caribbean. During this period, advocates of 'preventive imperialism' urged for the acquisition of territories that were in danger of being taken by other nations, while illicit activities such as blackbirding continued unabated.

Historians have contested the once commonly held notion that US imperial

expansion during the 1890s should be seen as an aberration amid predominantly isolationist policies. Indeed, the scale of the events that took place over an 18-month period between 1898 and 1899 (when the US took possession of Hawai'i, the eastern islands of Samoa, Wake Island, Guam, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, the latter as an occupied country and protectorate) suggests that these actions were hardly isolated or anomalous. In Hawai'i, Queen Liliuokalani was overthrown in 1893 by American forces as a direct result of increasing commercial exploitation of the sugar industry, but the act was not a fait accompli. Grover Cleveland's investigation, the Blount Report of July 1893, found that US forces had conspired against the monarchy, and Cleveland opposed annexation due to the islanders' resistance. The subsequent Morgan Report of 1894, however, reversed Blount's conclusions and refused Liliuokalani's return to power, leading to an interim colonial administration headed by an open enemy of Hawai'ian self-rule, Sanford B. Dole. President William McKinley, who took office in 1897, also favoured annexation. In 1898, he succeeded, arguing: 'we need Hawaii just as much and a good deal more than we did California. It is manifest destiny' (quoted in Morgan 2003: 225).

A member of the US Civil Service Commission, John R. Procter, summed up the momentous events:

The year 1898 will be one of the epoch-marking years in the history of the United States. In this year is to be decided the great question of whether this country is to continue in its policy of political isolation, or is to take its rightful place among the great World-Powers, and assume the unselfish obligations and responsibilities demanded by the enlightened civilizations of the age. (quoted in Welch 1972: 21)

Procter invoked a 'New Imperialism' rising from the ashes of European imperialism, and the Pacific was seen as the natural extension of manifest destiny. For pro-imperialists such as Procter, the issue was not merely political, but also moral and even explicitly racial. Procter's invocation of battles in the Philippines praises the systems developed by 'Teutonic ancestors', finding them regenerated in US beliefs and practices: 'from the blood of our heroes, shed at Santiago and



Manila, there shall arise a New Imperialism, replacing the waning Imperialism of Old Rome; an Imperialism destined to carry world-wide the principles of Anglo-Saxon peace and justice, liberty and law' (quoted in Welch 1972: 26). Indeed, as Peter Hulme argues, 'as the nineteenth century progressed, US Americanism increasingly became an ideology based on the supposed moral and political superiority of the Anglo-Saxon peoples' (Hulme 2012: 59), a concept reinforced in a closely related notion of 'English-speaking peoples'. This privileged category was promoted in the writings of Teddy Roosevelt (the first volume of his *The Winning of the West* is titled 'The Spread of the English-Speaking Peoples') and later persisted in prominent works such as Winston Churchill's *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*.

The motives behind expansionism were summed up by McKinley: 'there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all and to educate the Filipinos and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them as fellowmen for whom Christ also died' (quoted in Dudden 1994: 84). With these objectives, the president placed what Kipling had ironically labelled the 'white man's burden' firmly into US hands, perpetuating and extending established European colonial networks. Vincent Rafael reminds us that the Philippines mission was characterised by McKinley's policy of 'benevolent assimilation', which incorporated a nostalgic vision of manifest destiny while at the same time patronising Filipinos as the colonial children of the US, separating out the good ones from those labelled 'insurgents' (Rafael 2000: 21–22). More than 200,000 Filipinos (perhaps as many as a million) were killed during the ensuing Philippine-American war.

Often represented as a benevolent mission, US expansionism was underpinned by political and economic motives. For example, the watershed year of 1898 would see the founding of the American Asiatic Association, with its mission of working to 'foster and safeguard American trade and commercial interests' (i.e. to lobby to protect US trade routes across the Pacific) and to 'co-operate with religious, educational, and philanthropic agencies designed to remove existing obstacles to the peaceful progress and wellbeing of Asiatic peoples' (American Asiatic Association 1925: 709). In 1899, the

Association's secretary pushed aside prevailing messages about the 'civilising mission' and offered a blunter analysis of the Philippines' annexation: 'had we no interests in China', he noted, 'the possession of the Philippines would be meaningless' (quoted in LaFeber 1998/1963: 410).

There were, nonetheless, open concerns regarding the annexations of 1898–99. The Philippines conflict, for example, led anti-imperialists such as William James to argue that any possibility of the US retaining a moral advantage in international politics was lost: 'now (having puked up our ancient national soul after five minutes reflection, and turned pirate like the rest) we are in the chain of international hatreds, and every atom of our moral prestige lost forever'. For James, the debate over expansion in the Pacific was 'surely our second slavery question' (James 1972/1900: 108–109), pointedly collapsing the presumed gap between far-flung imperialist aggressions and domestic racial policies by highlighting continuities between 'external' and 'internal' (or 'foreign' and 'domestic') subjugations.

Advocates for expansion nonetheless were gaining the upper hand in the war of rhetoric, arguing that what once had appeared to be limitless space for advancement within US borders was filling up. The transcontinental railroad, completed in 1869, had shrunk spatial perceptions of the continent dramatically, reducing the travelling time from the East Coast to California from an arduous journey of months to one that could be done in under a week. Furthermore, by 1890, the US Census Bureau would announce that the western frontier had officially closed. A range of scholarly and literary works began to lament the loss of free land, indicating that a pervasive 'frontier crisis' had entered US consciousness (Wrobel 1993: 29). At the same time, rapid industrial expansion contributed to 'boom and bust' economics: depression struck in 1873–78 and 1882–86, and would return with force in 1893, lasting through 1897. Rekindling the visionary thinking of empire-builders like Seward, historian Hubert Howe Bancroft laid out plans for escaping what appeared an increasingly urbanised and unstable American continent by reinvigorating manifest destiny across 'the new Pacific':

The year 1898 was one of bewildering changes ... Almost since yesterday, from the modest attitude of quiet industry the

United States assumes the position of a world power, and enters, armed and alert, the arena of international rivalry as a colonizing force, with a willingness to accept the labour and responsibilities thence arising. (Bancroft 1912: 12–13)

Bancroft then envisions the new America: 'Thus the old America passes away; behold a new America appears, and her face is toward the Pacific!' (ibid.)

Yet the shift of US military and commercial power towards the Pacific was not merely the logical extension of the westward march of empire; it can be seen as part of the socio-spatial dynamics that Rob Wilson (drawing on Edward Soja) has called 'peripheralization', where the spatial mastery and centralisation of one area becomes yoked to the commodification and distribution of power over peripheral areas. Hence Pacific islands like Hawai'i become linked as plantation and tourist resources to the growth of California as part of a closely integrated 'global dynamic' (Wilson 2000: 94). This period further encompassed the rise of what Emily Rosenberg calls the ideology of liberal-developmentalism in US diplomatic policy: the adaptation of free-market enterprise as a fundamental principle for all nations, coupled with the growing acceptance of government intervention to protect private enterprise and speculation abroad. This ideology was aligning itself with both religious and secular senses of the US 'mission' overseas: the Christianisation of non-Christians through radical conversion and the bringing of technological and professional know-how, or 'progress', to 'underdeveloped' peoples around the globe (Rosenberg 1982: 7–9).

By the start of the 20th century, New World powers such as Australia, New Zealand, and Japan, like the US, were jockeying for position in the Pacific amidst established European colonial powers. It was thus hardly surprising when, in 1907, a rumour circulated that the US wanted to buy Tahiti from France for \$5 million, presaging the 'dollar diplomacy' that would shortly hold sway under William Howard Taft's Administration. With the Panama Canal's completion in 1914 (after Panama, backed by the US warship *Nashville*, declared its independence from Colombia in early 1904), the US gained an enormous advantage in the global commercial arena. Powers such as France (their own canal

project having foundered) had long held that the canal was the lynchpin to gaining dominance over Pacific trade routes. The French journal *Océanie française* stated: 'The Panama Canal is not only an instrument of economic conquest. The Panama Canal will also create incalculable consequences. It will permit an active reaffirmation of the Monroe Doctrine, altered from its original intent now for the sole profit of the Americans' (quoted in Aldrich 1990: 261). The French clearly still felt the sting of the Monroe Doctrine's invocation which, starting in 1842, had prevented intervention in protectorates such as Hawai'i.

US investment abroad, both economic and psychic, proceeded apace: between 1897 and 1914 (before the First World War forced a temporary slowdown), US direct investments in overseas companies increased fourfold, while the immense popularity of missionary societies like the YMCA, 'rushing to convert the world to American-style Christianity within their lifetimes', continued to gain ground (Rosenberg 1982: 28). When the War came, it did not spare the Pacific: in 1914, Australian troops fought German and Melanesian soldiers in New Guinea, while soon after, a German ship bombarded Tahiti, rather than Samoa, due to the 'high esteem' German naval commanders held for its population (Hiery 2012: 23–27). The Pacific, the strategic crossroads of competing powers, would in just over 20 years' time end up as a theatre of war, where the simmering imperial conflicts would be fully acted out.

Robert Aldrich refers to the period between the World Wars as the apogee of colonial power in the Pacific: a time when the idea of colonialism reached its zenith, when expansionist lobbyists and new modes of technical reproduction were disseminating images of colonial ideology more widely than ever before (Aldrich 1990: 273). But tensions were visible: the policies of New Zealand administrator Brigadier General George Spafford Richardson in Samoa initiated the rise of the anti-colonial movement the *Mau* (Samoan for holding fast), with violent skirmishes between New Zealand police and *Mau* protestors in the late 1920s. The *Mau* movement was also active in American Samoa, which was still under US Navy rule (Margaret Mead, famously, lived in a Naval dispensary with an American family while researching *Coming of Age in Samoa* [1928]). Under US rule, Samoans still faced the prohibition of interracial

marriage, and there were disputes relating to pay for workers in the copra trade and Samoan police guard. In 1929, in response to direct Samoan pressures, the US government changed the status of the territory from that of an 'illegal' to a 'legal' colony (Droessler 2013: 62).

As the Great Depression hit, US expansionism appeared to slow in terms of markets and territorial acquisitions, but at the same time tourism was helping to propagate the Pacific idyll in the popular imagination: by the 1930s, unprecedented numbers were embarking on luxury ships for 'round the world' cruises. Pacific crossings included stopovers at ports that had long underpinned imperial trade networks. The establishment of Matson Lines' famous 'white ships' (the S.S. *Malola* was launched in 1927 and the S.S. *Mariposa* in 1931) linked the east and west coasts of the US, via the Panama Canal, to Hawai'i, Samoa, Fiji, New Zealand, and Australia, reflecting the escalation of mass tourism and a substantial increase in tourist traffic through Pacific ports (the 'white ships' perhaps echoing Theodore Roosevelt's Great White Fleet of battleships, also painted white, sent to circumnavigate the globe in 1907 in a show of US military prowess). At the same time, commercial air travel was becoming a feature of modern life: in 1935, Pan American Airlines began services between San Francisco and Manila, with the *China Clipper* airplane becoming a symbol of national pride.

US military expansion also continued. The Panama Canal was widened in the mid-1930s to accommodate larger warships, and military installations on key sites such as Samoa were further developed, with the construction of a naval airbase and advanced fortifications at Pago Pago harbour in 1940. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the US immediately entered the Second World War; within days, thousands were flooding army recruitment stations to enlist for war, reflecting the powerful military, territorial, and psychic roles that Pacific island territories were playing in US life. Strategic planning in the run-up to war would prove enormously beneficial, when island bases served as supply sites and staging grounds for years of fierce air, sea, and land battles (a period of total militarisation of the 'Pacific theater' of war) as the US and its allies battled Japan for Pacific mastery. As Rob Wilson notes, the *idea* of the 'American

Pacific' began to take root as early as imperialist struggles for Samoa and Hawai'i during the late 19th century, but it was realised only after these Second World War battles, when the US defeated Japan and took control via 'strategic trust' in Micronesia and other territories of interest (Wilson 2000: 106).

Immediately following the war, the psychic hegemony of the American Pacific was so complete that James Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific* (1947) could represent the Pacific's 'trivial islands' as essentially nostalgic playgrounds for American soldiers and their 'native' love interests (quoted in Lyons 2006: 28). The new 'American Pacific' became the sum of a US vision won through commerce, missionary work, and ultimately military conflict on an unprecedented scale. As constructed after the post-war seizing of territories from Japan, it came to include the Marshall Islands, Belau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Northern Marianas, Guam, and American Samoa. As of 1990, there were nearly 300,000 US military personnel based in the 'Pacific theater', with the Department of Defense spending roughly \$16.8 billion (US) to support its presence there (United States Government Accountability Office 1991). This military presence remains the war's most profound and controversial legacy, with whole islands having been used as test sites for nuclear arms, and others (such as Kalama Atoll) becoming military dumps for chemical weapons. At least 66 nuclear tests were conducted in the Bikini Atolls, held under the unprecedented legal arrangement of a 'strategic trusteeship'. Moved to make way for 'Operation Crossroads', the first detonation of a nuclear device since the bombing of Nagasaki, the people of Bikini would experience a series of displacements that enacted severe physical and emotional hardships. They were moved to Rongerik Atoll, where mass starvation ensued, then to Kwajalein Atoll, living in tents alongside a military airstrip, and then finally to Kili Island, a tiny outpost without a lagoon for fishing, hence inadequate for supplying food. The majority remain there due to residual nuclear contamination.

The story of the Bikini islanders exemplifies the economic dependency, environmental degradation, and military dominance that still mark the US presence in the Pacific. In spite of their cultural richness, economic hardship (unemployment in American Samoa approaches 30 per cent) in various territories

has led to an unusually high proportion of people seeking work in the US armed forces, with disproportionately high casualties in recent wars as a result (American Samoa has its own military recruiting station in Utulei). In unincorporated territories such as American Samoa and Guam, there are ongoing calls for political representation with full US voting rights, as well as movements calling for greater political autonomy, and independence.

Saleable terms such as the 'Pacific Rim' and transnational 'Asia-Pacific' markets have begun to absorb and supplant concepts such as the American Pacific. Fijian writer Subramani (1985) has argued that even a seemingly monolithic term like 'American Pacific' has nonetheless long formed part of a broader, multicentred Pacific region that speaks to and has confronted a range of imperial centres. Works such as Vanessa Warheit's and Amy Robinson's film (and internet blog) *The Insular Empire* (2010), made in the Marianas, has addressed related issues of the paradoxes of presumed isolation versus actual transnational and transcultural interactions, charting everyday life in the still largely ignored spaces of empire. Barack Obama, raised in Hawai'i and hence, as Holger Droessler puts it, 'America's first Pacific President', declared in a speech to Japanese leaders in November 2009 that the United States 'is a nation of the Pacific; Asia and the Pacific are not separated by this great ocean, we are bound by it'. The centrality of Asia to US foreign policy has thus led to the blurring and renewal of two distinctly 20th-century terms ('American Pacific' and the 'American Century'), with the 21st century being labelled as 'America's Pacific Century'.

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## United States–Latin American relations after September 11, 2001: Between Change and Continuity

### Introduction

Since the start of the new millennium, fundamentally new dynamics have been at play in US–Latin American relations. Long considered part of Washington’s ‘backyard’, and the target of frequent US interventions, Latin America has in recent years fallen from the

list of US geopolitical priorities. In response, mainstream analysts – in *Foreign Affairs*, the BBC and elsewhere – have asked whether the US is ‘losing’, or perhaps has even already ‘lost’, South America in particular, and indeed Latin America as a whole. In sum, the region is no longer simply taken for granted as an inalienable part of the US sphere of influence.

This chapter seeks to analyse the current dynamics in US–Latin American relations, with a particular focus on the region’s evolving international political and economic profile. While the international relations of Latin America have long been viewed as revolving around the US, recent years have borne witness to ‘new’ axes of relations. China is emblematic in this regard, though Latin America has also reached out to other countries and regions. In other words, during the last decade there has been a significant expansion in Latin America’s international political and economic footprints.

As a result, it has by now become common to refer to ‘rising’ or ‘emergent’ Latin and South America. Yet US influence and imperialist dynamics of course have in no way disappeared from the region, as we will see. Further, to the extent that Latin America has indeed emerged from the US shadow, we must interrogate its rise as well, and its implications for how we conceive of imperialism and anti-imperialism vis-à-vis the current regional and global geopolitical scenarios.

### ‘Losing’ Latin America?

While the aforementioned rhetoric concerning Washington’s ‘loss’ of Latin America is flawed in a number of ways, it does nevertheless contain an important kernel of truth: there has been a general decrease in US influence, involvement, and intervention in the region. The trend is not uniform, and indeed rumours of the death of US sway in Latin America have been greatly exaggerated. However, as indicated by Peter Hakim, president emeritus of the Inter-American Dialogue, there has been a change in the nature (and frequency) of US engagement (and imperialist practices). While policing its ‘backyard’ had traditionally been at the top of its foreign policy agenda, other regions have subsequently become more important to the US. Hakim (2006) comments: ‘After 9/11, Washington effectively lost interest in Latin America. Since then, the attention the

United States has paid to the region has been sporadic and narrowly targeted at particularly troubling or urgent situations’.

In contrast, Washington has been directing more of its energies towards engaging in repeated military adventurism in the Middle East as part of the supposed ‘War on Terror’, as well as in countering the rise of China. In regards to the latter, the US is increasing its military presence in Asia as part of what Hillary Clinton has referred to as ‘America’s Pacific Century’. It is now commonly argued (both inside and outside of government) that the bilateral US–China relationship is the most important in the world. In turn, Latin America has often been an afterthought for US officials in recent years.

Accordingly, to take a representative example, Latin America played virtually no role in the 2012 presidential campaign. Even in the foreign policy debate, Barack Obama failed to dedicate a single word to the region. For his part, Mitt Romney did call for more attention to trade opportunities in Latin America, and also lambasted Obama for being willing to ‘meet with all the world’s worst actors’, among them the leaders of Cuba and Venezuela. Yet neither Brazil nor Mexico (the region’s two powers) received even a single mention (see Keppel 2012).

However, this rhetoric concerning the US ‘losing’ (or losing interest in) Latin America is problematic for a number of reasons. First, as Hakim himself suggests, Washington’s interest in the region has not been non-existent. Rather, it has been ‘sporadic’. In certain respects Washington’s interest in Latin America during the last decade has been downright intense. Examples include: ongoing efforts to isolate and undermine the region’s left-leaning governments, especially in Venezuela and during the ‘successful’ 2009 coup in Honduras against the left-leaning president Manuel Zelaya; the tremendous expansion of free-trade agreements with Latin American countries, specifically with Chile (2004), the Dominican Republic and several Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, 2005), Peru (2007), Colombia (2011), and Panama (2011); and steps towards the creation of a ‘security corridor’ from Colombia to Mexico in order to ‘enlarge the radius of Plan Colombia to create a unified, supra-national counterinsurgent infrastructure’ (Grandin 2010).

Periodically, US concerns have also been piqued by fears of Latin America becoming a staging ground for Middle Eastern ‘terrorist’ groups. In this regard, Latin American–Middle Eastern ties (real or imagined) became a hot topic at CNN’s ‘national security’ debate during the 2011 Republican Party primary campaign. Addressing a question about ‘using the United States military’, Texas governor Rick Perry’s response included the following comments:

I think it’s time for a 21st century Monroe Doctrine ... We know that Hamas and Hezbollah are working in Mexico, as well as Iran, with their ploy to come into the United States. We know that ... the Iranian government has one of the largest – I think their largest embassy in the world is in Venezuela. So the idea that we need to have border security with the United States and Mexico is paramount to the entire Western hemisphere.

Later, in response to the question ‘What national security issue do you worry about that nobody is asking about[?]’, former senator Rick Santorum commented: ‘I’ve spent a lot of time and concern ... [thinking] about what’s going on in Central and South America. I’m very concerned about the militant socialists and the radical Islamists joining together, bonding together’. Romney also got in on the act, adding that, ‘we have, right now, Hezbollah, which is working throughout Latin America, in Venezuela, in Mexico, throughout Latin America, which poses a very significant and imminent threat to the United States’. More specific rumours and accusations launched by US media and political figures include reports concerning Iranian–Cuban–Venezuelan terrorist plots to hack into US nuclear plants (El Universal 2011), the possibility of Iranian bombs exploding in Latin American capitals (Davis 2012), and South American-based agents of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard’s elite Quds Force preparing to launch attacks against ‘US interests’ in the region (Warrick 2012). Suspicions have also routinely centred on the activities of Hezbollah and similar groups in the tri-border area, where Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina meet (Karam 2011). Seeking to address the perceived threat, Obama signed into law the ‘Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act’ in December 2012.

There are further problems with this argument. The idea that the US has lost Latin America implies that, at least insofar as it concerns Washington's involvement, the region is in a post-imperialist phase. This is patently false. US–Latin American relations have of course changed markedly since the heyday of Cold War interventionism. Yet the US has not wavered in its desire to meddle in the region when it perceives its interests to be at stake. This much is clear from its machinations against the Hugo Chávez Government and attempts to further militarise the 'War on Drugs'.

In addition, the idea that US influence in Latin America is waning is often presented with an undertone of lament. In this narrative, Washington's divine right to play king-maker in the region is being denied by the entrance of unwanted external actors such as Iran and China. While it is frequently argued, not unfairly, that Chinese and Iranian involvement in Latin America will likely have many negative effects for the region, the US role, past or present, is not often subjected to the same critical analysis. Those who long for the simpler days when Washington's influence went mostly unchallenged in Latin America of course overlook the long and sordid history of US intervention, and its continuing (though more 'sporadic') attempts to subjugate the region.

Finally, the notion that it is the US that has lost Latin America suggests that Latin America itself has done nothing to provoke the changes in this relationship. That is, in attributing this shift entirely to the US, instead of in part to actions taken by Latin Americans themselves, this narrative denies the agency of Latin American actors. As noted, there are US-centred factors which help to explain the evolution in US–Latin American relations. These include the 11 September 2001 attacks, as well as Washington's concern with the rise of China, and its turn inward to focus on domestic economic and political crises. Yet Latin America has also been active in pushing for these changes. In short, many Latin American countries have become increasingly independent in recent years due to evolving economic and political circumstances. Respectively, these include greater stability and sustained growth (at least until the recent slowdown in parts of the region, such as Brazil), and a democratising trend

that has brought left-leaning and/or nationalist-minded leaders to office in many of the region's countries.

In sum, while Latin America should not properly be anyone's to 'lose', except for Latin Americans themselves, there have indeed been fundamental changes in US–Latin American relations in the post-9/11 period. Again: this is not to suggest that Latin America is fighting for or has created a new, post-imperial order, but rather that it has managed to carve out an unprecedented (if still highly insufficient) degree of autonomy within the existing global power structures and hierarchies. The following section delineates in more precise terms the nature of these changes, and the continuance of imperialist dynamics in the region on behalf of the US as well as other actors. Though the point should not be overstated, as we will see, this analysis requires differentiating between the trajectory of South America and that of the more northern Latin American countries.

### **Latin America's growing autonomy: A 'world historical event'**

As the historian Greg Grandin (2011) observes, so dramatic have been the changes in US–Latin American relations that they constitute 'a world historical event as consequential as the fall of the Berlin Wall, though less noticed since it has taken place over a decade rather than all on one night'. One striking illustration of this shift concerns Washington's efforts to rally other countries to participate in its post-9/11 'global torture gulag'. Grandin (2013) writes:

All told, of the 190-odd countries on this planet, a staggering 54 participated in various ways in this American torture system, hosting CIA 'black site' prisons, allowing their airspace and airports to be used for secret flights, providing intelligence, kidnapping foreign nationals or their own citizens and handing them over to US agents to be 'rendered' to third-party countries like Egypt and Syria. [...]

No region escapes the stain. Not North America, home to the global gulag's command center. Not Europe, the Middle East, Africa, or Asia. Not even social-democratic Scandinavia. Sweden turned over at least two people to the CIA, who were then

rendered to Egypt, where they were subject to electric shocks, among other abuses. No region, that is, except Latin America.

What's most striking ... is that no part of its wine-dark horror touches Latin America; that is, not one country in what used to be called Washington's 'backyard' participated in rendition or Washington-directed or supported torture and abuse of 'terror suspects'. Not even Colombia, which throughout the last two decades was as close to a US-client state as existed in the area.

While Washington often used to exercise de facto authority over Latin America's involvement in international politics, in more recent years it has been unable to coax the participation of a single one of the region's countries in its 'anti-terror' crusades. This holds even for staunch US allies.

Yet consideration of 'Latin America's' relations with the US also calls for disaggregation. For Grandin (2011), what is really occurring is that much of South America is 'pull[ing] out of the US orbit' while 'Washington is retrenching in what's left of its backyard'. This means that while Latin American countries in general are increasingly asserting their autonomy from the US, the trend is especially pronounced in South America; and not just in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador, but also in Brazil, Argentina, and elsewhere. Even US-friendly Chile, which at the time was negotiating a free-trade agreement with the US, refused to bow to Washington's pressure to authorise the 2003 invasion of Iraq at the UN Security Council (Baeza and Brun 2012). These are indeed different times.

Proceeding apace with this growing autonomy from the US, Latin America has deepened its relations with other countries in the global South. Leaving aside speculation about its political aims in the region, Iran's trade with Latin America has certainly surged in recent years. As of 2011, Iran was the world's largest importer of both Brazilian beef and Argentine corn (Charbonneau 2011; Warrick 2012). China has of course also made headlines for its growing economic interest in Latin America, and has displaced the US as the primary trading partner for a number of the region's countries. It has also become a leading lender and financier of infrastructure projects. One particularly audacious plan

(which may or may not come to fruition) concerns a Chinese-financed canal in Nicaragua, to serve as an alternative to the current route through Panama. As *Time Magazine* laments, this suggests that 'the can-do spirit Latin America used to expect from the US' now comes from Beijing instead of Washington (Padgett 2011).

South–South relations have also arisen along other, less publicised, axes (Funk 2013). Led by Brazil, South America in particular has greatly increased its presence in both Africa and the Middle East. The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) – a regional bloc that includes all 12 independent South American countries – has held a series of summits with the Arab League and African Union in recent years. These have provided an unprecedented forum for sustained, high-level contact between these regions. As Al Jazeera notes, then Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva 'invested himself and Brazil's overall foreign policy heavily in Africa, maybe more so than any other non-African leader in modern history', thus earning himself the nickname 'Secretary General of Africa' (Elizondo 2010). Political engagement with the Middle East has also reached new heights, with the UNASUR–Arab League summits representing the 'first time' that 'these two parts of the developing world were brought together'. As noted by Celso Amorim (2011: 48–49, 52), who served as Lula's foreign affairs minister and is the current defence minister, 'Without any hesitation, I can testify that the Middle East was brought, perhaps for the first time, to the center of our diplomatic radar'.

Economic relations between these regions have also soared. South American trade with both Africa and the Middle East has increased several times over in recent years. Brazil and Argentina are the primary players in this regard. Tellingly, Arab countries now comprise the second-largest market in the world for Brazilian agricultural goods (dos Santos Guimarães 2012).

There are other indications of growing Latin American (and particularly South American) autonomy from the US. These include: the formation of regional blocs such as UNASUR and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), both of which exclude the US from participation; the region's increasing participation as protagonists in the global economic system,



as indicated by the rise of Latin-American-based transnational corporations – the ‘Global Latinas’ (Casanova 2009); and the emergence of Brazil as a regional and even global power, including its participation as one of the BRICS countries.

Yet here, caution is in order. It is easy to overstate the ‘change’ that is embodied in Latin America’s growing global involvement. For example, though the 2014 founding of the BRICS’ ‘New Development Bank’ was met with much hysteria in the West, the grouping’s achievements in this or other areas in actually challenging US hegemony or the primacy of the US dollar have been meagre, to say the least. Given the massive disparities and differences between the BRICS countries (in size, political systems, economic interests, and so forth), there is indeed reason to suspect that the BRICS will produce much counter-systemic rhetoric but perhaps little else.

More fundamentally, Latin America’s increasing South–South relations, attempts at regional integration, and willingness to criticise US policies do not signify the end of US imperialism in the region. The US is still the world’s leading imperial power, still views itself as ‘the world’s indispensable nation’, and still sees Latin America as its rightful ‘backyard’. What has changed is not its imperial intentions but rather its ability to carry them out (again, prompted in part by Latin America’s growing autonomy) in the usual fashion. In the current era of US imperialism in Latin America, the means are less the bullet and the military dictatorship than growing surveillance, free-trade agreements, and foreign aid to prosecute the ineffectual and economically destructive ‘War on Drugs’, beef up security forces with extremely problematic human rights records in the name of fighting crime, and support opposition groups in the region’s left-leaning states.

Thus, imperial aims toward Latin America are a bipartisan constant; what vary are the chosen tools to bring them about. Obama’s would-be rapprochement with Cuba does not reflect a new, post-imperial US–Latin American relationship. The fundamental US goals of regime change and maintaining its colonial enclave in Guantánamo continue. What has changed is the recognition that greater US–Cuban engagement and the spread of capitalist relations will prove more efficient than a quixotic embargo in remaking Cuba in our image.

For their part, Latin America’s leading states have indeed become increasingly assertive in recent years, though of course without presenting any fundamental challenges to the existing global order. Nevertheless, in comparison to Latin America’s ‘Cold’ War (during which US-backed military coups and interventions leading to widespread carnage were less the exception than the rule) much has indeed changed in the contemporary period.

### Evaluating the ‘new’ Latin America

It is at least clear in the current period that we must qualify the seminal International Relations theorist Robert Keohane’s argument that Latin Americans ‘are takers, instead of makers, of international policy’ (quoted in Carranza 2006: 814). Simply, US influence in the region is no longer as all encompassing as was the case a mere decade or two ago, as the above analysis demonstrates. History is of course contingent, and Latin America’s gains in these regards could easily be reversed. Yet at least for now, the region has a degree of autonomy that is without historical precedent.

The prominent Colombian philosopher and legal scholar Oscar Guardiola-Rivera (2011: 13, 18) takes up this point in his suggestively titled *What If Latin America Ruled the World? How the South Will Take the North into the 22nd Century*. He writes: ‘Latin America is making world history, and looks set to lead the world into the twenty-second century’. He also singles out South America’s left-leaning governments for ‘manag[ing] to challenge the prevalent form of globalisation’ through their deviations, real or imagined, from the prevailing neo-liberal model. South and Latin America’s rise, then, is not only being concretised in the present but is also a harbinger for the creation of a better world.

Yet three caveats are in order vis-à-vis this sanguine account. First, if anything, capitalist relations and the ‘extractivist’ model have become even more entrenched in Latin America in recent years, even under ‘left turn’ governments (Veltmeyer and Petras 2014). The region’s historical inequalities and marginalisation of large sectors of the population have thus in general continued unabated, if not worsened.

Second, this again should not be taken to mean the end of imperialism in Latin America. In fact, as suggested above, it does not even mean the end of US imperialism in

the region. While there have indeed been fundamental changes in US–Latin American relations, Washington’s attempts to discipline and intervene in the region are not exclusive to the pre-9/11 world.

Further, China’s booming relations with Latin America have their own imperialist-style dynamics. The Chinese economic model in Latin America has largely been to import raw materials (from Chilean copper to Venezuelan oil) while exporting cheap manufactured goods that undermine local industry. Thus, there is a risk that Latin American countries are entering into a new ‘dependency’-style relationship with China, in which they will become trapped as commodity producers. In other words, the same wine, but in a new Chinese-made bottle.

Third, considering Latin American actors as ‘makers’ (i.e. as actors who matter at a regional or global level) also suggests the need for a more critical analysis than Guardiola-Rivera and many progressive commentators present. There is certainly reason to applaud the fact that the US is no longer able to exercise the same stifling control over the external agendas of Latin American countries. But to the extent that Latin American actors (from governments to Global Latinas) are exercising power in international politics and economics, it must be scrutinised. We cannot simply assume that Latin America’s rise will necessarily have positive social implications, or will bring into a being a more benign social order, and promote a nicer form of global capitalism. As Branwen Gruffydd Jones (2006: 225–226) puts it, ‘The anticolonial response ought not to privilege the non-Western as a matter of principle – to do so simply mirrors in reverse the logic of imperial value’. Instead, we must interrogate how Latin America is wielding this newfound power and to what ends it is taking advantage of its expanded autonomy.

This suggests a number of questions. For example: Are Latin America’s booming trade relations with other areas of the global South actually serving to undermine the global capitalist system or neo-liberal economics in any way? Or are they in fact reinforcing them? What about the tremendous trade imbalances in some of these sets of relations? For example, in 2011, Argentina exported around \$1.7 billion (US) in goods to both Algeria and Egypt, its largest trading partners in the Arab world, while importing only \$3.5 million and

\$74 million, respectively. Does this suggest South–South solidarity, or a quasi-neo-colonial relationship?

A *prima facie* response suggests extreme caution about viewing these relations as the building blocks of a new world order that is significantly different from what we have now. In other words, it is not clear how much the global political and particularly economic systems would actually change ‘if Latin America ruled the world’. This scepticism is further warranted based on Latin America’s (and, again, particularly Brazil’s) growing participation in the global weapons trade. Indeed, though it of course pales into insignificance in comparison to the US, Brazil is now the world’s fourth-largest exporter of light arms, with annual sales tripling between 2005 and 2010. Unsurprisingly, then, Arab Spring protestors in Bahrain found themselves the targets of Brazilian-made tear gas canisters, which are alleged to have killed several infants (Santini and Viana 2012).

Closer to home, Brazil’s economic activities within South America have also come under fire. Brazilian-financed infrastructure and mining projects from Ecuador and Peru to Guyana and Argentina have inspired local opposition. In the case of Bolivia, plans for a road through indigenous territories have prompted protestors to denounce the ‘São Paulo bourgeoisie’ and the Brazilian government for ‘imperialist’ tendencies’ (Romero 2011).

The point is not to take an overly dim view of the rise of Brazil, or Latin America more generally. Again, to the extent that Latin Americans are now able to exercise greater control in the realms of national and international politics and economics, that is of course a positive development. So is the fact that a region which has long been marginalised and disenfranchised from making decisions at the global level is now increasingly (though only nascently) assuming that role, through institutionalised channels such as the UN and World Trade Organisation and also otherwise.

This could have positive consequences. To take one example, in comparison to China, which has often provoked anger for its heavy-handed approach to resource-extraction on the continent, Africans tend to see Brazil as a ‘less threatening’ alternative partner (Carmody 2011: 78). Despite the aforementioned controversies, Brazil is also viewed quite favourably

by many in Latin America (BBC 2011). Indeed, though ultimately ineffectual, its leadership in responding to the 2009 coup in Honduras is but one example of the constructive role that the country can play there. The push by Brazil and other regional leaders for the establishment of institutions such as UNASUR and CELAC is another development that could have salutary long-term effects in Latin America. Further, the general respect (at least rhetorically) of Latin American governments for international law, and reticence to support military interventions, may often be a helpful antidote to the rules of the US-led global order. Beyond the region's governments, transnational social movements such as the Latin American-inspired World Social Forum can provide a hopeful vision for a globalisation and international politics 'from below' (Smith et al. 2008). Yet the beneficence of the region's actors in these regards must be interrogated, not merely assumed.

## Conclusion

The post-9/11 period has borne witness to deep and historic changes in US–Latin American relations, and indeed in the international politics and economics of Latin America more generally. This is especially the case for South America. Meddling by the US and (to a lesser extent) other outside actors of course continues in the region, while China's increasing economic ties with Latin America appear more likely to lead to further dependency than development in the region. Latin America still exists within the prevailing capitalist, neo-liberal order, and we are far from a post-imperialist age in which the US and Latin America interact on anything approaching an equal footing. Nevertheless, it is also true that, on the whole, Latin American actors enjoy greater autonomy at present than at any period since independence.

This has fed into repeated hand wringing in the US over whether Washington has 'lost' Latin America. Yet while this line of argument is troubling for a variety of reasons (e.g. it suggests that Latin America is in a post-imperialist phase, and implicitly denies the agency of Latin American actors), it does hint at an important truth. Namely, as stated in UNASUR's Constitutive Treaty, many of the region's governments are aiming to create a more 'multipolar' and 'balanced' world (Itamaraty 2008). Regional integration is

one manifestation of this desire, as is the diversification of Latin America's economic and political ties. This again does not portend a Latin America that is free of the imperial hand of Washington. But even greater latitude within existing imperial and global hierarchies, at least at the present moment, represents a markedly positive change from the Latin America of the 'Cold' War.

As a result, it is important to recognise that despite the continuing imperialist dynamics that characterise US foreign policy, Latin American actors have an unprecedented (though still rather limited) degree of agency in the contemporary period. For a region that has long suffered, and continues to suffer, at the hands of foreign powers, this is a reason for applause. However, instead of merely cheering the region's rise, and Brazil's push for regional and global influence, scholars and activists, as well as the general public in these countries, must also scrutinise how Latin American political and economic actors are exercising this power. It is not enough to celebrate their arrival as makers; we must also enquire as to what they are making.

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## Venezuela, Bolivarian Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism, and Hugo Chávez (1954–2013)

That Venezuelans should elect Hugo Chávez, a complete outsider, someone who only six years earlier had tried to overthrow a president via a military rebellion, should not have come as much of a surprise given the political and economic crisis the country suffered. In the 20 years prior to Chávez's election, poverty had increased from 15 per cent to over 60 per cent, corruption was perceived to be rampant, and abstention had reached historic proportions. Chávez promised to set the country right again by promising nothing less than a revolution: a Bolivarian revolution, named after Latin American independence hero Simón Bolívar.

While Chávez initially enjoyed support from a broad segment of Venezuela's middle class and from some of the country's elite, such as segments of its domestic business class and even from a key member of its transnational business class (Gustavo Cisneros, Latin America's media mogul), his support shifted dramatically after his first three years in office. His middle-class and upper-class support rapidly turned into enmity, so that his support eventually came almost entirely from the country's urban and rural poor. The process by which this shift in support took place was the result of Chávez's rejection of the country's old elite, his identification with the country's poor, and his pursuit of policies that redistributed the country's oil wealth and political power towards the poor.

### Rise to electoral power

Chávez's promise of radical change appealed to a broad segment of Venezuela's population, including most progressive groups and social movements, leftist and even centrist political parties, and large parts of the middle and even upper class. The reason for this broad support was that the country had been undergoing a 20-year period of steep economic and political decline, which had pushed a large part of the country into poverty and had completely destroyed the old regime's legitimacy. Venezuelans thus were desperate for real change. However, to get elected, Chávez needed to form a political party. He could not directly transform his clandestine revolutionary organisation that had organised the 1992 coup attempt, the MBR-200 (Movimiento Bolivariano Revolucionario-200; Bolivarian Revolutionary Movement-200) into a political party because it was a loose movement and because Venezuelan electoral law did not allow the use of the name Bolívar for political parties. Chávez's new political party was thus named the Movimiento Quinta República (MVR, Fifth Republic Movement). The party wanted to found a fifth republic (using the Roman numeral 'V') in that it counted four since Venezuela's independence and the fifth would begin with the passage of a new constitution.

Parties that ended up supporting Chávez's bid for the presidency included the Patria para Todos (PPT, Fatherland for All), Movimiento Al Socialismo (MAS, Movement Towards Socialism), Movimiento Electoral del Pueblo (MEP, Electoral Movement of the People), Partido Comunista de Venezuela (PCV, Communist Party of Venezuela), Bandera Roja (Red Flag), and Gente Emergente (Emergent People). Of the parties in the pro-Chávez coalition, only the MVR had some centrist nationalists in it. The others were all parties with a long leftist tradition.

The 1998 presidential contest boiled down to an establishment candidate (Henrique Salas Römer), who was supported by the country's two former governing parties, the social-democratic Acción Democrática and the Christian-democratic Copei, and the anti-establishment candidate Hugo Chávez. Given the country's disgust with the old political establishment, Chávez won easily, with 56.2 per cent of the vote – one of the largest margins in Venezuela's history.

However, even though Chávez had a clear mandate for the task of transforming Venezuela's political system, the country's old political class, once it realised that Chávez could not be co-opted, rejected him as the legitimately elected president. At first, there was not much this former governing class could do except to denounce the new president in the private mass media outlets that it controlled. Eventually, though, the opposition gained momentum and managed to destabilise the country severely in its all-out effort to oust Chávez. One can divide this battle into four distinct phases: new constitution and consolidation of power; coup attempt and Chávez's retreat; oil industry shutdown and Chávez's comeback; and recall referendum and radicalisation.

### **Constitution of 1999 and consolidation of power**

Chávez's landslide election, with crucial support from segments of Venezuela's middle and upper classes, gave him a mandate to convoke a constitutional assembly and to introduce far-reaching changes to Venezuela's political system. At first, those segments of the upper class that supported Chávez assumed he would be just like many politicians before him and would agree to do their bidding by appointing ministers out of their ranks. They presented him with a list of possible appointees, all of whom came from the upper ranks of the country's business and media elite. Chávez rejected all of their suggestions and thus the stage was set for confrontation. Chávez proceeded with his plan to convoke a referendum on whether the country should hold a constitutional assembly. Voters decisively approved the project. Next, a vote was held for who should constitute this assembly. Still riding his wave of popularity, Chávez won this vote overwhelmingly when 95 per cent of the assembly members who were elected were his supporters. Following a relatively accelerated discussion process, the new constitution was put to a vote in December 1999, when it passed with 72 per cent in its favour. With the new constitution in place, all elected offices had to be renewed in August 2000. In the National Assembly election the pro-Chávez coalition won two-thirds of the seats, with Chávez's own party, the MVR, winning just under an absolute majority. Also, in the regional elections for

state governors and city mayors, Chávez supporters won a majority. Chávez was also re-elected, this time to a six-year term, winning 59 per cent of the vote.

The new 1999 constitution introduced many important changes to Venezuela's political system. One of its main objectives was to create a democracy that was both representative and participatory. The participatory elements included the possibility of organising citizen-initiated referenda to recall any elected official, to rescind or approve laws, and to consult the population on important policy issues. Also, the new constitution opened up the possibility of forms of direct democracy at the local level, via local planning councils and citizen assemblies, which would later become the basis for the creation of communal councils. Another key objective of the 1999 constitution was to include previously marginalised segments of the population, such as: the indigenous population, which received a series of new rights to their lands, culture, and language; and Venezuelan women, who received rights to non-discrimination and to affirmative action in all governmental programmes. Also, in terms of human rights, the new constitution gives constitutional status to all international human rights treaties. Another important change was the creation of two new independent branches of government, the electoral power and the 'citizen' power, which include the attorney general, comptroller general, and human rights ombudsperson. The new constitution's most controversial aspect was that it slightly strengthened the office of the president by increasing the term in office from five to six years, allowing for one immediate re-election, and giving the president stronger control over the military by allowing him or her to make all upper-level promotions. Finally, in an important departure from most constitutions in the world, it raises the state's commitment to achieve social justice to the same level as the state's commitment to the rule of law (Article 2).

By winning the so-called 'mega-elections' of August 2000, Chávez consolidated his control over the country's executive, with his supporters controlling the other four branches of government: the judiciary, the legislature, the electoral power, and the 'citizen' power. Chávez then had to act fast to introduce social programmes to address some of the most urgent needs of the country's poor. Since

state revenues were quite low, largely due to an oil price that had hit rock bottom in 1998 at around \$10 per barrel, Chávez immediately set about reconsolidating OPEC, so as to raise international oil prices. Chávez visited all OPEC members in 1999, plus several non-OPEC oil producers, and managed to convince them to lower oil production. The result was immediate and prices started to climb again. However, in order to save money, Chávez also got the military involved in the organisation and provision of a new social programme known as Plan Bolívar 2000. This plan provided free food in the country's poorest neighbourhoods and improved barrio housing, among other issues.

Meanwhile, the Opposition, since it was increasingly locked out of political power for the first time in 40 years, still could not accept Chávez as the legitimately elected president. At first, given Chávez's political momentum, there was little the Opposition could do to stop him. However, as Chávez's honeymoon began to wear off and his approval ratings declined (as they had to) from the unheard of heights of 90 per cent approval, the former political class managed to regain its foothold in Venezuela's middle class by waging a relentless media campaign against the new president. Chávez ignored this development, which took place throughout 2001, and forged ahead with his larger political programme by presenting a set of 49 law decrees in October of that year, which Venezuela's National Assembly had in the previous year given him the authority to pass. The 49 law decrees were supposed to bring Venezuela's legal framework up to date with the new constitution and introduced far-reaching reforms, particularly in terms of a comprehensive land reform and large tax increases for the oil industry.

### **Heightened resistance, coup attempt, and retreat**

The outcry against these law decrees was immediate. Fedecamaras, the country's largest and most important chamber of commerce, which unites most of Venezuela's big businesses, complained that the laws were anti-business, undermined private property rights, and were passed without consulting them or anyone outside of government circles. Venezuela's main union federation, the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV),

quickly supported Fedecamaras, arguing that the laws were harmful to Venezuela's business community and therefore harmful to Venezuelan workers. A more likely explanation for the CTV's support, in addition to its ties to the former governing party AD, was that the CTV had just gone through a pitched battle with the government over who would control the organisation. A month earlier Chávez had forced the CTV leadership to submit itself to a grassroots vote, which the federation's old established leadership won amid Chávez supporters' claims of fraud, resulting in the government's non-recognition of the leadership. The result of this vehement CTV/Fedecamaras opposition to the government was that the two organisations called for a general strike on 10 December 2001. The strike met with moderate success, but the private media's bias and the private sector's lockout of employees for a day gave the strike a heightened visible effect.

But it was not only the package of 49 laws that added fire to Venezuela's conflict. Another crucial factor was that the economy abruptly slowed down in the wake of the 11 September terrorist attack on the US. The attack sparked a worldwide recession and with it a drop in the price of oil. This double blow forced the government to adjust its budget and cut back spending in all areas by at least 10 per cent, meaning that Plan Bolívar 2000 had to be abandoned, among other things. The impact was almost immediately noticeable, as unemployment and poverty began inching upwards again after they had declined in 2000 and 2001.

Meanwhile, there was an escalation of verbal attacks between Chávez and the Opposition. The economic downturn, the 49 laws, and Chávez's strongly worded discourse against the 'squalid opposition' and the 'rancid oligarchy' all made it relatively easy for the Opposition to chip away at Chávez's popularity, along with substantial help from the private mass media. Opposition opinion polls indicated that Chávez's popularity declined rapidly in this period, from a rating of around 60–70 per cent to 30–40 per cent between June 2001 and January 2002.

This was the context in which the Opposition became convinced that it could oust Chávez (whose legitimacy it never truly accepted) before the end of his presidency. Three specific attempts took place between January 2002 and August 2004. The first was

the April 2002 coup attempt, whose apparent detonator was the oil industry management's resistance to Chávez's efforts to wrestle control of the state-owned oil industry away from the old management. Crucial to the coup, however, was a disgruntled sector of the military which, for a variety of ideological and opportunistic reasons, believed it could and should get rid of Chávez. The failure of the coup, a mere 47 hours after Chávez was removed from office, was emblematic of all subsequent Opposition failures to oust Chávez from the presidency. The Opposition consistently underestimated the president's popularity (especially among the poor), believing instead the mass media's constant claim that Chávez was highly unpopular and incapable as president. It was precisely Chávez's popularity among the country's poor and the military that swept him back into the presidency.

For the Opposition this was a bitter defeat because it lost an important base of its power: the military. With Chávez's election, the country's old elite had already lost the presidency, which in Venezuela's very presidentialist society is by far the most important form of political power. Each subsequent effort to oust Chávez, the oil industry shutdown and the recall referendum, represented the loss of another base of Opposition power.

Chávez's reaction to the coup attempt, after his return, was to moderate his tone and to play it safe. He put a new economic team in charge that appeared to move to the mainstream and promised to include the Opposition more in his policy deliberations. Also, he reinstated the old board of directors and former managers of the state oil company PDVSA, whose replacement had been one of the reasons for the coup.

### **Oil industry shutdown and Chávez's comeback**

Following a brief period of uncertain calm and few policy initiatives, the Opposition interpreted Chávez's retreat as an opportunity for another offensive against him, this time by organising an indefinite shutdown of the country's all-important oil industry in early December 2002. While the Opposition labelled this action a general strike, it was actually a combination of management lockout, administrative and professional employee strike, and general sabotage. Also,

it was mostly the US fast food franchises and the upscale shopping malls that were closed for about two months. The rest of the country operated more or less normally during this time, except for food and gasoline shortages throughout the country, mostly because many distribution centres were closed down. Eventually, the shutdown was defeated, once again due to the Opposition's underestimation of Chávez's support. While about 19,000 employees (about half of the oil company's workforce) were eventually fired for abandoning their workplaces, the government nonetheless managed to restart the oil company with the help of blue-collar workers, retired workers, foreign contractors, and the military. The Opposition thus lost another crucial base of power, this time in the oil industry, whose managers were practically all Opposition supporters and were all removed from their jobs.

Despite the oil industry's eventual recovery, the strike represented a severe blow to Venezuela's economy, which shrank an unprecedented 26 per cent in the first quarter of 2003, relative to the same quarter of the previous year. Unemployment skyrocketed to over 22 per cent in March and capital flight caused the currency to plummet. It is estimated that the oil industry shutdown cost the industry over \$14 billion in lost revenues. The oil industry's recovery (which was said to be complete by May 2003), along with a dramatically increasing price of oil and thus oil revenues, meant that Chávez gradually had the resources to introduce new social programmes, called missions, to address the desperate needs of the country's poor. The first missions Chávez introduced between late 2003 and early 2004 were for literacy training (Mission Robinson), high-school completion (Mission Ribas), university scholarships (Mission Sucre), community health care (Mission Barrio Adentro), and subsidised food markets (Mission Mercal). The population living in the barrios welcomed these missions with great enthusiasm, contributing to Chávez's renewed rise in opinion polls.

### **Recall referendum and radicalisation**

The third and last attempt to oust Chávez during his first full six-year term in office was the August 2004 recall referendum. After having suffered defeat in two consecutive



illegal attempts, the Opposition was forced to follow the only democratic and constitutional route for getting rid of the president. The commitment to follow a strictly constitutional route for resolving Venezuela's political crisis was formalised following many months of negotiations in a signed agreement between Opposition and Government that the Organization of American States and the Carter Center facilitated in May 2003. Eventually, once the National Electoral Council (CNE) and the rules governing recall referenda were in place, which took until the end of 2003, the Opposition collected 3.1 million signatures in December of that year. Of these, following much political debate, 2.5 million signatures were validated (a mere 100,000 over the required sum of 20 per cent of registered voters) and a referendum was convoked for 15 August 2004. The vote took place peacefully and the following morning, shortly after 4am on 16 August, the CNE announced the first preliminary results. These gave Chávez a 58 per cent to 42 per cent victory. Immediately after the announcement, Opposition leaders held a press conference in which they stated unequivocally that fraud had been perpetrated. They offered no evidence for this claim, however. Election observer missions of the Organization of American States and of the Carter Center ratified the official result.

For the Opposition, this was perhaps the most bitter defeat of them all. Not only did it no longer have a base of power in the executive, in the military, or in the oil industry, it had also lost perhaps its most important base of power in the middle class. That is, following three years of continuous battle with Chávez, promising its supporters that he was on his way out and that Chávez was illegitimate because the Opposition represented the majority, Opposition supporters increasingly saw their leadership as being hollow and incompetent. Polls shortly after the recall referendum documented a dramatic loss of support for the Opposition, so that only 15 per cent of Venezuelans said they identified with it.

While the Opposition leadership managed to win over and then gradually lose middle-class support, between 1999 and 2006 Chávez won over ever more solid support from the country's poor. This can be seen most clearly in the voting pattern of different neighbourhoods with different average incomes. For

example, while middle-class neighbourhoods voted for Chávez by around 50–60 per cent in 1998, for the 2004 recall referendum, these neighbourhoods tended to vote against him at a rate of 60–70 per cent. In contrast, although support for Chávez in poor neighbourhoods remained in the range of 60–70 per cent in 1998 and 2004, voter registration and participation increased dramatically in these neighbourhoods, thus giving Chávez a decisive edge in 2004 and 2006.

Chávez and the Bolivarian movement that supported him realised the near total loss of Opposition power and thus saw themselves in a position to further radicalise the government's political programme. In his victory speech following the recall referendum, Chávez announced that a new phase of his government would begin:

From today until December 2006 begins a new phase of the Bolivarian revolution, to give continuity to the social missions, to the struggle against injustice, exclusion, and poverty. I invite all, including the opposition, to join in the work to make Venezuela a country of justice, with the rule of law and with social justice.

Later, in January 2005, Chávez took this call for a new phase even further by announcing that from now on his Government would seek to build socialism of the 21st century in Venezuela. Thus, the continuous efforts of the Opposition to oust Chávez, based on its non-recognition of his legitimacy, led to a continuous weakening of this opposition and to the concomitant opportunity for Chávez and the Bolivarian movement to radicalise their programme.

The main expression this radicalisation found during this period was in the creation of a nationwide effort to develop communal councils. These councils, which were first launched in early 2005, consist of 200 to 400 families in a contiguous neighbourhood. They represented an effort to deepen participatory democracy by giving them power and funds to decide on important infrastructure projects in their neighbourhoods. Also, these councils represented a pooling of grass-roots mobilisation that had taken place over the previous five years, whereby communities founded health committees to work with the community health programme, water committees to work on

improving the water supply, urban land committees to work on acquiring ownership title to barrio homes, and education committees to work with educational missions, etc. With the creation of communal councils all these committees were turned into work committees of the councils, thereby pooling and systematising community organisation. While the Opposition decried the communal councils as tools of patronage and clientelism, the communities themselves largely welcomed them enthusiastically and formed over 20,000 throughout the country by late 2007.

Chávez's call to build 21st-century socialism received another boost on 3 December 2006 when he decisively won a second six-year term. He beat the Opposition candidate Manuel Rosales with 62.9 per cent to 37.9 per cent of the vote. This 26 percentage point margin of victory was the largest in Venezuelan history. Also, Chávez managed to nearly double his support from an initial 3.7 million votes in 1998 to 7.1 million in 2006. More significant than the increase in support, though, was that Rosales admitted that Chávez had defeated him. This was the first time that an Opposition leader had conceded defeat in a confrontation with Chávez since he was first elected in 1998. In none of the Opposition's confrontations with him, whether following the 2002 coup attempt, the 2003 oil industry shutdown, or the 2004 recall referendum, had the Opposition admitted defeat. This implies that the 2006 presidential election was the first time in Chávez's presidency that the Opposition recognised Chávez as the legitimately elected president and thus opened the path towards a normalisation of Venezuelan politics in the Chávez era.

### **Hubris and renewal of the Bolivarian movement**

At the start of his second term in office in January 2007 Chávez seemed unstoppable. His popularity had reached new highs and his mandate to create 21st-century socialism for Venezuela was indisputable. The first thing Chávez announced after his re-election victory was the creation of a new political party for socialism, the reform of the 1999 constitution, a new enabling law that would allow him to nationalise key industries, the politico-territorial reorganisation of the country, and the deepening of communal power.

When the broadcast licence of the oppositional TV station RCTV was up for renewal on 27 May 2007, Chávez decided to let the licence lapse and to give the wavelength to a new state TV channel. This was perhaps the most unpopular decision of his presidency, since RCTV was the country's most widely watched TV station. However, Chávez and his supporters argued that since RCTV participated in the April 2002 coup attempt and since it had continued to violate broadcast regulations, it did not deserve to have its licence renewed. This move gave the Opposition an opening to launch a new movement against Chávez, this time, though, headed by new student leaders mostly coming from the country's private universities.

Many of the other changes Chávez had announced for 2007 depended on the constitutional reform effort, which he presented in August of that year. The National Assembly, which had to pass the president's proposal before it could be put to a national referendum, added another 36 articles to be reformed to Chávez's original proposal of 33 articles. The reform was to address four major areas: strengthening participatory democracy, broadening social inclusion, supporting non-neoliberal economic development, and strengthening central government. The first two of these were relatively uncontroversial, but the second two, which included shortening the working week, strengthening land reform, removing central bank autonomy, and removing the two-term limit on holding presidential office, were far more controversial.

The combination of the reform's top-down development, its complexity, well-orchestrated disinformation by the Opposition, the government's neglect of key social programmes, and the defection of prominent Chávez supporters all contributed to the referendum's eventual failure, despite Chávez's continuing popularity. The reform was defeated with a vote of only 50.7 per cent against it, but it was generally interpreted as a major loss for Chávez and the Bolivarian movement. Based on an analysis of the referendum results by voting centre, it was clear that the main reason the referendum failed was because Chávez's supporters did not turn out to vote as strongly as they had done in previous elections. The result prompted Chávez to launch a process of 'reevaluation, revision, and relaunch' of the effort to establish 21st-century socialism.

The demise of the constitutional reform project took place in parallel to the effort to start a new party, the Unified Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), which brought together supporters from all parties of the pro-Chávez coalition. By April 2008, PSUV delegates, who had been elected in a grass-roots democratic process, approved of an explicitly anti-capitalist party programme and a new leadership for the Bolivarian movement that came mostly from the country's traditional left (between the centre left and the far left). With the formation of the PSUV it seemed that the Bolivarian movement was gradually developing a structure that would be less dependent on Chávez and thus more long-lasting and better equipped to develop new leadership and to channel debate within the movement.

### **Economic crisis, cancer, and renewed destabilisation**

The global financial crisis of 2008 affected Venezuela primarily via the sudden drop in the price of oil, which went from a high of nearly \$120 per barrel in mid-2008 to less than half that amount by the end of the year. As a result, the Chávez Government had to decrease its budget significantly for 2009, thereby pushing the country into a recession, with GDP shrinking by 3.2 per cent in 2009 and another 1.5 per cent in 2010.

Perhaps even more significant was the effect on the country's fixed exchange rate. The oil price decline reduced the availability of dollars, which, in turn, increased the dollar-bolivar black-market exchange rate. The higher black-market exchange rate created opportunities for arbitrage, whereby those with access to the official exchange rate faced tremendous incentives to take advantage of the growing gap between the official and the black-market exchange rates. The ultimate consequence was a dramatic increase in smuggling; government estimates in 2014 suggested that up to 40 per cent of all subsidised imports (subsidised via the official exchange rate) were being smuggled back out of the country again, where they could fetch a price that was up to ten times higher than in Venezuela. Inflation also shot up during this period because many retailers used the black-market exchange rate to price their products, even when they had imported them with dollars that they had purchased at the official

exchange rate. Inflation thus reached 27 per cent in 2009 and even rose to 62 per cent in 2014.

Around the same time that the economy began having difficulties, in June 2011, Chávez announced that he had been diagnosed with and treated for cancer in the previous six months. He underwent chemotherapy for the next year and by July 2012 announced that the cancer was in remission. Subsequently, he engaged in an active campaign for a third six-year term in office and went on to win the 7 October presidential election with 55 per cent of the vote, against Opposition candidate Henrique Capriles Radonsky's 44 per cent (with an 80 per cent participation rate).

Shortly after this victory, on 20 October 2012, Chávez announced that he would institute a turnabout ('Golpe de Timón') to further radicalise his Bolivarian revolution. The announcement was important because it recognised that many goals had not been achieved yet and that more power and a more central role must be given to the communes (groupings of communal councils), both in the economy and in the country's political system.

The 'turnabout' announcement was relatively short-lived, however, because on 8 December that year Chávez made a new momentous declaration, namely that his cancer had returned in a very aggressive form and that he would immediately return to Cuba for more chemotherapy treatment. During this announcement Chávez also said that, should he not survive the cancer, the then vice president Nicolas Maduro should be his successor. Chávez spent the next four months in treatment in Cuba, while speculation and rumours about his medical condition reached unprecedented heights in Venezuela. On 5 March 2013, Maduro addressed the nation with nearly the whole Cabinet behind him, looking very ashen-faced, and announced that Chávez had passed away a little earlier that day.

Chávez's death meant that new presidential elections had to be called within 30 days, which Nicolas Maduro went on to win with 50.6 per cent of the vote.

### **Legacy**

Chávez's legacy as the founder of Venezuela's Bolivarian revolution and as the trailblazer

of the resurgence of the left in political office throughout Latin America is unquestioned. Between 1999 and 2012, nine more countries would go on to elect leftist governments in the region (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile, Nicaragua, Paraguay, El Salvador, and Uruguay). Furthermore, he inspired a global movement for the creation of '21st-century socialism', one which would later be emulated by political parties in Europe, such as Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece.

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# **CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

## Cinema and Anti-Imperialist Resistance

Olivier Assayas's seminal film *Après mai* (2011) includes a key moment when the protagonists, students from France travelling to Italy, participate in an open-air screening of revolutionary film-making on China and Latin America. The depiction of the young revolutionaries in early 1970s Florence, gathered around the screen in perfect counter-cultural outfit, endlessly debating the limits between bourgeois and radical film-making and whether cinema can provide the 'revolutionary syntax' for the new rebellious identities, encapsulates the entire meaning of cinema as a vehicle of anti-imperialist resistance at the time.

The mass media explosion in the 1960s, Marshall McLuhan's idea of the 'global village', the technological advances in terms of mobile cameras, editing and film-making in general, but also a more politicised audience ready to be seduced by the cinematic stimuli, played a major role in the dissemination of information regarding revolutionary movements, both through fiction and non-fiction films. This short essay will try to identify the most important exponents of this tendency over time.

### Historical context

Revolutionary film-making has its recent origins in Soviet cinema, and in particular in Dziga Vertov's *kinopravda*, Sergei Eisenstein's intellectual montage, and Aleksandr Medvedkin's *Kino-Trains*. With a passage through the epic realism of the battles of the Spanish Civil War and the Chinese war against Japan – depicted respectively in the propagandistic documentaries *Spanish Earth* (1937) and *The Four Hundred Million* (1938) by legendary Dutch film-maker Joris Ivens, and *L'Espagne vivra* (1939) by renowned photo-journalist Henri Cartier Bresson – film was only consolidated as a revolutionary tool in the 1960s. Several film theorists, predominantly André Bazin, promoted the idea of cinema as a way of 'educating' the masses, who, by way of this public entertainment, could acquire a political conscience and be shocked into awareness. Cinema, as a collective experience, was contrary to the passive consumption of television. The debates that

typically followed the screening of the movies heightened, at the time, the feeling of direct involvement. By the end of the decade this attitude was reinforced by the democratisation of film-making – facilitated by technological advances through 16mm production and distribution, which led to the creation of independent films. According to film theorist Amos Vogel, 'apart from the thousands of films produced by students, independent filmmakers, or political film collectives, there also exist[ed] distribution companies controlled by the New Left' (1974: 122). In France the so-called 'States General' of cinema (*Les États Généraux du Cinéma*) asked for a total reshaping and restructuring of the film industry. All the above posed questions regarding the necessity of revolutionary cinema, forming the context of the proliferation of film-making as a means of anti-imperialist resistance.

This trend was reinforced in the mid and late 1960s by the parallel rise of the cinema of denunciation and of social concern, which revolutionised cinema-making both in content and in form. A major exponent of this tendency was introduced by Italian film-maker Gillo Pontecorvo's anti-colonial masterpiece *Battle of Algiers* (1966) – arguably one of the most inspirational political films of all times – that led to the consolidation of this new genre: political cinema. Several French films had referred to the Algerian War beforehand – a conflict over the French Empire's last stronghold that started in 1954, eventually resulting in Algerian independence after years of brutal repression by the French authorities and the parallel rise of a strong local resistance movement, the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN). Both Alain Resnais, in his legendary *Night and Fog* (1955) and later with *Muriel* (1963), and Jean-Luc Godard in *Le Petit Soldat* (1963) included references to French atrocities during the war. Considering that it was a taboo at the time to refer directly to the war in a critical way in France, no-one did it as directly as Pontecorvo.

### Seminal cases of anti-imperialist resistance

Pontecorvo's film, shot on location, exposed the brutality of colonial violence, especially after the arrival of the French paratroopers under General Mathieu – a thinly disguised

reference to General Massu – which escalated into the so-called Battle of the Kasbah, institutionalising to a large extent the use of torture as an interrogation technique. The film depicts in a powerful way the violence on both sides. The director clearly takes sides, without, however, eulogising FLN's indiscriminate bombings against civilians. The film's anticolonial overtones soon rendered it a standard reference point for liberation movements, like the PLO, and even radical organisations such as the Black Panthers and the IRA. In cinematic terms, *Battle of Algiers* was shot on location, almost right after the actual events, with Saadi Yasef, FLN's number two in command, playing himself. The truthfulness of the depiction made it resemble real newsreel footage. Regardless of how uncompromised the film was politically, it nonetheless made use of devices of mainstream feature films, such as well-known actors, suspense, and Ennio Morricone's unmistakable score. Pontecorvo would continue making political films touching on difficult subjects, including Portuguese colonialism in *Burn!* – starring Marlon Brando – and the gripping political thriller *Operation Ogre* (1979), starring Gian Maria Volonté, on ETA's assassination of Admiral Carrero Blanco in Madrid in 1973. Recent events related to left-wing terrorism in his home country, and in particular the kidnapping and assassination of Aldo Moro by the Red Brigades in 1978, prompted Pontecorvo to reduce his clear pro-ETA stance in the film's controversial ending.

As a contrast to Pontecorvo's pursuit of left-wing politics with popular cinema devices came Jean-Luc Godard, who was becoming increasingly intransigent, denouncing bourgeois aesthetics in film and establishing a collective cinematic process through the Dziga-Vertov group. Godard argued that cinema could not be truly revolutionary unless its radical content was coupled with an equally radical form. In films like *La Chinoise* (1967) and *Sympathy for the Devil* (1968) he challenged the conventions of 'bourgeois' cinema-making, introducing non-linearity, reflexivity, and the cinematic-essay form that also acted as an instrument of propaganda in favour of Maoism, Third-Worldism and against US imperialism in Vietnam. In the *Dziga Vertov Group* that he initiated together with Jean-Pierre Gorin and films such as *Un Film comme les autres* (1968), *British Sounds/See You At Mao* (1969), *Le Vent de l'est* (1969), *Lotte in Italia*

(1969) and *Tout Va Bien* (1972) he brought the tendency of rejecting narrative in favour of incorporating political and social critique in the filmic process to the extreme. The ultimate goal was to force the audience out of its comfortable voyeurism to a more active stance and complicity with the subject matter. In the end, the self-awareness, which was the professed goal, was only achieved by small circles of intellectuals and students who had physical and conceptual access to these highly disjointed and cryptic films.

Even more radical were the Argentines Fernando Solanas and Ottavio Getino, who introduced anti-colonial films as 'critical essays' based on purely 'revolutionary' production values. This trend was later labelled 'Third Cinema': a non-commercial militant mode of cinema used as a weapon of political struggle, addressing specific political causes and directly calling on the viewer to take action. This was juxtaposed to first cinema (meaning studio-produced cinema) and second cinema, otherwise called 'auteur' cinema and characterised by formalism, intellectualism, and a leftist perspective, which reflected the director's creative personal vision when expressing a political message.

The most exuberant example of 'Third Cinema' was surely Solanas and Getino's *The Hour of the Furnaces* (1968). The film is a landmark moment in terms of anti-imperialist film-making. It bombards the viewer with superimposed images of the European and American imperialist control of Argentina's national economy (i.e. through the beef monopoly or the control of the railway system), attempting to construct a condemnation not only of neo-colonialism, but also of the role of the media and information in manipulating the masses. It is also a complete condemnation of British and US neo-colonialism and a defence of Peronism, blended with the class struggle.

It has a complex structure (a more descriptive, a more reflexive and a more interactive part), including inter-titles that reference Frantz Fanon's idea of violence as a cleansing and liberating force for the colonised (Fanon 2007), Guy Debord's perception that the spectator who had been drugged by spectacular images should be awoken, and Jean-Paul Sartre's conclusion that 'the only way the European could make himself man was by fabricating slaves and monsters' (Sartre 2007: lviii). At a crucial point in the film, a

shot of the eyes of the dead Che Guevara – the famous Christ-like image – dominates the screen with African percussion in the background, implying that his death was an act of liberation. The very title of the movie refers to Guevara's anti-imperialist revolutionary cry: 'Now is the hour of the furnaces. Let them see nothing but flames'.

Solanas and Getino attempted to be as reflexive as possible, by exchanging information with the militant groups with whom they were working. The film became legendary, particularly in the alternative circles in which it was shown, and it found faithful followers – such as the entire Cinema Novo tendency in Brazil, and in particular Glauber Rocha (*Antonio-das-Mortes*, 1969), Saul Landau and Haskell Wexler (*Brazil: A Report on Torture*, 1971) and others. Indeed, Solanas and Getino had been screening their film, receiving feedback which made them think repeatedly about the relationship between film and revolution, which they eventually included in the film. This helped them draft their manifesto 'Towards a Third Cinema', showing this way that movies could be turned into a revolutionary tool and that culture could be decolonised. Famously, in their manifesto they argue that 'the projector [is] a gun that can shoot 24 frames per second'. Third Cinema was becoming a 'space of counter-imperialist collectivism' (Guneratne and Dissanayake 2003: 148).

### **Vietnam and Chile: Ivens, de Antonio, Alvarez, Guzmán**

A prominent place in anti-imperialist cinema was reserved for films that were programmatically against the war that the US was waging in Vietnam. Joris Ivens is one of the most illustrious exponents of this tendency with such films as *The Seventeenth Parallel* (1967) and *The People and Its Guns* (1968) – which he completed after a trip to, and several films on, Maoist China during both the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. As 'being there while it takes place' was one of the major issues in anti-imperialist cinema, crude realism became part of this tendency. At the same time, however, Ivens's films offer a romanticised version of the Vietnamese peasants, with a tone of Brechtian didacticism over a plethora of inter-titles (Waugh 1988). This compares well with the cinema of Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin, and in particular their *Letter to Jane* (1972), a highly

reflexive treatment of Jane Fonda's anti-Vietnam involvement.

Jerry Snell's *Hearts and Minds* (1974), a documentary including footage from US helicopters bombing Vietnamese villages and Mickey Mouse in Vietnam by Lee Savage (1968) – whereby in just one minute the trigger-happy cartoon volunteers for the war and dies immediately after reaching Vietnam – are amongst the most interesting exponents of anti-Vietnam War movies. *Year of the Pig* (1969) by Emile De Antonio needs special mention in this category. An American Marxist, De Antonio tried to create an amiable image of Ho Chi Minh, condemning at the same time the French colonial rule of Indochina as blatantly as he could and the American contemporary involvement in Vietnam as a continuation of the same (neo-)colonial heritage. Combining original rare footage from the 1920s and 1930s and Roman Karmen's restaging of the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954 with 1960s footage of Vietnamese monks setting themselves ablaze, De Antonio created a dynamic collage that acted as a mighty indictment of Western involvement in South-East Asia.

Another director dealing with that very central conflict was Cuban film-maker Santiago Alvarez. In his film *Hanoi, Tuesday the 13th* (1967), he exposed 'the daily texture of life in Hanoi under bombardment' (Macdonald and Cousins 1996: 291–297). He would later create an extremely influential film tracing Fidel Castro's trip to Salvador Allende's Chile, not long before General Augusto Pinochet's US-backed coup in September 1973 (*De America Soy Hijo U A Ella me Debo* [1971]). Chile and the downfall of Allende's socialist Government became the subject of Chilean director Patricio Guzmán's monumental documentary *The Battle of Chile*. The three parts of the trilogy – *The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie* (1975), *The Coup d'Etat* (1976), *Popular Power* (1979) – chronicle the battle between revolution and counter-revolution in the country and the decisive role of the US in the triumph of the latter.

### **Between May 1968 and the Colonels' dictatorship**

A film-maker constituting a separate category of his own is Chris Marker – an idiosyncratic case of a director with a solid pedigree of anti-imperialist film-making who made an



early appearance in 1955, with Alain Resnais in *Statuses Also Die* (1955). This was one of the first films on the African experience of colonialism, and was censored in France. Marker continued in the same direction with *Cuba Si!* (1961). His masterpiece is, however, *Grin Without a Cat*, offering a panoramic depiction of the 1960s. Linking May 1968 in France to the war in Vietnam, and the anti-war movement in the US to the disintegration of Che Guevara and Fidel's Third-Worldist movement and the bureaucratisation of the Cuban revolution, the film annoyed both sides of the political spectrum for its outspokenness. At the same time, in a gripping 45-minute clip, a tie-wearing member of an American 'military training team' that drilled Bolivian soldiers hunting Guevara asks whether it would have been wiser to keep the guerrilla leader alive in order to prevent the myth that was created after his death. Very close to *cinéma-vérité*, Marker produced through the dynamic montage of his films a 'chorus of voices'. Instead of following the linearity of textbook history, he reinforced the 'fluidity of meaning and emotion' (Sinker and White 2012) in the depiction of historical processes and revolutionary utopias linked to the liberation movements of the second half of the 20th century.

Very much in Marker's tradition was a major West German anti-imperialist film, *Germany in Autumn* (1978). The film was co-directed by a collective, comprising legendary director Rainer Werner Fassbinder alongside Alf Brustellin, Alexander Kluge, Bernhard Sinkel, and Volker Schlöndorff, who also excelled in political film-making on similar subject matters (e.g. *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* [1975]). The film provided a non-linear account of left militancy across time as it linked Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht to the Red Army Faction, offering a strong critique against the presence of US bases and the Federal Republic's pursuit of American-inspired policies.

As far as the connection between 1968 and anti-imperialism is concerned, Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1973) structured an anti-imperialist critique within the language and tools of a situationist *détournement* that rejects essentialist images of war and commodity fetishism. One also has to mention William Klein's powerful satire *Mr Freedom* (1969) – on an American action hero who comes to save France from a Communist takeover at around the time of the Parisian *événements* – and

his documentary *Eldridge Cleaver* (1970) on the political exile to Algeria of one of the leading figures of the Black Panthers in the US. An interesting feature about Klein is the fact that even though he was very close to a tradition of cinema of social concern – he covered the pan-African Festival among other things – he was also a famous fashion photographer, working for *Vogue*. The double, and somehow contradictory, nature of this occupation (*Vogue* by day, Black Panthers by night) bears the strong imprint of the 1960s counter-culture and is reminiscent of the most iconic representation of this very tendency: Michelangelo Antonioni's signature film *Blow-Up* (1966). On the subject of the anti-imperialist action of the Black Panthers, one has to mention Italian film-maker Antonello Bionca and his seminal movie on that party from an insider's perspective in *Seize the Time* (1970). The movie is rich with documentary material, giving a nuanced depiction of the racial tensions within the US through a militant organisation that persistently and convincingly presented them as a guise of US imperialism.

Constantin Costa-Gavras's and Elio Petri's rendering of the political film-making mainstream is also worth mentioning. Gavras's *Z* (1969), *State of Siege* (1973), and *The Missing* (1982) condemn the US role in various contexts, such as the Greek pre-dictatorship police violence (1967–74), the CIA's role in Uruguay, and Pinochet's crimes in Chile, while *The Confession* (1970) is a gripping depiction of Stalinist totalitarianism in post-1948 Czechoslovakia. Raoul Coutard – Costa-Gavras's favourite cinematographer – had worked in Indochina, Africa and San Salvador filming battles with a hand-held camera – a fact that gave his cinematographic style a crisp documentary-esque feel. Elio Petri – with a masterful political thriller regarding the repressive state apparatus in *Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion* (1970) – shared Gavras's aversion for the purely militant film and the conviction that cinema should be mainstream enough to oblige a wider public to reflect on political issues. Interestingly, both Gavras's *Z* and Petri's *Investigation* won Academy Awards in the Best Foreign Language Film category, which attests to their commercial and global impact.

At the opposite pole from *Z*, but always on the issue of the coming of the Greek dictatorship and the dubious role of the American Embassy and secret services in the coup, was

*Kierion* by Dimos Theos (1968). This noir film did not have a global impact but acquired cult status, especially after the fall of the Greek Junta, despite (or maybe because of) its minimal production values, filmed in grainy black and white which 'ha[d] the frightening result of audience involvement', as critic Mel Schuster pointed out (1979: 132). It is an investigative thriller on the role of US authorities in framing Greek left-wingers and putting away American journalists in the troubled time around the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967. *Kierion* is a typical case of *éngagé* cinema of the national kind that fed into the creation of an idiosyncratic Greek political film-making by newly appearing directors, involving some of its own extras, such as Pantelis Voulgaris and Theo Angelopoulos. The latter, in particular, created an epic cinema that reflected on real pieces of recent Greek history, whereby foreign imperialist involvement had most of the time tragic results. His claustrophobic and dark *Days of '36* (1972) is a film on the authoritarian state of affairs Greece in the 1930s, clearly commenting on the 1967–74 dictatorship. Angelopoulos's masterpiece *The Traveling Players* (1975) is a non-linear piece of cinematic historiography, whereby the destructive role of the British and the Americans in Greek affairs is laid out poignantly. Similar to Bernardo Bertolucci's monumental *1900* (1976) – in its scope and sympathy for the heroic but defeated left – initiated a tendency for cinematic revisionism of recent historical events.

### Anti-imperialist films from the 'Eastern Bloc'

Last, but not least, one has to mention anti-imperialist cinema originating in socialist countries and the so-called Eastern Bloc. Mikhail Kalatozov's *I Am Cuba* (1964) is a very interesting case of a Soviet-Cuban co-production, with the great Soviet director attempting to recreate the conditions of the Cuban Revolution on screen and in socialist-realist terms, at a time in which de-Stalinisation was the order of the day in his own country. Long takes, mobile framing, and carefully choreographed sequences characterise the film, departing from the nervous editing of early Soviet cinema and aiming to reveal the material conditions of Cuban life and the on-going results of the revolution. The production values were very

high – Kalatozov used a team of 200 people – and the result is visually magnificent, but the film instead of acting as a powerful propaganda weapon to spread the Cuban revolution was ignored after its debut. In Havana it was harshly criticised for exoticising the locals, and in Moscow for lack of revolutionary zeal, despite its evident hope in the socialist future. The film had little impact and remained virtually unknown to the public in the West until its triumphant rediscovery in the 1990s by Martin Scorsese and Francis Ford Coppola.

Of equal interest is *Time to Live*, a Soviet-Bulgarian propaganda film that documents the Ninth Annual Communist Youth Festival held in Sofia, Bulgaria in 1968. The film entails a strong anti-Americanism, demonstrated through condemnations of the Vietnam War, and parallel praise of people's solidarity, world peace, and freedom. Czechoslovak and Yugoslav cinema also stand out. Jan Nemeč's *Oratorio for Prague* (1968), that documents both the 'opening' in Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring and its violent repression, is the only documentary account of the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The film *Jan Palach* (1969), filmed and circulated anonymously outside Czechoslovakia, pays homage to the eponymous student who burned himself in Prague's Wenceslas Square in January 1969 in protest against the Soviet occupation. Yugoslav cinema is a further interesting exponent of anti-imperialism in the East: Želimir Žilnik's *June Turmoil* (1968) was an authoritative documentary manifestation of 1968 in the East and an indictment of repressive imperialist tendencies on the part of the ruling Communist elites. Žilnik's film documents the unrest in Belgrade in favour of more liberalisation, inspired by the Prague Spring. One would have to add here as well Dušan Makavejev's idiosyncratic films *WR: Mysteries of The Organism* (1971) and *Sweet Movie* (1974), with their parallel critique of both communist and capitalist excesses – typical of radical Yugoslav film-making. Polish director Andrej Wajda and his use of historical parallels – the period of Terror after the French Revolution in *Danton* (1983) – to refer to Stalinism or the 1981 military coup by General Jaruzelsky is also worth mentioning.

Cinema with a distinct anti-imperialist vocation eventually diminished in the 1980s, turning from being a major tendency to a minor and marginal one, despite the fact that

some important film-makers such as Ken Loach (*Land and Freedom*, 1995), Raoul Peck (*Lumumba*, 2000) and Göran Olsson (*The Black Power Mixtape 1967–1975*, 2011), and even mainstream directors such as Michael Moore (*Bowling for Columbine*, 2002) built from its legacy.

## Conclusion

This essay is non-exhaustive and far from all-inclusive. Rather, it has suggested a list of the major exponents of anti-imperialist cinema in the 20th century, both in terms of alternative and mainstream film-making and the cross-overs between the two. It has tried to examine the reciprocal relevance of cinema for history and history for cinema, within the context of so-called ‘political’ film-making, by focusing on the politically inflected cinema and ‘cinema of social concern’ of the 1960s and 1970s, mainly – but not exclusively – in Europe and the United States.

Drawing on a range of films, it concludes that the social and political imaginary of these decades and anti-imperialist militancy and action went hand-in-hand with specific films and the radical messages they sought to convey. In this context, we can safely conclude that cinema’s anti-imperialist resistance has left a strong imprint in both the history of film and radical politics, especially from the 1960s onwards.

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## Cricket and Imperialism

The role of sporting cultures in the sustenance as well as the dismantling of the British Empire has been a vibrant field of enquiry within Postcolonial Studies, and cricket is generally considered to be the pre-eminent imperial sport. Much of the extant scholarship on cricket and the Empire focuses on two aspects: cricket’s effectiveness as an agent of the imperialist ideology, and the colonised’s agency in creatively transforming the imperial game. While the former line of enquiry has revolved around the elevation of cricket as a national sport which is capable of moulding imperial heroes as well as civilising the natives, the latter has been concerned with the questions of appropriation, post-colonial nationalisms and neo-imperialist cultures.

## Batting for the Empire

Although cricket is often simplistically described as ‘the imperial game’, the sport’s role in the sustenance of the British Empire is complex and heterogeneous. Several aspects of cricket’s imperialist functions have been identified by various scholars, out of which four will be discussed here: the politics of its association with Englishness; its supposed ability to prepare the upper classes to lead the imperial mission; its role in the civilising mission of the Empire; and a problematic portrayal of the (non)-cricketing Other which establishes an exclusive and elite notion of Englishness.

By the 19th century, the English began to see cricket as a game that embodies Englishness and this can be attributed to historical contiguity and consequently, the narrative construction of a myth. Dominic Malcolm (2013: chs 1–2) has argued that this notion is a result of cricket and the very idea of a distinct English character emerging concurrently, subject to the influence of the same social processes: parallel to the process of English political culture becoming more peaceful and orderly with the emergence of the parliamentary system, the rules of cricket were amended to make it a non-violent sport. Malcolm has pointed out that the social class who pioneered both these reforms – the aristocracy – viewed the peaceful resolution of conflicts as a typically English trait and hence cricket, with its stature as a non-violent sport, was reinvented as a symbol of Englishness by many writers (see Breuille 2014: 172). The key role played by discourse in establishing a link between cricket and the supposed national character has been accepted not only by Anthony Bateman (2009), whose framework is that of literary studies, but also by Malcolm, who analyses English cricket through the lens of figurational sociology. From the latter half of the 18th century onwards, a large corpus of English cricket writings celebrated the Englishness of cricket, the most significant works being John Nyren's *The Cricketers of My Time* (1907 [1833]) and Rev. Pycroft's *The Cricket Field* (1859 [1851]). A widely discussed instance of this discourse can be found in the latter:

The game of cricket, philosophically considered, is a standing panegyric on the English character: none but an orderly and sensible race of people would so amuse themselves ... . Patience, fortitude, and self-denial, the various bumps of order, obedience, and good humour, with an unruffled temper, are indispensable. ... As to physical qualifications, we require not only the volatile spirits of the Irishman Rampant, nor the phlegmatic caution of the Scotchman Couchant, but we want the English combination of the two; though, with good generalship, cricket is a game for Britons generally. (25–26)

This passage exemplifies not only the explicit connection that is forged between cricket and the supposedly English character but also the

'imperial' nature of this Englishness. Implicit in this notion of Englishness is a sense of cultural superiority vis-à-vis the Celtic nations (Bateman 2009: 1–2; Malcolm 2013: ch. 2). The argument is that an ideal cricketer should be English, an identity that, it is claimed, subsumes that of Irish and Scottish and this is an instance of what Malcolm terms England's 'imperial nationalism'. English nationalism of the 19th century was an 'imperial nationalism' wherein the 'imperialists must define their distinctiveness and/or superiority in terms of their mission and their creation – the Empire – rather than in terms of the people who created it' (Malcolm 2013: 'Conclusion'). According to Malcolm, this often enabled the English to see the (cricketing) success of the colonies as a sign of their own superiority and thus the English imperial identity was one which often sought to accommodate the colonial other. He observes that the Celtic nations were subject to a process of 'internal colonialism' and, as a result, the cricketing discourses saw these identities as subsets of Englishness (2013: ch. 3, 'Conclusion').

From the late 18th century onwards, the inclusive character of cricket waned gradually. While cricket was once an inclusive, rural sport, a distinction gradually emerged between the 'Gentlemen' or amateurs and the 'Players' or professionals. Not only was the captaincy of the side reserved for the amateurs, but the professionals also dined separately and entered the field through a different gate, and were generally treated as second-class citizens. By the late 19th century many cricket fields in both England and the colonies had become an elite social space where the upper and the upper-middle classes mingled with each other and the sport was not only a favoured pastime of the elite classes but it also played a role in the forging of such social groups (Allen 2012: 210–211; Scalmer 2007: 434). The Victorian public schools fostered what J.A. Mangan has termed the 'cult of athleticism' (that is, the belief that sports can inculcate moral values), and the upper classes were thus influenced by a pedagogic philosophy which believed that cricket and other sports could train the students to be imperial heroes (Malcolm 2008b, 58–59). Under the influence of Muscular Christianity, a doctrine which equates manliness and spiritual virtue, cricket (and other sports) came to be seen as a means for developing in the

students ‘... the basic tools of imperial command: courage, endurance, assertion, control and self-control’ (Mangan 1998 [1986]: 18; see also Stoddart 1988: 653–654). It was widely held that sports would inculcate these qualities in the students and create a generation of imperial administrators who were simultaneously able to control their subordinates and deferential to their superiors (Mangan 1998 [1986]: 18). One of the key influences on the public school system of the day was Thomas Arnold, the headmaster of Rugby School, who preached the need for Christian earnestness, discipline, and self-control. Arnold’s pedagogy was transformed into one in which sport became the locus of all these virtues (James 2005 [1963]: 215–217), an appropriation that can be best understood via Thomas Hughes’s cult novel *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* ([1857] 1993).

A pioneering work of the genre of public school fiction, *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* was extremely influential in shaping the imperialist sporting ideology of the day, a claim attested by the fact that the headmasters of public schools (both at ‘Home’ and in the colonies) used to read out the passages on cricket to their students (Mangan 1998 [1986]: 133). The novel’s imperialist leanings are revealed at the very outset when the narrator notes that the Browns are a family of warriors who are spread all over the Empire, and he asserts that this presence of Browns is the reason for the stability of the Empire (25). The novel features Thomas Arnold as the ‘Doctor’, the revered headmaster who encourages the virtues of manliness and piety. Ian Baucom (1999) has analysed the text’s celebration of Muscular Christianity and has noted that Tom Brown, the protagonist, is a manly sportsman who has become indifferent to spirituality whereas the physically weak George Arthur is a true disciple of the real-life Arnold in that he abounds in faith and moral convictions. Tom’s Christian spirit is rekindled under Arthur’s influence and the latter is introduced to games and thus made ‘manly’ by the former. In this way the novel fuses together the two worldviews and celebrates the ideal hero figure of Victorian England: a sportsman who is a Muscular Christian (Baucom 1999: 145–146). In the penultimate chapter of the novel, cricket is praised as a noble game which promotes teamwork, and it is dubbed ‘the birthright of British boys old and young, as *habeas corpus* and trial by jury

are of British men’ (225), thereby emphasising both the Englishness of the game and the pre-eminence of the English culture. In the ensuing conversation, the leadership qualities required of the captain of the cricket team are compared to that of the Doctor, and it is announced that the Doctor’s school is the most ably administered part of the British Empire (226). By the logic of synecdoche, the captain of the cricket team is likened to an imperial administrator who is able to maintain complete control over his subordinates.

The idea of school sports preparing the students for battle was very popular during the age with various newspapers and school magazines tracking the exploits of the public school alumni in the distant outposts of the Empire, reporting both their martial and sporting endeavours (Mangan, 1998 [1986]: 63–68). The most well-known expression of the military role of cricket can be found in Henry Newbolt’s poem ‘*Vitai Lampada*’, which draws a comparison between a batsman bravely fighting for his team during the last moments of a cricket match and a soldier fighting for his nation in a faraway desert (Bateman 2009: 42). The unselfish nature of teamwork that is valorised in both the cricket team and the army, and the warrior’s obedience towards his superiors (the captain and the colonel) make the poem representative of the imperial sporting discourse of the day. The cricket captain’s exhortation, ‘Play up! Play up! and play the game!’ – which the soldier recalls while fighting for his nation – evokes both the loyalty towards the school and the nation, and the role that school sports played in fostering a commitment towards the imperial project.

For the Victorian upper classes, cricket was not only an ideal means of equipping the English to head the empire; it was also a means of imperial control, an ideological tool for disciplining and civilising the natives (Malcolm 2008b: 59). These twin functions of imperial cricket have been forcefully articulated by the contemporary writer Cecil Headlam: ‘[C]ricket unites, as in India, the rulers and the ruled. It also provides a moral training, an education in pluck, and nerve, and self-restraint, far more valuable to the character of the ordinary native than the mere learning by heart of a play of Shakespeare’ (cited in Kaufman and Patterson 2005: 92). The first line of the passage indicates the widespread belief that cricket

would act as a cultural bond, an umbilical cord connecting the colony and the 'mother country', thereby containing the native challenges to colonialism. This hegemonic idea gained acceptance in many colonies (Allen 2009: 474; Bateman 2009: 2; Scalmer 2007: 435) as evidenced by the Anglophilia in the early cricket writings of colonies as diverse as Australia, the Caribbean, New Zealand and India (Bateman 2009: 124–130). The latter part of the passage indicates the sport's mandate to civilise the natives. The writer has no doubt that the natives' characters needed to be reformed and that cricket was the best way to achieve this aim. The discourse of civilising mission played a huge role in the diffusion of the imperial sport (Kaufman and Patterson 2005: 91–92; Malcolm 2013: ch. 3). The Victorians staunchly believed in their moral obligation to civilise the rest of the world (the infamous 'white man's burden') and in the moral worth of the sport of cricket. Cricket was thus exported to colonies as diverse as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Sudan, India and the Caribbean in the last decades of the 19th century (see Allen 2009; Bateman 2009; Mangan 1998 [1986]; Ryan 1999). These sporting missionaries tried to introduce sports in the colonies, mostly through the British-model public schools and the army, in order to 'create a universal Tom Brown: loyal, brave, truthful, a gentleman and, if at all possible, a Christian' (Mangan 1998 [1986]: 18). The civilising mission enabled the English to see the cricketing successes of the colonies as a result of their efforts at reforming the colonials, and thus fed into the idea of imperial nationalism outlined above (Malcolm 2013: 'Conclusion').

While the discourses of cultural bond and the civilising mission were definitely influential, cricket's introduction and dissemination in the colonies cannot be solely attributed to such intentional aspects of imperialist ideology. Malcolm (2013) has argued that for many imperialists, playing cricket was a way of establishing that their physical prowess had not been affected by removal from the supposedly healthy environment of England and exposure to the tropical climates of the colonies. While an intentionally ideological use of cricket became prevalent later on, the attribution of civilising intentions to the early cricket in the colonies might just be instances of 'post-hoc rationalization' (ch. 3). In a similar vein, Ramachandra Guha has noted that the

early cricket in colonial India was a means for the homesick Englishman to recreate 'Home' in the colony, and, far from having any intentions of promoting the sport, the early cricket clubs were racially exclusive (2002: 4–11). Moreover, as Stoddart (1988) has argued, the diffusion of cricket cannot be attributed simply to the policies of the British colonial governments. In many instances, the sports were adopted by the native communities in order to share the culture of the colonial masters in a subconscious attempt at gaining upward social mobility (660–661).

The imperialist cricket (and indeed, imperialism itself) was so rife with contradictions that cricket's imperial nationalism with its assimilatory tendencies coexisted with exclusionary discourses. The Othering of non-white cricketers was a prevalent feature of cricket writings and it served to project cricket as an exclusively (white) English game. The narratives on Ranjitsinhji – the Indian prince who became a cricketing sensation in England – are a case in point: Ranji and the discourses on him represent both the supposed power of the cricket field to anglicise the Other, and rather contradictorily, the exclusively English nature of cricket (Bateman 2009: 135–140). While Ranji's cricketing prowess led him to be considered as an English gentleman, his cricket was often depicted in orientalist terms (Sen 2001: 241–243). For instance, Neville Cardus writes, 'The style is the man, and Ranji belonged to the land of Hazlitt's Indian jugglers, where beauty is subtle and not plain and unambiguous' (1977: 139). Similarly, the early English accounts of cricket in India suggest that the natives are, by nature, disinterested and inept at the game (Guha 2002: 5–11). Another instance would be the English press's racist portrayal of the touring West Indies cricketers in 1900, wherein the black cricketers were depicted as infants learning the game from adult, white cricketers (Bateman 2009: 158–159).

The practical consequences of cricket's imperialist ideology were numerous and not restricted to the assimilation, exclusion, or disciplining of the colonised. For instance, in countries such as India and South Africa, the intentional diffusion of organised cricket mirrored the regional organisation of the colonial government and thus reinforced the Empire (Allen 2012: 214–215). The hierarchical relationships created by the Othering of

the non-whites were reflected in the field of play, with the early non-white cricketers in the colonies being relegated to the plebeian roles of bowlers and fielders. In Victorian England, batting was seen as a genteel activity and was often the preserve of the amateurs, while bowling and fielding were seen as more naturally suited to the working-class professionals, cases in point being the slaves in early Caribbean cricket (Yelvington, cited in Malcolm 2013, ch. 5) and the servant paid to bowl to the English gentlemen at the Calcutta Cricket Club in the mid-19th century (Bagot, cited in Guha 2002: 9–10).

### Anti-imperial playing fields

Cricket's challenges to, or deviations from, the imperialist ideology consist of: the (post-) colonial appropriation and indigenisation of the imperial cultural artefact; the sport's embodiment of post-colonial nationalisms; and the emergence of neo-imperialist cricketing cultures in the era of globalisation.

The appropriations of the imperial sport have been effected through counter-discourses and through the modification of the conventions of the sport. The foundational text of post-colonial cricket literature is C.L.R. James's *Beyond a Boundary* (2005 [1963]), which was heavily influential in shaping a post-colonial approach to cricket. This complex and layered text makes several significant interventions in the cultural politics of imperialist cricket, two aspects of which need to be discussed here: firstly, James challenged the very foundation of the imperialist cricket discourses when he insisted that sport is political. His famous question 'What do they know of cricket who only cricket know?' (309) succinctly captures the socio-political significance of cricket and counters the imperialist discourses which project cricket as an apolitical field (Malcolm 2008a: 25). Throughout the book, James points out that, in the face of the racial inequalities in colonial West Indies, cricket has been a medium through which the (racial) pride and the nationalist sentiments of the native Black community have been expressed (72–73). For James, cricket is a popular art which is at once aesthetically pleasing and socially relevant (Bateman 2009: 157–158, 173–178).

Secondly, James refuses to consider cricket merely as an ideological tool of the empire (Smith 2006: 95). He asserts both

the centrality of cricket to the colonised's notion of their self, and their agency in transforming the meaning of the imperial cultural artefact. Rather than seeking to completely dismantle the imperial culture, James lauds the strict moral code associated with Victorian cricket (2005 [1963]: 32–34) and seemingly concedes the success of the civilising mission of the colonisers by suggesting that cricket can transform colonials into Englishmen. However, by implying that Englishness is not territorially bound and that it can be embodied and transformed by the colonials, he is challenging the exclusivity of the Englishness associated with cricket (Baucom 1999: 157–163; see also Bateman 2009: 190–194). Although *Beyond a Boundary's* influence in decolonising cricket is second to none, it must be noted that James's position has attracted some amount of criticism. Scholars such as Brian Stoddart and Helen Tiffin have been troubled by his celebration of cricket's moral codes and have interpreted it as a sign of his inability to critique the English culture when it pertains to his favourite sport (Smith 2006: 96–97). Instead of lauding James's appropriation of Englishness, one may argue that this does not qualify as a challenge and that it can be seen as part of England's imperial nationalism (see above) wherein Englishness is an identity that can be acquired by the colonised as well. Andrew Smith (2006) has strongly defended James's position by arguing that James was not unaware of the illusory nature of cricket's moral codes and that he has noted that cricket in the Caribbean was marked by various kinds of hierarchies and discriminations (101–102). Smith holds that James valued the 'formal autonomy of the cricketing field' (102) – that is, the perception that cricket is a domain set apart from the everyday world – because he believed that such mythologies enabled cricket to question various imperialist and/or elitist ideologies. Thus, the various assessments of *Beyond a Boundary* have been divided along the twin poles of strategic appropriation and assimilation. Ultimately, there can be no absolute resolution of such a debate because the distinction between the two is often one of perception.

The appropriation of cricket can also involve drastic changes to its rules and conventions as in the case of the South Asian spectators in England and elsewhere whose spectator styles are celebratory and

passionate as opposed to the calm, dignified behaviour expected of English cricketing culture (Crabbe and Wagg 2005 210–214; Malcolm 2013: ch. 7). An extreme case of such an appropriation is that of the Trobriand Islands, where the sport was introduced by British missionaries with the intention of containing tribal warfare. The natives sabotaged the civilising mission and introduced into cricket practices associated with their tribal culture. The bowling action of Trobriand cricket was modelled on spear throwing, the width of the stumps was modified, and tribal markings and war dances were incorporated into the game (Stoddart, 1988: 825–826).

If in some countries, such as New Zealand and Canada (Mangan, 1998 [1986]: 162–165; Ryan 1999: 62), the imperial sport lost its popular appeal with the emergence of other, nationalist sports, in countries such as India and the Caribbean the game flourished as a symbol of anti-colonial as well as post-colonial nationalism. Studies on these cricketing cultures (Appadurai 1996; Beckles 2011) stress the indigenisation of the sport by which the performance styles as well as meanings associated with them are modified and – following the Jamesian tradition – the ability of the masses to recognise and consume the anti-colonial and nationalist sentiments associated with the sport. If white loyalism co-existed with Black nationalism in the cricket of the colonial West Indies (Beckles 2011: 160), much of early Indian cricket was loyalist with the Indian princes who patronised the sport adopting it as a royal spectacle and way of strengthening the bond with the colonial master (Appadurai 1996: 94–95). At the same time, cricket also became one of the earliest sites where the Indian nation was imagined because the visiting England teams needed a national team to which they could be opposed and, subsequently, the sport was indigenised through the emergence of media in the Indian languages (Appadurai, 1996: 98–99). Indian cricket's role as a vehicle of nationalist sentiment, which began in the 1970s as a result of the national team's improved fortunes, intensified with the expansion of the television networks from the 1980s onward (Mehta 2009; Sen 2002). While West Indian cricketers are no longer the nationalist heroes they were during the early decades after independence (Beckles 2011), the Indian male audience continues to find in cricket 'the erotics of

nationhood' (Appadurai 1996: 111). The economic globalisation intensified, rather than hampered, the nationalist frenzy associated with cricket, and the sport in contemporary India is located at the intersection of nationalist and capitalist ideologies with the culture industries marketing cricketing nationalism for financial gains.

If, for the bulk of its history as a multi-national sport, the West has dominated the governing bodies of cricket, the past few decades have seen the balance of power swing in favour of South Asia, especially India. Scholars (Gupta 2004; 2009; Majumdar 2004; 2011; Rumford 2007) have attributed this shift of dynamics to the changes in the political economy of the sport as a result of globalisation.

Amit Gupta (2004) has argued that a confluence of factors has enabled the non-West to dominate the politics of world cricket. While globalisation of sport usually results in the Western nations dominating the international organisation, the International Cricket Council (ICC) steadfastly refused to exploit the financial potential of the sport. In fact, the commercialisation of cricket was intensified only when Kerry Packer, an Australian media magnate, poached players from the national teams of Australia, England, and the West Indies and formed a rebel league (for a full account of the 'Packer revolution', see Cashman 2011). Gupta has noted that with the emergence of satellite television and cable industries, South Asia and its huge cricketing audience became crucial to the finances of the sport by the 1990s (Marqusee, cited in Gupta 2004: 265), and India emerged as a superpower in the world of cricket administration.

The administration of world cricket had long been the monopoly of England with the 'home of cricket' dominating the Imperial Cricket Conference and its successor organisation, the ICC. The change in the balance of power began in the 1980s and the key episodes in this shift included: the South Asian nations' securing of the hosting rights of the 1987 and 1996 World Cups; the Indian Premier League phenomenon; and, ultimately, the 2014 revamping of ICC's organisation structure. All these tussles are significant to the students of imperialism as the points of contention were the two-tier structures in the world of cricket administration whereby some nations wield a veto power, officially or unofficially.



India and Pakistan's successful joint bid for the right to host the 1987 World Cup was a momentous event in the East–West conflict in the world of cricket administration because it was the first time that the World Cup was held outside England. Majumdar (2004: 408) has noted that the sub-continental bid offered a higher compensation package for the participant nations and had the support of the majority of the members including such Western countries as Holland and Canada, but that there was stiff resistance from England and Australia who tried to invoke the ICC rule which stated all recommendations should be made by a majority which included a foundation member (England or Australia). Eventually, the bid was awarded to India and Pakistan on the basis of a simple majority (409), thereby undermining the advantage of the veto power given to England and Australia. Significantly, the Indian administration lobbying for the joint bid saw the tussle as one between the imperial West and the emerging East as evidenced by the comment of N.K.P. Salve, the then president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in his book *The Story of the Reliance Cup* (1987). He wrote that the sub-continent hosting the World Cup:

would virtually threaten more than a century old era of England's supremacy in the administration of International cricket. The Mecca of cricket all these long years had been Lord's. If the finals of the world cup, the most coveted international cricket event, were played at any other place, it would shake the very foundation on which the super edifice of international cricket administration was built. (quoted in Majumdar 2004: 408)

A similar struggle was waged over the venue of the 1996 World Cup. A joint bid was put forward by India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka which was more financially lucrative for the member nations than that of England (412). Once again, the foundation members' veto power became the bone of contention, with ICC solicitors arguing for the same and the three sub-continental nations successfully arguing that the venue should be decided by a simple majority of the member nations (413). It should be noted that both these anti-imperial victories (as the veto can be seen as maintaining a hierarchical relationship between

the two Western countries and the rest) were enabled by the South Asian nations' efficient exploitation of the financial potential of the sport. India's increasing influence in the ICC also resulted in Jagmohan Dalmiya being elected as president of the ICC despite the machinations of the Western lobby (414–417) and enabled Indian players to challenge the terms of the ICC contracts for the Champions Trophy of 2000 (426–446).

India's position as the cricketing superpower has been further strengthened with the success of the Indian Premier League (IPL), and Majumdar has argued that the IPL completes the 'decolonisation of Indian cricket' (2011: 173). Through the IPL, India has developed an Indian brand that has acquired global recognition (Gupta 2009: 204). Along with the financial and political clout the tournament has afforded India, it has also played a role in reversing the sense of racial inferiority that Indians used to experience and has gone to the extent of co-opting Western players (Majumdar 2011: 177–178). As an instance of the latter, Majumdar refers to David Hussey – the Australian player who played for Kolkata Knight Riders – earning the moniker 'Hussey da' ('da' being a Bengali word which means 'elder brother'). Majumdar's formulation of the 'decolonisation of Indian cricket' notwithstanding, his own analysis suggests that Indian cricketing cultures have acquired a neo-imperial dimension. By comparing the contemporary Indian acceptance of foreign players in the IPL with the reception of Ranji in the Victorian England, Majumdar has brilliantly argued that the acceptance is unstable and contingent upon the player's success, and that slightest failure can immediately relegate him to the status of the Other (2011: 178–179).

The above account makes it clear that while India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka often worked together as a bloc to foil the Western lobby, India has been the dominant player among the three nations. India's status as a superpower in the world of international cricket administration was formalised in 2014 with the adoption of a new organisational structure which would see the ICC being dominated by India, England and Australia, a group dubbed the 'Big Three' by the media. The constitutional amendments, which were accepted after months of controversy, vest much of the power of the ICC in two five-member committees – the Executive Committee and the Finance and Commercial

Affairs Committee – in which India, England and Australia will have permanent representatives with the other two members being selected from other countries on a rotational basis (ESPNcricinfo staff, 'ICC Board clears governance, financial changes'). Even within this cabal, India is the first among equals, with an ICC media release stating that the BCCI will take 'a central leadership responsibility' (ESPNcricinfo staff, 'Full text of media release after ICC Board meeting on January 28', n.p.). The new revenue model adopted as part of the revamp will also result in an increase in the income of the already wealthy cricket boards of India, England and Australia. India's dominance has been justified on the grounds that it generates 70–80 per cent of ICC's revenue (see ESPNcricinfo staff, 'NZC not worried over power takeover – Snedden'). Not only have such claims been contested (see Ugra 2014), but the formal adoption of a new hierarchy is an instance of neo-imperialism, a blatant adoption of plutocratic ideals. It is worthwhile noting that the imperialist overtones of these developments have been recognised by the media. The new system has been termed an 'oligarchy', which gives the 'Big Three' an advantage reminiscent of the veto enjoyed by the founding members earlier (Bal 2014, n.p.). The irony of the neo-imperial role of India, which was at the forefront of the struggle to abolish the veto enjoyed by England and Australia, has also been noted (see Abbasi 2014). India's pioneering of this reform is a deviation from the policy of South Asian solidarity that BCCI used to adopt occasionally in the past, and while India's increase in clout was initially at the cost of the West's influence, at the time of writing, the old and new powers in the world of cricket have become allies in heading a new empire. (A detailed coverage of the controversies following the proposals for the revamp and the minor concessions made by the Big Three can be found at the popular cricket website ESPN Cricinfo [<http://www.espn-cricinfo.com/ci-icc/content/story/712255.html>].)

Since the 19th century, cricket has been part of imperialist as well as anti-imperialist ideologies. However, it would be erroneous to pin down cricket to a single meaning and label it as an 'imperial', 'anti-imperial' or even 'neo-imperial' sport. With regard to the last, it is worth remembering that even after the rise of India as a superpower, cricket has not entirely

shaken off its imperial past; something proven by the Western media's representation of the sport in the Indian sub-continent which continues to evoke Eurocentric, racist assumptions (Sen 2001). Rather than attempting to fix the meaning of cricket, it would be more analytically fruitful to see it as a cultural practice whose meaning is never monolithic and always subject to change.

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## Film Festivals and Imperialism

Film festivals and their networks have both built upon imperialist strategies and taken part in anti-imperialist struggles. As part of a privileged circuit for the international circulation of films as cultural, commercial, and ideological products, film festivals constitute an ideal platform for articulating various geopolitical and economic interests, and a visible stage for the performance of global powers and counter-powers. Looking at film festivals through the lens of imperialisms and anti-imperialist struggles illuminates the power relations embedded in the multiplicity of festival networks. It also complicates the common understanding of film festival networks as alternative, while they are at the core of global strategies of powers.

Developed as a sub-field in its own right in the last 20 years, film festival studies has been mostly structured around a European history, justified by the idea that Europe was the 'cradle' of film festivals (de Valck 2007). While research has focused on contemporary global networks and economies, it has paid less attention to histories of non-Eurowestern film festivals, such as Third-World film festivals of major importance, and their central role in the shaping of the global circulation of films. Examining the relations of film festivals to imperialism provides new narratives in addition to the Eurowestern capitalist ones that have been applied in order to read the growth of film festivals and their marketing strategies in comparison and/or opposition to Hollywood. It reminds us that other heterogeneous political economies were also involved in shaping the film festival circuit. Re-inserting undermined geographies, histories, and industries in the study of the constitution of film festival networks underlines the highly political role of film festivals. As a result, Eurowestern logics should be considered as only one among many understandings of film festival networks since their inception in the early 20th century, and one that is inevitably connected to, and influenced by, a multiplicity of unacknowledged global players.

This introduction to an anti-imperialist and a de-Westernized history of film festivals is therefore unfortunately limited by, and dependent on, the extent of the research conducted on non-Eurowestern film festivals

and their networks. The focus in film festival studies is gradually shifting towards new geographical regions. However, extensive research is still needed in order to have a clearer account of the role that Latin American, African, and Asian film industries played in the development of international regulations of film circulation in the mid-20th century; the connections between Third-World film festivals and the Eastern and Western blocs during the Cold War; the role of Soviet film festivals and their networks; the current festival industries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East, as well as the way they all relate together and with Eurowestern festivals; diasporic festivals and how they negotiate identity politics and global networks; geopolitical readings of online film festivals; and networks of solidarity that successfully avoid or re-appropriate the logics of global capital. Finally, there is a need to look at different types and sizes of film festival and to keep in mind the social and political disparities within the ensembles taken into consideration.

### Early film festival circuit and imperialisms: 1930s to the post-war period

#### Spreading and countering fascisms

Strategies of ideological imperialism are tightly connected to politics of nationalism and internationalism, which played a central role in the formation of film festivals in the inter-war period in 1930s Europe. In the wake of the First World War and the economic depression, European nation states worked to consolidate themselves through new alliances. Highly political gatherings from the start, film festivals were conceived as spaces for diplomatic exchanges, exhibition of power, and claims of authority or opposition. Not only did the powers at play in film festivals reflect larger political tensions and repartition of forces, but festivals themselves had a role in reinforcing alliances and conflicts. The two first major festivals, in Venice and Cannes, were created respectively in 1932 and 1939 in an increasingly tense political climate that saw the rise of German and Italian imperialist fascisms in Europe as a result of the poor management of the peace process in 1918. Hitler's invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 actually prevented the first

edition of the Cannes festival from happening, and the festival was finally launched after the Second World War, in 1946. The Venice film festival, which grew as a very profitable extension of the long existing Art Biennale (1885), offered a model whereby nations were invited to present their finest selection of national productions in an international setting. Directly supported by Mussolini, the festival became a tool to legitimise and spread fascism through an international cultural event that would arguably profit the glory of all European national cinemas. The Venice Mostra served the intensification of the ideological ties between Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany with the visit of the German minister of propaganda, Goebbels, in 1936, and the awarding of the Mussolini Cup prize to Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* in 1938. In turn, the Cannes festival resulted from the collaboration between France, Great Britain, and the US to respond to the German-Italian alliance, which reflected the division of forces in the coming Second World War.

Early film festivals provided a showcase for national representation through a set of films selected by national committees, while maintaining ambiguous relationships with industrial and commercial forces seen as threatening and imperialist, such as Hollywood. Hollywood was in fact considered as the dominant film market against which European cinema had to compete. However, the US, backed by the United Kingdom, contributed to the creation of Cannes. In addition, in Cannes and Venice, Hollywood commercial strategies were both exploited and re-appropriated to celebrate the glory of nations. In Venice, the festival meant to both raise cinema at the level of high art and enable a larger population, including the middle class, to access productions that would encourage adhesion to the regime (Stone 1999). This tension between the elitist and the popular encouraged borrowings from the Hollywood model that offered reconciliation through the use of the glamour, also re-asserting the power of Hollywood cultural imperialism. Moreover, while the emphasis on nationalism over commercialism countered the Hollywood logic, the MPPDA (Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America) was a guest of the festival and used it as a stage to show off American stars (de Valck 2007). Early film festivals were therefore

not primarily meant to boost national film industries. Rather, they were exhibiting film industries' already existing power to promote national culture but also tourism, as a way to showcase both national cinemas and the national space of exhibition. As a result, while serving the imperialist endeavours of fascist Italy and Germany, the international showcase of national cinemas also led film festivals to negotiate the cultural imperialism of the Hollywood industry as both an enemy to counter and a strategy to exploit.

### **Cultural imperialism and imperialist protectionism**

This is not to say that film festivals were not embedded in major economic logics and networks. In the post-war period especially, film festivals in Europe were more than ever serving protectionist strategies to support not only economic regional ensembles (Europe versus the US) or national cultural supremacies, but also the ruling of colonial empires, whose foundations were starting to vacillate. Hollywood industries came out of the Second World War strengthened by the US's victorious position, and with renewed support from the MPAA (the Motion Picture Association of America, replacing the MPPDA). The department of the Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA) was created to unify American film productions' exportation fees in order to have more impact on foreign exchanges, a strategy that was reinforced by local bilateral agreements that favoured American film distribution in Europe. The urge to develop circuits for European film distribution then became even more pressing in the late 1940s than it was in the 1930s. Film festivals mushroomed in Locarno (1946), Karlovy Vary (1946), Edinburgh (1946), Brussels (1947), and Berlin (1951), but would be soon caught up in the Cold War as a cultural, economic, and political support to the international crisis.

Therefore the European countries that had seen the political potential of festivals gathered to keep control over the multiplication of film festivals. They foresaw the possibility of a network that would quickly exceed the European borders, and initiated collaboration with regimes in Latin America. The *Fédération Internationale des Associations de Producteurs de Films* (FIAPF) was created in 1939 (as opposed to 1933: Moine 2011)

and reinstated in 1948 as a way of being in command of international regulations. The FIAPF had substantial consequences for the development of film festivals. The presidency was shared between France and Italy, but also included extra-European members such as Mexico and Argentina. Film festivals were at the core of the FIAPF's mandate, and the 'Producer's Charter' ('La charte du producteur') that formed the basis of the association's renewal was launched at the 1949 Venice festival. The festival became an institution where legal issues could be discussed, as it hosted several yearly assemblies that the member countries and also the US attended. Primarily, the FIAPF sought to organise all festivals within one unique network that fell under its jurisdiction, which led to the establishing of the festival calendar. The first project was to create a global showcase of nations called 'Olympic of Films', but this was greeted with general reluctance. The FIAPF finally gained control by establishing a classification that would restrict the number of competitive film festivals to the following categories: 'competitive festivals', which included only Cannes and Venice at the time (A); 'non-competitive film festivals' (B); 'special events' (C); and 'national events' (D) (Moine 2011). The charter also aimed to increase the control of producers over the exhibition of films, and therefore over festivals' programming. However, the very definition of the role of the producer was left uncertain because different models coexisted in Europe and the Americas, which were the areas then covered by the global agreement. Finally, the protectionist model advocated by the FIAPF tended to be in contradiction to the development of film markets on the side of film festivals that encouraged open film trade, as was the case in Cannes from 1950 (Moine 2011). The charter was therefore designed to privilege European interests but soon faced the need to integrate its festival network globally.

### Film festivals and diplomatic imperialism

The federation's stance against the US's cultural and economical domination became confused when the MPEA joined the FIAPF in 1951, at a moment when Cold War logics complicated mere economic interests. The FIAPF in the early 1950s then became dominated by the US's diplomatic demands.

It constituted the stronghold of the so-called Free World and a continuation of the Marshall Plan, which aimed to rally countries potentially interested in joining the Eastern bloc. As a result, non-European countries were also represented within the FIAPF, including Turkey, Israel, Egypt, India, Pakistan, and Japan, in addition to the pre-existing members Mexico and Argentina. Coincidentally, film festivals emerged in Mar del Plata (Argentina, 1954) and Cartagena (Colombia, 1960), both accredited to the FIAPF and supported by military regimes. Film festivals were of major importance for the West as a means of gaining a foothold in the Eastern bloc. The Berlinale was initiated in 1951 by Oscar Martay, a film officer of the American military administration in West Germany, and was aimed at audiences from both the Western bloc and the Eastern bloc. It screened only Western productions, which it promoted in border theatres in order to introduce Eastern populations to Western ideology until the Berlin Wall was built in 1961. Similarly, Karlovy Vary (1946) and Moscow (1959) became accredited as competitive festivals to the FIAPF, extending its control further east but also enhancing the diplomatic power of the Eastern bloc. In fact, the Soviet Union, which maintained a strong national film industry, boycotted Cannes and Venice in some years, according to the state of its relationship with the US (Gallinari 2007).

The multiplication of film festivals worldwide under the FIAPF's control followed the aims of the Club International du Film created in Cannes in 1947, which took as a model UNESCO's defence of the role of cinema as a central weapon in international relations, but also served collaboration with extra-European military regimes. The imperialistic international reach of the FIAPF and its regulation endeavours coexisted with the ongoing colonisation of nations that were forced to be part of the Cold War by default, while discontent was growing in the colonies. Protectionism in film industries was not only applied against hegemonic competitors, but also functioned to restrict indigenous productions, as in French Africa, where laws such as the Laval decree forbid Africans to produce their own films (Diawara 1992). Film festivals in turn also played a central role in the development of indigenous film industries and the popular struggle in the decolonising world.

## Anti-imperialisms and the proliferation of film festival networks: from the post-war period to the 1980s

### Third-World film festivals and regional anti-imperialist movements

While the Cold War was shaping new international dynamics and divisions, the FIAPF relentlessly tried to constrict the festival circuit to one network serving the interests of the Western bloc. Yet the processes of decolonisation introduced new players to the world's map of exchanges, opening up the way for alternative networks of film circulation. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was constituted at the Belgrade Conference in 1961 after a first gathering at Bandung in 1955. It then comprised African and Asian countries that were newly independent or in the process of decolonisation, but the movement became tri-continental in 1966 at the Havana Conference. The new states gathered to develop the 'Third World Project', a political alliance that asked for 'a redistribution of the world's resources, a proper rate of return for the labour power of their people, and a shared acknowledgement of the heritage of science, technology and culture' (Prashad 2007). Film festivals became integral to the Third World Project because they were ideal vehicles for the new national theories that it promoted, which that would revolve not around the idea of race but around the historical struggle against colonialism and imperialism. Film festivals also responded to the need to develop structures that could showcase widely the new indigenous cinemas emerging from decolonisation. The Third World's international ethos therefore required a new model of film festivals, one that would serve not the competition between countries, but their dialogue and alliances. At the end of the 1960s, both Latin America and Africa had developed their own multiple networks, which had yet to be connected together.

Third-World film festivals therefore started as separated regional projects. In Latin America, Viña del Mar (Chile) and Mérida (Venezuela) became the two major events for the development of a Latin American cinema. After several attempts starting in 1963, Viña del Mar was finally called Festival de Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano in 1967, whose appellation gave its name to the regional film movement. Mérida in turn focused on

documentaries, and contributed to the importance of the genre in Latin American cinema. Both Viña del Mar and Mérida were structured around a competition, which facilitated the circulation of the prizewinning films outside the regional confines in other market-free networks. In fact, the Pesaro film festival, established in Italy in 1965, bridged European audiences and films from Latin America, to which it dedicated its 1968 edition premiering Fernando Solanas's *La hora de los hornos* (1968). Political filmmakers were also instrumental to connecting the different film festivals together as they travelled from one festival to another. Viña del Mar had organised an encounter between Latin American filmmakers in 1967 and 1968, placing discussions and debates at the heart of the festival's mandate. Similarly, Pesaro included conferences and political debates, and these also reflected on the structure of European film festivals, which started to be contested in the late 1960s.

The regional impetus was even stronger in Africa, where film festivals ambitiously served as a platform for conversation between not only filmmakers but also politicians and activists, and generated fundamental initiatives. The first and only edition of the Pan-African Culture Festival in Algiers in 1969 was funded by the Algerian state and the Organization of African Unity, and gave birth to two important statements. First, the festival issued the 'Pan-African Cultural Manifesto' in order to consolidate African unity. It also allowed filmmakers to gather and create the continental organisation that took the name of *Fédération PanAfricaine des Cinéastes* (Fépac) and was established in 1970 at the Tunisian *Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage* (JCC). Fépac was designed to make possible the development of African and Arab cinemas outside the control of foreign distribution companies. It also aimed to strengthen the Pan-African vision through the nationalisation of film distribution and production, and the creation of regional film schools such as the *Institut Africain d'Études Cinématographiques* (INAFEC), founded at the University of Ouagadougou in 1976. Created in 1969 in collaboration with the French Ministry of Co-operation, the Festival PanAfricain du Cinéma de Ouagadougou (FESPACO) in Burkina Faso (then Upper Volta) developed to meet these expectations.

In addition to following what had become a recurring feature of Third-World film festivals, namely organising symposiums and debates, the FESPACO was also dedicated to archiving African cinema. The project took shape in 1989 with the creation of the Cinémathèque Africaine de Ouagadougou.

### **Connecting the Third World with the two blocs**

By the early 1970s, and thanks to the platforms of exchange allowed by film festivals, many African countries had nationalised their film industries and had connected them through an inter-African distribution network that bypassed the French-American monopoly. In the continuity of film festivals, ties were strengthened between the two continents, and exchanges developed between filmmakers from Latin America and Africa. In December 1973 and 1974, the Third World Cinema Committee met in Algiers and Buenos Aires to implement the Third World Project through cinema. Yet these networks were not isolated from the Western and Eastern blocs, a fact which complicates binary understandings of imperialism and anti-imperialism. For example, the *Rencontres Internationales pour un Nouveau Cinéma* in Montreal in 1974 sought to include Third-World filmmakers and militant cinema groups from the Free World in a common dialogue against imperialist strategies of distribution, which was thought in direct continuity with the meetings of the Third World Cinema Committee. Another example is that of delegations from Third-World countries sent in the 1970s to the Tashkent Film Festival (Uzbekistan), which served as a major meeting point in the Eastern bloc. In addition, some countries were truly dedicated to the communist ideology, including Cuba, for which the idea of a Latin American cinema became a key concept in international diplomacy. Havana was a hub for film circulation between the Eastern bloc and the Third World, in a context where the Cuban film industry was supported by strong national institutions such as the film school *Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos* (ICAIC). In turn, Pesaro and other festivals in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, France, Canada, and the United Kingdom constituted important relays to introduce 'New Latin American' productions labelled as political cinema to the Western bloc. Some

productions would also infiltrate mainstream festivals such as Cannes (Isaza 2012). Yet the Third-World film festival networks were also regularly in conflict with circuits identified as imperialist and grounded in their own geographical space. In Latin America, Viña del Mar and Mérida were in open confrontation with official festivals organised under military regimes, such as those in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and Mar del Plata (Argentina), the latter being also accredited to the FIAPF (Mestman 2002). Already present in Latin America, the FIAPF tried to assert its authority in Africa and accredited a new festival in Cairo (1976), trying to further expand the influence of the Western bloc while also being welcomed by the Egyptian president Anwar Sadat and his policy of offering an 'open door' to foreign investments (*Intifah*). The FIAPF also attempted to become involved in North Africa by calling on the JCC to respect its regulations. As a result, the *Fépaci* was partly constituted at the JCC in 1970 in order to respond to the FIAPF's injunction with a strong declaration of independence.

### **Challenging the imperialist structures of Eurowestern film festivals**

Third-World cinemas reached Western film festivals quite soon after the Second World War, and the introduction of this new aesthetic contributed to a crisis in 1968 during which the structure of the European festivals was challenged. In the late 1950s, dissatisfaction started to grow against the nationalist format of film festivals, which was regarded as antiquated and conservative. French critics in particular protested against the glamour and prizes of Cannes, and asked for more attention to be paid to alternative auteur cinema, which privileged independent filmmakers and low-budget equipment over big productions and was spreading from France to other parts of Europe. Protests culminated in 1968 when the head of the *Cinémathèque Française*, Henri Langlois, was dismissed and the festival had to be shut down. In other words, the capitalist strategies that had served the nationalist discourses of early film festivals had become inadequate to the new generations of alternative cinema, which included not only European new waves and Eastern films, but also Third-World productions. Berlin and Venice went through similar crises, and European leading festivals were reconfigured to include a parallel section dedicated



to alternative cinemas (the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs in Cannes, the Forum des Jungen Films in Berlin, the Giornate del Cinema Italiano in Venice).

Ultimately, this re-structuring was a direct attack on the supremacy of the FIAPF's ruling, which went against artistic freedom for the benefit of geopolitical purposes then largely related to Cold War logics (de Valck 2007). While the A-status of these festivals was finally maintained, the FIAPF still had to re-adjust its regulations regarding the selection procedure. The national selection committees disappeared, and the decision-making was handed down to festival directors. Festivals therefore went from a model where capitalist states were omnipotent to a format where artists and films were considered as individual entities, which allowed both more co-productions and the inclusion of new national productions. However, the new parallel sections in the leading European film festivals framed the new indigenous cinemas as 'discoveries', which repeated the colonial enterprise of mapping the emergence of cultures by perpetuating a Eurocentric point of view.

### **Globalisation and the rule of capital: from the 1980s onwards**

The intensification of financial and trade flows in the 1980s, reinforced in the 1990s at the end of the Cold War with the opening of new markets, had numerous consequences for the festival industries. Expanding globalisation thickened film festival networks worldwide, enhanced the competition between the major players, allowed the emergence of new economic actors, and endangered festivals that were depending on less viable national economies. As mainstream festivals became increasingly market-oriented and less state-sponsored, networks were reorganised according to corporate interests and niche industries that grew out of new politics of programming. By the 1980s, the Third World was completely crippled by corruption and debts, and depended on the assistance of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Prashad 2007). As the economic gap between rich and developing countries increased, the Third World Project withered away and the NAM countries came to be understood as part of the unclearly defined ensemble of the Global South, which

encompasses all developing countries in the context of globalisation. In the early 2000s, however, new regions came to the fore, such as East Asia and the Gulf area. Regional urban centres have gained global attraction and become home to strong media industries and financial decisional bodies. Moreover, the multiplication of transnational co-productions, facilitated by film festivals, has complicated a clear North–South divide. Yet as new hegemonies are arising, new gaps have been created within the regions.

### **Recuperation of the Third World Project and new politics of programming**

On the one hand, the shift in programming politics enabled Eurowestern and A-list festivals to negotiate the arrival of new cinemas and incorporate them within the logic of global capital. Framed as anti-Hollywood, global film festivals however still partake in imperialist logics of economic expansion. The shift in programming also served enhancing the discrepancy between the film economies of the North and the South, although only to a certain extent, since these logics have also been exploited by very competitive emerging festival industries. The re-structuring of film selection practices in Eurowestern film festivals and the focus on art cinema since the late 1960s led to the specialisation of film festivals and to the rise of 'thematic film festivals' (de Valck 2007). This specialisation had been initiated with the creation of parallel sections in Cannes, Venice, and Berlin due to the introduction of auteurist discourses on Eurowestern films which were also being applied to new national cinemas from the Eastern bloc and the Third World. Similarly, many festivals emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s that built on the new waves coming from the South in order to constitute a supposedly alternative network away from mainstream glamour. Therefore, when in the late 1970s revolutionary festival projects in Latin America and Africa started experiencing difficulties in existing without sustainable and independent funding, they were recuperated by festivals in Europe and North America, which capitalised on Third-World cinemas that they uniformly categorised under the appellation 'world cinema'.

World cinema has now penetrated the global market beyond thematic festivals and niche networks, and has become very prominent in A-list film festivals. Filmmakers of the

South have profited from the international exposure that these niche markets and, later, wide networks have allowed, and for that reason have prioritised them over exhibiting their productions at home. The system of premieres, which is predicated on the accumulation of cultural capital preserving the status quo, and its centralisation in the hands of few dominant festivals categorised as A-list by the FIAPF or other growing institutions, such as the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), have helped to push away festivals of the South towards other networks in the peripheries of global capital. Festivals in Africa such as the FESPACO are now competing against thematic festivals such as the Milan African Film Festival (Italy), Vues d'Afrique in Montreal (Canada), or the Amiens International Film Festival (France), but also mainstream festivals in Cannes, Venice, Berlin, and London (Diawara 1994). Conversely, in Cuba, the International Film Festival of New Latin American Cinema in Havana was created in 1979 in order to rekindle the political flame of the 'Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano' in the region. The Havana festival soon became a meeting point for leftists from all over the world, including Europe and North America. As well as facilitating collaborations with the Toronto International Film Festival (Canada) and Sundance (Salt Lake City, US), Havana also worked as a catalyst for capitalisation on the Latin American cinema brand (Isaza 2012). The play on the category of regional cinema has therefore allowed both the submission of ensembles in the South to capitalist logics and the exploitation of the global network to the regions' own ends, blurring clear distinctions between anti-imperialist struggle and adhesion to imperialist logics.

### **Film festivals, trade, and the rise of new regional hegemonies**

Processes of regionalisation, which were central to the anti-imperialist Third-World struggle, have developed and taken other shapes as a result of globalisation. The current phenomenon of regional film festivals is connected to the flourishing of film markets within film festivals, and to the new importance of cities now functioning as central nodes in the global networks of trade that is not limited to the West (Sassen 2001). In Europe, film markets that existed on the side of festivals have been incorporated in the

official structures since as early as the 1980s (Cannes, from 1983; Berlin; Rotterdam). In China, festivals created in the 1970s by state initiatives have been gradually sold to corporations, and have become modelled on profit-making commercial enterprises. Their success attracts sponsors, and the cities in which they are set accumulate both financial and media capital (Hong Kong International Film Festival, since the 2000s; see Cheung 2009). Emerging economies embracing late capitalism have profited from the new centrality of trade within festivals. For example, in the Gulf region, the Abu Dhabi and Dubai festivals were created around their film markets in the 2000s. In the same decade, East Asian film festivals acquired high profile through their film markets (Hong Kong, 1997; Tokyo, 2004; Busan, 2006; Shanghai, 2007).

As a result, categories of world cinemas have also become economic weapons exploited by emerging industries, and are deeply entangled with processes of regionalisation. The new role assigned to global cities, in which film markets participate, has changed the previous dynamics that were still inflected by national interests. Having had their roles reinforced after the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98, film festivals and film markets have strengthened the circulation between three major poles within East Asia: Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Busan. This network and other lesser ones including Taipei and Taiwan have favoured the discursive formation of a regional cinema – echoing the rhetoric of 'world cinema' and 'Latin American branding' – marketable to both internal and external buyers, and competing with major industries and mainstream festivals (Ahn 2012; Cheung 2011). As they build on the rise of global cities, however, processes of regionalisation as discursive formations tend to hide new imbalances of power within these discursively unified ensembles. Moreover, other regions are left out from global capital dynamics because of internal dissensions. For example, heavy politics of sponsorship have not favoured the development of the Pan-African festival FESPACO in the context of the economic crisis of the 2000s. Rather, these politics have benefited tourism more than Pan-African cinema; tourism is judged more profitable by a state whose legitimacy has been more and more contested by the population (Diawara 1994; Dupré, 2012).

### Film festivals: new functions, new imperialisms?

The centralisation of capital in global festivals has also impacted on their function within the film economy, and enhanced them with additional prerogatives. Previously limited to exhibiting and facilitating distribution, film festivals now also play the role of producers. Funds are developed to help 'world cinema' as it has become a major asset in the marketing strategy of global film festivals. These funds also create new networks of influence, reinforcing pre-existing power relations or constructing new regional discourses. As an example of the latter, set in a city that has become a centre for arts sponsorship in the Gulf area and is itself in rapid economic expansion, the Abu Dhabi Film Festival developed the SANAD Fund (from the Arabic word for 'support') in the 2000s to help the post-production of Arab films. On the other hand, in 1988, the International Film Festival of Rotterdam launched the Hubert Bals Fund to support filmmakers from developing countries. Similarly, the fund *Cine en Construcción* (2002) is a joint initiative of Donostia–San Sebastián International Film Festival (Basque Country/Spain) and the *Rencontres Cinémas d'Amérique Latine de Toulouse* (France) and aims to help the post-production of uncompleted Latin American features. While it builds upon the historical ties that constituted the Ibero-American sphere, it also implies a certain economic dependence among Latin American productions (Ross 2010). These funds however also reveal the importance of transnational co-productions, which complicate unilateral power relations that would always disadvantage countries of the South. Diasporic film festivals, for example, because they foreground collaborative work in co-productions, provide good models for challenging clear binaries.

Alternative networks of international solidarity of various forms have tried to exploit the potentialities of globalisation to their own ends, and have strived to exist outside globalised film economies. However, there is always a risk that activist festivals will become other thematic events susceptible to being capitalised upon, or placed under the control of overarching organisations such as international non-governmental organisations that are subjected to their own global aid economy. Following the growth of Human Rights Film Festivals worldwide since the 1980s, the

Human Rights Film Network (HRFN) was launched in 2004 in Locarno (Switzerland) as a regulating authority. The HRFN is supported by a charter that offers definitions of human rights, which have been accused of primarily reflecting Western conceptions. Moreover, as the category of 'human rights film' is formulated, its penetration into global festival markets is also made possible (Grassili 2012), which reveals the difficulty of constituting worldwide networks without global capital. Similarly, LGBT and queer film festivals first developed as grassroots formations. As they have mushroomed globally, they have developed a niche market around New Queer Cinema that has tamed the previous activist endeavours (Loist and Zielinski 2012). However, the impact of queer film and video festivals is still important locally (e.g. in Taipei and Seoul), and contributes to shape counter-publics (Kim and Hong 2007; Perspex 2006).

### Conclusion

Because their primary function is to establish networks, film festivals have been central to historical and global negotiations of geopolitical powers through the circulation of films. Film festivals have reflected, actively participated in, and been shaped by imperialism and economic, discursive, political, and cultural strategies both disabling and empowering political formations, sometimes simultaneously. They have also served the articulations between various geographical scales such as the city, the country, the region, and the global that nuance preconceived understandings of political ensembles and the relations between them, often shaped by imperialism and capital. Film festivals therefore allow us to understand imperialisms and anti-imperialisms as forces of organisation and networks of influences that are in constant evolution and vary from one geopolitical space to another.

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## Jazz

### Come on and Let's Get Free

When thinking of jazz, thoughts of imperialism and decolonisation may not be the first that come to mind. One thinks of leisure time spent in dancehalls and late-night clubs before issues of hegemony and self-determination. But it could be argued that

jazz is one of many products that formed out of the hundreds of years of cultural interaction throughout the course of the New World slave trade. This cultural product and process first coalesced in the city of New Orleans at the beginning of the 20th century and later spread throughout the US and the rest of the globe before, during, and after the World Wars. And with the spread of jazz, the process of identity maintenance, contestation, and reconstruction accompanied the music. Throughout the history of jazz, this undercurrent of identity negotiation intensifies in moments of cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation. The hope of this work is to outline some of these moments in jazz's history and provide a resource on some of the literature, recordings, and films on the processes.

Most literature on jazz addressing issues around imperialism is found in discussions on jazz and its relationship to black nationalism or social protest (e.g. Baraka 1963, 1967; Budds 1978; Carles and Comoli 1974; Floyd 1995; Hobsbawm 1993; Kelley 2002, 2012; Kofsky 1970 and 1998; Monson 2007). Very little literature deals with jazz in relationship to imperialism or decolonisation overtly; during this research I found only Lane (2013) and (McClure 2006). Many musicians and listeners to jazz see the music and its tradition as a celebration of freedom. Such ideas and feelings are what initially draw many people into jazz, myself included (first as a listener and later as a performer and a scholar). Cornell West sums up these feelings best and how they are embedded in the process of democracy in his book *Democracy Matters: Winning the Fight Against Imperialism*, stating:

[One of the] crucial traditions [that] fuel deep democratic energies [is] the mighty shield and inner strength provided by the tragicomic commitment to hope. The tragicomic is the ability to laugh and retain a sense of life's joy – to preserve hope even while staring in the face of hate and hypocrisy – as against falling into the nihilism of paralyzing despair. This tragicomic hope is expressed in America most profoundly in the wrenchingly honest yet compassionate voices of the black freedom struggles; most poignantly in the painful eloquence of the blues; and most exuberantly in the improvisational virtuosity of jazz. (2004: 16)

The potential of jazz to propel the process West calls 'tragicomic hope' is undeniable to those who love the music. Jazz (along with voices of the black freedom struggle and the blues) can prevent individuals and society from falling into despair. Such a notion is liberating. But we rarely see discussions on such transformation in the traditional literature on jazz, except in the autobiographies by jazz musicians or the writings of non-musicians like Ralph Ellison, Jack Kerouac, Albert Murray, and others who adore the music from a distance.

Additionally, by taking a larger and wider view from an international perspective, one can begin to see jazz as an agent of social change and by extension see decolonisation and anti-imperialism throughout its history. In his introduction to the book *Jazz Planet*, Atkins outlines how jazz is not only the precursor to globalisation, but is also simultaneously a national and a post-national music:

Jazz, though certainly born on U.S. soil, was both product and instigator of early-twentieth-century processes and trends that were global in scope: the mass manufacture of culture, urbanization, the leisure revolution, and primitivism. It is this fact – combined with the sheer, and early, ubiquity of the music – that leads us to conclude that, practically from its inception, jazz was a harbinger of what we now call 'globalization'. In no one's mind have the music's ties to its country of origin been severed, yet the historical record proves that it has for some time had global significance, if not necessarily for the commonly accepted, purely aesthetic reasons. Jazz exists in our collective imagination as both a national and postnational music, but is studied almost exclusively in the former incarnation. Our purpose here is to recuperate its career as a transgressor of the idea of the nation, as an agent of globalization. (2003: 13)

The failure to see jazz as more than a national music and simultaneously a national and a post-national music hampers the discussion of jazz and its true and greater potential for anti-imperialism. We begin to see that since its beginning, jazz is a music that originated in the United States but at the same time had success beyond its country of origin due in part to its hybridity as a product

of the centuries-old process of cultural mixture between Africa and Europe. Jazz has of course spread to all parts of the world like Africa, Asia, Australia, the Middle East, and South America. In discussing jazz around the world, Atkins borrows the term 'jazz nationalism' from Japanese jazz critic Yui Shoichi to explain the simultaneity of jazz as national and post-national music through the rejection of an idea of America:

[Yui's] theory of 'jazz nationalism'... maintained a faith in the much-proclaimed 'universality' of jazz as a language, while incorporating nationalistic themes of fundamental ethnic difference and Japanese exceptionalism to distinguish Japanese jazz and accentuate its originality. As Yui wrote in liner notes for the CD reissue of the TAKT Jazz Series in 1996, "The movement for "national [ethnic] independence" that surged through each country [in the sixties] became the motive power for what must be called "jazz nationalism" [jazu nashonarizumu], "to be free of America" [Amerika banare]'. (2001: 246–247, additions in the original)

My hope is to show that moments of cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation in jazz in the US can be seen as an internal process within jazz's native country 'to be free of America'. By juxtaposing the tension of laughter in the face of hate and hypocrisy in West's notion of tragicomic hope with the tension of Atkins's depiction of jazz as both a national and post-national music, the true anti-imperialist potential of jazz can be understood. Without these two dynamics, jazz might not have spread around the world and continued to evolve outside the US in the 20th century. By recognising moments of cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation in jazz, we can illustrate and celebrate jazz's anti-imperialist character.

Before going forward, these ideas of cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation should be explained. The three exist on a spectrum with varying degrees of cultural mixture and disruption. For cultural borrowing to occur, certain elements and ideas are simply incorporated from one culture into another. For cultural destabilisation to occur, traditional elements and ideas within a culture are challenged. For cultural decolonisation to occur, traditional elements and ideas

are removed and replaced with alternative or hybridised ones. Viewing the three processes on a spectrum helps to unpack some of the cultural exchanges that take place throughout the history of jazz. And one of the first and most important exchanges happens before jazz begins.

While waiting for a train late one night in 1903, brass band conductor and cornetist W.C. Handy heard what would later be called the blues for the first time, and to his ears it was '...the weirdest music [he] had ever heard' (Handy 1941: 74). These new sounds sung and performed by an African-American guitarist casually at a train station and other experiences he had while traveling in the South would have a profound effect on Handy's musical output. Beginning in 1912, he first published 'Memphis Blues' that included the 'earthy flavor' (78) he was so enamoured with. Handy would later pen such famous songs as 'St. Louis Blues' (1914) and as a result would be known as the Father of the Blues, not because he invented the blues but because he wrote it down. Handy's borrowing of these southern sounds fused with his brass band experience would create a foundation for what would later become jazz.

Many agree that the first jazz record ever made was 'Livery Stable Blues' in 1917 by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, five white musicians from New Orleans billing themselves as the 'Creators of Jazz'. Previously, New Orleanian and Creole cornetist Freddy Keppard was offered the chance to record for the Victor Talking Machine Company, but refused, worrying that other musicians might copy his recordings (Giddins and DeVaux 2009: 88). The members of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band would become very successful touring the country and travelling all the way to London to perform for King George V in 1919. But controversy surrounds this success as many feel that the all-white Original Dixieland Jazz Band did not deserve their place in history. This is only the beginning of the dynamics of race and jazz. In 1923, Paul Whiteman (who later dubbed himself the 'King of Jazz' and was the originator of a new music called 'symphonic jazz') commissioned George Gershwin to compose a piano concerto to be debuted at Aeolian Hall in New York City as part of an all-jazz concert entitled 'An Experiment in Modern Music'. Gershwin heard jazz in Harlem and befriended stride pianist James

P. Johnson. Gershwin incorporated much of what he heard of early jazz in his new piece *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924), which was hugely successful at Whiteman's concert. But these two moments in jazz's early history are associated with musicians who are not fully representative of the community that produced the music. My aim here is not to start a debate on the validity of the contribution to jazz made by white musicians, which has already been discussed elsewhere (e.g. Lees 1994). Rather, my emphasis is on the cultural borrowing and the use and appropriation of music by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and Gershwin. On the positive side, their successes most definitely helped propel future successes by musicians both black and white.

In a letter to the editor of *Downbeat* in 1938, pianist and composer Jelly Roll Morton stated that he invented jazz in 1902. And when Morton's recording of Scott Joplin's 'Maple Leaf Rag' (1899) on *The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz* is compared to one of Joplin's piano rolls on the same collection (Morton 1938; Joplin 1899/1916), such an assertion can begin to be entertained. Morton's improvisatory contribution and adaptation of Joplin's original composition are noteworthy. But Morton's letter was aimed as an attack on Handy as the creator of jazz. Handy would later admit that he made no such claim and did not even consider himself a jazz musician:

I ... would not play jazz if I could, but I did have the good sense to write down the laws of jazz and the music that lends itself to jazz and had vision enough to copyright and publish the music I wrote so I don't have to go around saying I made up this piece and that piece in such and such a year like Jelly Roll ... (Handy 1938: 37)

Interestingly, Morton is commonly credited with jazz's first composition in 1915 with 'Jelly Roll Blues'. This bickering is typical of the early arguments regarding the creation of jazz and legitimisation of musicians both black and white.

In the same year that Gershwin and Whiteman debuted *Rhapsody in Blue*, jazz's first great soloist and trumpeter Louis Armstrong arrived in New York after a thorough apprenticeship under Kid Ory, King Oliver, and others. Shortly thereafter, jazz's first great composer and pianist

Duke Ellington started working regularly at the Cotton Club in Harlem in 1927. Both Armstrong and Ellington would record songs that would foreground race. First, Ellington recorded 'Creole Love Call' in 1927, which featured a haunting melody by Adelaide Louise Hall. And in 1929, Armstrong recorded Fats Waller's '(What Did I Do To Be So) Black and Blue?' from Waller's hit Broadway show *Hot Chocolates*. The song tells a story of personal damage that results from social discrimination based on skin colour:

Even the mouse, ran from my house  
They laugh at you, and all that you do  
What did I do, to be so black and blue?

I'm white, inside  
But, that don't help my case  
That's life, can't hide  
What is in my face

How would it end? Ain't got a friend  
My only sin, is in my skin  
What did I do, to be so black and blue?  
(Armstrong 1929)

Armstrong's foregrounding of race is a moment of cultural destabilisation. His admonition is powerful and begins to open doors to discuss issues of race. Only a decade later, in 1939, Billie Holiday made her landmark recording of 'Strange Fruit' (plus a later, chilling re-recording in 1956). Her song illustrated the horrors and violence of lynching in the South, climaxing in the final verse:

Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck  
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck  
For the sun to rot, for the tree to drop  
Here is a strange and bitter crop  
(Holiday 1939)

Holiday's performance of the song for mixed audiences at New York's Café Society can be considered not only a moment of cultural destabilisation, but also a moment of cultural decolonisation for listeners in how it provided them with such a graphic account of violence predicated on skin colour. Armstrong and Holiday are opening the conversation within jazz to create an alternative dialogue around race. Coincidentally, around the same time these discussions were happening, clarinetist and bandleader Benny Goodman broke the colour line in jazz by hiring and

predominantly featuring pianist Teddy Wilson in 1935 (and a year later including vibraphonist Lionel Hampton) as both part of his big band and in a special small combo with drummer Gene Krupa.

A much more subtle version of cultural decolonisation can be seen in the recordings of saxophonist Charlie Parker. Simply by looking at his 1946 tune 'Ornithology' we can see a manifestation of what could be called cultural decolonisation on a sonic level. The tune 'Ornithology' is a contrafact, which is a new song based on previously used chord progression. Having evolved from the blues, which uses a small combination of chord changes to create several new pieces of music, it should come as no surprise that jazz would do the same. In the case of 'Ornithology', Parker borrowed the then popular tune 'How High the Moon' from the 1940 Broadway review *Two for the Show*. Clarinetist Benny Goodman had recorded a hit version of 'How High the Moon' the year the review debuted. For 'Ornithology', Parker developed a new melody over the 'How High the Moon' chord progressions, thus creating something new out of something old. 'Ornithology' has since become a jazz standard. And the origin of the tune is not lost, as Fitzgerald reversed the process in her famous 1960 live performance of 'How High the Moon' on *Ella in Berlin* by singing the melody of 'Ornithology' during her scat solo. This process may not seem as powerful as Armstrong's, Ellington's, and Holiday's contributions, but Parker has subtly embedded the repertoire with a history of cultural decolonisation.

Additional moments of cultural borrowing that could arguably lead to cultural decolonisation by providing alternative narratives are the many suites of Ellington (recorded 1947–71) and the 'jazz impressions' and other non-traditional recordings of Dave Brubeck (recorded 1957–67). Both musicians had toured the world and were official cultural ambassadors for the US. The history and the cultural dynamics of their and other musicians' global tours have been recently documented (see Davenport 2009; Seghal 2008; Von Eschen 2004), but the globally influenced recordings of Ellington and Brubeck are a testament to the adaptability of jazz. For example, Ellington wrote suites that either incorporated elements from or were dedicated to regions of the world like Africa (both Liberia and Togo), England, Eurasia, the

Far East, and Latin America. Brubeck made recordings with elements from and homages to Germany, Japan, Mexico, and Turkey. Both musicians also created new music and homages to their home country. Without delving deeply into each recording, these recordings are a manifestation of the openness of jazz in addition to its adaptability. These recordings illustrate Atkins's concept of jazz being simultaneously a national and a post-national music.

Now we come to the more documented and discussed period of jazz in relationship to ideas of imperialism and self-determination. The recordings made in the late 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s embody the social issues of the time from the Civil Rights Era to the Black Power Movement. Musicians like bassist Charles Mingus, drummer Max Roach, and saxophonist Archie Shepp also incorporated issues and themes directly from the Civil Rights Movement. In his 'Fables of Faubus' (1959) and its later incarnations, Mingus criticises Arkansas governor Orval Faubus and his segregationist politics for not letting nine African-American students (known as the Little Rock Nine) attend a recently desegregated, public school in 1957. Roach references the Greensboro sit-ins on the cover of his 1960 album *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite* with a photo of three African-Americans sitting at a lunch counter. Shepp composes several pieces of music in honour of Malcolm X. And these are just the most notable examples from each musician. In addition, musicians like Cannonball Adderley, Art Blakey, Ornette Coleman, Charlie Haden and his Liberation Music Orchestra, Joe Henderson, Roland Kirk, Joe McPhee, Sonny Rollins, Pharoah Sanders, and Randy Weston record similar music with similar themes. Many of the relevant recordings of these and other musicians are included in the Discography.

John Coltrane also reflected historical moments from the Civil Rights Movement with compositions like 'Song of the Underground Railroad' (1961) and 'Alabama' (1964), homages to heroes of the freedom struggle, like Harriet Tubman, and also its casualties like the four African-American girls killed in the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama. But of a more spiritual nature, Coltrane's masterpiece *A Love Supreme* (1965) was a four-part suite that acknowledged his victory over his drug addiction and subsequent spiritual enlightenment



as a result. In the form of a letter to the album's listener, Coltrane detailed the experience and explained the intent of the recording in the liner notes:

During the year 1957, I experienced, by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening, which was to lead me to a richer, fuller, more productive life. At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music. I feel this has been granted through His grace. ALL PRAISE TO GOD ... , This album is a humble offering to Him. An attempt to say 'THANK YOU GOD'...

After *A Love Supreme* and as part of this new consciousness, Coltrane would begin to explore more freely structured music and include elements from the musics of Africa and India. His wife Alice Coltrane would take such cultural mixture further after his death by borrowing culturally from Indian, Egyptian, and other Middle Eastern philosophies and religions. Other musicians also incorporated non-Western musicians and instrumentation in their recordings. For example, guitarist John McLaughlin worked with world-renowned tabla player Zakir Hussain in their group *Shakti* starting in the mid-1970s.

Though not directly related to specific historic events, trumpeter Miles Davis would also create music that was reflective of the social changes of the time. After spending time in France recording the soundtrack to *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* [Elevator to the Gallows] (1958), Davis returned to the US with a different mind-set, as he was treated differently and more respectfully in Europe than he was in the US. He began to take artistic risks in his recordings, most notably the blues-influenced *Kind of Blue* (1959) that was very minimal in contrast to the dense harmonies of bebop and the aggressive rhythms of hard bop. A year later, Davis recorded the ethereal, flamenco-influenced *Sketches of Spain* (1960), augmented by a large ensemble arranged by Gil Evans. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Miles Davis converted his ensemble from acoustic instrumentation to a more rock-oriented instrumentation. Davis exchanged the acoustic piano and upright bass for electric bass and synthesizers with electric guitars and percussion. After seeing rock musicians like Jimi Hendrix and Sly

Stone, Davis had hoped to attract a younger audience. Davis fused rock rhythms and textures with jazz harmonies and improvisation on such recordings as *In a Silent Way* (1969) and *Bitches Brew* (1970). Many alumni from Davis's bands from this time went on to form successful fusion ensembles and make ground-breaking recordings, most notably Chick Corea's 1972 *Light as a Feather* with Return to Forever, Herbie Hancock's 1973 *Headhunters*, and Joe Zawinul's 1977 *Heavy Weather* with Weather Report. This is not the typical cultural borrowing that had happened earlier with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and Whiteman, as Corea, Hancock, and Zawinul all helped pioneer fusion with Davis. But it should be noted that these three musicians and others made music after their tenure with Davis that they might not have made before. Davis would continue to use the latest forms of technology until his death in 1991. Two of his most successful later recordings referenced the social and political struggles in South Africa: *Tutu* (1986), a homage to South African bishop (later archbishop) Desmond Tutu; and *Amandla* (1989), a Xhosa and Zulu word meaning 'power'. Davis continually borrowed from many sources, both technological and cultural.

In the 1970s, cultural destabilisation continued. Band leader and keyboardist Sun Ra had been making recordings since the 1950s. But his ideas of interstellar space travel as a metaphor for cultural disruption and evolution crystallised in his 1974 movie *Space is the Place*. Sun Ra had constructed a persona for himself based on the idea that he was originally from Saturn. His belief was that humanity did not understand its origins and was therefore out of step with its destiny. Sun Ra's ideas were an attempt at a cultural decolonisation of the mind. Mark Dery would later group Sun Ra's philosophies and others like it under the term 'Afrofuturism' (1994: 180), which combines ideas of technology and science fiction with ideas of race and magic realism. One could view both Davis's and Sun Ra's uses of technology as a gateway to another place or space. Though they may not overtly discuss the use of technology, such themes of exodus and desire to move to a new world had appeared earlier in the music like Ellington's piano concerto *New World A-Comin'* (1945), inspired by the 1943 Roi Ottley book of the same name, Eddie Harris's *Exodus to Jazz* (1961), Lee Morgan's *Search for the New*

Land (1964), and others. So Sun Ra's philosophy can be seen as an extension of an earlier theme of exodus in jazz. In the film *Space is the Place*, Sun Ra invited people to join him in his space travels by registering with his employment service. The recruitment pitch stated: 'If you find earth boring / Just the same old, same thing / C'mon, sign up / With Outer Spaceways, Inc'. Though comical here and serious elsewhere, such themes of exodus are obviously anti-imperialistic and are aimed at promoting cultural decolonisation. And starting in the 1960s before Sun Ra's invitation, many musicians formed groups and associations as an alternative to record companies and to help promote their own music; for example, the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) in Chicago, the Black Artists Group (BAG) in St Louis, the Jazz Composers Guild in New York, the Union of God's Musicians and Artists Ascension (UGMAA) in Los Angeles, and others.

The process of augmenting the conversation of jazz with new issues continued through the 1980s. Most notably, saxophonist Fred Ho drew heavily on the black freedom struggle and applied its issues and challenges to additional groups, such as Asian Americans, Latin Americans, and women. Ho not only has an extensive catalogue, but is also an accomplished author. The trend to augment the conversation continued through the 1990s with musicians like bassist William Parker and saxophonist John Zorn, both associated with the downtown scene in New York. Parker established the group Other Dimensions of Music to provide an alternative to the neo-bop young lions like the Marsalis brothers, Nicholas Payton, Joshua Redman, and others. Parker's group was firmly rooted in the free jazz tradition of Ornette Coleman and others, as opposed to the hard bop tradition of the young lions. Parker was key to establishing the Sound Unity Festival in the 1980s and later the Vision Festival beginning in 1996. Saxophonist John Zorn also widened the conversation by emphasising Jewish culture in his work, starting in the 1990s with his various incarnations of the Masada groups and the accompanying repertoire. Zorn also founded the record label Tzadik in 1995 to document his output and continually cultivate younger musicians. Zorn opened his own venue, The Stone, in 2005 to support his own output and the music of other

adventurous musicians. Parker and Zorn, both prolific authors, have borrowed from other sources in order to destabilise the norm of jazz performance. Parker's further development of free jazz and Zorn's incorporation of Jewish culture both widen, contest, and attempt to decolonise the jazz tradition as envisioned by the neo-traditional young lions since the 1980s.

It should be noted that both Marsalis brothers have reinterpreted and recorded Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* (see B. Marsalis 2002; W. Marsalis 2004). Wynton Marsalis recorded multiple works by Mingus with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra (2005). And Branford Marsalis recorded Rollins' *Freedom Suite* (2002). Plus, trumpeter Terrance Blanchard has paid tribute to Malcolm X both on the soundtrack for Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* (1992) and his own album *The Malcolm X Jazz Suite* (1993). It could therefore be argued that these young lions have recolonised and thus canonised what were originally disruptive music and themes. To be fair, all three musicians have also released adventurous original music in some way. Branford Marsalis worked with Sting and released albums by his hip-hop project Buckshot LeFonque (1994–97). Wynton Marsalis wrote and recorded the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Blood on the Fields* (1997) and the thought-provoking *From the Plantation to the Penitentiary* (2007). And Blanchard composed and recorded music inspired by the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath on three different occasions: the soundtrack to Spike Lee's documentaries *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* (2006), and *If God is Willing and Da Creek Don't Rise* (2010), and his own album *A Tale of God's Will: A Requiem for Katrina* (2007).

Venturing beyond the boundaries of jazz, it should be noted that the musical contributions of jazz musicians have not only spread around the world, but have also been sources of inspiration for non-jazz musicians. Since the late 1960s, a vibrant scene of improvisatory rock bands (known as jam bands) has flourished in the US. Bands like Blues Traveller, the Dave Mathews Band, Gov't Mule, Phish, Widespread Panic, and others all have roots in bands like the Allman Brothers, Grateful Dead, and The Jimi Hendrix Experience, which based much of their improvisatory nature on jazz. Improvisation and the openness to collaboration may be the only markers shared with jazz, but to ignore

jam bands and leave them out of a conversation of music and anti-imperialism would be short-sighted. Most of these jam bands have received little to no radio support. And though they have all have created a large repertoire of original material, their fans attend their concerts repeatedly to witness each band's exploration of the musical possibilities of their repertoire with hopes of new discoveries. Thus, jam bands may have borrowed improvisation from jazz, destabilised the usual radio-friendly, single-dependent structure of rock, and arguably decolonised the attitudes of many young people to make them open to more exploratory musical environments.

To close this examination of moments of cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation in jazz, there are three more recent examples that show that these processes continue. First, French multi-instrumentalist Michel Henritzi released the album *Keith Rowe Serves Imperialism* in 2007. The title of the album references composer Cornelius Cardew's 1974 book *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism*, criticising both John Cage and Karlheinz Stockhausen, and denouncing his involvement with the avant-garde. Similarly, Henritzi believes that the music of improvisers like English table-top guitarist Keith Rowe are non-subversive. In the album's liner notes, Henritzi criticises the idea of a recorded improvisation, arguing that once recorded, an improvisation is no longer an improvisation: 'The manufactured record [of an improvisation] is deifying the living moment of the performance into a finished work, into an object which is just feeding the market of Art'. Instead, Henritzi has taken improvisations conducted at separate times and places and assembled them into a performance, stating:

[The musicians] were all ignorant of the other one's music. But this is precisely where improvisation is taking place, just through the arbitrary collage ... We are not free with our choices. The record as an object gives us a restraint with which we must deal. The market is selling us its norms and we need the market to sell our cultural production. (2007)

Henritzi is trying to redefine (and thus decolonise) the idea of recorded improvisation. This may just be a mental exercise, but it reinforces the idea that improvisation needs to

be experienced in the moment. And once it is over, it cannot be repeated.

Another moment of cultural destabilisation (and potentially decolonisation) is Robert Glasper's Grammy win for the album *Black Radio* (2012) in 2013. This may not sound like a moment of destabilisation at first. But in spite of the fact that Glasper is a product of the jazz tradition and the album was released on a jazz record label (Blue Note), the recording won a Grammy for Best R&B Album. Granted, Glasper was working under the moniker the 'Robert Glasper Experiment' and included many R&B, hip-hop, and other non-jazz musicians on the album such as Erykah Badu, Yasiin Bey (formerly known as Mos Def), and Me'Shell Ndegéocello. But for a musician rooted in jazz to be able to cross over in 2013 and win in a non-jazz category is noteworthy. Granted, Herbie Hancock won Album of the Year in 2008 with *RIVER: the joni letters* (2007), but Glasper's cross-genre shift is more of a departure from the norm.

The final example of cultural decolonisation is the music video recently released in 2013 by bassist and singer Esperanza Spalding entitled 'We are America', which calls for the closure of the US detention facility known as Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. The music video also features other famous musicians such as Harry Belafonte, Janelle Monáe, and Stevie Wonder. The song does not appear on any of Spalding's albums and was released solely as a music video. And though more of an R&B song, Spalding's association with the greater jazz community firmly attaches 'We are America' to the jazz tradition. The song itself does not reference Guantanamo Bay, but the video features quotations regarding the facility, statistics of detainees, and its closure. Spalding repeatedly states: 'We are America / In my America / We take a stand for this' and 'Let 'em out', both phrases reinforcing the quotes in the music video.

Hopefully, the above-mentioned examples will begin a discussion surrounding cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation in jazz. Keeping West and Atkins in mind, jazz serves as a model where one can remain calm during moments of adversity, but also have multiple identities that are rooted in different ways. Recently in the *New York Times*, Herbie Hancock commented on how and why jazz keeps evolving: 'The thing that keeps jazz alive, even if it's under the radar, is that it is so free and so open to

not only lend its influence to other genres, but to borrow and be influenced by other genres. That's the way it breathes' (2013: AR25). The more recent moments in jazz of borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation seen in the work of Henritzi, Gasper, and Spalding are in agreement with Hancock's statement. And the many moments from W.C. Handy to John Zorn also fit into Hancock's statement. The necessity is to keep breathing, and the breath or exchange is the balance between borrowing and being borrowed, destabilising and being destabilised, and decolonising and being decolonised.

The title of this work 'Come on and Let's Get Free', is borrowed from Funkadelic's 'Good to Your Earhole' on *Let's Take it to the Stage* (1975). In many ways, funk bands in the 1970s continued many of the same ideas of cultural destabilisation found in jazz. The idea of dancing as a way to 'get free' is not too far from the previously discussed ideas. But the real message of these moments of cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation is best stated in the lyrics of the title track of Funkadelic's 1970 album *Free Your Mind and Your Ass Will Follow*: 'Freedom is free of the need to be free'. The projects of anti-imperialism and decolonisation and their corresponding agendas could not be more accurately expressed. Though not the first to say this, trumpeter Nicholas Payton recently reminded the readers of his blog that the word 'jazz' is a pejorative term that should be avoided and is not reflective of the music and its tradition:

'Jazz' is an oppressive colonialist slave term and I want no parts of it. If jazz wasn't a slave, why did Ornette [Coleman] try to free it? Jazz is not music, it is an idea that hasn't served any of us well. It saddens me most that some of my friends can't see that. (2011)

The word and its history are problematic. But it may be appropriate that the word and its history embody the very cultural and historical struggle that produced the music. Hopefully, these and other moments of cultural borrowing, destabilisation, and decolonisation in jazz (or whatever one calls it) can be seen as progress toward the goal of getting free, and maybe even getting beyond the need to be free.

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## Language, Translation, and Imperialism

### Introduction: The linguist in the shell

The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it. (Marx 1845)

Karl Marx's ultimate 'philosophical mission' was, indeed, to help reduce inequality and suffering caused by large-scale transformations in economic production in the wake of the industrial and scientific revolutions of the long 19th century. To replace 'philosophers' by 'linguists' within Marx's apposite statement provides a pretty accurate assessment of the current state-of-the-art in thinking about questions of language. But can linguists help to change the world? Is there any currency in the idea of a 'linguistic mission' to foster equality and social justice? It is telling about the state of the world (academic or otherwise) that linguists – just as 19th-century philosophers (and those of the 20th and 21st centuries) – suffer heavily from anti-social tendencies. This widely unexplored question, although not the purpose of this essay, nonetheless helps remind us of ways in which the institutional sanctification of academic discourse prevents linguists from effectively agitating for positive social change.

Post-Marxian critical theorist Herbert Marcuse (1964) famously attributed revolutionary potential *only* to the marginalised and downtrodden. Therefore, it would seem that writing anything about imperialism and language – with most of us well-established and well-adjusted, or simply too indifferent to care about the fate of the world – is pointless. Besides, modern academia is so fragmented into thousands of knowledge tribes (cf. Becher and Trowler 2001) that this fact alone plays into the hand of the powerful few who rule the world by dint of military, economic, and financial might. Ways to circumvent this quandary might be to call for intellectual class warfare: (*Linguists of the world unite!*) or to succumb to a quasi-taoist social-democratic reflex: *Let's meditate and then perhaps discuss the options!* There might be, however, a tiny glimmer of hope in preventing our linguists from constantly retreating into their shells. And this glimmer would attempt to firmly relate linguistic inquiry to questions of inequality, hegemony, and domination.

### Discourse in the world

Language is much more than a simple tool of communication. Only a small minority of linguists *presuppose* an ontological connection between 'language use and unequal relations of power' (Fairclough 1989: 1). Most linguists like to divorce language from its historical, sociocultural and above all political-economic roots. The generic term 'language' itself already constitutes part of the problem, for language cannot speak by itself. It is put to use by speakers who are caught up in historically situated and largely unequal relations of power. People rarely use language consciously, nor are they able to speak with their own 'unique' voice. Language never fully 'belongs', it is populated with the 'voices' of other speakers; in other words, it is shot through with direct or indirect references to what others have uttered before (Kristeva 1986). But speakers do not only use language by means of intertextual reference. Language is a site of ideological struggle, for 'the ideological becoming of a human being' constitutes 'the process of selectively assimilating the words of others' (Bakhtin 1981: 134). Language is in the world. It is there for us to be *appropriated* in order to pursue our – often unconsciously held – ideological interests.

The onset of institutionalised positivist science from the 19th century onwards, in addition to the ever-increasing fragmentation of scholarship, has not been conducive to a self-reflective and critical engagement with the ways in which imperialism as a manifestation of dominant power relations shapes language and vice versa. For the linguists in the shell, language is not a predominantly social activity. They shield it away from the world; they clip its wings and incarcerate it within a prison of rhetorical and grammatical rules. They conform to the dogma of objective rationality and, in their quest for sanitised scientific knowledge, they overlook language as a force of imperial power. Generations of linguists – sociolinguists, semanticists, and so forth – have consciously ignored this communicative force. After all, who wants to bite the hand of the institutional master that feeds them? In the late 19th century, modern linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1983/1916) theorised language as a decontextualised and abstract system of interrelated signs; whilst in the mid-20th century, Noam Chomsky (1957) theorised language as the interplay of speakers' knowledge of grammatical rules (competence) in relation to their linguistic output in real-life situations (performance). Chomsky's cognitive essentialism strictly separates language and society and thus still has a detrimental effect on attempts to construct a critical theory of language (but for a counter-example, see Lecerle 2006).

The preconditions of semantic essentialism – a decontextualised theory of meaning and language – can be sought in the Western imperial project of modernity. In its zealous strife for popularised enlightened reason and disciplinary conformism, modernity ultimately aims to triumph over the anarchic outgrowth of localised and thus alternative modes of knowing, speaking, and writing. Today, a totalitarian vision of cultural, economic, and technological mastery over linguistic resources lies at the heart of the prevalent neo-liberal orthodoxy of governance. In one of the most cited passages of contemporary scholarship, Foucault (1981: 52) laid the ground for what has by now become a truly hegemonic notion in thinking on language in the world, by suggesting that:

in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain

number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.

Foucault's conception of language as a form of discourse is a tacit dig at the linguist in the shell, who insists on a positivist separation of grammatical competence and real-life linguistic performance. The ambiguous term 'discourse' nonetheless allows for a more holistic view on language as a socially grounded activity, and its etymological origins – from the Latin *discurrere* – connote a semblance of fuzziness and diffusion rather than clarity and convergence. Discourse as a mode of speaking and writing is indeed a precarious notion. It suggests movement and stillness, knowing and ignorance, sound and silence, language and its absence. Whether discourse is seen as a discontinuous set of material and linguistic practices à la Foucault, or as a more or less continuous 'flow of knowledge through time' (Jäger 2001), discourse structures knowledge and is structured by it. Yet most importantly, both conceptions of discourse epitomise its central role in the historical struggle over human destiny, authority, and material resources. Discourse is truly *anarchic* and thus, since time immemorial, has been a crucial instrument of social control and by extension of the construction and maintenance of empires.

Language and translation are manifestations of discourse. Most work in mainstream linguistics simply ignores the perseverance of inequality, hegemony, and domination. Linguistic and social-theoretical research indeed tends to eschew a rigid interrogation of the inter-dependency of imperialism, knowledge, and discourse, given that such questioning inevitably promotes value judgments on entrenched social hierarchies. A further weakness in the study of discourse constitutes the conscious avoidance of political-ideological bias by a persistent emphasis on blurry concepts such as modernity and its role in the construction of empire. Perhaps closest to an engaged study of discourse are the efforts by scholars working in the field of critical discourse analysis (e.g. van Dijk 2011), an academic movement which emerged during the 1980s with the aim to uncover underlying relations of power and ideology in language use. Critical discourse analysis largely draws on continental social theory

(e.g. Bourdieu 1991) and contextualised interpretations of grammar (e.g. Halliday 1994). Unfortunately, however, these intellectual efforts serve no other additional purpose than to raise awareness of unequal power relations among a small educated elite. In view of such epistemological shortcomings, the entanglement of imperialism *with/in* discourse will now be illuminated through a brief account of language and translation, which can then be fruitfully merged with an account of reified and post-imperialist discourse.

### Imperialism *in* language and translation

Imperialism manifests itself through processes of communication. Imperialism enforces and naturalises relations of dominance and hegemony. Hegemonic relationships tend to firmly remain in place even after their power base has been removed. Most languages of colonised cultures, for instance, apart from having been installed as languages of government *after* colonisation, have never fully recovered from a stigma of being 'deficient' in terms of their powers of expression in order to face the challenges of the (post-)modern world. Nineteenth-century linguists, subconsciously enthralled by Western hegemonic intellectualism, gladly classified African languages as exhibiting 'feminine' characteristics in contrast to the 'male' and hence, as they thought, superior Western languages such as German, English, or French (Irvine 2001). Standard languages, to be sure, have 'high symbolic value' simply by dint of their connection to cultural and political elites (Foley 1997: 409). Imperialism in discourse is indeed to a large extent a 'gendered' phenomenon where cultures and nationalities are highly sexualised (MacDonald 1994). By 'othering' the unknown, these linguists perpetuated the myth of ideological and, not least, racial superiority between the West and the rest. Against this background it becomes clear that research on imperialism in discourse cannot merely trace origins, contextualise geopolitical developments, or pinpoint ideological battles.

Research on imperialism in language and translation needs to map dominant modes of knowledge pertinent to specific groups across time and space. Accounting for the dominance of English and some other languages, for instance, necessitates the tracing

of discourses that sustain this dominance. In line with the evolution of scientific thought and methods, certain discourses on madness and social deviance, especially from the 16th century onwards, have increasingly stigmatised marginal groups (Foucault 1988). Likewise, intellectual discourses on language and communication, especially the ominous equation of language and national character by the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1966/1787), have cultivated an exclusionary ideology of language as the property of privileged, mostly nationally defined, social classes. Just as any language carries social, cultural, symbolic, and economic capital (Bourdieu 1991), so language can be (mis)used as an instrument of exclusion and inclusion, of persuasion and dissuasion, or of clarification and deceit. The fact that every language is closely tied to individual and collective identities renders it of utmost importance to political and corporate decisionmakers in the (post-)modern world. Linguistic domination is strongly tied to cultural hegemony, an aspect often overlooked in imperialism research. Educational efforts to spread the English language are often underpinned by short-term political-economic and long-term ideological objectives. In the 1980s, for instance, the head of the British Council, the UK's central promoter of English as a foreign language, maintained that 'Britain's real black gold is not North Sea Oil but the English language' (quoted in Phillipson 1992: 48–49). Anglo-American linguistic imperialists – even if they might not always be conscious of their own imperial mindset – will do everything to spread the value of possibly its most crucial tool of imperial domination: the English language.

Studying English as a language of empire has a long intellectual tradition. Many leading linguists, however, play down the threat of English language imperialism (e.g. Crystal 2004; Graddol 2006). It is fair to say that much of what has been said in recent years about power and discourse has been blighted by a conformist reflex to provide an either 'post-modern' and thus relativistic image of cultural domination (e.g. Derrida 1976), and simultaneously a culture-theoretical impulse which has nothing to say about the real suffering linguistic imperialism has caused (e.g. Tomlinson 1991). After all, it does not need a sophisticated analysis to realise that the neglect of indigenous and minority languages

in materially deprived parts of the world can be clearly traced back to economic interests (cf. Ngugi 1986). However, some useful suggestions are made to undercut the dominance of only few major languages. Phillipson (1992; 2009) has embarked on an influential and long-term research programme to combat the 'linguistic imperialism' of English. Furthermore, ecolinguistics (Mühlhäusler 1995) is a growing subdiscipline with the aim to defend languages from 'linguicide' (Ngugi 2009). Many sociolinguists explore issues of language planning and language politics, practices that are prime examples for the appropriation of discourse for political-ideological ends. An even more obvious example in this regard is the study of historical discourse in totalitarian regimes such as Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany where the 'correct' use of language is prescribed and rigorously enforced through cultural and literary censorship (Hutton 1999), a phenomenon which also applies to contemporary extremist politics (Wodak and Richardson 2012). It is telling that totalitarian control places particular emphasis on cultural and literary contact with the outside world, and this contact is mainly maintained through the sociocultural act of translation (Baumgarten 2009).

Translation as a mediating phenomenon is an act of linguistic and cross-cultural communication. Translation has been theorised as inhabiting an 'in-between space' of linguistic contact with its own characteristics, as it is always caught in the tension between a so-called 'source' and 'target' cultural pole (Bhabha 1994). The source/target dichotomy has come under much scrutiny in the wake of post-structural theory, however, as upon closer inspection it is far from clear how to precisely define a specific culture, a language, or a supposedly faithful relationship between a 'source' and its 'target text'. It is most crucial to conceive of translation as an act which by definition occurs within asymmetrical relations of power. Such relations are sustained through social hierarchies and different types of Bourdieusian capital, resources which are partly predetermined and partly battled out between the actors involved in any act of translation. Mainstream Anglo-American publishers, for example, have accrued such a massive amount of sociocultural prestige and economic capital, based largely on the communicative hegemony of English, that this provides them with almost

monopolistic powers to control the flow of translations in the global book market (cf. Apter 2001). Yet the people involved at the heart of the process, the translators themselves, largely remain 'invisible' agents of cross-cultural exchange (Venuti 1995). In addition, naked statistics on translations between English-language literature and other languages are indicative of unequal cultural relations, given that 50 per cent of all books worldwide are apparently translated from English and only 6 per cent into English (Grossman 2010: 50).

Linguistic domination leaps over into linguistic hegemony when people internalise the power and ideology of a prevailing discourse to such an extent that they forget their own subjection to its manipulative force. Many Portuguese academics, to give an example, when translating their own work into English, tend to self-censor their efforts by subconsciously adapting their work to entrenched hegemonic norms of English academic discourse. In this way, a more flowery and digressive discourse style, traditionally rooted in Portuguese-language humanities research, is eradicated through the process of translation, whilst the translations themselves become absorbed into the global hegemony of English-language academic discourse. Whilst this surely happens to the majority of academic self-translation into English, this discursive phenomenon constitutes a constant danger of 'epistemicide' through translation (Bennett 2007). It appears in fact more important to scrutinise such communicative undercurrents, in true analogy to Gramsci's theory of hegemony, than more obvious examples of linguistic 'manipulation'. After all, the underlying processes of knowledge exchange, rather than their linguistic surface materialisations, help to sustain or subvert existing relations of power. Moreover, Foucault's insight on the suppression of the anarchic proliferation of voices in the world proves nothing less than the inherent – and most often subconscious – conformism of discourse participants.

### Discursive reification and post-imperialist discourse

Discourse is perhaps the most decisive tool in processes of capitalist globalisation and in turn of reification. The capitalist revolution since around the late 18th century has

furthered an ongoing reification, or commodification, of human and material relations. In line with the positivistic evolution of science and its technological offshoots, this commodification of social relations bears decisive consequences for the way patterns of language and communication develop. The English language has become the world's 'lingua franca', having replaced French during the ascent of the British Empire in the 19th century and especially the evolving US-American Empire during the 20th century. In the context of social change, Fairclough (1992: 200–224) speaks of the (pseudo-) democratisation, commodification, and technologisation of discourse. And there seems no way out of this quandary. Discourse is produced and reproduced in what Bourdieu (1991) calls the 'linguistic market', and the struggle over resources and interests is decided by the forms of capital – most evidently economic ones – at the disposal of discourse participants.

Since discourse research largely relies on a post-modern ethics which first and foremost rejects conceptual binarisms and politically engaged research, the crucial problematics of imperialism have largely been sidelined. This is all the more deplorable as imperialism, one of the prime forces of domination, is a strong transformative force which shapes historical destinies and identities. In this context, popular imperialism is at its strongest in education, owing to its authority to captivate the imagination of the youngest and ideologically most vulnerable subjects in society. A popular poem entitled *Foreign Children* from the high times of the British Empire begins as follows (Stevenson 1907, quoted in MacDonald 1994: 9):

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,  
Little frosty Eskimo,  
Little Turk or Japanese,  
Oh, don't you wish that you were me?

This is possibly the strongest subconscious internalisation of empire's authority that can be achieved through the medium of discourse. However, such a 'language of power' not only 'hails' its receivers through immediate ideological impact, but through a persistent spinning of dominant networks of perception and understanding by means of repetition and re-publication. Such a discourse congeals into hegemonic forms of Bourdieusian capital which are for the most

part not consciously reflected by those subject to their powers. In other words, ideological supremacism can be seen as one of the prime communicative modes of English language imperialism. Even apparently critical voices during the high times of British imperialism, such as Mary Kingsley (1898), whose travel writing communicated scepticism towards the empire, nonetheless abound in references to an unspoken white master race.

On the whole, the history of linguistic imperialism should not be separated from the economic contexts of its inception. Modern technology is increasingly setting the agenda for how we communicate. Communication is increasingly morphing from traditional 'face-to-face' interactions into one-to-many or many-to-many communication platforms (Jin 2013). Anti-imperialist discourse can criticise and resist the homogenising practices of English language education. And it is also in education and in the social margins of the lower classes where resistance can flourish. It is in education where dominant cultural, symbolic, and above all economic interests are perpetuated. Anti-imperialist discourse as an effective site of resistance to domination and hegemony is unlikely to originate from the powerful. At the same time, however, large parts of dominated groups and populations tend not to be conscious of their domination, as they are entrapped, so to speak, within the dominant logic of discourse. Suggestions for a 'discourse ethics' whereby, within an 'ideal speech situation', only the better justified argument shall win, have already been put forward in the 1980s (Habermas 1985), yet without any consequences for 'discourse in the world'.

## Conclusion

It is clear that 'imperial globalisation' (Phillipson 2009: 15) intends to create a one-language-fits-all world. What is crucial is to see that modern imperialism is capitalist and that it is driven by a dual strategy of political control and wealth accumulation (Harvey 2005: 132). These ideological activities, nourished further by the neo-liberal forces of 'techno-science', are the key determinations of modern imperialist discourse (Pellizoni and Yllönen 2012). The linguists in the shell, if they want to recognise these phenomena at all, would do better to change dominant perceptions rather than only attempt to interpret them.

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## Music, Imperialism, and Anti-Imperialism

### Introduction

This essay explores the opposing uses to which musical forms are put within three key historic and contemporary zones which span the 18th and 21st centuries.

These zones designate imperial force, as it is embodied by Britain and America, as well as the oppressed communities of the heartlands of imperialism, in African America, and dissenting and dissident Britain; imperial agency, such as Chile and Israel, as well as the interior, subaltern, and exterior zones of exile, through which resistance takes place, particularly in the instance of Palestine, and the zones of imperial exploitation and resistance, in Kenya, Venezuela, Palestine, Vietnam, and India.

This exploration takes place through the interweaving of thematic concerns, exemplary musicians, musical forms, and modes of practice, inclusive of hymnody, folk, reggae and evangelical country blues, national anthems and would-be national anthems, jazz, Indian classical, electronica, and hip hop; and key historical moments and movements over an 11-part structure, in which themes of dissent, silence, the border, citationality, memory and the archive, drum culture, reciprocity, and uprising are elaborated.

Through this approach, the essay describes the complex and contradictory uses to which

music is put in the formation of the British and American empires, and the struggles of groups such as the Mau Mau, the Black Panthers, the peoples of the Occupied Territories of Palestine, the revolution of Venezuela, and the cultural project of the Communist Party of India.

### Isaac Watts: hymnody, empire, and voices of dissent.

The publication in 1707 of English hymnodist Isaac Watts's songbook *The Psalms & Hymns of Isaac Watts* (aka *Isaac Watts' Hymns & Spiritual Songs*) (Watts 2004/1707) and the publication the same year of the *Union with England Act* (Estates of Parliament 2014/1707), through which the kingdom of Great Britain was established, mark a founding intersection of music in the service of imperialism.

This intersection is grounded by an emphasis on the idea, present in the Acts of Union's synonym of divine and temporal rule, symbolised in its adoption of the crosses of Saints George and Andrew as the official emblem 'in all Flags, Banners, Standards, and Ensigns both at Sea and Land' (2004/1707: xxv), and noted in Watts in *The Psalms of David, Imitated in the Language of the New Testament and Apply'd to the Christian State and Worship* (1717), of Britain as a divine elect. Watts's centrality in the formation of this intersection of music, scripture, and imperialism is documented in Hull (2008).

This intersection is characterised, through Watts, by a break with the idea present in hymnody since the publication in 1562 of Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins's *The Whole Book of Psalms Collected into English Metre* (1812), that hymnody was the sole practice of the clergy and that its songs comprised the setting to music of Biblical texts: in his *Psalms and Bibles* (2009/1707) Watts presented hymnody as a secular writing practice that was inclusive of the use of subjectivity.

It is, however, unlikely that the subjectivities Watts had in mind were those of the African slaves upon which the expansion of the British Empire was dependent: Watts's rationale for their location 'in the confines of hell' was 'because it pleased thee, whose counsels are unsearchable' (Watts 1812/ 1723: 173).

Nevertheless, the adoption of Watts's ideas on hymnody by African slaves in the British Empire's North American colonies and in the subsequent 'nascent' (Washington 1786), 'infant' (Washington 1788) American Empire gave Watts's idea historic force: Boyer

(2000/1995: 6,7) traces documentation of slaves' independent use of Watts's hymns to 1755. The violence of slavery and segregation ensured that subsequent expressions of dissent, in the negro spiritual of the 19th century and the gospel forms of the 20th century, were governed by song writing and performance strategies cohered by what Brown (1953) describes as 'oblique' forms of musical expression.

This allusive, figurative use of language, particularly in its deployment for the founding of black pedagogic institutions, such as the Fisk University by the Fisk Jubilee Singers in, for example, *Great Camp Meeting* (aka *There's a Great Camp Meeting in the Promised Land*) (1997/1909), and its deployment for a global working-class solidarity in the performance of the form by Paul Robeson, in *There's No Hiding Place* (2008/1937) serves as evidence of the subversive use of a musical form compelled by an imperialist intent.

### William Blake: *Jerusalem* and England upside down

Music is the medium through whose forms imperialist and anti-imperialist alike articulate their mutual antagonisms of interest, sometimes through the same song. Consider the case of William Blake's poem *Jerusalem* (Blake 1998/1810).

Blake relocates Jerusalem in England. This relocation designates a scriptural, biblical Jerusalem of the world before its destruction and reconstruction, described by John of Patmos, and presided over by a Satanic presence (Rev. 21: 7,8), which is present in Blake's anti-war poetry in, for example, *Milton: Book the First* (Blake 2008/1804) as the 'dark satanic death' instituted through military and religious conflict (119) and the 'dark satanic mills' of *Jerusalem* (Blake 2008/1810: 95), which Blake historian Erdman describes as figurative of a critique of militarism (Erdman 1991: 396).

*Jerusalem*, in its orchestral version by Hubert Parry (1916) and Edward Elgar (1922) nonetheless found an advocate in King George V (Dent and Whittaker 2002: 89): *Jerusalem's* subsequent use in the BBC's second *Empire Day Royal Command Concert* broadcast in 1938 (Richards 2001: 172) and its presence as a regular feature of the BBC's *Last Night of the Proms* comprise the most resonant examples of what Crocco describes as an erroneous perception of Blake's work as that of an imperialist in the



service of the British Empire (Crocco 2014: 184, 185).

On the other hand, Mark Stewart's version of *Jerusalem* (Stewart and MAFFIA 1983) uses post-colonial, Jamaican dub process, and English post-punk performance technique to fracture and distort a recording of Elgar's orchestration of *Jerusalem*, through which Stewart disempowers the affirmation of empire present in Elgar's composition. Stewart's fragmented, reversed reading of the stanzas of Blake's poem creates a shattered figuration of a broken, post-imperial Britain, a sense of 'England's green and pleasant lands turned upside down' (Whitson and Whittaker 2013: 86). Stewart's version of *Jerusalem* thus uses an imperialist rendition of Blake's poem to restore Blake's intent to its context of anti-imperial dissent.

### Silence I: Salim Joubran, *Hatikvah*, Israel, America

The function of music in the affirmation of empire is twofold: to sonify the aspirations and presence of imperialism, and to silence, if not subsume into its sonic presence, the dissenting sonic voices of the conquered. However, in the context of the mutuality of support between Israel and the post-Second World War realisation of George Washington's nascent, infant American imperialism, *Hatikvah* (Imber 1878), the national anthem of Israel, performs the silencing function of imperialist music, against which the performance of silence can sometimes function as an articulation of dissent.

Such was the case in the refusal of the Israel Supreme Court's sole Arab judge, Salim Joubran, to sing *Hatikvah* with his colleagues in a public event marking the retirement of Supreme Court chief justice Dorit Beinisch. Joubran's silence signalled a reversal of the relation of the song to silence.

*Hatikvah* had, in its performance in 1945 by survivors of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp on the day of the Allied liberation (BBC 1945) rendered, through sound, the failure of the Nazis to force an absolute silence on Jewish presence: *Hatikvah*, in this context, functioned in opposition to silence.

In 2004 *Hatikvah* was made the national anthem of the State of Israel. In this new context the song exists both as that which historically functioned against silence, and as that which also performs an advocacy of silence,

that of a vocal Arab subjectivity in the expression of Israeli national presence. Here is the 'essential access' (Fein 2012) prohibited by the song's lyrics: 'As long as Jewish spirit/ Yearns deep in the heart/With eyes turned East/Looking towards Zion/Our hope is not yet lost/The hope of two millennia/To be a free people in our land/The land of Zion and Jerusalem' (Imber 1787).

By making present a Palestinian silence in the song's performance, and thus performing a silence in the song which makes of the song a song of silence, a silent *Hatikvah*, Joubran extended *Hatikvah*'s historical opposition to silence to the very Palestinians whom the song, in its function as a national anthem, renders silent. By means of silence, Joubran's performance thus extends into the 21st century the intent of the 1945 Belsen survivors' performance: to affirm the presence of a people against attempts at their annihilation.

But Joubran's silence also serves as a counterpoint to a second historical silence, one which brings us back to the question of silence and its role in imperialism. Chomsky (1989; 1999/1983) identifies a silence in US political and media culture toward Israel's territorial expansion and the corresponding conduct of the Israeli military toward Palestinians. This silence, Chomsky writes, comprises 'an apologetics about the crimes of one's own state and its clients' (Chomsky 1989: 282). Its effect, in Israel, is to make possible further violence. In the US this silence serves to obscure from the American public, whose taxes ensure the continuity of this violence, both its scale and its cost (Chomsky 1989: 293; 1999/1983: 49).

### Silence II: Victor Jara: Pinochet, memory, oblivion

In the case of Chilean music against the agencies of US imperialism, the secrecy with which the latter secured its interests in Chile, inclusive of its facilitating the overthrow of the democratically elected Allende Government, documented in Kornbuh (2004) and Dinges (2004), functioned as the modality through which the Chilean military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet exerted its powers of silence.

In the Pinochet regime's murder of musician and theatre director Victor Jara, and its imprisonment and enforced exile of musicians and poets (e.g. Inti Illimani, Angel

Parras, Patricio Manns, and Quilapayún, whose work comprised both univocal support for Allende and the Pan-Latin Americanism of the Nueva Cancion movement), there was an investment in secrecy which was concomitant with that of the White House.

However, whereas the White House articulated this investment through the labyrinthine paper trail of transmissions documented in *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* (Kornbuh 2004), Pinochet expressed his investment through his antipathy to and subsequent censure of Nueva Cancion artists. This investment was characterised by Pinochet's attempts at secreting the sound of the Nueva Cancion's opposition in the noise of torture and the silence of death. The legacy of the relation between the Chilean expression of US imperialism and dissenting Chilean music is thus a microcosm of the broader legacy of American imperialism in Chile.

This legacy is one of silence, identified as such by exiled musician Horacio Salinas, one of the founders of Inti Illimani. Salinas (in Manz 1999: 4) located this silence in the collective memory of the half-a-million Chileans who experienced torture by the Pinochet regime. For Salinas, the memory of this mass trauma had yet to undergo catharsis, and was present only in the silence of memory. The problem for musicians in post-fascist Chile was thus one of speaking to and allowing for the expression of this trauma, which remained as silence precisely because it was too painful to exist as sound (ibid.).

With no small irony, Salinas noted that these reflections occurred to him during a 1999 performance by Inti Illimani at the National Stadium of Chile on the group's return from exile. Pinochet had used the stadium as a mass detention centre after his military coup. Jose Paredes Marquez, the first soldier to be charged with Jara's assassination, confirmed in 2009 that the stadium was the site of Jara's murder.

Paredes's confession to his role in Jara's death in 2009 (Morales 2009) marked the beginning of the end of Chilean military secrecy surrounding Jara's death. The indictment in 2012 of a further eight soldiers might be viewed as the beginning of the catharsis Salinas had hoped for ten years earlier, if not the restoration to justice of sound, that of the music and ideals of Jara and the Nueva Cancion movement.

These indictments certainly mark the triumph of memory, that of music over

forgetting, in the rescue of Jara and the Nueva Cancion from what journalist Ramona Wadi called Pinochet's 'hope for oblivion' (Wadi 2013: 4), a term which might also describe the implementation of forgetting through the silencing of musicians.

### Pham Tuyên: borderless music

Music against imperialism crosses national borders designated by imperialism and articulates an affinity of struggle against oppression. The anti-imperialist song functions as a space of connection and solidarity via the valorisation of a people through their political leaders. For example, Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Viet Minh independence movement and architect of the victory of the North Vietnamese against both France and the US, was the figure through whom a unity of political identification was established between Chile and Vietnam, in Victor Jara's *The Right to Live in Peace – a Song of Comrade Ho Chi Minh* (1971).

The Plastic Ono Band's *Give Peace a Chance* (1969) functioned as a catalyst between American folk music and Vietnamese liberation music. Pham Tuyên, founder of the Vietnam National Academy of Music and one of Vietnam's pre-eminent composers, many of whose 600-plus songs voiced Vietnam's aspirations for independence during the country's defence against French and US incursions, recalled seeing American folk singer Pete Seeger lead a massed audience through a rendition of *Give Peace a Chance* on a television broadcast of the momentous anti-war event 'Moratorium to End the War' in Washington DC. In a 2008 interview, Tuyên described being so affected by the song and Seeger's performance that he wrote *Play Music for Our Dear American Friends!* (1972), and dedicated the song to Seeger (Norton and Kutschke 2013: 105).

This was no small compliment. Tuyên's songs made an indelible imprint on Vietnamese consciousness. His composition *Hanoi Dien Bien Phu in the Air* (1972) served as an aid to morale in the face of Hanoi's bombing by the US in December 1972.

The bombing, a protracted 12-day attempt aimed at making the Vietnamese submit, deepened their resolve. In a 2012 interview, Tuyên said the song was 'strong and resolute to remind people that the Vietnamese people were determined to win. ... The song echoed throughout the city despite the tense situation. Our people in the south said that Hanoi

sang while fighting and the U.S would be defeated. And yes, the U.S had to retreat the following day' (Lan 2012: 2).

Tuyên's composition *If Only Uncle Ho was Here on the Day of Victory* (written, recorded, and broadcast on 28 April 1975 on a Voice of Vietnam newscast), marked the defeat of the US's South Vietnamese allies and the official cessation of the Vietnam War.

### **Burning Spear: citation, Slavery Days**

In music against imperialism citation functions as an aid against imperialism's annihilating forces of forgetting by which histories of resistance are erased from popular memory. Through citation, a song, a line in a song, becomes present in another song, in the voice of another singer, in the absence of its author; and the memory of resistance carried by music against imperialism thereby crosses the spatio-temporal borders of imperial demarcation.

For example, Jones (2005/1941: 41) recounts that former African-American slave Lucy Adams, 104 years old 'and unable to control her memory', would sing fragments of songs: 'Her favourite was one she said her grandfather had sung: '... Keep your lamp trimmed and burning, for your work is almost done'. By 1941, when Jones interviewed Adams, this fragment had comprised a popular gospel song, *Keep your Lamp Trimmed and Burning*, recorded by African-American evangelist William 'Blind Willie' Johnson (1929). Johnson's song and an earlier version, *Let Every Lamp be Burning Bright*, written by Euro-American hymnodist Franklin E. Belden and published in the songbook *The Seventh Day Adventist Hymn and Tune Book for use in Divine Worship*, in 1886, when Adams was in her 30s, may have been the song Adams recalled her grandfather singing.

Johnson's refrain, 'the work is almost done' (Johnson 1929), is given apocalyptic expression in a 1956 version of the song by Reverend Gary Davis. That Davis sings 'this whole world is almost done' serves as an example of the oblique song-writing strategy referenced in Brown (1953), by which the desire for the absolute end of the work of slaves and their descendants in Johnson's recording and the world of slavery and segregation in Davis's version are rendered implicitly.

On the other hand, the repetition and difference of Johnson's line in Jamaican vocal group (latterly a solo artist) Burning Spear's

*Zion Higher* (1971) relocates 'heaven's journey', the metaphysical trajectory of Johnson's song, to the terrestrial planes of Africa:

Awake, Zion I, awake  
Awake and trim your lamp  
for I want to go  
to the land  
where the milk and honey flow.

(Burning Spear 1971)

Zion, in Spear's subsequent songs (e.g. *Red, Green and Gold* [1975]) functions as the interchangeable name of Africa. Spear's citation of Johnson's line, in *Zion Higher*, thus grounds the space of post-imperialism in the non-metaphysical, historical-material world.

Burning Spear's oeuvre also designates the beginning, in African diasporic music against imperialism, of an explicit reference to slavery as a question of historical memory. Spear begins his song *Slavery Days* (1975b) with a question: 'Do you remember the days of slavery?' The plea (to the listener as much to himself) with which Spear ends, 'Try and remember, please remember', makes the song an injunction against forgetting the transatlantic trade on which British imperialism was founded and through which the US 'infant empire' was realised.

Burning Spear's sustained engagement with the legacies of imperialism (including his name, which is the English translation of Jomo, the Kikuyu forename of Mau Mau leader and first president of independent Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta) and present in his earliest recording, *Door Peeper* (1969), prefigures that of *The Wailers' Soul Rebels* (1970), Fela Kuti and the Africa 70 with Ginger Baker's *Why Black Man Dey Suffer* (1971), and Sonny Okosun's *Fire in Soweto* (1978). Okuseinde and Olubomehin (2011) suggest that the lingering euphoria of independence may have been a contributory factor in Kuti and Okosun's late, but nonetheless vital, engagement with imperialism's reverberations.

However, Burning Spear's citational namesake Jomo Kenyatta was instrumental in suppressing the legacy of the Mau Mau and its heroes (see Durrani 2006: 15), and this was a major contributory factor in the deferral of Kenya's engagement with its own role in the defeat of British imperialism. In comparison to the wealth of songs composed during the Mau Mau rebellion waged against the British between 1922 and 1963 (documented in Clough [1998]; Durrani [2006]; Kinyatti [2009/2001];

Njogu and Maupeu [2007]; Pugliese [2007]), the number of similarly themed recordings made since colonialism is relatively low. Two examples are Wanjau with the University Orchestra's *The Late (Marehemu) J.M Kariuku Pt.1* (1975) and Jabali Afrika's *Deedan Kimathi* (2013).

The simultaneity of memory and its suppression contained in the name 'Burning Spear' thus suggests that the relation of music to imperialism may be one of contradiction, in which is present the co-existence of opposing, yet nonetheless productive, meanings.

### The 1857 Revolt and the Indian People's Theatre Association: the archive and the preservation of memory

The Indian Revolt of 1857 is regarded in Marx, Engels, and Joshi, as India's first national armed insurrection against British colonial rule. Despite its defeat by the British, it succeeded in creating a unity of purpose across India's ethnic, linguistic, and religious divides, and in developing affiliations in the international anti-imperialist struggle (Engels [1858]; Joshi [1994; 2014/1954; 2014/1957]; Marx [1857a; 1857b; 1857c; 1857d]).

Joshi observes that while British documentation of the revolt is plentiful, there is no corresponding Indian record (Joshi 1994: ix). Joshi's anthology *1857 in Folk Songs* serves as a counter-historical document in whose songs the British imperial presence is named Farangi, 'the foreign usurper', and is the subject of an incendiary 'burning hatred' (xvi).

The book commemorates the revolt through songs from the key locations in which the revolt took place (Delhi and its neighbouring vicinity, Oudh, and Rajasthan), and through songs that honour key leaders of the revolt such as Laxmi Bai, the Rani of Jhansen, and Kunwar Singh. The nature of the imperial violence that characterised the revolt is also recalled in these songs. The following untitled passage on Bai documents the British lynching of Indians:

Fell the trees,  
Commanded the Rani of Jhansi  
Lest the Farangi hang  
Our soldiers on them  
[...]  
So that, in the hot sun  
They may have no shade.

(quoted in Joshi 1994: 61)

The following verse, from *The Battle Of Gangi*, documents Singh's first insurgency and also the finality of Indian hostility toward British rule.

Fire no more shots, oh Baba Kunwar Singh  
The Farngis are routed  
Oh Rama  
The Firanji's are finished  
Oh Baba Kunwar Singh  
Fire no more shots!

(quoted in Joshi 1994: 84)

The book thus functions as an archive of the revolt, comprising Indian, anti-imperialist expressions of the beginning of a new 'tradition' (Joshi 2014/1957: viii) of insurgency, of national, armed insurrection. That these anti-imperialist expressions take place through songs and are restored to public memory as songs suggests that the book also functions as an archive of expressions of a tradition of Indian anti-imperialist music.

The songs can also be regarded as an archive of the memory of defeat, through which the memory of imperial violence can constitute a galvanising force. Joshi writes, 'when the modern nationalist movement emerged and began rallying the mass of the people during the 1920s, the memory of the 1857 terror was recalled to warn the Indian people to get ready to face the worst' (212).

There is an autobiographical resonance to Joshi's claim. In 1929 he joined the Communist Party of India, and in 1935 became its leader. Formed in 1925, the Party, and Joshi, were part of the nationalist movement he describes. The memory of the 1857 rebellion was thus borne by Joshi. The commemorative work of 1857 in *Folk Songs* thus includes its author's political formation within the broad context of the emergence of India's anti-imperialist movement.

On the other hand, the book was intended to be part of an archive, initiated by Joshi, of the history of communism in India (Panikkar 1994: v). The archive has remained unfinished since Joshi's death in 1980. The role of culture within India's anti-imperialist struggle and its broad socialist project would have been an essential concern of such an archive. This role would have been embodied by the culturally diverse work of the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA).

Richmond locates IPTA's beginning as 'a low key affiliate of the Anti Fascist Artists and

Writers' Association of Calcutta' (Richmond 1973: 323). Chowdhury cites the Bengal cultural Renaissance movement of the 19th century as a predecessor (Chowdhury in Biswas 1978: 1). IPTA National Congress (2015: 1) places its development in the context of Indian anti-colonial cultural activism: the first Progressive Writer's Association Conference (1936), the formation of the Youth Cultural Institute in Calcutta (1940), and the People's Theatre in Bangalore (1941). Chowdhury describes IPTA's aim, before and after India's independence, as 'Socialist revolution. And to awaken the people, to make them aware for it' (Chowdhury in Biswas 1978: 5).

The founding of IPTA in 1943 as a response to the Bengal famine of that year is documented in Chakravorty (2014). IPTA grew from the work of the Bengal Cultural Squad, a mobile theatre organised by Binoy Roy (IPTA National Congress 2015: 1). The Bengal Cultural Squad toured India performing, feeding, and raising money for the famine victims, and drawing national attention to the famine. Significantly, the Squad also inspired the formation of similar mobile theatre and musical units (Chakravorty 2014: 30–31; IPTA National Congress 2015: 1).

The theatrical work that comprised the main aspect of IPTA's output is documented in Bathia (2004), Gupta (2010/2008), and Richmond (1973). Damodaran notes that the musical aspect of IPTA's work 'remains largely undocumented in any systematic manner' (Damodaran 2008: 1). Dewri's text on IPTA's musical work in Assam (Dewri 2012) corrects this state of affairs, as do the downloads of revolutionary Indian songs stored in Soumya Chattopadhyay's *Ganasangeet Archive* (2011), and Damodaran's text, 'Protest Through Music' (2008), in which the author identifies four genres and forms of practice descriptive of a definitive IPTA musical tradition:

1. The folk genre, in which folk tunes provide the basis for new compositions. Damodaran cites Hemanga Biswas and Nirmalendu Chowdhury, Nibaran Pandit and Gurudas Pal as writers and performers whose work illustrates this genre (Damodaran 2008: 1).
2. The classical music-based genre, which emerged in Bombay and Hindustani, and in which Hindustani classical musical was used as the basis for protest songs.

Damodaran cites Pandit Ravi Shankar and Jyotirindra Moitra as exemplars of this genre (*ibid.*). Shankar was also involved with IPTA's theatrical and cinematic productions; he composed music for IPTA's ballet *Amar Bharat* [Immortal India] (1946) (Lavezzoli 1996; Ray 2012), was the musical director for filmmaker Chetan Anand's *Neecha Nagar* (1945), and K.K. Abass's film on the Bengal famine *Dharti Ke Lal* (1946) (Gupta 2010/2008).

3. The nationalist genre, whose songs Damodaran describes as exhortations to colonial revolt, was also rooted in the Indian classical tradition, and characterised by 'uplifting tunes, sung at high scales and tempos to the accompaniment of large orchestras using instruments like the sitar, veena, violin, tabla and the bugle' (Damodaran 2008: 3).
4. The trans-generic activity of translating and adapting songs composed within the Western harmonic tradition, and drawn from the international communist and anti-fascist movements, as a way of identifying with the international protest music culture and its exponents, such as Bertolt Brecht and Paul Robeson.

Damodaran writes of 'the direct use of Western tunes such as from Paul Robeson, the writing of anti-fascist ballads in Malayalam and Bengali on the lines of Brechtian war ballads', and also notes that 'Hemanga Biswas wrote songs about Paul Robeson and the Chinese Revolution which had western tunes; Bhupen Hazarika adapted Paul Robeson's *Mississippi* to talk about the Ganga' (3–4).

Regarding the composition of protest songs within the Western harmonic tradition, Damodaran credits composer Salil Chowdhury with transforming the prevailing style of composition and vocal performance in Indian music during the 1940s (3). Chowdhury's oeuvre is the subject of *The World of Salil Chowdhury*, an archival website by Gautam Choudhury (1998), which features interviews, overviews, and an extensive discography of phonographic singles recorded by Chowdhury for the Megaphone record label between 1944/45 and 1991.

The dispersal of Chowdhury's songs followed the same route as IPTA's theatrical productions. Choudhury writes that 'with IPTA comrades [Salil] took his songs to the

masses. They traveled through the villages and the cities and his songs became the voice of the masses' (Choudhury 1998: n.p.).

Evidence of the claim by Chowdhury (in Biswas 1978) and Choudhury (cited in Mujumdar 2012) that many of the songs composed by Chowdhury during the struggle for independence remain popular in peasant communities can be found in *Chetonaar Gaan* [Songs of Consciousness], an album, produced by Choudhury (Chowdhury 2011).

Mujumdar (2012: 1) describes the making of the album: Choudhury used his extensive knowledge of Chowdhury's music as the basis of a 12-year search for the composer's songs in villages where Chowdhury's former comrades still resided. At his request, the villagers sang the songs: Choudhury recorded their performances and used them as the basis of re-recordings by IPTA singers. These were collected on the album.

As with 1857 in *Songs, The World of Salil Chowdhury* was compelled by a concern that a significant cultural contribution to India's anti-imperial struggle would be lost to memory because of the absence in India of a culture of preservation (Choudhury in Mujumdar 2012: 1). Through Choudhury's archival work, Chowdhury's music is restored to Indian public culture, and the project of restoring India's anti-imperialist songs to memory, initiated by Joshi, is given a new expression in the 21st century.

### Max Roach: drum culture

The anti-imperialist musician finds political fellowship and continuity through a listening informed by musical practice. This is the case with African-American jazz drummer, bandleader, and pedagogue Max Roach (1924–2007). With trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, saxophonist Charlie Parker, pianists Bud Powell and Thelonius Monk, and fellow percussionist Kenny Clarke, Roach was a pioneer of be bop, and thus an inventor of modern jazz.

Roach's commitment to anti-imperialism is embodied in percussion. His collaboration with vocalist and anti-imperialist collaborator Abbey Lincoln, *We Insist! Max Roach and Oscar Brown, Jr.'s Freedom Now Suite* (1960) expressed Roach's opposition to segregation in the US and South Africa. The album's artwork, comprising a photograph of African-Americans desegregating an American cafeteria, and

the album's compositions (notably *Tears for Johannesburg*, and *Driva' Man*) offered its listeners parallels between apartheid and US segregation. Roach further developed these themes in *Percussion Bitter Suite* (1961).

Roach's explicit opposition to domestic and global expressions of US imperialism preceded subsequent work by jazz musicians. A key example is the quartet of albums composers Charlie Haden and Carla Bley collaboratively created as the Liberation Music Orchestra (Haden and Liberation Music Orchestra 1990; 2005; Liberation Music Orchestra 1969). The Orchestra's first and eponymously titled album was recorded in opposition to the Vietnam War (Haden in Goodman 2006: 4–5), commemorated the anti-Fascist Spanish Civil War, Che Guevara (*Song for Che*) (1969), and was dedicated to the anti-colonial movements of Mozambique and Angola (Goodman 2006: 8).

A second example is the work of Archie Shepp. Shepp's composition *Malcolm, Malcolm, Semper Malcolm* (1965) eulogised the slain Muslim internationalist; *Attica Blues* (1972) honoured George Jackson of the socialist organisation the Black Panther Party, who was slain in Attica prison in 1971. Roach's collaboration with Shepp, *Force: Sweet Mao-Suid Africa '76* (1976) was a product of a touring invitation by the Italian Communist Party, and commemorated the death of Mao Zedong, founder of the People's Republic of China, and the protests by the youth of Soweto against apartheid (Ho 2009: 124).

An anti-imperialist sensibility informed Roach's thinking about the political meaning of jazz: he considered it 'a democratic form ... it means to listen, to respect, and harmonize together' (Roach in Chénard 1978: 2). For Roach, jazz, understood as a dynamic, intergenerational musical process, was also antithetical to imperialism: 'Jazz is not an imperialistic way [of making music] where a conductor tells [you] that you are not doing it right. That is classical music. Jazz is fluid, and every generation has the opportunity to contribute something new (2).

The anti-imperialist thinking and practice of Roach, Shepp (in Kofsky 1983/1970: 20), and Haden (in Goodman 2006) runs counter to the use of jazz by the United States Information Service (USIA) and the Voice of America (VOA) during the Cold War. Willis Conover, the VOA's music consultant, describes this use: 'our music helps maintain

contact with people already inclined to sympathise with the United States' (Conover in Kofsky [1983/1970: 109]. Kofsky describes the function of the USIA as supervising 'the dissemination of pro-U.S. and anti-socialist propaganda throughout the world' (110). Zolov (1999: 236–239) elaborates on this function.

When Roach listened to hip hop in 1985, two years prior to the emergence of Public Enemy, the genre's most politically confrontational and sonically dissonant group, he discerned in its sound a continuity with jazz, a radical capacity for invention from conditions of social and political disenfranchisement, for 'making something out of nothing ... which affected the whole world' (Roach in Owen 1988b: 60).

In the relentless percussive force of L.L. Cool J's album *Radio* (1985), Roach heard a martial sensibility which he associated with the transformative momentum of the civil rights movement: 'the sound was very militant to me because it was like marching, an army on the move. We lost Malcolm, we lost King and they thought they had blotted out everybody. But all of a sudden this new art form arises and the militancy is still there in the music' (72).

### **Bob Dylan, Public Enemy, Tupac Shakur, and the Black Panthers: revolution and reciprocity**

An affective reciprocity between anti-imperial activism and popular music, which begins in the music of Bob Dylan and returns in hip hop through the music of Public Enemy and Tupac Shakur, illustrates an intertwining of personal and political experience in the relation between music and anti-imperialism.

Seale writes of members of the Black Panther Party (BPP) listening to Dylan's music over the course of three days while preparing their newspaper (Seale 1991/1971: 183). In a photograph by Steven Shames taken in the home of Black Panther co-founder Huey P Newton, Newton is about to play, or has already played, the album whose sleeve he casually brandishes as display and protection, between his body and the world: Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965) (Miss Rosen 2010: 3; Shames 1967).

Shames's photograph shows Dylan's music formed a part of the domestic space of the Panthers' political project, in the intimacy of

which a consonance of his music with their view of the world took place. Seale describes Newton's detailed listening to one of the songs: *Ballad of a Thin Man* (Dylan 1965). In the song's narrative of voyeurism and horror, power and abjection, Newton found an intimate description of the relations between America's black working poor and its white middle classes (Seale 1991 [1970]: 183–184).

The Panthers' project of politicising the black poor, including the incarcerated, gave the organisation common ground with the work of prison activist George Jackson. A self-educated Marxist theoretician of imperialism's global, domestic, penal expressions, Jackson was serving a life sentence for stealing \$60 while a teenager.

Jackson shared the Panthers' view of the US as a colonising country whose colonised subjects were African Americans, one of whose tasks was nonetheless to create an international anti-imperialist network through which revolution could take place (Jackson 1994/1970: 264). Newton (2009/1973) had offered to send Black Panther members to join the North Vietnamese in their war against the US; BPP co-founder Elaine Brown outlines the Panthers' affiliations with anti-colonial movements in Palestine, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and China (Brown 1990: xvii–xix).

In 1970 Newton invited Jackson to join the Black Panthers and integrate his prison activism with theirs (Jackson in Wald 1993/1971: 7). The Panthers were by 1970 regarded as 'the most active and dangerous black extremist group in the United States' (FBI in Wolf 2001: 2). Their destruction is identified in Wolf (2001) as the chief objective of the FBI between 1968 and 1971: the Party was infiltrated; key members were hounded, harassed, and killed in a succession of attacks by the police. In August Jackson was shot and killed by guards during a riot at San Quentin prison.

In *George Jackson*, recorded in August that year, Dylan recounts Jackson's life, his death. Jackson was feared, Dylan tells us, because he was indomitable:

He wouldn't take shit from no one  
He wouldn't bow down or kneel  
[...]

They [the prison authorities] were frightened of his power

They were scared of his love.

(Dylan 1971)

Jackson had his own thoughts about music and death. He wrote, in a letter to attorney at law Fay Spender, on 17 April 1970, that he did not 'want to die and leave a few sad songs as [his] only monument' (Jackson 1994/1970: 266). The folk lineages of dissenting music through which Dylan voiced his empathy with Jackson and, earlier, the Civil Rights movement (Dylan 1963; 1964), and the lineages of politicised rap most forcefully defined within the genre by Public Enemy (1987; 1988; 1990a; 1990b) can be figuratively regarded as guarantors of Jackson's wish.

So too can *The 2006 George Jackson Tribute Mixtape* (Ball 2006), compiled by Jared Ball, in which tracks by US MCs Dead Prez, Mos Def, RZA, Ghostface Killa, and Immortal Technique are interspersed with readings from Jackson's *Blood in My Eye* (1990/1972) and *Soledad Brother* (1994/1970). The MCs on Ball's mixtape are representative of a strand of politicised rap developed by Public Enemy, who are also featured. In the example of *The 2006 George Jackson Tribute Mixtape* the writing of Jackson the anti-imperialist functions as a discontinuous audio narrative whose vocal performance, assemblage, and inter-cutting renders Jackson's writing a component part of a musical process, to be consumed within the experience of listening to music. Jackson's writing thus functions as a musical guarantor of its writer's wish.

However, Dylan's, Public Enemy's, and Tupac Shakur's lineages of political dissent converge not in Jackson, but in Shames' image of Newton, in whose hands and hearing Dylan is present as phonographic music (in Seale 1991/1970) and photographic image (in Shames 1967), and whose body is recalled to music in the moment of his murder in 1989, 'from the hand of a nigger that pulled the trigger' (Public Enemy 1990b), in Public Enemy's *Welcome to the Terrordome* (1990b), and recalled again in Tupac Shakur's posthumously released *Changes* (1998):

It's time to fight back  
That's what Huey said  
Two shots in the dark  
Now Huey's dead.

Public Enemy vocalist Chuck D, in Reynolds described liaising with the Panthers in order to 'spark a revival' (Reynolds 1987: 14), and in *Party For Your Right To Fight*, called for the Panther's return. Shakur, in *Changes*,

represented a calling forth into the present, through 'two shots in the dark', the violent passing of the time in which the time for fighting back had been announced, and the end of the possibility of the presence in the present of the past in which the object of such retaliation was international socialist transformation, in Seale (1991/1970), Jackson (1990/1972; 1994/1970), Newton (2009/1973):

That's just the way it is  
Things'll never be the same  
That's just the way it is.

(Shakur 1998)

In the absence of the revolution advocated by the Panthers, the possibilities for social transformation Shakur suggests in *Changes* mark a shift from macropolitical to micropolitical change which nonetheless reflects the politicising of caring embodied in the Panthers' 1968 'Serve the People' activities, a key example of which was their national free breakfast project for the children of welfare recipients:

Let's change the way we eat  
Let's change the way we live  
And let's change the way we treat each other.

(Shakur 1998)

On the other hand, in *Wordz of Wisdom* (1991), Shakur uses the phrase, 'America's nightmare' to locate the past of the Panthers in the unconscious of the Euro-American imagination in its dreaming and waking states. Shakur achieves this by personifying a murderous, mnemonic dream figure, a 'nightmare' of the memory of slavery through which the rapper declares to the US that 'Just as you rose you will fall/By my hands'.

Shakur repeats the phrase to name and cohere a continuum of politicised MCs who are his contemporaries:

Ice Cube and Da Lench Mob ... America's Nightmare  
Above The Law ... America's Nightmare,  
Paris ... America's Nightmare,  
Public Enemy ... America's Nightmare,  
KRS-One ... America's Nightmare

and political activists who are among the last physical embodiments of the Black Panthers, are bearers of the punitive force of



the US government, and are also members of Shakur's family.

Shakur's godfather, Elmer 'Geronimo ji Jaga' Pratt, the Panthers' minister of defence, was sentenced to 27 years for murder under the FBI's illegal COunter INTElligence PROgramme (COINTELPRO) (Kleffner 1993; Wolf 2001). Pratt's conviction was overturned in 1997. Shakur's stepfather, Mutulu Shakur, was sentenced to 60 years for bank robbery and aiding the escape of Tupac's aunt, Assata Shakur.

Assata Shakur was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of a state trooper. Shakur escaped in 1979 and was granted asylum in Cuba. In 2013 she was placed on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorist List. A \$2m reward was issued for information leading to her capture (Walker 2013). Lawyer Ron Kuby suggested a context for Shakur's indictment that could also be applied to Mutulu Shakur and Elmer Pratt: 'Assata Shakur was the embodiment of the Black Panther Party ... at a time when there was a low intensity war between black radicals and the U.S.' (Kuby in Jones 2013: 1).

In his later work, the autobiographical component of Shakur's nightmare continuum grew to include his father, Billy Garland, in *Papaz Song* (1993), and his mother, Afeni Shakur, in *Dear Mama* (1995). Garland and Shakur were both Panthers: Shakur was incarcerated while pregnant with Tupac (Garland in George 1998; Shakur in Shakur 1995).

Shakur thus uses autobiographical writing to create an intimacy between politicised hip hop and the outlawed embodiments of the Panthers' project. Hip hop, through Shakur's early work, extends across genre and time the reciprocal relation between popular music and anti-imperialist activism articulated between Newton, Seale, Dylan, and Jackson, while also foregrounding the role of a lived experience within that reciprocity.

### **Hip Hop Revolución: organisation, pedagogy, and practice**

Music against imperialism comprises a multifaceted cultural activity that counters the prevailing forms imperialism's presence might assume in the absence of direct or indirect imperial domination. The practice, organisational and pedagogical work of Venezuela's socialist collective Hip Hop Revolución embodies this description.

US attempts to overthrow Venezuela's United Socialist Party, since its election in 1999, and its failure to achieve its intent are documented in Golinger (2007/2006) and Petras (2013). In Golinger (2010), US State Department documents declassified under the Freedom of Information Act show that between 2005 and 2007 the US State Department invested \$40m in three American agencies, the Pan American Development Foundation (PADE), Freedom House, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) (1).

The strategy of the funding was to target Venezuela's 18–25-year olds: its students, particularly students of journalism, and users of online and community media. The strategy would thus have sought to solicit the support of young Venezuelans of the age of Journey Madriz, the rapper also known as Master. Madriz was 15 when Chavez was elected. He lived in low-income housing in one of Caracas' most deprived areas. 'I didn't care that he had won. Why? Venezuelan youth, myself included, lived in total political apathy' (Madriz in Navarette 2015: 1) 'But I did pay attention when he was overthrown in 2002'. (Madriz in Terra 2012: 1)

Madriz was one of a generation politicised through its role in the popular revolt by which the US-backed opposition's attempted coup against Chavez was thwarted and Chavez returned to office, albeit not to the effect the US government's \$40 million investment in coercing the hearts and mind of Venezuela's youth had been intended, particularly considering Madriz was a fan of America's biggest popular cultural export, hip hop. On the contrary, Madriz founded the collective Hip Hop Revolución in 2003 with Gustavo Borges.

In August 2005 the collective organised the First International Hip Hop Summit in support of Chavez, with three open-air concerts featuring over 100 hip-hop artists as part of the 16th World Youth Festival in Caracas. The size of the event suggests that the State Department's \$40 million had missed a significant sector of its demographic: 17,000 participants from 144 countries attended the festival. The size and scale of the Hip Hop Summit suggests that Hip Hop Revolución's affirmation of socialism possessed an international appeal, as well as evidencing hip hop as a popular genre through which the ideas of a socialist revolution could be voiced and disseminated within and across national borders.

In January 2010, Hip Hop Revolución organised the first national conference of activists from the Venezuelan hip hop movement. The conference included political education, music production workshops, film screenings, and discussions for the founding of a national curriculum of urban art schools, Popular Schools for the Arts and Urban Traditions (EPATU), a joint project of Hip Hop Revolución and Venezuela's Ministry of Communes (Hip Hop Revolución 2010).

By 2011 there were 31 EPATU schools located across the most deprived areas of Venezuela. EPATU's curriculum comprises musical and political education; workshops and discussions include subjects such as racism, consumerism, and cultural imperialism, as well as the four disciplines of hip hop: breakdancing, rapping, graffiti, and DJing (Cassell 2011: para 15). Graduates are encouraged to become teachers to the next group of students (McIntyre and Navarette 2012).

In this regard, Hip Hop Revolución's EPATU project constitutes a contemporary Latin American expression of an African-American cultural continuum of the inter-generational pedagogy Roach (in Owen 1988b) associates with the democratic aspect of jazz practice. This is one way in which the collective's work offers an example of anti-imperialist music practice which forms a continuum extending across time and space through black musical genres, and which is both cultural and political.

Hip Hop Revolución's identification with Hugo Chavez and the broad project of socialism in Latin America (Navarette 2012) can, for example, be said to locate the collective in a Venezuelan political continuum of anti-imperialist activism whose forms, in Petras (2010) include the popular mass movements, guerrilla organisations, and trade unions of the 1960s.

These national expressions of dissent cohere with their contemporaneous African-American expressions through the collective's identification with the work of the BPP and Malcolm X: 'Hip Hop Nacido del seno de movimiento como Malcolm X y Panteras Negras' (Hip Hop Revolución 2010): the BPP's opposition to imperialism is documented in the writing of two of its key figures: George Jackson, in *Soledad Brother – the Prison Letters of George Jackson* (1994/1970), and Bobby Seale, BPP founder and national organiser, in *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton* (1991/1970).

Through their identification with the Black Panthers, Hip Hop Revolución's musical, pedagogic, and organisational activities can be viewed as a project in which two aspects of the politically engaged anti-imperialist sensibility present in Roach, Shepp, Haden, and Bley is condensed. Firstly, the militancy Roach accorded those killed or 'blotted out' during the African-American political struggle of the 1960s ('King ... Malcolm X ... [and] everybody' [Roach in Owen 1988b: 73]). Secondly, the return of this militancy, present as composition and its performance, within hip hop ('the militancy is still there in the music' [Roach in Owen 1988: 73]; my italics).

Through the figuration of militancy that conjoins Roach and Hip Hop Revolución, the ambitions of the dead can be said to return as an enervating musical force, albeit with the critical caveat that this reanimated presence of the dead as music is also a reanimation of failure: Hip Hop Revolución's work is directed at consolidating a socialist revolution, which unlike the Black Panthers, had won a substantial victory against US imperialism.

Consequently, the sense of loss that followed the murders of King, Malcolm X, and members of the Black Panthers, and which informed the recordings by Shepp, Haden, and Bley, and the subsequent sense of loss articulated in the enraged, retrospective evocation of these figures in African-American music, has yet to take place in Venezuela's revolution, and may not take place, should the Venezuelan revolution prevail.

This sense of loss is thus absent from the following examples of Venezuelan revolutionary rap: *Revolution* (Desde Guaraira 2009), *EPATU (1 Tema)* (Master, MC Arcades 2010), *Hijo de Lobo Caza* (Arte y Esencia 2012), *Patriotas (Agents of Change Remix)* (Área 23 2012), *Hip Hop Revolución: The Mixtape Volume One* (Various 2014), *Planetario el himno de la Revolución* (Muchocumo Official 2015).

However, the multivalent nature of America's ongoing attempts to destroy Venezuela's government, through external agencies and internal tensions (Ciccariello-Maher 2012), which Robinson, in Polychroniou (2010), describes as a 'war of attrition', suggests that it is precisely the potential presence of such a loss that informs the force with which these recordings affirm Venezuela's revolution.

USAID's covert deployment of Venezuelan youth to foment opposition toward the Cuban

government suggests that the US views Hip Hop Revolución's indigenous audience as a possible agency of this loss. USAID's deployment began in 2008 but was not made public until 2014 (Bercovitch 2014); USAID also attempted to train anti-Castro rappers Los Aldeanos to become leaders of a movement for the overthrow of the Cuban government (Weaver 2014).

### A musical intifada: Palestine in Electronica and hip hop

The support of musicians within the electronic and hip hop genres for the people of Palestine can be understood as an opposition to what Bashir (2007) describes as a geometrical relation of violence between US imperial interests and Israeli colonial interests which functions to sustain the economic interests of the former, and the territorial interests of the latter:

U.S. support reinforces Israeli colonialism and occupation, which bolsters Israeli militarization of state and society, which generates new ideological and political justifications and breeds new religious fanaticisms, leading to further indigenous resistance and to more U.S. interventions in the region. A cycle of violence if ever there was one, ultimately determined by U.S. imperialism. (1)

Imperial America's determining role in the maintenance of Israeli colonialism includes the use within Israel of hip hop. One example, in Billet (2013), is a collaboration between Taglit Birthright, an organisation which sponsors heritage trips to Israel for young Jews in the US, and Artists 4 Israel, the aim of which is to arrange 'hip hop tours of Israel' for Israeli Zionist fans of hip hop (1). For Billet, the entrenchment of two kinds of colonialism is at work in this collaboration, that of Palestine and hip hop.

Billet also notes a contradiction in this use of hip hop, '[a] music and style that gestated in reaction to the wilful neglect and apartheid treatment of African-Americans and people of colour' to make popular 'the image of an apartheid regime among young people'. Importantly, Billet also observes that Taglit-Birthright and Artists 4 Israel's hip hop tours serve to overshadow Israel's indigenous Palestinian hip hop culture (1).

A second example is the placing of Israeli hip hop in the service of Zionism: Mumford cites the mobilising of homicidal anti-Palestinian sentiment in Tel Aviv by Israeli Zionist rapper Shadow, and the holocaustic demand by rapper Subliminal to "burn the prisons" housing Palestinians and "destroy [the Palestinian city of] Jenin" in the aftermath of the killing of an Israeli soldier by a Palestinian man (Subliminal in Mumford 2014: 1). This service also includes the use of hip hop as a vehicle for the dissemination of Zionism: British Jewish rapper Antithesis dedicates his first video single *I'm a Zionist* (2010) to Theodore Herzl, the founder of Jewish Zionism's colonial project (Herzl 1988/1896).

Rap that voices support for Palestinian self-determination can be understood as an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial musical force which seeks to break the circular relation of violence kept in place through the interdependency of colonial Israel and imperial America.

However, while Palestinian hip hop in particular has an indigenous, Arab tradition of dissenting music, the history of which is documented in Kanaanah et al.'s *Palestinian Music and Song: Expression and Resistance since 1900* (2014), and whose proponents, in Flow Motion's *promised lands* (2008–2010) include Mahmoud Salim al-Hout, Fairuz, Said Al Muzayin, Said Darwish, and Marcel Khalife. The identification with Palestine expressed by the broader rap community has a precedent in the recordings of British electronic musician Muslimgauze.

Within the many genres that comprise Euro-American and African-American electronic popular music, Muslimgauze's oeuvre is singular because it coheres around a single theme, that of Palestine and its liberation, through which he integrates an empathy with Middle Eastern politics and Arab history and culture.

Muslimgauze's music is instrumental. He communicated these themes through his album artwork, and elaborated on them through his album and composition titles. These include: 'Shadow of the West', in *The Rape of Palestine* (1988), 'Muslims of China', in *United States of Islam* (1991), 'Zion Poison', in *Vote Hezbollah* (1993), 'Yasser Arafat's Radio', in *Hamas Arc* (1993), 'Anti Arab Media Censor', in *Fatah Guerilla* (1996), 'Thuggee', in *Return of Black September* (1996), 'Strap Sticks of Dynamite Around Her Body', in *Vampire*

of Tehran (1998), 'Every Grain of Palestinian Sand', in Mullah Said (1998), 'Zion Under Islamic Law', in Baghdad (2000), 'Veiled Sisters Remix', in Veiled Sisters Remix (2002), 'Refugee', in No Human Rights for Arabs in Israel (2004), ' Hamas Internet, Gaza', in Ingaza (2006), 'Find Yugoslav Butcher of Muslims', in Beirut Transfer (2011), and 'All I Have is Sand', in Al Jar Zia Audio (2013).

Political solidarity is the driving force of his music: 'Without the politics, the music would not exist. The political fact is the starting point, from this I am pushed into a musical idea' (Muslimgauze in Mallonee 1998: 1), Muslimgauze located the beginning of his solidarity with Palestine in the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (Muslimgauze in Schefel 1998: 2). He thereafter refused to perform in Israel, telling an interviewer in 1998: 'I would never visit any occupied land, when Palestine is free, I would like to visit then' (1). Muslimgauze viewed his boycott of Israel in a prescriptive light, feeling that 'Others shouldn't [visit Israel]' (Muslimgauze in Urselli-Scarerer n.d.: 2). An early stirring of the imperatives of the Boycott, Disinvestment, and Sanctions movement can thus be detected in the thinking that informed Muslimgauze's music.

Muslimgauze's identification with Palestine offers a precedent for musicians who have worked within the genres that comprise electronic popular music and have affirmed the necessity of the Palestinian struggle. Brian Eno, rock music producer and founding figure of ambient electronic music, is a significant example. In a 2014 editorial titled 'Gaza and the Loss of Civilisation', published on the website of musician David Byrne, Eno expressed his outrage and confusion at what he described as a 'horrible one-sided colonialist war' (Eno 2014a: 1). That year Eno also condemned the BBC for what he viewed as partiality toward Israelis in its news reporting on Israel, against which 'Palestinian lives [are regarded] as less valuable, less newsworthy [than the lives of Israelis]' (Eno 2014b:1).

Eno was also one of a number of public figures who participated in #Gazanames, an online video produced by Freedom 4 Palestine and Jewish Voices for Peace (2014). Rebecca Vilkomerson, executive director of Jewish Voice for Peace, stated that the aim of the video was to convey the idea that 'securing freedom and justice for Palestinians is the

only pathway to a lasting peace' (Vilkomerson in Surasky 2014: 1).

Released in July 2014, the political backdrop to #Gazanames was Israel's 'Operation Protective Edge', a military offensive instigated by the Israeli government against the people of Gaza. Al Jazeera reported that, by August that year, the mortality rate had reached 1,951 (Al Jazeera 2014).

#Gazanames is significant for a consideration of hip hop as a vehicle for Palestinian liberation because it features two of the genre's most influential protagonists: Chuck D, lead vocalist of Public Enemy; and DAM, who are widely regarded as Palestine's first politically outspoken rap group.

In the documentary film *Slingshot Hip Hop* (Salloum 2008), DAM lyricist Suhell Nafar cites Public Enemy's *Fear of a Black Planet* as a conceptual influence in a personal continuum that includes Edward Said, Mahmoud Darwish, Tupac Shakur, Nawal el-Sadawi, and Malcolm X, among others. Tamer Nafar remarks that 'In this country [Israel], there's a fear of an Arabic nation'. (Nafar in Saloum 2008). A biographical synopsis of the Palestinian rap quintet Katibe 5, featured on the website *Cultures of Resistance Network*, states that the group 'see their music as a continuation of Public Enemy's legacy'. In an extract from the documentary, *Cultures of Resistance* (Lee 2010b), Katibe 5 describe their music as rap for people who do not listen to rap: 'Rap is not the main goal; the main goal is the cause for which we are singing' (Katibe 5 in Lee 2015). British-born Palestinian MC Shadia Mansour names Public Enemy as a source of conceptual 'discipline [...] their form of resistance was intellectual, and they managed to speak in a universal language. Hip-hop was a shelter that became a community' (Mansour 2011b: 1).

The community Mansour describes includes: socialist Palestinian/Jordanian group Torabeh's *Ghorbah* (2012a), and their album *Mixtape Volume One* (2012b); Katibe 5's album *Ahla fik bil moukhayamat (Welcome to the Camps)* (2008); Ramallah Underground's MP3 releases, *From the Cave* (2007a), *Natejeh bala shughol* (2007b), *Qararat* (2008), *Sijen ib Sijen (Prison Within a Prison)* (2011), their collaborations with DJ Lethal Skillz, *Qararat* (2008), and Kronos Quartet *Tashweesh (Interference)* (Kronos Quartet and Ramallah Underground 2009), group co-founder Boikutt's *Letter From Boikutt* (2007) and *Hayawan Nateq* (2013), the E.P. of fellow

co-founder Asifeh, a.k.a Stormtrap, Iradeh (Will) (2012), and Asifeh Stormtrap's *Fi Hadal Habs* (2012).

Politicised indigenous Palestinian hip hop is nonetheless exemplified by DAM. Essential moments in the group's discography include DAM's first politically themed single *Posheem Hapim me Peshaa* (Innocent Criminals) (2008b). The track was compelled by the Israeli response to the second Intifada, in which the Israeli Defence Force killed over 1,000 Palestinians.

Also essential are DAM's: collaborations with Shadia Mansour *I Want Peace* (Jreiri and Mansour 2008/2007) and *They All Have Tanks* (2008); DAM's albums, *Ihdaa' – Dedication* (2006b) and *Dabke on the Moon* (2012); as well as their six tracks which, in addition to contributions from We7, PR, Mahmoud Shalabi, Arapayat, Abeer Alzinati, Shadia Mansour, and Sameh 'SAZ' Zakout, comprise the soundtrack album *Music from the Documentary Film Slingshot Hip Hop*, and include 'Born Here', 'Who is the Terrorist?' (2008a) and 'Freedom For My Sisters' (2008b).

Palestinian hip hop thus sonifies a politically informed cultural riposte to the multivalent privations and the forms of discrimination and militarised violence through which the State of Israel seeks to render its Arab population politically, economically, spatially, and culturally void of presence. In *Cultures of Resistance*, Mansour states that she regards Arab hip hop as a sonic intifada, 'an uprising in music' (Mansour in Lee 2010a).

Essential moments in Mansour's discography include *Assalamu Alaikum (Peace Be Unto You)* (2011a) and *Sho Eli Saar* (2013). The collaborative nature of Mansour's music's suggests that her musical intifada might also constitute a dissemination, a movement of an Arabic diaspora, determined as much by an immersion in hip hop as by migrant histories of exile and displacement. In Mansour's work there are collaborations with: Chilean Palestinian MC Ana Tijoux (*Somos Sur* [2014]); Iraqi-Canadian MC The Narcicyst (*Hamdulilah [Praise God]* and *Gaza Remix* (2009a; 2009b), M1 of U.S rap duo Dead Prez (*Al Lufiyeh Arabeyeh [The Kufiyeh is Arab]* [2010]; Lebanese producer DJ Lethal Skillz (*Language of Peace*) (DJ Lethal Skillz and Mansour 2013); and Syrian-American MC Omar Effendum (*We Have to Change* [2013]).

Mansour's musical activity has a pedagogic and fundraising function which strikes

a political contrast to Artists 4 Israel and aglit-Birthright's deployment of hip hop to further Israeli apartheid, as Billet (2013) observes. Mansour's pedagogic activism takes place through her work with Existence is Resistance, an organisation that organises hip hop tours in Occupied Palestinian Territories to enlighten hip hop fans about Palestine and the conditions against which the emergence of Palestinian hip hop has taken place.

British-Iraqi Lowkey, with whom Mansour collaborates, is also an exponent of Existence is Resistance's work. For Lowkey, hip hop is a means of establishing Palestinian presence against Israeli attempts at diminishment: hip hop, Lowkey says, is '[a] way of saying "I am here and I demand to be recognised"' (Lowkey in Lee 2010a).

Mansour and DAM collaborated with Lowkey on the two-part single 'Long Live Palestine Part 1' (Lowkey 2009) and 'Long Live Palestine Part 2' (Lowkey et al. 2009). The former is a Lowkey composition; the latter features Mansour, Lebanese-Syrian MC Eslam Jawwad, Iranian MC Hichkas, DAM's Mahmoud Jreiri and Tamer Naffar, British-Iranian MC Reveal, The Narcicyst, and African-Caucasian Muslim MC Hasan Salaam, a fragment of whose verse reads:

There's no such thing as the Middle East  
 Brother they deceiving you  
 No matter where you stand there's always  
 something to the east of you  
 So whether it's Mossad or the FBI policing  
 you  
 It's all one struggle 'til the final breath is  
 leavin' you.

(Salaam in Lowkey et al. 2009)

Salaam's verse illustrates what O'Keefe (2014) describes as a salutary effect of Arab hip hop's diasporic dissemination within the global hip hop community: 'Revolutionary rappers throughout the Middle East and the world ... are associating their fights against their own societies' social injustices with the Palestinian cause – a process that Palestinian hip-hop artists encourage and amplify'.

However, read with O'Keefe in mind, two lines from Tamer Naffar's verse reverse O'Keefe's observation, and show the DAM MC offering the listener a suggestion of comparisons between the struggles of Palestine and those of other displaced indigenes, and thereby

articulating the interconnectedness and deathless significance of anti-imperialist struggle:

They took my land from under my feet  
And gave me only suffering.

(Naffar in Lowkey et al. 2009)

## Conclusion

This essay has elaborated on the role of musical forms and practices in the service of imperialism and the role of music in struggles against imperialism. It has displayed the interrelation between musical forms in forging unities of anti-imperialist struggle across place and time, and has also presented key examples of the contradictory nature of the relation between music and imperialism.

This elaboration has taken place through the interweaving of musical genres from the 18th to the 20th century with themes of contradiction, dissent silence, the border, memory, citationality, listening, reciprocity, pedagogy, and uprising. It has conveyed, on the one hand, the uses of music as a subversive vehicle for the affirmation of presence within liberation movements and through individual agents of anti-imperialist transformation; and on the other, the use of music in the affirmation of imperial expansion.

Through this interweaving of themes and forms, historical agents, and moments, the essay has demonstrated music's subversive potential for functioning as a conveyor of opposing interests, and thus as a volatile cultural medium through which struggles for liberation can be articulated. However, it has also shown that music is a medium whose cultural and political use is as much the subject of contestation as the view of the world presented by music.

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## Political Cinema and Anti-Imperialism

'All films are political, but films are not political in the same way', Mike Wayne states in the opening lines of his 2001 book *Political Film: The Dialectics of Third Cinema*. The imperialism/anti-imperialism dichotomy offers one way to categorise political films. These encompass a wide range of contexts, practices, and genres; they cover cinematic traditions produced in Europe, Latin and Central America, Africa, and Asia, and include industrial, commercial, independent, and governmental films. For French scholar and film curator Nicole Brenez, 'a politically committed filmmaker is first of all someone who thinks of collective history, thus someone who thinks in terms of the future that he wishes to call forth, and who sows the seeds of justice in the form of images knowing that, at best, they will grow later' (Brenez 2012).

In the early decades of the 20th century, cinema was often called upon to propagate colonial propaganda; according to James Chapman and Nicholas J. Cull, authors of *Projecting Empire: Imperialism and Popular Cinema* (2009), this relationship between cinema and empire did not stop in the 1930s and has remained central to Hollywood and British film industries from the 1930s onwards to the present day. Accounts of early cinematic critiques of British and Japanese imperialism have been documented in Hollywood,

Indian, and Chinese films in the 1930s, yet, the eruption of anti-imperialist struggles and the formulation of clear political strategies by filmmakers are more commonly connected to the 1950s and 1960s. In fact, the period saw the convergence and intensification of two discourses: anti-colonialism, fuelled by the decolonisation wars opposing Britain and France against their respective South-East Asian and African colonies; and anti-imperialism, spurred by growing discontent across Central and South America with encroaching US economic and diplomatic policies. More recently, with the general acceptance of globalisation as the new dominant paradigm, concerns about cultural homogenisation, transnational corporate monopoly, and global inequalities, the strict antagonisms of the past are being replaced by intersecting and overlapping geographies. Needless to say that politics of anti-imperialism in cinema have been plural, multidirectional, and have even at times conduced to conflicting ideologies. The most blatant example of such conflicts concerns the inability of Third Cinema to account for the direct impact of imperialism on women's conditions. For practical reasons of length, this essay cannot cover everything. The selective overview offered here seeks to move beyond the traditional binary imperialism/anti-imperialism and to suggest ethical connections between ongoing redefinitions of anti-imperialist cinemas and critical reassessments of cosmopolitanism. A short, selective filmography is included at the end for more specific examples of the geographical and thematic range of films denouncing various forms of imperialism.

In the history of political cinema, the long 1960s (meaning the period that starts in the mid-1950s and ends in the early 1970s) are remembered as the golden age of revolutionary militant filmmaking. In contrast to the instrumentalisation of film by colonial and fascist propaganda campaigns during the first half of the 20th century, post-war times marked a leftist re-signification of political cinema. The term then became synonymous with a critical practice indicting bourgeois social values, colonial oppression, military and economic imperialism, and free-market capitalism. Wars of independence in Africa and South-East Asia were bringing European colonialism to its knees; popular revolutions were rattling South America, causing serious political and social turmoil worldwide. In Europe and the US,

mass protests were calling for the end of colonial wars in Vietnam and Algeria, demanding greater social freedom, denouncing cultural elitism, and advocating for gender, racial, and sexual equality. Cinema played a major role in giving visibility to those movements, but most importantly, debates initiated in the early 1920s by Soviet cinema about the ideological nature of cinema as a medium, as an industry, and as a sociocultural praxis resumed, most notably in Latin America.

Following the first jolts of the Cuban revolution and the victory of Fidel Castro in 1959, Argentina, Chile, and Brazil became stages for violent popular revolts against the newly instituted military governments. Numerous filmmakers sided with the people. Several manifestoes – Glauber Rocha, 'Aesthetic of Hunger' (Brazil, 1965), Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino 'Towards a Third Cinema' (Argentina, 1969), and Julio García Espinosa 'For an Imperfect Cinema' (1969) – defined the aesthetic and economic principles of a new, revolutionary cinema. Third Cinema would achieve what the Second Cinema of the European New Waves could not complete; that is, exist outside of the System and develop aesthetic and industrial alternatives to the passive consumerism and alluring visual escapism of First Cinema. While Second Cinema was seen as an attempt to awaken the spectator from First Cinema's glossy superficiality, the proponents of Third Cinema deplored the financial and industrial entrapment of their European counterparts and the ineluctable assimilation of their films within the international film industry. This certainly rings true today when we consider the role festivals, awards ceremonies, and critics play in the international legitimization and reproduction of art cinemas.

Third Cinema sought not only to document the process of decolonisation, independence, and access to self-sovereignty on the screen, but it also, first and foremost, endeavoured to 'decolonise the mind' of the spectator, taking after Frantz Fanon's seminal analysis of colonisation *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). This meant working outside and against the structures of production, exhibition, and reproduction that, in their mind, precluded cinema from being an effective medium of political consciousness. In Brazil and Cuba, Glauber Rocha and Julio García Espinosa turned the chronic under-development of their countries into counter-aesthetics and

political interventions: hunger and imperfection were upheld as the antidote to the commercial entertainment promoted by Hollywood. The question of funding quickly posed itself. For Mike Wayne, state funding was admittedly 'a problematic necessity' for Third Cinema (Wayne 2001: 79). David M.J. Wood adds that, in spite of their initial reluctance to accept state sponsorship, regional film archives, private and public, ended up playing a central role in the diffusion of the films and 'the language of anti-imperialism', providing filmmakers with decentred spaces from where they could pursue their efforts to 'move from existing bourgeois towards new proletarian modes of film spectatorship' (Wood 2010: 167). French militant filmmaker Luc Moullet, who shared similar political values and was an active proponent of cinemas of transnational social consciousness, mocks such financial disparities and his own artistic hypocrisy in his anti-imperialist documentary *Genesis of a Meal* (1978).

The long-lasting influence of Latin American Third Cinema on European militant filmmaking and on post-colonial cinemas alike lies in the unique and far-sighted historical compression its political agenda evidenced. The movement targeted all at once European colonialism, US imperialism, and, to some anachronistic extent, the transnational mechanisms of globalisation. Furthermore, it provided a structure for transnational solidarities across three continents, supporting the Tricontinental Revolution called forth in the late 1960s by intellectuals and political figures such as Che Guevara and Frantz Fanon. Although Third Cinema was very much the product of specific local and national conditions, Solanas and Getino's 1969 manifesto, premised the success of the social revolution on the intertwining of both scales:

Testimony about a national reality can be an inestimable means of dialogue and knowledge on a global scale. No internationalist form of struggle can be carried out successfully without a mutual exchange of experiences between peoples, if peoples cannot manage to break out of the Balkanization which imperialism strives to maintain. (Solanas and Getino 1997/1969: 46)

In Africa, Mohammed Lakhdar-Hamina's *The Winds of the Aures* (1967) and Ahmed Rachedi's *Chronicle of the Years of Fire* (1975)

epitomise the violence of early Algerian cinema, and the interweaving of war and nation building. Further south, in sub-Saharan Francophone Africa, early anti-colonial and post-colonial cinemas focused more extensively on how persistent economic dependency precluded the development of local economies and affected the capacity of filmmakers, in particular, to lay the foundations of African cinema on their own terms. When film had to be shipped and processed in France, the very possibility of an African cinema was compromised. In the early years of this enterprise, the persisting economic dependency upon France was nonetheless counterweighted by the creative influence of Soviet cinema. Several young filmmakers received scholarships to study film making in Moscow, including Ousmane Sembène, Souleymane Cissé, and Abderrahmane Sissako. Post-colonial Francophone African cinemas were very much the product of this tri-headed cultural and ideological root – African cultural traditions and experiences, French (neo-)colonialism, and a Soviet-inspired dialectical approach to cinema. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, African filmmakers strove to undo past European narratives and images about their continent and their people, and their films developed, as in Latin America, a national and continental political language that could expose and expel what Sembène described as 'all the things [they] ha[d] inherited from the colonial and neo-colonial systems (qtd. in Pfaff 1984: 11)' (Pfaff 2004: 2). In recent years, post-colonial emphasis on national sovereignty and African cultural integrity has intersected with anxieties about unbounded economic and cultural pressures exerted by globalisation.

Since the 1990s, the principles laid out by Third Cinema have bifurcated: documentary, small, and new media continue to circumvent media conglomerates, financial monopoly, and alternative platforms of distribution whenever possible, while feature-length fiction cinema has produced sophisticated geopolitical allegories engaging the filmmaker's position in a world governed by colonialist, imperialist, and globalist impulses (Jameson 1991; Stam 2003). Brazilian cinema, for instance, has found in 'garbage' a symbolic:

point of convergence [...for the] three themes of hybridity, multiplicity and the



redemption of detritus. [...] captured the sense of marginality, of being condemned to survive within scarcity, of being the dumping ground for transnational capitalism, of being obliged to recycle the materials of the dominant culture. (Stam 2003: 40–41)

African cinema, in comparison, has privileged the metaphor of crossroads in its negotiations of unresolved ‘postcolonial asymmetry’ (Akinwumi 2001: 9). In *Moolaadé* (Sembène 2005), transactions of all kinds (economic, social, sexual and political) continuously draw the characters to the centre of the village; the dramatic junction of several destinies, the place ‘is the point where journeys begin [...] and the place to which the traveler may return’ (Akinwumi 2001: 10). In *Bamako* (2006), Abderrahmane Sissako enacts the impossible intersection of everyday West African life (the conditions of underdevelopment in the global South) and the global Empire: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation, and European neo-colonialism.

Colonialism and globalisation are often seen as equally oppressive and exploitative states that enforce economic dependency and cultural hierarchies between hegemonic powers (Europe, the US, Japan, China, and transnational financial corporate institutions) and the global South, formerly referred to as the Third World (Central and South America, Africa, South-East Asia). The amorphous quality of the global Empire has increasingly blurred boundaries between First, Second, and Third Cinemas. Frank Ukadike notes in several analyses of the transformation of Anglophone African media industries from the 1980s onwards that the ability of Nollywood (the Nigerian commercial video industry), for instance, to emancipate its production from ‘extant distribution/exhibition systems’ and to break traditional categories of spectatorship might seem in line with the goals of Third Cinema. The commitment of these videos to their actual social and ethical emancipation from First Cinema’s commercial popular clichés is nevertheless questionable (Ukadike 2003: 140). Yet, the economic affirmation of India’s Bollywood and Nigeria’s Nollywood has been key in establishing industrial counterweights to Hollywood, disrupting traditional geographies of cultural production and consumption. Similarly, Hollywood itself

has produced over time films denouncing the very hegemonic and imperialist nature of their own structures of production. Certainly the most recent to be worthy of consideration concerns critical accounts of James Cameron’s *Avatar* (2009), one of the largest grossing US blockbusters of all times, that have positioned the film at the intersection of consensual US popular culture and anti-imperialist political charges. Yet, if the charge against imperialism is admittedly visible in Cameron’s ecological plea and denunciation of military neo-liberalism, critics have nonetheless highlighted the film’s inability to articulate a critique of imperialism that could be anything but Western centric (Alessio and Meredith 2012).

The persisting threat of assimilation of anti-imperialist films and practices by the System has only been enhanced by the wide availability of digital technologies from the 1990s onwards. The Internet and new technologies have admittedly opened the gates to seemingly independent, alternative channels of diffusion, reproduction, and (thanks to social media and funding platforms) more recently to production. However, they have also transformed political video making and film making from a fundamentally co-operative project into an individual endeavour. The collaborative dimension, which had been foregrounded in Third Cinema and in post-colonial African aspirations to build national cinemas, has thus shifted from production to reproduction and circulation. Michael Chanan’s most recent work draws attention to the digital renewal of political cinema and video and the role new media might play in the 21st century. In his 2012 e-book, *Tales of a Video Blogger*, Chanan chronicles several forms of ‘citizen journalism’ that preview the form and content of a Third Cinema 2.0. He describes how the production of agitational videos during the 2010 General Election in the UK and the use of mobile phone cameras during the Arab Springs, for instance, adapt and reinvent past experiments, such as the *cine piquetero* movement in Argentina in 2001, and indigenous videos in Mexico, Chile, and Brazil during the late 1980s. As Chanan points out though, imperialism and its critics are now even more closely intertwined as ‘growing numbers of people are using the products of consumerism to try and combat the power of the same global corporate capitalism that sells them the instruments of digital social

communication to begin with' (Chanan 2012: 36).

In their efforts to design an equal, fair and respectful 'conception of the world', anti-imperialist cinemas have always simultaneously engaged different geographical scales of experiences: the local, the national, and the global. Film praxis of anti-imperialism is best described as the endless re-opening of the viewer's relationship with the film, but most importantly, with the world that surrounds him or her. While these political cinemas have already triggered geopolitical shifts, they continue to be seen in oppositional terms vis-à-vis imperialism, a theoretical position that unfairly replicates the normative pre-eminence of exploitative impulses. Michael Chanan's new geographies of Third Cinema fold the margins and the interstices of the global Empire back into its centre; there, he hopes, they can redefine the terms of a collective politics of resistance appropriate to the increasingly interlaced experiences of the social outcasts of the North and the South (Chanan 1997). The programmatic commitment of anti-imperialist cinemas in Latin America, Africa, and South-East Asia evolved but never ceased to question the normativity of Western and American globalism. Yet, fixing these evolutions in the anti-imperialist struggles of the 1960s denies them the complexity of their contemporary responses to social, cultural, and technological transformations. Another geography is possible, and these cinemas have been relentless in uncovering the constant mutability of imperialism, as a political, social, cultural, and economic system, and inviting us to envision a (utopian) alternative to the imperialist essence of modernity. In over half a century, political cinemas of anti-imperialism have shaped an alternative conception of the world. They have 'engag[ed] in practices of global justice confronting all systemic relations of subordination while [staying] committed to establishing projects of egalitarian and pluralist universalism', and in doing so, they have contributed to the critical redefinition of cosmopolitanism, the antithesis of imperialism (Kurusawa 2011: 290).

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# HISTORY

# Anti-Apartheid, Anti-Capitalism, and Anti-Imperialism: Liberation in South Africa

The first Mandela was Jesus Christ. The Second was Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. The third Nelson Mandela are the poor people of the world.

(S'bu Zikode, a leader of Abahlali baseMjondolo, the South African shack dwellers movement, quoted in Gibson 2006: 12)

## Introduction

On 16 August 2012, heavily armed South African police ambushed and hunted down striking mine workers. They killed 34 miners, wounded another 78 and then arrested a further 177 strikers, incredibly charging them with murder. The miners worked at Marikana platinum mine owned by British company Lonmin, and were on strike for a living wage (Alexander et al. 2012). A tough hand had been called for by Cyril Ramaphosa, once a leader of the miners union, but now a multi-millionaire and a Lonmin shareholder. The Marikana Massacre was a turning point, demonstrating beyond reasonable doubt that the ANC Government sides with big business against the workers.

Little over a year later, on 5 December 2013, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, the personification of dignified resistance to apartheid, and his country's first democratically elected president, died aged 94 years. The world's media recalled Mandela's role in leading the ANC liberation struggle, his 27 years in prison, and dwelt at length on the generosity of his spirit in the reconciliation with his former oppressors. Honouring a great man whom they had spent decades fighting was not simple hypocrisy; the international bourgeoisie let out a detectable collective sigh of relief that matters had not turned out worse.

To bracket the Marikana Massacre with Mandela's passing captures the deep ambiguities of contemporary South Africa, where apartheid has gone but capitalism seems as entrenched as ever. What had the liberation struggled achieved? Where did it go wrong? What still needs to be done? Those who see

Mandela as untouchable locate the problem as a post-Mandela degeneration in presidents Mbeki and Zuma. Others see the deal that Mandela struck as the source of the problem, delivering an end to apartheid but on terms that guaranteed private ownership of the means of production. In the early 1990s, the ANC leaders certainly felt faced with a stark choice between a pragmatic peace and revolutionary war. Was the ANC's strategy wrong, or was it just as far as it could get given the balance of forces?

This essay takes the long view on these questions, outlining a series of critical debates concerning the relations between apartheid, capitalism, and imperialism. We focus on the connections between theoretical perspectives and movement strategies, with special reference to the nexus between British imperialism and capitalism in South Africa. Our lens excludes as it magnifies; we do not cover vital related topics including especially the struggle experiences of the African masses, South Africa's occupation of Namibia, and wars against the Frontline States, the impact of the divestment movement led by African Americans, and the role of the US and international finance in apartheid's end game, all of which are needed for a rounded picture.

The theoretical perspectives considered are successively anti-imperialist, anti-apartheid, and anti-capitalist. The essay argues that a new synthesis of these perspectives is possible and necessary. The nub of the debate is the dominant, orthodox, communist strategy of transition summed up in the term 'national democratic revolution'. We will see 'national democratic revolution' had two distinct versions rooted, ultimately, in distinct class interests, and that the concept needs to be rescued from the pro-bourgeois, orthodox communist version. The essay concludes that South Africa today is a particular case of neo-colonial capitalism generating particular forms of resistance that involve fighting racism and imperialism on class terms.

## South Africa and theories of imperialism

The conquest and domination of African peoples in southern Africa feature in the classical Marxist theories of imperialism. Beyond the direct reportage and commentary by Hobson (1900; 1988/1902), the Marxists Hilferding

(1981/1910), Luxemburg (2003/1913), and Lenin (1916a; 1916b) all sought to build this history into a wider theoretical explanation. Between them, these authors address economic, social, and political aspects of the relation between Britain and South Africa. In general, this literature treats the relation as an archetype of modern world imperialism. Moving from the abstract to the concrete, in this section we will ask what did these theorists of imperialism from middle and eastern Europe learn from South Africa?

Starting with the most strictly economic approach, Hilferding concentrates on the reorganisation of capital's corporate forms. He was involved in a simultaneous exposition and critique, a sustained dialogue between the categories of Marx's *Capital* and capitalism as it had evolved a generation later. Hilferding sets up a dialogue with *Capital*; especially Volume 3, Part 5 on the division of profits, which he seeks to extend. Although he does not entirely lose sight of production, Hilferding leaves the labour process in the background. In the foreground are changes in the forms of capital as value-in-circulation, the creation of capital markets, the socialisation of capital, futures markets, joint stock corporations, the stock exchange, and credit as capital that are still recognisable and of enormous significance today.

Hilferding fastens onto the significance of what Marx termed 'fictitious capital', defined as a property claim on future income (Hilferding 1981/1910: 597). He highlights that shares in joint stock companies are a form of fictitious capital, a capitalised claim on the future profits of the company, and so the turnover of these shares 'is not a turnover of capital, but a sale and purchase of titles to income' and that 'aside from the yield their price depends upon the rate of interest at which they are capitalized'; it is therefore 'misleading to regard the price of a share as an aliquot part of industrial capital' (111). When shares are issued and sold for money 'one part of this money constitutes the promoter's profit ... and drops out of circulation in this cycle. The other part is converted into productive capital and enters the cycle of industrial capital' (113). Hilferding's step forward is to identify the inversion of form, how the socialisation of industrial capital is mediated through finance, and that this actually further disguises the source of profits. This is relevant because companies offering

shares in South African gold mines were being launched on the London stock market, thousands of miles away from the site of production, and gave both the London banks and financiers like Cecil Rhodes enormous wind-fall 'promoter profits'.

Hilferding claimed that his study of 'dividends as a distinct economic category' took the analysis of the corporation 'considerably beyond' Marx's 'brilliant sketch of the role of credit in capitalist production' (114–115). This opened the question that Lenin would make explicit: the character of changes in capitalism beyond those analysed by Marx. Marx had already perceived in the capitalist joint stock company 'a necessary point of transition towards the transformation of capital back into the property of the producers, though no longer as the private property of individual producers, but rather as their property as associated producers, as directly social property' (Marx 1981/1895: 568). For Marx, the socialisation of capital showed the real possibility of a mode of production controlled by the associated producers; that is, socialism. Without directly refuting Marx's optimism, Hilferding's analysis registered that the joint stock company had actually become the vehicle for imperialist surplus-profit. The potential for socialist transition that Marx foresaw in the form of socialised capital had turned in a reactionary direction. Hilferding highlighted the export of industrial capital in the production of raw materials, pointing out that price fluctuations and hence profit variability lead to a strong tendency to the formation of cartels in this sector. Capital investment in these new territories, he argued, 'turns towards branches of production which can be sure of sales on the world market'.

Capitalist development in South Africa ... is quite independent of the capacity of the South African market, since the principal branch of production, the working of the gold mines, has a practically unlimited market for its product, and depends only upon the natural conditions for increasing the exploitation of the gold mines and the availability of an adequate work force. (Hilferding 1981/1910: 317)

Hilferding did not delve into the racial colonial processes involved in procuring 'an adequate work force', but he did mark a change in the role of certain colonies within

capitalism as a whole, from commodity consumers to producers of surplus value.

Rosa Luxemburg gave a stirring critique of the racism and violence of colonial capitalism. Her *The Accumulation of Capital* has a chapter on capitalism's struggle against the peasant economy takes South Africa as the major example. Luxemburg charted the dispossession of the original African peoples by the Boer farmers, and then their ousting by the British mining interests. The history is excellent, but there is an issue with her theory. At its most general form, Luxemburg stated:

Imperialism is the political expression of the accumulation of capital in its competitive struggle for what remains still open of the non-capitalist environment. (2003/1913: 426)

While Luxemburg's framing is sensitive to the battles of first nations at the frontiers of expanding capitalism, it is incomplete as a theory of their incorporation as oppressed nations within the capitalist mode of production. She sees the mode of production of the conquered society as persisting in a subordinated relationship to the conquerors, rather than a new synthesis of extended capitalist social relations that also changes the conqueror's mode of production (for elaboration of this idea, see Higginbottom 2011). A form of Luxemburg's argument has been influential in Wolpe's articulation of modes of production approach (see below).

Whereas Luxemburg's theory of imperialism emphasised that capitalism inherently requires sources of value from societies external to it, Lenin's theory is of a capitalism that has been transformed in its expansion. As did Luxemburg, Lenin ascribed great significance to the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902, which he placed with the US war with Spain in 1898 as an historical turning point of global significance. In *Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916a), Lenin argued that these two wars marked a new stage in which a handful of imperial powers fought each other in order to gain colonial possessions; that these wars served to redivide the world between them. Lenin acknowledged that he had learnt much from the 'social reformer' Hobson's 1902 work based primarily on South Africa, describing it as 'a very good and comprehensive description of the principal specific economic and political features

of imperialism'. He saw those features most pronounced in Britain as a 'rentier society' enjoying 'super-profits', and the domination of finance that had sprung from the spectacular profits extracted from South Africa, India, the West Indies, and other colonies.

Most distinctive in Lenin's theory of imperialism is that it has a political side (imperialism as generalised and intensified national oppression) and an economic side (imperialism as monopoly capitalism, the domination of finance) which he did not have time to integrate with Marx's critical political-economy. In contrast to Hilferding's detailed extension of the categories of Volume 3 and Luxemburg's robust critique of Volume 2, Lenin's 'popular outline' on imperialism [(1916a)] does not reference back to *Capital*. He was more concerned to present the totality of contradictions, to connect the military conflict in Europe with the economics of imperialism. In this regard there is a greater theoretical leap with Lenin than with his contemporaries, and because not all the conceptual mediations were filled in, perhaps a leap of faith by Lenin that he had applied Marx's spirit of revolutionary dialectics to the new reality (Anderson 1995).

What Lenin did achieve was the filling out of his concept of modern imperialism as a new stage of capitalism to encompass a fresh look at social class relations. He was especially concerned to chart the social roots of 'opportunism' in Europe, the tendency to reconciliation with the ruling class even as it engaged in imperialist oppression and war. In the rich countries, the working class had become more differentiated, with an upper stratum merging with the petit bourgeoisie that was socially corrupted and bound to the benefits of imperialism, a 'labour aristocracy' that for material as well as ideological reasons backed its own state in the war. Although imperialism had created a split in the working class, resistance had at the same time created the possibility for unity of workers in oppressor and oppressed nations on the political basis of support for national self-determination. In the poor countries, specifically the colonised nations, national liberation movements were agents of rebellion and revolution that the poorer strata of workers in the rich countries should unite with as allies against their own imperialist state and its labour aristocratic defenders (Lenin 1916b).

Another aspect of Lenin's analysis of imperialism was the class relations within the oppressed nation and the social basis of their distinct political objectives. This aspect was quite undeveloped in Lenin's initial analysis, which was challenged by Indian M.N. Roy in debates at the second congress of the Communist International. Together they developed a position that recognised the distinct experiences and role of the working class in the oppressed nation (Lenin 1920; Roy 1922).

The recognition that capitalism had created structural divisions and splits within the working class internationally resonated strongly in South Africa, from where, quoting a contemporary observer Mr Bryce, Hobson reported an 'absolute social cleavage between blacks and whites':

The artisans who today come from Europe adopt the habits of the country in a few weeks or months ... the Cornish or Australian miner directs the excavation of the seam and fixes the fuse which explodes the dynamite, but the work with the pick axe is done by the Kaffir. (Hobson 1900: 293-294)

Half a century later, and this 'absolute social cleavage between blacks and whites' would be pushed yet further.

### Debating the struggle against apartheid

The apartheid system was introduced in 1948 and lasted until South Africa's first non-racial elections in 1994. Apartheid was intense racism across all spheres of life, justified as a programme of 'separate development' for racially identified groups.

After the Second World War, the increasingly urbanised African workforce was employed in manufacturing (men), services and domestic labour (women), as well as on the mines and farms. The entire African population was denied citizenship of South Africa; instead, Africans were designated citizens of ten remote, impoverished, ethnicised Bantustan homeland states to where around 4 million would be forcibly removed as 'surplus people'. Black Africans constituted over 70 per cent of the population but could hold only 13 per cent of the land. The barrage included racial classification of 'Indians' and

'Coloureds' as well. Apartheid's segregation laws meant that all political and economic power was reserved for 'Whites', only 15 per cent of the population (IDAF 1983; Mamdani 1996; Platzky and Walker 1985).

The racist assault called forth a defiant response from the oppressed majority. The ANC Youth League played a leading part in a Defiance Campaign that built up over the 1950s, the era that gave birth to the *Freedom Charter* whose story is told in Nelson Mandela's autobiography and rightly celebrated in most accounts (Mandela 1994). The Charter remains for many the foundational anti-apartheid document. 'The People Shall Govern! ... All National Groups Shall have Equal Rights! it declared. Moreover, its economic demands centred on sharing the country's wealth: 'the mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks, and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole ... and all the land redivided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger' (ANC 1955). The ANC formed a multi-racial coalition around the Charter, including the Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, the (unmarked white) Congress of Democrats, the trade unions, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and so on, designated 'the Congress Alliance'.

Less well known, but of lasting significance, is the emergence of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) at this time. The 'Africanist' PAC was against white supremacy, it had split from the 'charterist' ANC on several related grounds including disagreement with the excessive influence of white communists in its leadership. The PAC pointed out that different national groups were not the same; Africans were the absolute majority and that to put the exploiting, European white minority on the same footing as Africans as a national group was to reproduce white privilege within the Congress Alliance in the name of equality. The PAC identified their commonality with other African liberation struggles, and emphasised the land question, in which regard the PAC saw South Africa as a case of settler colonialism. See especially the PAC's leader Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe's inaugural speech for a clear explanation of these themes (Sobukwe 1959). In practice, the PAC showed a stronger commitment to mass initiative, but weaker organisational infrastructure than the ANC working with the Communist Party.



For example, the 1960 protest at Sharpeville against the pass laws, brutally shot down by the police, was in fact called by the PAC. As both liberation organisations turned to guerrilla armed struggle in the wake of the Sharpeville Massacre they were both banned, their activists hunted down, killed, tortured, and imprisoned. The racist regime even passed a special law allowing it to imprison Sobukwe, as well as Mandela and ANC comrades (Lodge 1983; Poggrund 1990).

### The SACP version of the national democratic revolution

So it was in the immediate context of the Communist Party's rivalry with Pan-Africanism that its version of the national democratic revolution crystallised in the early 1960s. The SACP's forerunner, the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) founded in 1921, had originally been oriented to the white workers and supported their strike in 1922, infamously behind the racist slogan 'Workers of the world, unite and fight for a white South Africa!' The party then shifted attention to the black majority of workers, although the Executive Committee of the Communist International still found it necessary to admonish its South African comrades: 'the CP cannot confine itself to the general slogan of "Let there be no whites and no blacks."' The CP must stand the revolutionary importance of the national and agrarian questions'. It urged the party to invite black workers 'without delay into much more active leadership' (ECCI 1928).

In stating its political strategy 30 years later, the Soviet-inclined 'Marxist-Leninist' SACP still found the use of Lenin's thought to be ideologically central, and so we turn now to that legacy. In his *Two Tactics* booklet written in 1905, Lenin had analysed that there needed to be two revolutions in Russia: first, a democratic revolution to sweep away the Tsarist feudal dictatorship and bring in a democratic republic; then a socialist revolution to get rid of capitalism. Lenin argued an energetic interventionist tactic in the first, democratic revolution, so that it be pushed to its fullest limit, towards a 'revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry'; and that this would be against the bourgeoisie whose instincts were to compromise, to do a deal with the Tsar and the landlord class. In this way the ground would be prepared for passing on to the socialist

revolution. The actual course of the revolution confirmed Lenin's general orientation, albeit in a way that was unexpected due to the realignments of the First World War which saw the Russian bourgeoisie turn ever more decisively against the mass of workers and peasants.

The struggle for independence was of course a long-standing issue for oppressed peoples in countries occupied by European colonialism, that was posed afresh by the national movements in the 20th century. The idea of the national democratic revolution was widely debated in the early years of the Communist International including, as we have indicated, with reference to strategy in South Africa. It was from these antecedents that the SACP constructed its own version of the national democratic revolution. In 1962, the SACP adopted the thesis of 'colonialism of a special type' arguing that the

'the combination of the worst features both of imperialism and of colonialism with a single national frontier', maintained in the interests of all whites, but particularly the monopolies which 'are the real power'. In this 'white colonialist system' the task of the Communist Party 'is to lead the fight for the national liberation of the non-white people, and for the victory of the democratic revolution'. (Davies et al 1984b: 291)

From this perspective, the party gave its 'unqualified support' to the *Freedom Charter*, arguing that, although not itself 'a programme for socialism', nonetheless:

its aims will answer the pressing and immediate needs of the people and lay the indispensable basis for the advance of our country along non-capitalist lines to a socialist and communist future. (SACP 1962)

This ambiguous formulation was to leave many questions open as to how the democratic revolution would connect 'along non-capitalist lines' to a socialist future.

Several crucial points were overlooked in the SACP's rendering of Lenin. First, the whole point of *Two Tactics* was that the working class should ally with the peasantry to together play the leading role in the democratic revolution against feudalism; Lenin

warned that the Russian bourgeoisie would vacillate and seek to make a deal short of full democracy. Second, while the political goal of the democratic revolution was to gain a republic, as that afforded the best grounds for working-class organisation to flourish, its social purpose must be to destroy private ownership in the land. Learning from the experience of peasant revolts against the landlord class, Lenin (1907) went on to emphasise that the land should be nationalised to complete the democratic revolution. As circumstances changed again in the First World War, he added 'nationalisation of the land is not only the "last word" of the bourgeois revolution, but also a step towards socialism' (Lenin 1917, original emphasis). Third, while Lenin retained an analytical distinction between the democratic revolution and socialist revolution, their relationship changed in practice. As the class struggle changed reality, Lenin changed his conceptualisation. In his later understanding, he presented them more and more as phases in a continuous, complex revolutionary process. This applies to the actuality of the Russian revolution itself as well as to anti-colonial struggles; throughout, there was a sense of revolutionary dialectics on how the two could be connected to the best advantage of the working class.

How then would the national democratic revolution to get rid of apartheid be prosecuted to the best advantage of the African working class? The SACP's 'colonialism of a special type' has drawn one line of criticism from Trotskyism on the grounds that it justified armed struggle, and turned away from the specific mission of the working class (Callinicos 1988: 61–72). For Hironson, the SACP's 'two stage theory' of revolution 'became the hallmark of Stalinism in South Africa' (1992: 48). The Trotskyists' critique of 'two stages' (actually two revolutions in the SACP interpretation) and their preferred 'permanent revolution' thesis based on (Trotsky 1906) suffers from two problems (both of which were forms of abstraction). First, it was abstract politically: there was an urgent need for a democratic national liberation movement uniting forces to end racist apartheid, including by violent armed struggle as required. Second, the critique was theoretically schematic: it harked back historically but was disconnected from an actualised political economy of current realities. The left critique of the 'Stalinist' SACP needed to be grounded

in the concrete debate about apartheid's connection with capitalism and imperialism, which was about to surface.

SACP theorist Brian Bunting's book *The Rise of the South African Reich* clarified the direction the party had taken: it sought liberalism as an ally. Bunting identified two wings of Afrikaner political leadership in response to the British state-building strategy that forged the Union of South Africa in 1910. The orientation of 'Milnerism' was the offer of an alliance between the predominantly British mining magnates and Afrikaner settler farmers as the dominant class. Generals Smuts and Botha were for conciliation with the British, Hertzog was for a separate path for Afrikaners (Bunting 1964: 22–23). Bunting emphasised that Hertzog's Nationalist Party supported Hitler in the 1930s. If the point was not sufficiently clear, his book was published with swastikas on its cover. The Afrikaner 'Nats' stood for *wit baaskap* in the 1948 election. Bunting translates *baaskap* literally as 'mastership': Charles Feinstein (2005: 161) translates *wit baaskap* more meaningfully as 'white domination'. The Nationalists gained 70 out of the 150 seats and, as the biggest single party, formed the government that implemented a series of measures to stop all forms of integration; and to enforce racial exclusion of the black majority, brought in *apartheid*, otherwise known as 'separate development'. Bunting portrayed these as 'South Africa's Nuremberg Laws'. He framed apartheid as a policy that was the product of Afrikaner nationalism's convergence with Nazi ideology. This in turn implied a 'popular front' opposition strategy that involved uniting with all possible forces, in particular with British liberal democratic capitalism, against the greater evil. This view of apartheid was widely shared internationally at the time, and in that sense is not exceptional. The significance was that Bunting was an SACP guiding light, yet his analysis suppressed entirely the legacy of Marxist theorising South Africa in its relation with capitalism and imperialism.

In many respects, the strengths and weaknesses of the final outcome of the anti-apartheid struggle were already present in Bunting's analysis. The persistence of this line of thought, despite its obvious one-sidedness, can only be because it corresponds to certain class interests.

### Apartheid as a stage of racial capitalism

In the 1970s there was a flourishing of Marxist scholarship, mostly written in exile, influenced by ideas of the 'New Left', and motivated by the liberation of Angola and Mozambique from Portuguese colonialism and the recovery of struggles inside South Africa, most especially after the Soweto Uprising in 1976.

*The South Africa Connection* by First, Steele and Gurney on Western investment in apartheid is a classic that deserves to be republished. There was a brief dip, then foreign investment surged after the Sharpeville Massacre. Two-thirds of the investment came from Britain, such that 'it is hard to imagine how some sectors, like banking ... would keep going without British backing' (First et al. 1973: 9). The explanation for the investment surge was simple: the spectacular returns to investors 'is exactly what apartheid is all about' (15). First et al. recognised specifically Afrikaner prejudices but, they argued, the difficulty with this description of apartheid:

as the result of a clash between two aggressive nationalisms – African and Afrikaner – does not explain, for one thing, why and how apartheid grew so naturally and effortlessly out of the state policies pursued, not in the Boer Republics but in the British ones, when South Africa was a colony run from Whitehall. (16)

Although they do not critique him directly, First et al. were challenging Bunting's analysis. The emphasis in this new approach was on apartheid as the latest stage of capitalism in South Africa, as well as a set of ethnic/nationalist policies. The starting point of the revisionist school of analysis was the relation between class and race in the formation of a modern, industrial 'racial capitalism'. Harold Wolpe (1972) and Martin Legassick (1974) were founding contributors to this new school, both of whom focused on the system of migrant African labour for the gold fields from 1890 onwards. Frederick Johnstone (1976) and Bernard Magubane (1979) wrestled with theorising the role of British imperialism as colonial capitalism. What is distinctive here is the concentration on the establishment of the corporate mining system as the foundation of modern South Africa, historically prior to apartheid as such.

The new analyses engendered a debate with liberalism, which is reviewed in (Alexander 2003). Could big business become a force against apartheid? Could, as the liberals claimed, foreign investment be portrayed as at all beneficial for the African working class?

The general point that the new Marxists argued is that, contrary to the liberal claim that capitalist growth 'would in the long run undermine the racial structure of apartheid', it was actually accompanied by 'ever increasing repression' (Legassick and Innes 1977: 437). Liberal author Merle Lipton's response argued that, in absolute and relative terms, the condition of African labour was improving. 'If important groups of capitalists are increasingly tending not to support apartheid, then this makes possible the option of cooperation with them' (Lipton 1979: 75). Consequentially, for Lipton, a 'constructive engagement' with big business to end apartheid was viable.

Apart from the empirical grounds of the dispute, and the political consequences, of which more later, there was a theoretical Achilles heel in the Marxist response to the liberals. Although approaching the issue in historical materialist terms, most of the new Marxists balked at a concept of greater exploitation which was required to anchor their argument, to connect racial capitalism with imperialism theoretically.

### Debate over the rate of exploitation

Infrequently cited but worth close attention is the critique of Wolpe by Michael Williams (1975), who applied Marx's theory of money to stress the particularity of gold production in South Africa. Wolpe and Williams made a serious attempt to use the concepts of Marx's *Capital* in their analysis of the specific social relations constituting South African capitalism. Wolpe highlighted that reproduction of migrant labour-power in pre-capitalist societies with low money costs, allowing mining capital to pay low wages to African workers. South Africa emerged as a social formation in which the capitalist mode of production draws value from pre-capitalist modes. Echoing Luxemburg, Wolpe interpreted this relation of exploitation relying on reproduction outside capitalism as the continuation of Marx's 'primitive accumulation'.

Williams's intent was to critique both Wolpe and the SACP thesis. He fastened on the particularities of value production by

African labour in the gold fields. Williams replaced Wolpe's outer contradiction with pre-capitalist modes as the source of extra surplus-value with an inner contradiction peculiar to the capitalist production of gold as the money commodity. Gold mining capitalists had a privileged position that allowed them to draw surplus profits: 'the gold mining industry is in a unique position to reap the benefits of exploitation directly in accordance with the quantity of immediate labour it employs' (Williams 1975: 23). This draws on Marx's theory of absolute rent, and needed further development using the theory of differential rent, but which nonetheless was a big step forward. For a discussion of Williams and Wolpe which argues that the 'articulation of modes of production' is better theorised as a re-articulation of the capitalist mode of production itself, in which race is internalised as part of the capital-labour relation, see (Higginbottom 2011). In place of the notion of colonialism of a special type to explain South Africa's exceptionalism, Williams argued in effect for a fuller concept of capitalism of a special type. With the idea of 'archaic surplus-value' he came close to the categorical breakthrough achieved by Marini in Latin America, with the concept of the super-exploitation of labour, see (Latimer 2014).

In a paper published by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement, Good and Williams (1976) reached a high point from which to take the theoretical debate forward. The purpose was to convince British workers that their solidarity would serve a common interest. What was innovative in their argument was the application of Marx's explanation of the declining rate of profit to the problem, in relatively popular form. They opened their discussion in similar vein to Legassick (1976: 437), who argued that although African workers were paid significantly less than workers in Britain, British workers were nonetheless in a technical sense actually more exploited because they were more productive, and hence received relatively less for their labour. This is more than a view, but rather a widely held ontological assumption of Trotskyism and north-centric Marxism in general. In line with this thinking, Good and Williams offered a worked example to demonstrate the difference in value relations between an 'advanced country' (such as Britain) and a 'neo-colony' (such as South Africa). In their example, productive technique and hence

the ratio of capital invested to labour is much higher in the advanced country, thus:

Let 4:1 be the capital-labour ratio in the advanced capitalist country and 1:4 in the neo-colony; and let 100 per cent be the rate of exploitation in the former and 50 per cent in the latter' (Good and Williams 1976: 8).

The analysis was bounded by these two assumptions; but were they correct?

On the first assumption, Good and Williams's data showed that in 1970 the gross fixed capital formation per manufacturing worker in South Africa was just marginally below that in the UK. But investment in South Africa was increasing faster, so, by 1973, fixed capital per worker was slightly higher in South Africa than in the UK. Insofar as gross fixed capital formation per worker is a reasonable proxy for the mechanisation that led to greater productivity, what Marx termed the technical composition of capital (1976/1867: 762), the UK and South Africa manufacturing averages were roughly equivalent. A Land Rover production line in Pretoria was in fact technically quite similar to one in Solihull, and the workers were similarly productive.

The second assumption of the illustrative example concerned the rate of exploitation, yet this was precisely what had to be investigated rather than assumed. Marx explained that within the capitalist mode of production the rate of exploitation of labour is the same as the ratio of surplus value to variable capital, which he called the rate of surplus value. The rate of exploitation of the workers is the surplus value they produce ( $s$ ) divided by variable capital ( $v$ ) exchanged in wages to purchase their labour power (1976/1867: ch. 11). The ratios of 100 per cent rate of exploitation in the advanced country and 50 per cent in the neo-colony are similar to the ones given by Marx, in a questionable example comparing a European country 'where the rate of surplus value might be 100 per cent' and 'in an Asian country it might be 25 per cent' (Marx 1981/1895: 249), which he did not justify empirically, and which bears no relation to the international production relations of contemporary capitalism, but which has been clung onto as a crutch by subsequent north-centric Marxists. Good and Williams assembled data that showed there could not possibly be a lower rate of exploitation

in South Africa than in the UK, because on the basis of a similar technical composition investors were able to make a significantly higher rate of profit. 'We can only conclude that the relatively high rate of profit in South Africa is more a function of the high rate of exploitation than of low capital-labour ratios' (Good and Williams 1976: 10). The investigation obliged Good and Williams to move beyond their initial assumptions and conclude that the rate of exploitation in South Africa was higher. When we add here that white labour was remunerated on average nine times more than African workers (Martin 2013: 26), and that by this time there were few white workers, rather white supervisors, this higher average rate of exploitation was entirely due to the drastically lower wages paid to the African workers for the same value produced.

We have arrived at a vital point for the political economy of apartheid, capitalism, and imperialism: the rate of exploitation considered quantitatively to demonstrate the material 'cleavage between black and white'. To illustrate, gold mining in South Africa publishes industry figures. This allows us to estimate the degree of exploitation of African gold-mine workers over decades. Selecting the same year that Good and Williams studied (i.e. 1970), the ore milled per worker was 193 metric tons; the average working revenue was R11.24, the working costs R7.34 and the working profit R3.90 per ton. In 1971, the average annual African wage was R209, at 1970 prices. Assuming the 1970 annual wage was also R209, the average wage cost was R209/193, that is R1.08, per ton (Feinstein 2005: 170; Lipton 1986: 410). Assuming that working profit is realised surplus value, and wage cost stands for variable capital, on these figures the gold-mining industry average rate of exploitation of African labour was  $R3.90 / 1.08$  (s/v), or 361 per cent, nearly four times higher than the 100 per cent rate typically cited by Marx. Rather than, as Marx often observed, workers toiling half the working day for themselves and half for the capitalist, the African workers wages were the equivalent of less than a quarter of their labour time, with nearly four-fifths of their time going to the capitalist.

The above analysis corresponds with solidarity initiatives that some trade unionists in the UK, such as the British Leyland workers, were taking against their own bosses

(Luckhardt and Wall 1980: 481–483). On theoretical terrain, it fills a gap left by Hilferding, who viewed the international class relation from its European end, where the benefit to finance was apparent. The promoter's profit made in the launch of new mining companies and income from shares as fictitious capital had, eventually, to come from somewhere. What underpinned the new generation of joint stock companies and other forms of finance capital was at the other end of the relation, fundamentally the system of cheap labour, or super-exploitation of African workers, as the source of the expected surplus-profits (in this case identical to the super-profits in Lenin's terminology).

### The history of imperialism and racial capitalism

The relation of imperialist super-exploitation is the axis around which capitalism in South Africa was built, and which buoyed up the monetary system of British colonialism, extending its life. Within two decades of the initial production on the Rand in the early 1890s, the gold industry employed a quarter of a million African workers at any time, with several times more than that number rotating through the migrant system. The British prosecuted the Second Boer War to wrest control of the Rand from the Afrikaner farmers, who themselves had dispossessed the Africans two generations before. Victorious Lord Milne inaugurated a regime tailored to the needs of mining capital: land laws, the colour bar, and pass controls (Callinicos 1981). The African National Congress came together in 1912, just two years after the birth of the South Africa Union, to protest 'the repression of all blacks in every conceivable form' (Meli 1988: 34).

Around two-thirds of the mine labour force came from outside the borders of the Union (Wilson 1972). In their first two decades, the Johannesburg mining houses were mostly financed from London, with some capital from Germany and France. Milne's project was foundational, shaping the contours of the state as a functioning apparatus of racial repression, and it situated South Africa's location in international political-economic relations. African labour was pulled in from neighbouring colonies, while profits flowed out to London. London moreover consolidated its control over the world's biggest source of gold. Gold bullion boosted the value of pound sterling and the City of

London as a financial centre, and with that extended Britain's imperial privilege (Ally 1994). Once they had secured the Union, the British pursued rapprochement with the Afrikaners to secure internal political stability through white supremacy, in exchange for a share in the spoils. This power shift is seen as one of the 'systemic periods' in South African history that would transition again into apartheid in 1948 (Terreblanche 2002).

A distinctly South African mining monopoly capital emerged when Ernest Oppenheimer formed the Anglo American Corporation in 1917. Using capital investments mostly from the US, Oppenheimer set about bringing the diamond and gold industries under the sway of centralised holding companies. The story is well told in Lanning (1979), and the dedicated book-length study by Innes (1984). These authors point out that underlying Oppenheimer's financial wizardry was an inherent tendency towards monopoly characteristic of gold production. As identified by Williams (1975), insofar as gold is the money commodity, the universal equivalent exchangeable with every other form of abstract human labour, capitalist gold producers have an unlimited demand for their product. Any increase in productivity, reducing production costs and expanding volume, increases profits without undercutting the 'price' of other gold producing capitals. This gave rise to a unique attenuation of competition in certain aspects. The gold mining capitalists of the early Rand were united in their determination to keep labour costs down through industry-wide 'maximum wage agreements', and they had a mutual interest in sharing knowledge on production techniques and output data. Corporate organisation passed quickly from hundreds of individual joint stock companies to just six financial groups that switched capital around a portfolio of gold mines according to their performance (Innes 1984: 55). Monopoly over the diamond industry started at the sales end, a cartel limiting sales to keep the price up. Oppenheimer's innovation was to build on these tendencies and take them to another level. He centralised existing mining corporations into a single conglomerate that rapidly rose to pre-eminence in South Africa, and beyond that into sub-Saharan Africa.

On its internal projection, Anglo American opened up mine production in the Orange Free State after the Second World War,

requiring increased investment in plant and machinery to cope with the mines' extreme depth. The company concentrated its portfolio on the more profitable mines, and emerged as a 'dove' within the Chamber of Mines, lobbying for an increase in black wages that would reduce its reliance on foreign labour, and which it was in the best position to afford. Anglo's intention was not to get rid of the colour bar but to reposition it. The corporation's reforming pressure was within narrow limits defined by self-interest, and in any case could only ameliorate the growing gulf between white and black as captured in their earnings ratio, which had risen from 12 times in 1946 to over 20 times in 1969 (Lanning 1979: 156).

The external projection of the Oppenheimer empire is documented by Lanning and Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah argues that imperialism entered a new stage of neo-colonialism after the Second World War. He sees the essence of neo-colonialism being that although the subordinate state 'is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside' (Nkrumah 2002/1965 ix). Outside direction is targeted at the profitable extraction of Africa's mineral resources. In this regard, Nkrumah showed South Africa in a double relation with the rest of Africa. On the one hand, 'the whole of the economy is geared to the interests of the foreign capital that dominates it' (12) and, on the other hand, white South Africa's mining giant had spread neo-colonial tentacles of its own across Africa. Oppenheimer's De Beers diamond group drew profits from Sierra Leone, the Congo, Tanganyika, Angola, and South West Africa (today Namibia); and Anglo American subsidiaries mined in Rhodesia (today Zimbabwe) and Zambia.

### Neo-colonialism and Black Consciousness

What is striking in Nkrumah's account is the leading of role of mining corporations alongside Finance as the principal vehicles of Africa's continuing neo-colonial domination. In his analysis, the main contradiction is between externally based capital and internally based democracy. This view is deepened by class analysis of neo-colonialism that confronts the voluntary alignment by an aspiring African middle class, choosing to align itself with the interests of

the corporations and imperialism. Fanon (2000/1963) and Cabral (1966) analysed the class aspect of neo-colonialism in its subjective and objective dimensions. They warned against and fought against the neo-colonial alliance as an outcome of the liberation struggle (Saul 2012).

Fanon's mode of thought had its correlate in racist South Africa, Black Consciousness. Writing under the pseudonym 'Frank Talk', Steve Biko urged his fellow blacks to realise that 'the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed' (2002/1978: 68). The government banned Biko in 1973 and made it illegal to quote his words, and yet his thought contributed to a new generation of struggle, the workers revolt in the early 1970s, and most especially the school students' rejection of Afrikaans as the language of their education that animated the Soweto Uprising. Biko was assassinated in 1977, and the next year his comrades formed the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO).

Under the pseudonym 'No Sizwe', Neville Alexander wrote *One Azania, One Nation* to dissect the Nationalist Party apartheid ideology in the construction of groupings of people through the prism of 'race', with the Bantustans as the lynchpin. Alexander brought a fresh perspective into the debate. He argued that understandings of race held by different currents 'tend to become tied to the related question of which class should lead the national liberation movement' (Alexander 1979: 98). He identified three conceptions of national liberation in South Africa. The first, which had been advocated in the ECCI 1928 memo, was for an independent native republic. The second conception was 'the democratisation of the polity within the existing capitalist framework ... that the black people should be integrated in the existing system by being given formal political equality' (285–286, original emphasis), as advocated by the SACP/ANC alliance (whether this is a fair characterisation of the *Freedom Charter* is part of the debate). Alexander advocated a third conception: the unity of the non-Europeans to overcome the white bourgeois class strategy of division and fragmentation in which 'the nation ... consists of all the people who are prepared to throw off the yoke of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression' (290). 'Azania' was the term adopted to relay the idea of one nation of all the oppressed.

Black Consciousness drew in some measure from the transition that took place amongst African Americans from civil rights to radical nationalism. The debates over how to defeat racism arose in different contexts, yet began to overlap.

### Debating solidarity strategy

Another aspect of the debates internal to the movements, that indeed throws light on them, is the debate on international solidarity strategy.

As we have seen, First et al. (1973) had pointed out the vital importance of the South Africa connection for sustaining the imperialist character of British capitalism, with 10 per cent of its direct investments and 13 per cent of its foreign profits worldwide (1973: 334). To the economic we should add military collaboration, on which Labour Governments in the 1940s, 1960s and 1970s had an appalling record, especially with regard to purchasing uranium from South Africa and illegally occupied Namibia (Brockway 1975; Moorsom 1982). Far from banning the nuclear bomb, Labour had connived with apartheid to make it. This raised again Lenin's analysis of the labour aristocracy, a privileged layer expressed through the official labour movement that would block effective moves to undermine the very relation from which it drew its privilege (Yaffe 1976).

The debate over solidarity strategy has been resurrected in recent publications. Fieldhouse (2005) offers a history of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) as a pressure group. Thörn (2006) conceives of 'anti-apartheid' as a social movement, a successful campaign that he presents as a model for transnational action. Both works downplay the degree of British involvement with apartheid; that is, they express the AAM's standpoint in the debates of the time, drawing at least one sharp review (Brickley 2005). There is an ongoing research project that investigates the views and actions of participants in what became known as the militant wing of anti-apartheid and which offered a distinct strategy, the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group (Brown and Yaffe 2014). It is timely to review the debate, not least for any lessons that may be drawn for future international solidarity campaigns.

Even by its own terms of maximising unity against apartheid, the AAM made a strategic error. In practice, its mobilisation against

British collaboration with apartheid was constrained to what was acceptable to the official trade unions and Labour Party in Britain, and since Labour had in government itself collaborated fully with apartheid, the extent of AAM action was generally no more than formal lobbying. In fact, most purposeful initiatives to break the routine of collaboration came from outside the official AAM, the clearest indicator being the Stop the Seventy Tour (Hain 1971: 120–125).

The question of unity needs to be considered dialectically in relation to the struggle. The right point of unity in the struggle cannot be defined in the abstract, but in the concrete (Cabral 1989). It was the masses in South Africa, in Namibia, their liberation movements and the Frontline States who were fighting apartheid directly, and their struggle was the primary motor for the entire movement. The solidarity movement was a support base that could only fight apartheid indirectly, a secondary but nonetheless important role, and to do that effectively it had to have its own clear strategy. In its close co-operation with the SACP and the ANC, the official AAM strategy confused roles whereas there was a need to distinguish between them. If the solidarity movement had a single issue to concentrate on, it was to isolate apartheid, to weaken it from without and that meant fighting collaboration between its own establishment and the apartheid regime, to work for sanctions. To do otherwise would be to renege on its specific responsibility. The greater the collaboration, as in the case of imperialist countries such as Britain and the US, the more this was so. In fighting British collaboration with apartheid, solidarity forces in Britain were providing the most effective contribution they could to fighting apartheid (Brickley et al. 1985).

A further problem became ever more evident. The mobilising activity of the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group came across a second constraint, that given its position as a solidarity campaign was at first difficult to accept and later even harder to comment on publicly. Despite their anti-imperialist rhetoric, the SACP and ANC were in practice opposed to an anti-imperialist campaign that risked alienating allies in the Labour Party and other sectors of the British establishment. They were closely tied to the AAM, its orientation was theirs too. Once this was realised, the sectarianism of the ANC towards solidarity with other currents arising in South Africa, its

tendency to put itself forward as the sole representative, to discourage direct trade-union solidarity links, and to court only social-democratic support all fell into a new light.

In the meantime the struggle had taken a leap forward. The racist regime was confronting manifold political and economic challenges that led it to instigate a phoney reform programme of controlled internal changes (Price, 1991). The combination of co-option and repression failed to stem the upsurge in popular protest. The United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed in 1983 to oppose a stooge ‘tricameral parliament’, a national organisation with an international audience. The UDF was an internal correlate of the ANC, linking it to the mass upsurge on the programme of anti-apartheid unity. Murray (1987) relates the widespread eruptions of popular revolt, ‘stay-away’ strikes, civic protests, and the broadening of political struggle in the mid-1980s. Every time the regime turned the screw, the resistance grew. The Vaal Uprising in 1984 was an explosion of working-class rebellion. Even the State of Emergency in 1985 could not halt the protest spreading nationwide. To his lasting credit, Mandela steadfastly refused to countenance any deal short of one person one vote, even at the expense of staying in prison. Towards the end of the decade the regime was reaching an impasse, every move it made thwarted by the preparedness for insurrection, not by the increasingly concerned ANC/UDF leadership but from grass-roots forces, whether UDF aligned or not. It was doubtful they could be held back, raising the possibility of an internal people’s war to match the wars going on outside South Africa’s borders.

Ten years of Kissinger’s policy of ‘constructive engagement’ had failed to rescue Pretoria, cracks were appearing in the alliance of international forces protecting the regime. The State of Emergency had the unintended consequence of unsettling international lenders, who from the credit crisis of 1985 began to look for an exit strategy (Ovenden and Cole 1989: ch. 4). Sanctions had really begun to bite (Commonwealth Committee 1989; Orkin 1989). South Africa’s ‘total strategy’ security doctrine meant saturation terror in Namibia, and took an awful and devastating toll on the adjoining populations of Mozambique, Angola and the other frontline states (Hanlon 1986). At the close of several months of fighting, at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, in early 1988, Cuban-piloted planes and tanks helped



Angola's MPLA Government defeat the invading South African forces. After having inflicted tens of thousands of African casualties, hundreds of white South Africans were now also being killed. Not only had South Africa's invasion of Angola been repulsed, its ability to maintain the occupation of Namibia without further morale-sapping losses was doubtful. Forced back on its external front, and facing internal insurrection, the racist minority regime's capacity to sustain total warfare had been tested to breaking point. The apartheid state could no longer guarantee capital accumulation and racial domination, the question of reform or revolution had truly arrived. On the side of white supremacy, P.W. Botha's resignation in 1989 cleared the way for new president F.W. de Klerk to address the previously unthinkable: steps towards a negotiated non-racial settlement (Price 1991: 11).

### **Beyond apartheid: managed transition**

By the mid-1980s, the racist regime had entered into a prolonged 'organic crisis' (Saul 1986). As reflected in publications such as *Work in Progress*, *Transformation*, *South Africa Labour Bulletin* and *South African Review* the debate on the opposition side had returned with fresh immediacy to the question of political power and what would happen beyond apartheid.

### **Two class interpretations of the national democratic revolution**

Under the pressure of an intensifying class struggle, two distinct and, in class terms, opposing interpretations of the national democratic revolution emerged. What 'two tactics' meant for the South African revolution was about to become clear.

The general history of workers' organisations and trade unions in South Africa is told up to 1950 from the SACP perspective by Simons and Simons (1983). Luckhardt and Wall (1980) provide a comprehensive history of the pro-ANC South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) until the end of the 1970s. At this time there was a resurgence of trade unionism inside South Africa, especially in the Eastern Cape, and with it came a new debate between 'workerists' and ANC 'populists'. Eddie Webster's study of workers' arduous conditions in metal foundries linked changes in the labour process to the radical form of

trade unionism that these workers created, based on the role of the shop steward. Webster saw the rise of the shop stewards' movement as 'a challenge from below' (1985: 231) and 'the birth of working class politics' (261). Webster worked with the FOSATU federation formed in 1979, the 'workerist' tendency that emphasised rank-and-file trade unionism. Steven Friedman (1987) covered the black trade unions as a journalist, telling the story of the Durban strikes in 1973 and the debate inside the movement about whether to register with the state after the Wiehahn reforms, which FOSATU did, but the SACTU/ANC-aligned unions refused seeing registration as tacit collaboration. The SACTU/ANC 'populist' tradition came forward into a new generation of general unions linked with community-based struggle organisations. Leaders like Moses Mayekiso emerged who embodied both strands.

COSATU was formed in 1985 from the convergence of unions led by the 'workerist' and 'populist' tendencies, and the 180,000 strong National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) that broke away from another federation, CUSA. The independent union movement had swollen from just 10,000 members in 1976 to COSATU's 600,000 members (Naidoo 1986), with 250,000 more in other federations. The first years of COSATU bore great promise of possibilities for united worker resistance, and within its first eight months the federation led the two biggest strikes in South Africa's history. It was mobilising against the immediate challenge of the regime's restrictive Labour Bill, and in a wider sense to bring apartheid to an end. COSATU general secretary, Jay Naidoo, made the point that COSATU was engaged in the general democratic struggle, both as an independent organisation of the working class and an essential component of the democratic forces:

It is clear that in the specific conditions of our country it is inconceivable that political emancipation can be separated from economic emancipation. (Goddard 1986: 10)

COSATU's inaugural congress was a high point, calling for disinvestment and resolving to support all sections of the oppressed:

To call for a national strike should the apartheid regime carry out its threat to repatriate any migrant workers ...

... under capitalist conditions of exploitation unemployment is a reality facing every worker at all times. To establish a national unemployed workers' union as a full affiliate ...

... women workers experience both exploitation as workers and oppression as women and that black women are further discriminated against on the basis of race ... (ibid.)

In terms of strategy, Naidoo asserted:

We are not fighting for freedom which sees the bulk of workers continuing to suffer as they do today. We therefore see it as our duty to promote working-class politics. A politics where workers' interests are paramount in the struggle. (ibid.)

This was a militant reformulation of the national democratic revolution strategy in terms 'where workers' interests are paramount' (emphasis added). Meanwhile some distance away, in London in fact, SACP leader Joe Slovo was likewise reformulating the concept of national democratic revolution, but in the opposite direction, onto terms where capitalist interests would be paramount:

For some while after apartheid falls there will undoubtedly be a mixed economy, implying a role for levels of non-monopoly private enterprise represented not only by the small racially oppressed black business sector but also by managers and business people of goodwill who have or are prepared to shed racism. (cited in Reed 1986: 10)

As David Reed pointed out, Slovo was deliberately imprecise, 'his failure to specify that the land and monopoly industry will be expropriated' tailored to assure 'disparate forces' ranging from Anglo American to the British Labour Party that private enterprise would be safe (ibid.). This was a retreat from the 1962 programme, whose 'non-capitalist lines' had become capitalist lines; and a long step away indeed from Lenin's 'nationalisation of the land is not only the "last word" of the bourgeois revolution, but also a step towards socialism', which in the South African context could only translate into nationalisation of

the mines and mineral resources. This, then, was an intended reformulation of the national democratic revolution, into terms where the interests of big capital would remain paramount.

Still, the message was coded. Wolpe's insistence upon contingency in the concept of national democratic revolution (1988: 32) was an adroit supporting move to Slovo; any realistic strategy needed to take into account the unknowns of political struggle. Those more schooled in Marxism might recall that Lenin himself updated his view on how the analytically separable democratic revolution and the socialist revolution were connected in practice. Yet, for all the sophisticated pseudo-theoretical argumentation (Slovo 1988), the SACP's revived version of the 'national democratic revolution' proved to be so elastic that it meant all things and none. It took some time for the realisation to emerge that the SACP's version of 'contingency' in the national democratic revolution meant something altogether different to Lenin's; in fact, it was not contingent at all but its opposite, the enforced separation between ending apartheid and bringing down capitalism. In practice, it was used to cover up not only the ANC's historic compromise, but whatever venal opportunism was attendant upon it (Bond 2000; McKinley 1997).

### Regulation theory in the moment of transition

Meanwhile, as the endgame of apartheid approached, a particular school of political economy arose temporarily like a fashion. At the end of the 1980s, a group of scholars working with the union federation COSATU developed an analysis of organic crisis in South Africa based on the 'regulation' approach from France. They were to pave the way and give a radical economics gloss to the political turnaround that was about to take place. The approach theorises changes to capital accumulation in any given capitalist society using the inter-related concepts of regime of accumulation, mode of exploitation, and regulation. In this view, regulation is broadly 'the way in which the determinant structure of a society is reproduced' (Aglietta 1980: 13). Applying this to South Africa, Stephen Gelb argued that the post-war accumulation model crystallised by apartheid was best conceived as a 'racial Fordism'. Henry Ford had not only pioneered mass production, but linked this

to a society of mass consumption in the US: his workers should earn enough to own one of the cars they produced. Gelb saw a similar accumulation model combining mass production and consumption in South Africa, with the crucial qualification that it was racially structured: wages were limited and consumption was limited, only white workers were paid enough to afford a car. Racial Fordism was necessary to cement the support of the white population, and possible so long as it could be built on the continuing success of mining. South Africa has chosen an accumulation strategy that 'made possible the importation of the capital equipment necessary to expand manufacturing' (Gelb 1991: 15).

Contingency is built into the regulation mode of analysis, too, as it seeks to explain why one strategy is adopted rather than another. The 'racial Fordism' strategy relied on the dollar price of gold and other mineral exports to pay for the imports. There was a competition for investment between mining and manufacturing. Their growing demand for skilled but cheap labour led capitalist organisations to press for the colour bar to float, that is to allow some African workers into occupations previously reserved for whites, and into more settled urban living. These were changes that were resisted by the political regime, putting 'racial Fordism' into crisis. In this regard, Gelb noted without irony the convergence of his analysis with the calls for reform by Harry Oppenheimer, inheritor of the Anglo American Corporation (19–20).

Gelb argued the need for an alternative economic strategy in which the 'developmental state' was the central actor that would lead social restructuring to the benefit of the working class. The agency of the state was 'an essential counterweight to the inevitable reluctance of extremely powerful private economic agents, especially the conglomerates, to bring about a fundamental shift in economic development' (31). The strategy the regulationists proposed was a series of industrial-sector plans requiring the co-operation of business and labour under the direction of government. Redirecting finance to invest in state priorities would be a particular challenge given South Africa's 'highly concentrated corporate structure, which dominates the provision of external finance to industrial firms' (31). Behind the apparent pragmatism of the approach was a huge dose of utopianism: wishful thinking that the conglomerates

would accept an arrangement in which their profitability would be subordinated to a social justice agenda through state-directed plans for each industry. Bond (2000) and many others point out that in practice the opposite happened: big business controlled the economic policies of the post-apartheid state.

There are weaknesses at the heart of the regulation theory that correspond to its exponents' technocratic tendency. The theory, Gelb argued, 'focuses above all on the process of exploitation in class societies; that is, the appropriation by one class of the surplus produced by another. The various processes through which this surplus is expanded or contracted, comprise the major driving force in the accumulation process' (Gelb 1991: 9). This claim is not substantiated. On the contrary, regulation theorist Aglietta doubts the essentiality of surplus value as a concept (1980: 15), and rejects the concept of imperialism 'as an ambiguous notion' (29). In Gelb's book, none of the sector chapters actually look at the issue of surplus value and exploitation. What emerged from the regulation school's apparent sophistication was actually a watered down version of Marxism. It recognised class struggle, but without relating it to workers' production of surplus value and its conversion into capital, that is with the general law of capital accumulation; it recognised monopoly capital is a social power and yet hung back from its conversion into social property, as we have seen Marx had anticipated.

At the vital moment, these theoreticians bestowed a 'New Left' patina to the SACP/ANC's compromise with capital. But what about the third party in the alliance: the trade unions? Despite being positioned as advisers to COSATU, the crucial political factor that the regulationists ignored was the revolutionary potential of the mass movement, the only actor capable of breaking the power of the banks and conglomerates to enforce their nationalisation. Instead the regulationists advocated a 'developmental state' to counterweight big capital. This set them on a trajectory; the trade-union researchers became ANC government advisers and reluctant co-authors of the neo-liberal programme.

### From regulation to reconciliation

The commitment of the political executive is pivotal in the power play between state and capital. By 1991, the ANC had already

sufficiently indicated its accommodation with big business to bring into serious doubt its intention of implementing the regulationists' advised alternative strategy. While the tensions within the triple alliance would take several years to eventually play out, the ANC leadership was already courting big business. On 4 July 1990, Nelson Mandela addressed British businessmen on the 'critical need' for rapid growth that 'cannot happen without large inflows of foreign capital' (cited in Padayachee 1991: 108). The transition was going to be managed top-down. As Marais puts it:

The ANC's historical privileging of the political over the economic invited a settlement that would allow for significant restructuring of the political sphere, and broad continuity in the economic sphere. (2011: 70)

The lynchpin of the continuity was the arrangement made with a core group of multinationals led by Anglo American, as detailed by Terreblanche (2002) and Marais (2011). The die was fully cast in 1993 when, as part of the power-sharing interim government, the ANC applied secretly for an IMF loan, with the standard conditions attached (Martin 2013: 163). The outcome was a reconciliation with white-owned capital and imperialism that pushed socialism off the agenda (Bond 2013, pp. 575–576).

### South Africa after apartheid

Democratic rule was welcomed, but class divisions have polarised. The unemployment rate actually increased from 28 per cent in 1995 to 42 per cent in 2003, and by 2013 stood at 34 per cent (Di Paola and Pons-Vignon 2013); (Kingdon and Knight 2009). 55 per cent of 23 year olds are not in education, employment or training (Lolwana 2014). 65 per cent of African women are unemployed (Ntlebi 2011) Income distribution is still highly racialised, 'in 2005/06, whites accounted for 9.2 per cent of the population but netted 45 per cent of total household income' (Marais 2011: 209). The African population suffers one of the worst levels of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in the world (264). Migrant mine workers still suffer silicosis and other crippling diseases on an industrial scale (McCulloch 2013). Johannesburg is

threatened by rising acid mine water, Soweto is still rimmed by poisonous tailings dumps, and communities in the Mpumalanga coalfield are engulfed by a cocktail of pollutants. According to environmental activist Matthews Hlabane 'the soil is burning and full of salt, the water is contaminated, the air is dangerous' (cited in Munnik 2008: 52).

Black economic empowerment (BEE) has meant business opportunities for some, but it is no more than a minority who have prospered, 'the real beneficiaries of the democratic breakthrough have been the various fractions of the black middle classes, which have seen rapid growth' (von Holdt 2013, 593). South Africa after apartheid has not been a utopian experience for the working-class majority of the black majority. The decision of the ANC to embrace the neo-liberal model has layered a new set of ills over the apartheid legacies of debt, disease, violence, exclusion, poverty, and environmental disaster. Good entry points into the critical literature that grasp the real content of the transition are Marais (2011), Satgar (2102), Terreblanche (2002), and von Holdt (2013).

A critical perspective from within liberal democracy is exemplified by Andrew Feinstein (2009) and R.W. Johnson (2010), who are scandalised by defence minister Joe Modise's corrupt arms deal with a British Aerospace consortium. Their justified exposure of the ANC in power is, however, shorn of any critique of its neo-liberalism. In similar fashion, Plaut and Holden (2012) ask 'Who rules South Africa?', and answer narrowly and only in terms of political parties rather than the socio-economic structures of class (and race) power. Liberals do not like the ANC's corruption, advancing to degeneration under Mbeki and Zuma, but they nonetheless back its economic programme. Liberal historian Leonard Thompson's *History of South Africa* identifies that once reconciliation was achieved the Mandela Government had two major goals: 'to create growth and to improve the quality of life for the majority of citizens', but, he asserts, 'if both goals were pursued simultaneously from the beginning of the new regime, they would not be compatible' (2001: 278). That is, within the liberal paradigm, a challenge to private property relations is even now off the agenda; what is needed to deepen democracy is first and foremost more capitalist economic growth providing the base for a future redistribution of wealth.

Recognising growth first, redistribution later was the ANC's 'crash course in reality'. But we have been here before; this is trickle down, the mantra of neo-liberalism.

### Neo-liberalism after apartheid

Vishwas Satgar (2012) provides a critical overview of the post-apartheid period. He draws on neo-Gramscian, global political economy to question the characterisation of the South African state as a 'developmental state', as it is not pursuing any substantive strategy of state-led industrialisation and redistribution. Satgar sees South Africa as fully aligned with the post-Washington consensus version of neo-liberalism. The state interventions that take place are to facilitate market efficiencies, capital investment, and accumulation. The economic structural roots are to be traced back to the late 1980s and the outward movement of finance capital that continued through the 1990s into the post-apartheid era. Through a series of programmes, the ideology of the ANC as the ruling party has indigenised and given 'an African voice to neoliberalism' (43). Satgar sees the state as no longer managing national capitalism, but transnational capitalism: 'South Africa's mode of production is now driven by an externalised logic' (44). The 'externalised logic' is competitiveness in global markets. ANC Governments have sought to impose the drivers of competitive advantage through trade liberalisation, tight monetary and fiscal policies, and dismantling self-sufficiency. It was in this third dimension that the peculiarities of apartheid's political economy were most strongly present. The legacy included a comprehensive array of parastatal energy corporations across the steel, coal, electricity, and hydrocarbon sectors, as well as arms manufacture and transport infrastructure that in the ANC's initial Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) would continue as the crucial hub to endogenous development. The approach was quickly undermined by the adoption in 1996 of the misnamed Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) framework.

Satgar acknowledges that state programmes provide 14 million people with social grants and have built a million houses, an example of 'post-Washington' poverty alleviation measures; nonetheless, 'underpinning this reality is a state incapable of stemming

the tide towards deepening inequality' (54). Many in social movements targeted by the ANC machine might go further to argue that the state is not only incapable but decidedly unwilling.

### Post-apartheid into globalisation: Global apartheid

Fine and Rustomjee make an important analysis of South Africa's economy, arguing that the 'minerals energy complex' (MEC) remains at its centre and furthermore plays 'a determining role throughout the rest of the economy' (1996: 5). 'Complex' suggests interconnection and these authors delineate the inputs and outputs that were constructed over decades around three principals: the mining corporations; formerly state, now privatised state energy corporations; and, at its hub, finance. The complex gives the economy unusual characteristics. Coal is largely exported or turned into gas or electricity, rather than consumed in homes. The South African economy is 'uniquely electricity-intensive', with 40 per cent of electrical energy used 'in mining and mineral processing' (8). These authors recognise the continuing central importance of Anglo American and its association with 'South Africa's highly developed financial institutions', and point out that in this system of accumulation, Finance is the epicentre of the complex (91–92). Drawing on O'Meara (1983), Fine and Rustomjee (1996) analyse the process whereby Afrikaner capital emerged in the inter-war period to compete and converge with English capital. They trace the inputs and outputs to the mining and energy complex, note the growth of uranium and platinum mining, and review debates on industrial policy. Bell and Farrell (1997) and Natrass and Seekings (2011: 549) argue that the MEC interpretation overstates the weight of the minerals energy complex by including all related manufacturing, and understates the extent of diversification of manufacturing sectors.

The restructuring of mining capital and other conglomerates throughout the transition is a vital topic. Cross-sector shifting of investments complicates the picture. In the late 1980s, a lot of foreign corporations, especially US ones, divested from South Africa. Sanctions penned the mining corporations into their domestic capital markets, so they bought into the businesses previously owned by foreign capital, for example the automotive

industry, as analysed in (Barnes 2013). From its inception in the 1920s, the industry's production combined imported kits with increasing local content. The 1980s saw 'South African mining houses and pension funds acquiring the assets of the departing MNCs' (249), a consequence of the pressure of sanctions. By 1993, mining capital dominated vehicle production. The sole exception was Volkswagen, which stayed throughout. The other multinationals returned in the 1990s to form joint ventures with local capital, then further buy-outs such that since 2008 all the seven major vehicle manufacturers have been 100 per cent owned by global brand multinationals.

In correlation with these movements has been the 'offshoring' of big mining capital's headquarters as soon as it was able to do so after 1994. Fine and Rustomjee highlight the 'extent of capital flight' (1996: 11, 177) that was at first illegal but has since been officially allowed. The phenomena are investigated in a series of studies that probe:

a particular combination of short-term capital inflows (accompanied by rising consumer debt largely spent on luxury items) and a massive long-term outflow of capital as major 'domestic' corporations have chosen offshore listing and to internationalize their operations while concentrating within South Africa on core profitable MEC sectors. (Ashman et al.: 2010: 178)

Capital flight averaged over 9 per cent of GDP from 1994–2000, rising to 12 per cent between 2001 and 2007. Major corporations 'such as Anglo American, De Beers, Old Mutual, South African Breweries, Liberty, Sasol and Billiton' have relisted on the London Stock Exchange (Ashman et al. 2011: 13). The moves are a combination of push and pull factors. Moving out corporate HQs means that dividend payments escape South Africa's exchange controls and removes the corporations from any risk of nationalisation. Moving to London provides security, a better access to credit, and an enhanced platform for global operations. These corporations that were the principal economic beneficiaries of more than a century of racial capitalism have internationalised their operations through London and repositioned themselves as global players.

Ashman and Fine (2013) link the offshoring process with the restructuring of the financial sector in South Africa itself, which by 2010 was dominated by just four conglomerates: Standard Bank, ABSA, First Rand, and Nedbank, which between them control 84 per cent of the market. Two of these 'Big Four' have a London connection. UK-based Barclays Bank bought a controlling share in ABSA in 2005; and Nedbank is controlled by Old Mutual, the insurance conglomerate that moved to London and is 'placed thirtieth of the world's most powerful corporations' (165).

As well as capital flight, relocating the site of capital ownership, there is the distinct question of capital flows into and out of the country. South Africa was 'the single largest investor in FDI projects in Africa outside of South Africa itself in 2012' (Ernst and Young 2013: 5). South Africa is also the destination for more FDI projects than any other African country (31). The top five source countries for FDI projects in Africa from 2007–12 were the US, UK, France, India, and South Africa. China is ninth on the list. The UK had three times more projects. Of the top ten global mining corporations with direct investments in Africa, three (arguably four) are UK-based, and three are South Africa-based (Fig 2014). Each of the UK-based global mining corporations has significant connections with South Africa.

We started this essay with Hilferding, to whom Ashman et al. (2010: 175) wrongly ascribe the idea that industrial and banking capital fuse to form finance capital. As we have seen, his argument is rather that they are 'intimately related' through credit and capital markets, and the form of the linkage is fictitious capital. More generally, there is yet to be a positive connection between theories of imperialism and the particular form of neo-liberalism and capital restructuring in contemporary South Africa.

William Martin (2013) takes a world-systems approach to framing South Africa within international racial hierarchies of core and periphery countries. Like Fine and Rustomjee, he gives special emphasis to the industrialisation that took place in the inter-war period. He looks closely at the policies of the Nationalist and Labour Pact Government from 1924 with case studies of railways, banking, and tariffs. The government built a fully national railway system, whose extension and tariffs were geared to the needs of white

farmers and white labour rather than the mining magnates. South Africa created its own reserve bank so that monetary policy, specifically decisions to go on and off the gold standard, were not so directly tied to British imperial interest. Similarly, South Africa sought a customs union with its neighbours, on terms that would favour its interests. The state steel corporation ISCOR was constructed in the 1930s to locally supply mines, rail, and incipient manufacturing industries. Martin argues that with these changes South Africa managed to industrialise and emerge as a 'semi-peripheral' state, a relation that has seen major continuity into the post-apartheid period as South Africa continues to export manufactures and capital to its sub-Saharan neighbours. Bond reads this unequal relation as 'aspirant sub-imperialism' (2008: 25).

### Social movement struggles and politics

This essay cannot do justice to the depth and diversity of social struggle movements in post-apartheid neo-liberal South Africa. It is nonetheless essential to appreciate the creative mainspring, the energy of the working class in resistance. *Challenging Hegemony* collects excellent essays on social movements in peri-urban Johannesburg, the National Land Committee of rural farm dwellers, and the Treatment Action Campaign's patient-led fight for state support and treatment of HIV/AIDS (Gibson 2006).

Ashwin Desai's *We are the Poors* relays the eruption of community-based class struggles. Community movements have sprung up amongst the poor in Chatsworth near Durban and other townships nationwide, fighting against the effects of neo-liberalism on their lives. The trigger issues are the state's callous determination to drive through market solutions to problems of service provision. Metropolitan councils insist on 'cost recovery', rent debt collection and disconnection for non-payment for water and electricity services. With ever more workers unemployed or at best casually employed, they simply cannot pay. The impoverished find ways to reconnect their homes, to resist evictions, to stand up to ANC local councillors and the police. Drawing on past struggle experiences, but also overcoming old divisions, people in the new movements are taking collective action for their very survival, putting themselves

onto the frontline with innovative direct-action tactics. Starting from their immediate need to stop cut-offs and evictions, communities united around the Durban Social Forum, 'New Apartheid: Rich and Poor'. Durban in 2001 was 'the first time a mass of people had mobilized against the ANC government' (2002: 138).

The ANC's neo-liberal programme continues to evoke counter-movements. In the Western Cape, Mandela Park is another community that found itself under armed assault by the state, its leaders either imprisoned or on the run, for resisting mass evictions from privately built housing. The evictions were consequent on the ANC's adoption of a Structural Adjustment Programme in 1996. The company manufacturing the pre-paid water meters is Conlog Holdings, the same corporation that Modise took directorship of as reward for the British Aerospace fighter deal (Pithouse and Desai 2004).

Social movements face considerable problems in finding a way to consolidate an ongoing political project. Trevor Ngwane was an ANC councillor in Johannesburg who refused to implement party policy to privatise domestic services. He was thrown out of the ANC and then stood against them on an anti-privatisation platform. The Anti-Privatisation Forum was formed in 2000 to unite struggles by grass-roots campaigns fighting the electricity cut-offs and the privatisation of workers' jobs at Wits University (Ngwane 2003; Buhlungu 2004). It was from independent social struggles like these, that Ngwane and other socialists began to advocate the formation of an independent workers party, see Bond, Desai and Ngwane (2012). Against this perspective, Buntu Siwisa (2010) recognises the breakdown of social citizenship exemplified by the APF, but disputes that 'intellectuals-cum-activists' have a mandate from the urban poor for forming an electoral alternative to the ANC. Another explanation for the difficulty that social movements have is that they are subject to dirty tricks and repression by the ANC at the local level (Zikode 2013). The rural poor, farmworkers, went on strike in 2012 (Jara 2013). The persistence of these social struggles from below is a constant reminder that, despite the difficulties, there is a possibility of a party emerging to the left of the ANC. Several populist pretenders have thrown their hats into the electoral ring, but the more difficult challenge remains of

constructing an inclusive and non-hierarchical social and political national movement.

The recovery of the mass movement is ongoing. In the communities, despite ANC-directed state violence against it, the shack dwellers movement Abahlali baseMjondolo continues to resist and 'walk the talk' of advocating socialism from below (Zikode 2013).

Barchiesi (2011) emphasises the precarious and insecure conditions of the working poor. He encountered 'disorientation, apprehension and disillusionment' (xvii) of municipal workers in Johannesburg and industrial workers in the East Rand. On the demoralisation and decline of collective solidarity in the NUM, see Beresford (2012). There are developments in trade unions across many sectors breaking from the ANC alliance (Amandla! 2013). There is a fight to recover the independence of COSATU from the ANC/SACP; as a result, the now biggest affiliate, the metal workers union, has declared the need for a united front and a new workers party (NUMSA 2013).

In party-political terms, the biggest turnaround has been the emergence of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) under the leadership of Julius Malema, former president of the ANC Youth League. The ANC expelled Malema in February 2012 for fomenting divisions and tarnishing the party's reputation. The criminal charges against him for money laundering and corruption may have been politically motivated, they may be true; either way, Malema's radical discourse has resonated with a growing audience amongst those disillusioned with 20 years of ANC rule. The political issue that got Malema into trouble with the ANC hierarchy was pushing for nationalisation of the mines and the land. Malema visited the striking Marikana miners two days after the Massacre, the first national political figure to do so. He condemned the shootings, attacking the mine's British owners and Cyril Ramaphosa, 'the ANC in government eat with the British' (City Press 2012). Malema returned in October 2013 as the EFF launched itself at a mass rally in Marikana with the slogan 'Economic Freedom in our Lifetime' (Mvoko 2013). The EFF has combined the left wing of the ANC with the Africanist and Black Consciousness traditions, both in its imagery and radical programme (Fogel 2013), and has mounted enough of an electoral challenge to the ANC to take over 6 per cent of the

votes, gain 25 seats, and a platform of opposition in the National Assembly (EFF 2014; Sowetan 2014).

## Conclusions

This essay has looked over a long trajectory of anti-imperialist, anti-apartheid, and anti-capitalist Marxist theories concerning South Africa. I have argued that the anti-apartheid struggle was legitimately conceived as a mass democratic revolution against racism, but I have sought to return content to the notion of national democratic revolution and rescue it from the formulaic and reformist interpretation of the SACP. African nationalism is not inherently reformist; it takes revolutionary directions that can be bolstered by a strategy of unity of the oppressed against all exploitation. The motor of the revolution has been the resistance of the black masses that emerged in the form of the ANC's Congress Alliance and Pan Africanism, reappeared as Black Consciousness, and finally erupted as multifaceted working-class insurrection of sufficient threat to force regime change. The national democratic revolution in South Africa was an alliance of classes as well as races. The impetus of the revolutionary movement was harnessed and channelled by privileged class interests leading the ANC alliance in its crucial phase.

In the fight against apartheid, the ANC had the most successful strategy in that it concentrated on unity in the struggle against apartheid. The strength of being 'anti-apartheid' was, however, turned into its opposite: a source of weakness. In abstracting apartheid from its connections with capitalism and imperialism, the ANC has become a vector for the exploitative system. The SACP and ANC's strategy was a bourgeois class project. Black empowerment was for a select few millionaires. The 'us' in the slogan 'South Africa belongs to us!' is not the African masses but a black bourgeoisie that seeks to own and control the post-apartheid democracy as its property.

In the South African context, nationalisation of the mining conglomerates and their transformation into social property would be the last word of the democratic revolution and the first word of the socialist revolution, a measure that great energy was spent to ensure did not happen. This is the connection with socialism, which remains a fight against capitalism and imperialism.



Politically, one chapter has ended and new terms of struggle based on a split from the ANC alliance are being addressed. Questions of how the movement is built, from within or outside the trade unions, from above or below, whether there will be participatory workers' control over social struggles, and the form of political representation of the oppressed are all in contention.

The mission of critical political economy should be to reinforce the efforts of the masses, not to offer up alternative economic policies for the consideration of the bourgeoisie. The system of accumulation of capital wrests from the conversion of surplus value into capital, and must therefore encompass the mode of exploitation of the working class and how this is reproduced systemically. I have argued that the mode of exploitation of the racially oppressed before and during apartheid was a form of super-exploitation. Marikana demonstrates the continuation of super-exploitation in post-apartheid class relations. The classical Marxist theories of imperialism that owed so much to material relating South Africa and Britain need to be refreshed in the light of this experience.

Most of the writers cited in this survey, including the present author, are white males and academics, many based in the global North. Allow then a penultimate comment on the diluting effects on theory that is mediated through layers of social privilege. Critical political economy can only make a step forward if it embraces theories and perspectives that originate in working-class experiences in the global South. So informed, it can help illuminate the fundamental continuities of racially oppressive class exploitation, and investigate super-exploitation in South Africa today. Yet the outright rejection of dependency theory by still influential authors (Callinicos 1994; Fine and Harris 1979; Legassick 1976) is holding back the revolutionary contribution of Marxism. To avoid recognition of the greater exploitation of workers in the global South is as incorrect theoretically as it is unedifying morally; above all, it is misleading politically as to the principal agency of revolutionary change, that will come from the oppressed. I have argued that a generation ago, such evasion of super-exploitation missed the essence of apartheid in South Africa; today it misses the essence of global apartheid.

Cabral's and Fanon's thesis has been realised in the negative in South Africa. The

paradox of post-apartheid has been that so long as the masses trusted the ANC, any substantive alternative strategy would be politically inoperable. The Marikana Massacre changed that. Although the ideological spell has been broken, the deal that the ANC and its allies struck means that the legacies of racial capitalism are still being reproduced. The profits that flow into South African corporations from across Africa, and simultaneously flow out from its workers to the global centres of financial power, indicate that post-apartheid has descended into a particular set of neo-colonial relations of collaboration, a neo-colonialism of a special type.

Azania is still on the way. The full potential of the African masses is yet to be realised, but they are once again finding the way forward.

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## British 20th-century Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism in South Asia

The 'short' half-century from 1905 to 1947 in South Asia was framed by two partitions that say much about the contours of imperialism and anti-imperialism during this final phase of British rule in the Indian subcontinent. With the decision to partition the colonial province of Bengal along its east–west (and Hindu–Muslim) axis in 1905, mass agitation in India was given its most visible platform since the so-called 'sepoy' mutiny or Indian rebellion of 1857. By once more dividing a Bengal that nationalist fervour had successfully reunited by 1911, while splitting the Punjab in two as well, the end of British

imperialism in the subcontinent in 1947 brought not only independence but also the carnage and tragedy that yielded the two new states of India and Pakistan.

### **Swaraj, the partition of Bengal, and the growth of All-India Party nationalism**

While the origin of official party nationalism in India dates to the middle of the 1880s, the English-educated 'middle classes' who launched the organisations that became the Indian National Congress (INC) were reformist more than anti-imperialist in bent. The demands articulated by the most visible among these early nationalists thus focused on increased opportunities for participation in the Government of India. These included calls for easing access to posts in the Indian Civil Service and for increased representation within the ranks of the limited institutions of quasi-parliamentary government that the Raj first established after the rebellion of 1857 and until the Indian Councils Act of 1861.

While the INC can scarcely be described as heading a mass-based people's movement in its early years, events like the so-called Ilbert bill controversy of the 1880s did mean that even the politics of reformism harboured the seeds of more significant oppositional tendencies. Already prior to the INC's formation, moreover, figures like the Parsi intellectual Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917), the renowned forefather of party nationalism in India and a member of the UK parliament from 1892 to 1895, had begun to voice key points of a nationalist indictment of the economic effects of imperial rule. By the time selections from Naoroji's speeches and writings were prominently collected in his *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* in 1901, he was joined in this effort by figures like the Maharashtrian nationalist and Bombay Supreme Court Judge Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842–1901) and, especially, the Bengali intellectual and Indian Civil Service member Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848–1909). Together such figures articulated ideas about the drain of wealth from India to Britain, the de-industrialization of the subcontinent's economy through the stifling of handicraft production and the attendant consequence of de-urbanization, and the beginnings of a thesis about distorted agricultural commercialization. The latter, in particular, highlighted the Raj's privileging of the

production of export commodities and their movement by rail to coastal cities over grains for domestic consumption, the creation of a robust internal market, and the prevention of the spate of famines that haunted the Indian countryside throughout the late 19th century (Habib 1985; Roy 2000).

By the 1890s Congress nationalism was showing new and more vigorously agitational tendencies as well as signs of the tensions around religious communitarianism that would continue to complicate the politics of anti-imperialism in India throughout the first half of the 20th century. The early 1890s marked the high point of the popular movement for cow protection that had been gaining momentum across much of north-west India for some two decades, especially with the support of the Gujarati religious luminary Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824–83) and his orthodox Hindu reformist organization the Arya Samaj. This was a budding sore point between increasingly mobilised members of the Hindu community and segments of Indian Muslim society – for whom the cow could be a more ready option than the goat for performing the rite of sacrificial slaughter associated with certain festival days in the Islamic calendar – and rioting around the issue broke out in 1893 in various parts of north India. Clearly symbolising growing inter-religious tension, such turbulence was also indicative of a new phase in the expression of nationalist discontent with the colonial government, whose registration scheme for licensing cow slaughter was taken both as an unfulfilled prohibition of the practice by the protection movement's advocates and as express sanction for it by Indian Muslims.

One of the more prominent exponents of the majoritarian brand of nationalism that emerged from this mix of anti-imperialist agitation and communitarian strife was the Maharashtrian social reformer, lawyer, and early Congress 'extremist' Balwantrao Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920), who along with Lala Lajpat Rai (1865–1928) in the Punjab and Bipin Chandra Pal (1858–1932) made up the famous triumvirate of 'Lal, Bal, and Pal', usually portrayed as moving the Congress away from its reformist origins and towards a more militant stance. Especially with partition of Bengal in 1905 by the notoriously high-handed Viceroy George Nathaniel Curzon (in office 1899–1905), a more extremist 'hot faction' emerged within the Congress.

This so-called *garam dal* faction was counterpoised against the more moderate *naram dal* or 'soft' faction headed by figures like Tilak's rival, the Congress leader Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866–1915), a fellow Maharashtrian from the Ratnagiri district who was ten years his junior.

While the 'moderate'–'extremist' split certainly speaks to the terms on which majoritarian party nationalism negotiated its own evolving temperament, as contemporary historians observe, it does a disservice to the diversity of elements that underpinned the first truly mass and geographically expansive episode of anti-imperialist nationalist agitation that developed around the call for *swadeshi* ('self-sufficiency') in Bengal from 1905 to 1908 or 1911. Along with the old moderates who favoured constitutional methods while being 'deeply offended at Curzon's aggressive measures' (Bose and Jalal 2004: 95) in Bengal, such as Gokhale and the forefather of Bengali nationalism Surendranath Banerji (1848–1925), the historian Sumit Sarkar distinguishes three other orientations. While the 'extremist' politics favoured by Lal, Bal, and Pal, as well as figures like the Calcutta-born poet and yogi Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950), clearly did leave room for tactical violence if necessary, more generally such figures called for passive resistance through the boycott of British goods and institutions. At the same time, already prior to 1905 other more diffuse strands – such as those emanating from the Nobel laureate, the famous Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore – had been calling for Indians to ready themselves for a more confrontational stance against the Raj through a process of self-strengthening (*atmashakti*). Finally, at the most militant end of the spectrum were individuals, both male and female, who used tactics of revolutionary terror, including bombings and political assassinations (Bose and Jalal 2004: 96; Sarkar 1988).

While the highpoint of *swadeshi* agitation had passed by 1908, in the previous three years notable achievements had been made, with cotton imports declining by up to a quarter in the first year of boycott and a concerted effort to avoid other imported consumer goods as well as major institutions of the colonial state such as courts and educational facilities. At the same time, events in Bengal provided a rallying point for anti-imperial nationalist sentiment to deepen in

other parts of the subcontinent as well. They also provided a basis for Congress to increase its visibility and press its claim to the status of ostensible spoke for the nationalist cause outside Bengal, primarily in parts of Madras, the Punjab, and Bombay. As the historian Burton Stein notes, for example, in the south of India the *swadeshi* movement and the larger moderate–extremist split within Congress that it precipitated by 1907 was used by different elements of Madras's Brahmin community to jockey for leadership over the regional Congress. While the Mylapore Brahmins of Tamil Nadu had dominated Congress activity in Madras until 1905, their upstart northern Telugu-speaking Brahmin adversaries opted to side with the more radical stance of figures like Tilak and Aurobindo. Supporting the singing of the banned Bengali anthem 'Bande Mataram' ('Hail Mother India') and pledging to unite the Madras and Calcutta division of the Congress, it was this same faction of Telugu-speaking Brahmins who would form the Andhra Mahasabha in 1910. A half-century later, the same body would succeed in its call for a separate Telugu-speaking province to be carved out from the old colonial province of Madras (Stein 2010: 282–283).

In the Punjab *swadeshi* activism in Bengal ended up resonating with unrest or discontent that had its own independent cause. The main point of anger in this crucial wheat-growing bread-basket of the subcontinent was the colonial state's decision to raise rates for canal waters. Some 30 years after irrigation in the province started to be transformed through large-scale canal construction – which, along with the railways, ended up being one of the only forms of heavy capital investment that the late colonial state would sponsor – the years 1906–07 saw the outbreak of significant peasant unrest in the Punjab. At the same time, the province was another site that proved only too well equipped for anti-imperialist social unrest to blend into inter-communitarian tension, owing to its mixed population of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. Therefore, so too were the Arya Samaj's efforts at consolidating support among the lower middle-class Punjabi Hindus just past their third decade (Fox 1985).

By the end of the first decade of the new century, much of the more militant leadership that had assembled around *swadeshi* – including Lajpat Rai and Tilak – would see



their campaigning result in imprisonment or exile. By this time, moreover, the spirit of boycott had already been largely broken – in no small part because of the opportunistic decision of Bombay's textile industrialists to ramp up prices and profits amid diminished competition, which sapped the Bengali peasant's ability to persist in support of the boycott. Nonetheless, by 1911 they also saw victory, as the new viceroy Hardinge (who replaced Curzon's own successor, the Earl of Minto, in 1910) opted to annul the partition decision. In the process, the colonial state's about-turn also served to discredit the class of landed Muslim interests in East Bengal who had been the only group to support partition, thus further opening the way for the All India Muslim League, which it played a significant role in founding in 1906, to be seized by a new style of leader by the time of the First World War.

### **The First World War, the shifting economics of colonial rule, and political leftism**

It is telling that among the myriad effects of the First World War on the context of early 20th-century imperialism and anti-imperialism in India the movement of some one million Indian troops to foreign theatres of operation rarely ranks high on the list. While well over 60,000 would perish in foreign battlefields, those who returned proved greatly transformed by the traumas of battle as well as by what was, for most, their first sight of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Though it is difficult to quantify the effect that such exposure had on the views of those who returned to a home society ruled by Britain, the numbers underlying other aspects of the war's impact are less difficult to capture. Used widely to protect Britain's broader imperial interests in Asia and Africa throughout the late 19th century, on the eve of the war the British Indian Army was already among the largest volunteer forces in the world, if not the largest. In the four years after 1914 its ranks had swelled enormously, totalling some 1.2 million by 1918 with some 350,000 absorbed just from the Punjab (Bose and Jalal 2004: 102; Bose 2006: 125). Not surprisingly, such a vast increase in manpower together with the need to support the wider military endeavour that Britain was fighting entailed a large-scale expansion of India's

war-related production, as well as of prices and the money supply.

This combination produced decidedly polarising effects at the different ends of the class spectrum. With the free coinage of silver rupees suspended since the early 1890s, Indian currency policy was controlled by the Secretary of State for India sitting in London, on the basis of a so-called gold exchange standard. With both a gold reserve and a paper currency reserve at his disposal, the Secretary of State's policy throughout the 1890s was to stabilise the exchange rate of the rupee at 1 shilling 4 pence. If the general tendency towards deflationary policy became too much of a bottleneck, as was becoming the case during the first decade of the 20th century as economic activity expanded, the mints could be selectively reopened to coin more silver rupees. With the enormous expansion in the price of silver during the war, however, the relationship between the nominal and intrinsic values of the rupee suddenly reversed. Whereas for the previous 20 years actual value was well below nominal value, when the opposite became the case after 1914 there was no choice but to allow the rupee to appreciate. The latter effect was exacerbated by the growing demand for silver fostered by the ramping up of wartime production, which necessitated increased coinage given what was then a still limited paper currency. The supply of silver rupees thus expanded from 1.8 billion to 2.9 billion during the war years (Rothermund 1993: 72–73).

With the colonial state also resorting to an outright printing of money that was secured by accumulating credits on India's behalf in the Bank of England, in the five years from 1914 to 1919 circulating paper notes jumped from Rs. 660 million to Rs. 1530 million (Bose and Jalal 2004: 103). Given its multiple sources, war-induced inflation would persist for a significant period after 1919, a fact that helped expand the windfall profits that the war had brought to India's ascending capitalists. Among the emergent industrial bourgeoisie who benefited most were west India's textile mill owners, concentrated in Bombay and Ahmedabad, with the jute mill owners of East Bengal also seeing significant gains after a decline in orders at the very start of the war (though British jute magnates were dominant in the province); coal-mining capital also fared well. While these were among

the few sectors that had already managed to establish themselves under imperial rule, the war marked a coming-out party for cement and, especially, steel, with the famous conglomerate of the Tatas capitalising on the de facto protection that the war brought with it (Rothermund 1993: 67–69; Sarkar 1988: 171).

Further complicating these tendencies was the Government of India's unchastened revenue demand, a virtual necessity in light of its priority of reorienting Indian society and economy towards serving Britain's war-related needs. While the hated Indian land tax – which had been the principal mechanism for effecting the drain of wealth ever since the late 1700s – had by the 1880s already started to decline in importance in relation to other means of surplus appropriation, it remained a significant burden all the same. Given the increasing reliance on other sources of government demand during the war years – especially through the income tax and customs duties – it was India's great mass of agriculturalists as well as its much smaller, though significant, band of urban workers who were hardest hit.

As prices of industrial goods and imported manufactures increased precipitously, the war had the opposite effect on the prices of agricultural commodities destined for export. This made for a particularly perilous circumstance for the Indian peasant, whose livelihood had been definitively fastened to the world market ever since the reversal of the long price depression that had characterised the East India Company's rule in the years from 1820 to 1850. While the blow to the agrarian export economy produced a grave decline in earnings for the wealthier peasantry, as Sarkar notes, the agricultural poor and the landless were confronted with an even more dire situation; the fact that the price of the coarse food grains on which such groups relied for subsistence was increasing faster than the price of more expensive crops like rice and wheat became a particular source of distress. For urban workers as well, the high price of food grains meant that the wartime industrial boom amounted to little in the face of the erosion of their real wages. Overall, therefore, 'the war meant misery and falling living standards for the majority of the Indian people' (Sarkar 1988: 171).

As a harbinger of great economic dislocation, the war also portended the extreme volatility of social forces that would underpin Gandhianism during the 1920s and the

attendant process by which Gandhi himself would transform Congress into the head of a true mass movement. Already before the 1920s, however, both mainstream party nationalism and other anti-imperialist forces experienced other crucial developments that bear mentioning. From 1915 to 1918, for example, the famous poet and Hyderabad-born Bengali activist Sarojini Naidu (1879–1949) travelled the breadth of the sub-continent talking about nationalist themes and the empowerment of women. Well before sitting in jail alongside the men who dominated Congress nationalism in the 1930s, she had helped to launch the Women's Indian Association in 1917 to call for female suffrage and the right to hold what limited legislative offices existed for Indians within the colonial government.

In these same years, other new varieties of radicalism, internationalism, and leftism were accumulating as well. It was in the years after 1918 that trade unionism became truly substantial, paving the way for significant strikes, especially in Bombay in the mid- to late 1920s. It was also in 1920 – at the October meeting of the Second Congress of the Communist International in Tashkent – that the Communist Party of India is often said to have been started. (The main wing of the party, however, records its birth as dating from a conference for Indian communists held in Kanpur, the largest city in contemporary Uttar Pradesh, in 1925.) The spirit of internationalism inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution absorbed a broad range of Indian figures who had already become convinced of the need to solicit foreign assistance – including that from Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany – during the war. They included the eminent socialist (and eventual exponent of a self-made philosophy of 'radical humanism') M.N. Roy. Well before the Bengali revolutionary had appeared at the Second Congress of the Communist International, Roy's initial involvement in what the British feared would become a vast Indo-German conspiracy had brought him to Japan, Korea, China, the US, and then Mexico, where he proved instrumental in starting that country's Communist Party as well.

Roy's tireless intellectual production, together with his relentless and penetrating criticism of the mainstream of Indian nationalism, including Gandhi's 'counter-revolutionary leadership' in calling an end to the first campaign of civil disobedience

in the early 1920s, is indicative of the great diversity in Indian anti-imperialism that is typically obscured by the focus on better known-figures and organised party activity (Roy 1926: 47). In this respect, the origins of Gandhi's role as anti-imperialist tactician in his struggles on behalf of the Indian community of South Africa (though, as is worth noting, not in any significant way the black one) should not be regarded as unique. Already prior to war and outside a path of intrigue as extensive as that which Roy would travel, for example, an institution like the Ghadar Party had been set up among Punjabi emigrants in North America. With the goal of supporting India's liberation, assorted Ghadarites had made their way back to the Punjab on the outbreak of war in order to organise revolutionary activities by 1915, persisting in their oppositional activity for the next 30 years until independence was finally won. In a very different example, it was in this same period that in Malabar the beginnings of the modern state of Kerala's communist tradition began congealing with the emerging, if often symbolically conflicted, low-caste empowerment politics of temple entry (Menon 2007).

### **Gandhianism, Islamic universalism, and the development of a mass basis for politics in the 1920s**

Before the 1920s, there was ample reason to believe that the relative quiescence that characterised the beleaguered Congress movement during the first years of the war had come to an end. With leaders like Tilak back from imprisonment or exile (the latter having been jailed in Mandalay), by 1916 Congress had reached its historic Lucknow Pact with the Muslim League. While the pact would continue in the spirit of moderate reformism in its demands on the British, it was more notable for what it suggested about efforts to forge an all-India anti-imperialist politics capable of bringing together the subcontinent's extremely heterogeneous Muslim community during these years.

As would remain the case well into the 1940s, and much more than the Congress at the same point, the Muslim League was a party in search of a base. What it did have was a new generation of leadership, with the Karachi-born and English-trained barrister and INC member Muhammed Ali Jinnah

(1846–1948) having joined the League in 1912 after being elected as the Muslim representative to the Imperial Legislative Council in 1909. Tellingly, Jinnah's political career thus began in the wake of the so-called Morley–Minto reforms legislated through the Indian Councils Act of 1909. While portrayed by Congress leaders as a stalling tactic in lieu of real self-government, the Morley–Minto reforms increased the number of Indian representatives to the district, municipal, provincial, and central legislative bodies, while expanding their selection through elections rather than appointment. Partly in response to the 'middle-class' reformist Muslim leadership, Morley–Minto also inaugurated a system of reserved seats (at a proportion tending to exceed population levels) for Muslim representatives as well as separate electorates for those seats that were to be restricted to Muslim voters. Jinnah himself initially opposed such a system, given its tendency to ghettoise Muslim politics. After he separated himself from any official role in Congress by 1916, however, his ascent within the command structure of the League by championing Hindu–Muslim unity through the Lucknow Pact would be premised on persuading the Congress to accept separate Muslim representation and elections.

While it is true that by this time separate electorates and seats reserved on a 'communal' basis were becoming a non-negotiable issue for the Muslim elite, the politics of imperial divide and rule was not confined to Muslims alone. This would be made most dramatically evident in the rift between Gandhi and the great leader of India's Dalit community Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891–1956) over the 'communal award' of 1932, through which the British proposed to mandate a separate electorate for untouchables as well. Yet it had been cemented well before with the Government of India Act of 1919, which reaffirmed electoral 'communalisation' by providing for reserved seats not only for Muslims but for various other groups as well, including Sikhs, non-Brahmins, and landowners. The other crucial feature of the 1919 Act was to formalise the so-called Montagu–Chelmsford reforms of two years earlier. Setting the pattern for imperial strategy for the next quarter century, the 1919 Act thus sought to appease the increasingly vociferous demands articulated by the nationalist mainstream for home

rule by offering a system of dyarchy or dual government. By expanding the franchise and devolving a variety of non-essential powers of government to the provinces, where Indian politicians would be dominant, the offer of dyarchy proved effective in splitting the mainstream of party nationalism after 1917 once more.

It was against this backdrop that Mohandes Karamchand Gandhi (1868–1949) would step into the void of official leadership, with his charisma, invocation of traditional Hindu imagery, and unique blend of cultural traditionalism, agrarian anti-materialism, and tactical ingenuity accelerating Congress into his orbit. The symbolism to which Gandhi appealed allowed a much-needed expansion of populism within the mainstream of the nationalist movement. As Thomas and Barbara Metcalf observe, for example, Gandhi's appeal to the imagery of *khadi* (hand-spun or hand-woven cloth) and *charkha* (the spinning wheel) 'opened new opportunities for India's women'. This took place by shifting the emphasis of the most audible stream within nationalist discourse from the notion of woman as guardian of an inner 'spiritual' order to woman as a lead sponsor in actively creating the nation by her own hand (Metcalf and Metcalf 2006: 185).

Born to a Gujarati *bania* family, educated as a lawyer, and having made his way to South Africa by 1893, Gandhi would remain keenly aware of the goings-on in India, with his earliest well-known tract, *Hind Swaraj*, appearing in 1908. By 1915 Gandhi had returned from Natal, initially remaining distant from Congress nationalism and dipping his toes into the waters of several local agitations instead. From 1917 to 1918 he thus involved himself in Gujarat in an episode of agrarian protest over the colonial state's land revenue demand, followed by a second experiment in the industrial centre of Ahmedabad where he helped to conciliate a labour dispute in the city's textile mills. His third major campaign during these years found him in the eastern province of Bengal, where he lent his support to peasants against the European indigo planters who supervised the forced regime of production to which they were subject.

By 1919, with mainstream party nationalism able to win no more than dyarchy, with the hated wartime emergency powers for detention and trial without jury (inaugurated by the so-called Rowlatt Acts) retained, and

with seething discontent among the urban and agrarian poor, Gandhi saw fit to expand his strategy for agitation far and wide. After he set up his own organisation Satyagraha Sabha, drawing on the existing infrastructure of home rule leagues and allying with the leaders of 'Pan-Islamist' (or, perhaps less derisively, 'Islamic universalist') sentiment, the Muslim brothers Mohamed and Shaukat Ali, the protests of 1919 were the most significant in India since the 1857 rebellion. They also marked the inauguration of a new method of *hartals* or work stoppages which were designed to unfold in co-ordinated fashion with urban marches and other forms of direct action. Alarming to the British, the new emphasis on such tactics elicited a resort to martial law in various areas; the most notorious consequence of this took place in the Punjabi city of Amritsar, where on 13 April 1919 the commanding general Reginald Dyer ordered his troops to open fire on peaceable protesters gathered at the Jalianwalla Bagh, killing 379 and injuring more than 1200 (Bose and Jalal 2004: 111–112; Metcalf and Metcalf 2006: 168).

Now more vocally calling for the old strategy of 'passive resistance' to be supplemented by a confluence between *ahimsa* (non-violence) and his new philosophy of 'questing for truth' through *satyagraha*, Gandhi ascended rapidly over the next few years. Both on its surface and at a much deeper level for the great many, especially in the north Indian belt from Gujarat to the Uttar Pradesh, where so many revered the Mahatma (or 'the great soul'), it was a Gandhian nationalism that became the idiom for confronting British imperialism en masse. Fresh from capturing leadership, Gandhi continued his alliance with Muslim political leaders attempting to spearhead a mass movement among Indian Muslims to express concern over the fate of the Ottoman Empire's claim to the Islamic caliphate, the survival of which was feared to be in jeopardy after the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. Allying with these 'pro-khilafat' Muslims, Gandhi once again expanded his tactic of organised mass agitation through what became the truly all-India 'non-cooperation movement' of 1920–22. As Sarkar notes, even in a relatively isolated province like Assam, non-cooperation would attain a strength that no later episode of nationalist anti-imperialism would again rival (Sarkar 1988: 217). Likewise, so was the

'Malabar Rebellion' of 1921 a chapter in non-cooperation. (It was also, more immediately, a chapter in pro-khilafat agitation among a Mappila community of Muslim tenants in south-west India who had been invoking Islamic imagery in protest against their largely Nair and Nambudiri landlords since the mid-19th century.)

Again taking British imperialism by storm, the ferocity of non-cooperation was scarcely contained. Gandhi's decision to muster the immensity of his reputation to call for its end in February of 1922 – not, as suggested earlier in the quotation from M.N. Roy (1926), without criticism – followed from peasant unrest in the Uttar Pradesh district of Gorakhpur, which resulted in the burning of a police station in the town of Chauri Chaura and the deaths of 22 officers trapped inside. As the incident at Chauri Chaura suggests only too well, mass agitation may have found crucial inspiration in Gandhian nationalism but was never exhausted by it. Throughout the 1920s, as significant episodes of *satyagraha* continued, there was also a dramatic upsurge in labour and peasant unrest, both through highly visible organised action and on a more spontaneous basis. The textile mills of Bombay played host to their first widespread strike in September of 1925, with some 250,000 millhands participating and communist trade unionists playing a significant role in its organization. This was only a prelude, however, to the much bigger industrial action that would be conducted among Bombay's millhands three years later in 1928, with worker participation roughly doubling (Chandravarkar 1981). Likewise, during these same years the subcontinent witnessed a dramatic expansion in the membership of the new *kisan sabhas* ('peasant associations'). Marching largely to the beat of its own drummer, such peasant (and also 'tribal') resistance was more often than not feared as a source of potentially uncontrollable unrest in the countryside, by British colonialists as well as mainstream party nationalists. With the growth of such subaltern movements, the demands and ideologies of those at their forefront also proved varied and nimble. Calls for abolition of *zamindari* landlordship, threats of rent and revenue strikes against government and private landed interests alike, and agitation against the government's attempts to increase its tax demand – as in the Krishna–Godavari river delta in 1927 – would become

an important feature of these years and a sign of things to come (Sarkar 1988: 241–242).

At the same time, it was not just Gandhi who displayed a knack for charismatic leadership coupled with tactical ingenuity. By 1927 Ambedkar had emerged as the crucial figure giving voice to the demands for caste equality (and abolition), especially among his own community of Mahar untouchables in Maharashtra. As his visibility increased, he would also become unsparing in criticising Gandhi's paternalistic and ineffectual approach to India's Dalits, which focused on conciliation rather than confrontation by calling on upper castes to treat untouchability as an unwanted accretion rather than a fundamental feature of Brahmanical domination. In Tamil Nadu, these same years witnessed Erode Venkata Ramaswami (1879–1973), known to his followers under the title of Periyar, break with Congress after supporting non-cooperation in the south of India to launch his anti-Brahmanical 'self-respect' movement.

### The political and economic contexts of the 1930s

In terms of the high politics of British rule in India during the period from the late 1920s to the end of the 1930s and before the Second World War, there occurred a continuation of already established patterns of imperial retrenchment. In the face of ever more vociferous demands for autonomy and, by December 1929, *purna swaraj* ('complete self-rule'), London persisted in offering only vague possibilities of constitutional reform by increasing the franchise, expanding legislatures, and devolving non-essential powers to the provinces. True sovereignty through control over the political centre and key issues like defence and finance remained off-limits. To an observer in the 1930s it would hardly go without saying that the days of British imperialism in the subcontinent were numbered.

The historic *purna swaraj* declaration itself was meant as a direct response to the parliamentary 'Simon' Commission of 1928 and its tepid recommendations along the above lines in the wake of the extreme anti-imperialist tumult of the 1920s. Gandhianism had dealt the final blow to Congress's old moderates long ago, and by 1930 it was a younger, more left-leaning, and still almost entirely male leadership that was taking over the

party, which had now become the premier font of majoritarian nationalist politics in India. This included figures like Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) and Subhas Chandra Bose (1897–1945), both of whom would play ever more important roles in the years to come. After the failure of the Simon Commission, it was with Gandhi's historic 'salt march' in March 1930 that the next great wave of all-India anti-imperialist agitation would be unleashed. This took shape through the civil disobedience campaigns of the early 1930s. While the salt tax was deemed an obscure target to inaugurate this new phase of struggle, the symbolic richness of the choice was made manifest as Indians of all stripes supported the Mahatma's procession to the coastal city of Dandi. The insistence of a figure like Naidu on participating alongside the largely male group that Gandhi had assembled portended what would also become of the thousands of largely rural women (along with some urban-based elite women) who would consciously break the law, openly selling and buying salt in countless market towns. It was the sub-continent's women, above all, in other words, who would vindicate Gandhi's tactic.

While civil disobedience would be renewed several times over the next four years, amid large-scale arrest and repression, the first phase of the campaign reached a limit in March 1931. At this point Gandhi once more found himself with cold feet when faced with the possibility of uncontained peasant radicalism and the possibility of revolutionary violence. (It was during this period that the young Punjabi revolutionary and Marxist Bhagat Singh (1907–31), along with his fellow revolutionaries Sukhdev Thapar (1907–31) and Shivaram Rajguri (1908–31), would be tried for the last time and convicted in the famous Lahore Conspiracy case that resulted in their execution.) Ongoing calls in the agrarian context to suspend the payment of rent, for example, fell foul of Gandhi's general preference for 'national unity' over arousing excessive inter-class and inter-caste discord by too freely sanctioning a national liberation movement focused on the inequities of Indian society rather than just the goal of independence. By March 1931 Gandhi would enter into his much-reviled pact with Viceroy Irwin in advance of the second of the three Round Table Conferences that would take place on constitutional reform in London and as part of which he would call to

end the first phase of the civil disobedience campaign. Unfortunately, Gandhi banked on obtaining more than would be in the offing at the second conference, which took place at the end of 1931. He would miss the third conference at the end of 1932 altogether, although from his jail in Pune his vow to fast to the death in the name of opposing the fractionalization of Hindu unity did succeed in persuading Ambedkar to sign the so-called Poona Pact. (It was by the terms of the latter that Ambedkar withdrew his support for Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's communal award, which would have created separate electorates for India's untouchables. In exchange, Ambedkar won Gandhi's support for an increased number of seats for the 'depressed classes' instead.)

While the first inkling that Britain might one day leave India would emerge with the Government of India Act of 1935, that piece of legislation was roundly condemned by anti-imperialist forces across the political spectrum. Although it would do away with the system of dyarchy and bring all government offices under the control of elected Indian officials, the Act's arrangements for power at the federal centre were deemed too little, too late. Among the condemnations were those that came from Jinnah, now the leader of the Muslim League, who used the Act's deficient though explicit proposals for the future structure of a federal centre as an occasion to return to politics after the League had been largely sidelined from the mid-1920s. (The 'Pan-Islamist' politics of the Gandhi-allied *khilafat* movement proved to be little to Jinnah's staunchly secularist liking.)

Despite their outrage at the 1935 Act, mainstream party nationalists opted not to boycott the proposed elections for provincial ministries in 1937, with Congress's sweeping success proving nearly unqualified and the Muslim League's dismal performance a sign of how little support Jinnah still had as the 'sole spokesman' for India's Muslims. Winning a total of only 4 per cent of the Muslim vote, as the historian Ayesha Jalal has been most important in demonstrating, Jinnah's League was caught in the basic contradiction that would bedevil any brand of all-India Muslim politics for the next ten years. With the two most populous Muslim states of the Punjab and Bengal dominated by elites and politicians whose interests favoured maximal

provincial autonomy, there was scarcely any convergence with the interests of elites and politicians in the Muslim minority provinces, whose fate would be tied to the prospect for power over the federal centre. According to this view, there was no straight line from the demands of the Muslim League to a demand for secession in order to form an Islamic homeland (Jalal 1985). Of course, outside the realm of high politics the notion of a Muslim state in north-west India, consisting of what would become the provinces of the eventual West (though not East) Pakistan, had initially been articulated in 1930 by the famous poet Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) and again in 1933 by Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, a student at Cambridge. As such, it was also gaining popular momentum within the broader context of mounting anti-imperial agitation in the years that followed.

Setting the larger context for the high and popular politics of India anti-imperialism during these years was the shock of the Depression, which was heard around the world and reverberated across the decade. From the standpoint of a colonial economy like that of India, still dealing with the dislocation produced by the First World War, the Depression initially manifested itself through the sudden collapse of a wheat price that had become acclimatised to a general increase in agrarian prices following the First World War. While internal supply and demand conditions in India remained the same, the release of American wheat stores took their toll on world market prices. A similar fate (though for very different reasons) was met by the price of rice.

Yet it was not simply cash crop production that was hit by the Depression. With British imperialism's dominant mode of surplus extraction having already shifted since the 1870s and 1880s to appropriation via credit rather than tax-based mechanisms, by 1929 the Indian peasant had grown deeply dependent on borrowing. Therefore, even if the path of credit terminated in the person of the reviled moneylender, it clearly commenced in the esteemed high streets of London. The larger collapse in liquidity was thus anathema to the subsistence agriculturalist as well, given the reliance of the peasant on usurious loans to service revenue, rent, and debt payments. All of these burdens thus increased when prices for agricultural commodities plummeted, given that both government and

landed and moneyed power-holders refused to lower their respective demands.

It can be no surprise that Gandhi's decision to call off civil disobedience before the Second Round Table Conference took place just as discontent was spreading from the subcontinent's wheat-producing areas to its eastern and southern rice-growing regions (Rothermund 1993: 98–99). With the colonial state's refusal to accept the nationalist demand for a prohibition on the export of gold, it is equally unsurprising that from 1931 to 1936 some Rs. 3 billion worth of gold left India. The product of distress sales by a desperate peasantry selling off ornaments, trinkets, and, in effect, the last reserves of what little wealth they had, the outflow was the direct consequence of the marked appreciation of gold and the inability of anyone but the Secretary of State in London to control India's monetary policy. Once it became more lucrative for the moneylender to demand the surrender of objects made of precious metal rather than whatever nominal debt he was owed, there was little choice for the peasant but to comply. In the process the enormous disinvestment from the Indian countryside that took place maintained Britain's all-important imperial interest and self-image as creditor, including that to an India with which it had long run a trade deficit but upon whose exports the imperial centre's traditional surplus with the rest of the world was based (Rothermund 1993: 102).

Finally, in urban areas the Depression produced a more varied set of effects. While unemployment and low wages were common in many important sectors, such as jute and cotton textiles, for industrialists in others the limited tariff protections that were allowed in these years proved significant. Sugar, pig iron, and cement are three notable examples. Ultimately, however, 'the 1930s were good times for urban consumption' though much less so for 'urban investment', with the Rs. 155 million worth of alcohol imported in this time, rivalling the total invested in machinery for cotton textile production (Bose and Jalal 2004: 122).

### War, partition, and the end of British imperialism

To continue with the focus on economic context, the last years of the British imperial enterprise in the subcontinent once

again produced a whiplash effect wrought, in major part, by the consequences of international geopolitics for world capitalism. Viceroy Linlithgow's unilateral declaration of India's entry into the war alongside Britain on 3 September 1939 inaugurated a new phase of anti-imperialist outrage among party nationalists, though much less within the Communist Party of India. (The latter's anti-fascist stance in support of the Allied war and its eventual opposition to the last great Gandhian episode of civil disobedience that took place through 1942's Quit India movement would largely sap the goodwill it had been building up since the high point of communist-socialist unity after 1936.)

While the effects of the Second World War were not wholly different from those of the First, they were also much more dramatic. Initially at least the war brought with it increasing prices that reversed the pattern of the Depression years, with the full employment of existing industrial resources, another windfall in the profits of India's capitalist class, and significant difficulties for the agrarian and urban poor. With little new capital investment, even though wages and profits should have increased purchasing power for ordinary consumption, the prioritisation of export for provisioning Britain's war effort ended up seriously compounding what Rothermund calls the regime of 'forced saving' to which India was being subjected (1993: 115). With goods from the subcontinent bought by the British government on credit, in the longer term the vast sterling balances that India was accumulating in London would fundamentally alter its foundational role as debtor to Britain's creditor. Although the heart of the economic relationship on which British imperialism had come to be premised would thus be inverted, in the immediate term such balances could not be touched. Moreover, the enormous increase in the Indian money supply on which such expansion was based made for a grave inflation shock. While in the ten years from 1929 to 1939 the money supply increased from Rs. 3.4 to 4 billion in coins (and dropped from Rs. 2.6 billion to 1.6 billion in paper notes), by 1945 it had reached Rs. 22 billion. Overall, during the war the printing presses thus produced the equivalent of Rs. 11 billion in sterling balances in the Bank of England and another Rs. 5 billion in other credits. Herein was to be found not only the inversion

by which the war would result in a national debt of Rs. 9.5 billion and credits totalling approximately Rs. 16 billion but also one source of the extreme duress that the rural poor, labour, and the urban salaried would face. With a dramatic decline in what the economist Amartya Sen calls 'exchange entitlements', it was the millions in rural Bengal who would suffer the worst of this duress, with the catastrophic famine of 1943-44 taking some 3.5 to 3.8 million lives (Bose and Jalal 2004: 129; Rothermund 1993: 116; Sen 1999).

While by the end of the war the fate of British imperialism was in many ways sealed, the 1940s would witness questions of independence that were increasingly consumed by questions about the structure of the proposed federal centre. The renewed rift within Congress after 1937, which pitted an increasingly pronounced left wing led by Subhas Chandra Bose against the organization's more conservative right wing and what was, by then, Gandhi's often stifling moderation, was only temporarily repaired by the shared outrage over the declaration of war on India's behalf. The reinvigorated spirit of unity that resulted did lead the rejection of Sir Stafford Cripps's Mission to India in March 1942, the gestures of which towards self-government proved insufficient for party nationalists in the Congress. However, this unity could not conceal the lasting difficulties that were to result from the crisis that Congress had experienced in its conference of early 1939 at Tripuri, a village in the then Central Provinces, where Gandhi up-ended Bose's attempts to win re-election as president. Despite the latter's electoral victory, Gandhi had used his great personal stature to persuade both Congress's right and left, Nehru included, to make it effectively impossible for Bose to lead. Combined with the general failure of the Congress left to resist the anti-labour and anti-kisan policies of its party ministries in the provinces, the atmosphere was such that Bose was left with little choice but to withdraw his candidacy. Opting in June 1939 to form a new 'Forward Bloc' within Congress – with communist support – he would be altogether ousted from the INC by the end of 1939 (Sarkar 1988: 373-374).

In this sequence of events are to be found the origins of Bose's later efforts to launch the last great internationalist chapter in



Indian anti-imperialism with his Azad Hind Fauj ('Indian National Army', INA), with its widespread participation of women and its famous female 'Rani of Jhansi' regiment as well as its tilt towards the Axis powers. Escaping from India in 1943 and making his way towards Japan, Bose sought to recruit a religiously and ethno-linguistically diverse range of Indian expatriates and surrendered soldiers from the British Indian Army in East and South-East Asia. These he planned to use to lead a march back to Delhi in order to strike at a Britain embroiled in the Allied war. While the INA would be halted in 1944, and Bose himself would die in a plane crash in 1945, the British decision in that same year to try three INA officers – one Hindu, one Muslim, and one Sikh – would incite the last great episode of mass people's protest during the anti-imperialist struggle.

In the story of Bose's exile from Congress, there can also be found evidence of the conflicting nature of the forces that comprised Indian anti-imperialism at nearly every level. While the politics of Hindu-Muslim strife had hardly begun in the 1940s (or even in the 20th century), whatever clear momentum towards partition that had developed in these years was not ultimately determinative of the choice of partition. Instead, the rush of events that followed the end of the war derived principally from the inability of mainstream party nationalists to come to consensus over what the federal structure of the post-colonial state should look like. Amid the squabbling, recrimination, and back and forth, almost nothing was certain with respect to how 'nations' and 'states' in the subcontinent were to be aligned once the British were finally to leave.

With the Simla conference of June 1945 bringing together Gandhi, the Congress, and Jinnah, with the 1945–46 elections in which Jinnah's Muslim League had finally won any semblance of right to call itself an All-India Party for the subcontinent's Muslims, and with the so-called Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946, exactly what the Pakistan demand was supposed to mean remained largely up in the air. From the standpoint of Jinnah's brand of Muslim League anti-imperialism, the idea of binding together the Muslim-majority areas of the north-west and Bengal in the north-east was meant largely as a means for creating a loose confederal structure.

In this latter vision – as the Cabinet Mission of 1946 found the British largely endorsing – the 'Pakistan' entity, complete with its large Hindu and Sikh minority communities, was to function as a counterbalance to a 'Hindustan' entity that would have its own large community of Muslim minorities. Therefore, that Jinnah's endgame should have eventually come apart may not have been an entirely obvious outcome, even if it was, perhaps, naive to imagine that Congress's leadership – now securely in the hands of figures like Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel (1875–1950) – would ever prefer a weakened centre over a non-partitioned Bengal and Punjab. That the ultimate fruit of anti-imperialism in India was to be both independence and the enormous human tragedy of partition, however, cannot be doubted. With an effective population exchange across religious lines of some 12 million persons and widespread, gruesome, and semi-organised communitarian slaughter, Britain's sudden insistence on quitting India as fast as it could in 1947 would pave the way to a new era of American neo-imperialism, complete with its Cold War battles against the Soviet Union. The latter itself being no stranger to neo-imperialism in Asia, it would be a very different constellation of global forces that would have to be met by the states that the struggle against British imperialism in the subcontinent gave rise to, India, Pakistan, and eventually Bangladesh as well.

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## British Left and Imperialism: the Faint-hearted Internationalists

There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism and that is – working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in *one's own country*, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy and material aid) *this struggle*, this, and only this, line in *every country* without exception. (Lenin 1965: 80)

Lenin was moved to offer this adamant definition of internationalism during the First World War when millions of workers and peasants from Britain, Germany, Turkey, India, and China and many other nations and states were slaughtering each other at the behest of their imperialist rulers. For Lenin, colonialism was but one aspect of imperialism or monopoly capitalism (Lenin 1952). He therefore had had no hesitation in denouncing the European war which erupted in 1914

as an imperialist war. But for most European socialists imperialism was taken to be a synonym for colonialism. It was fairly easy then for those socialists who supported the war to rationalise it as (in the German case) a war against Russian autocracy or (in the British case) a defence of Belgium against 'Prussian militarism'.

But even when the colonial objectives of the various powers became crystal-clear – when, for instance, the war spilled over into Africa or when the Bolsheviks revealed the Anglo-French plot to take over the Middle Eastern possessions of the Ottomans – very few European socialists desisted from supporting the war. As it is war which provides the most searching test of internationalism and which most clearly reveals fundamental attitudes to imperialism, this essay on the British left and imperialism (using this concept in the Leninist sense) will focus on the two imperialist world wars of the 20th century and their aftermath. It will concentrate on the two most important parties of the British left, the Labour Party and the Communist Party (CP).

It is not particularly surprising, given that until relatively recently Britain was in possession of a huge empire, that the British left tended to see only the colonial aspect of British imperialism. Moreover, the most influential theorist of imperialism among the British left was the liberal J.A. Hobson, who saw colonialism as the essence of imperialism. But concentration on colonialism can easily lead to ignoring one of the most important internal aspects of imperialism – the use of social reform to bolster working-class support for the capitalist order. In Britain in 1914 working-class support for war was solid, but later a price – post-war reform – began to be demanded for support.

The imperialist powers could not have attempted to wage imperialist war without the support of the working class. To many on the left the influence of a 'labour aristocracy' benefiting from imperialism could be the only explanation for such support. Lenin was a pioneer of this trend (Lenin 1965). But is the influence of a labour aristocracy sufficient to explain the existence and persistence of such social-patriotism? (Communists tended to use the terms 'social-chauvinism' and 'social-patriotism' interchangeably. But it is inappropriate to use the same term for the simple patriotism of most working-class people and

the conscious priority given by many on the left to the national interest over their internationalist responsibilities. Here, the term 'social patriotism' is used for the former tendency, 'social-chauvinism' for the latter.)

A school of Marxist scholars argues that the explanation for working-class support for imperialism is not merely the influence of a 'labour aristocracy'. It is argued that in the imperialist countries all working-class people – even the poorest – benefit to some degree from imperialism (Amin 1977; Lotta 1984; Nabudere 1977). This materialist explanation for the strength of social patriotism in the imperialist countries is convincing. In Britain, for instance, the growth of imperialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was accompanied by, to name but two reforms, an expansion of the franchise to a majority of working men and the introduction of old-age pensions.

Needless to say, especially given that they tended to come from the intelligentsia and the better-off sections of the working class, the leaders and members of the parties of the British left were not immune to bourgeois influence. Indeed they used their influence among the working class to subvert internationalism. The largest party of the British left, the Labour Party, has throughout its history taken a consistently pro-imperialist stance.

The party was not a Marxist party. It was founded by the trade unions, which were anxious for representation in parliament to secure legislation favourable to trade unionists on such matters as the right to strike. Another major influence on Labour was the Fabian Society, whose members argued for social reform in the national interest. George Bernard Shaw argued that 'a Fabian is necessarily an Imperialist', while Sydney Webb declared his support for the Liberal imperialist Lord Rosebery on the grounds that he was the most likely among the Liberal leadership to create a "virile" collectivist, imperialist opposition party' (Porter 1968: 111), before deciding that Labour would be the best vehicle for social reform.

Though affiliated to the Second International, Labour took little part in its agonised debates regarding the circumstances in which it might be possible to support a national war. Though a substantial minority argued that a war of national defence could be supported, majority opinion was that a general European war would be an unjust

war (Braunthal 1966). The parties of the International were committed to organising general strikes to oppose such a war. British socialists were still discussing the general strike option when the race to war began in late July 1914. The majority capitulated to war-fever. Labour's leader, Ramsay MacDonald, resigned in order to lead a pacifist opposition to the war and was replaced by the pro-war Arthur Henderson.

Labour's stance on the war was twofold. On the one hand it gave it full support. On the other hand it attempted to defend working-class interests on such matters as the rights of trade unionists and food shortages and demanded post-war reform as the reward for working-class support for the war. Its War Committee issued a series of reports demanding reform on such matters as housing, education, and welfare. In 1915 Labour joined the government and quickly demonstrated its imperialist credentials. Labour eventually took over the Ministry of Labour, becoming responsible for ensuring that the working class co-operated in the production of war materials. The party was in government in 1917, when British troops entered Jerusalem to initiate the Anglo-French takeover of the Ottoman Empire. Locally, many Labour people served on tribunals, which, after the introduction of conscription in 1916, decided on who could and who could not be exempt from military service and were thus party to the continuing carnage.

The other main parties of the British left in 1914 were the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and two Marxist parties, the British Socialist Party (BSP) and the much smaller Socialist Labour Party (SLP). Led by MacDonald, the ILP maintained an ineffective pacifist opposition to the war. It might be expected that the Marxist and thus nominally internationalist BSP would oppose the war, but it too declared its support for war. An internationalist minority was outraged when at the start of the war a manifesto called on the membership to participate in army recruiting campaigns. As many as 15 out of 18 London branches called for the manifesto to be withdrawn. In Glasgow, John Maclean argued that 'Our first business is to hate the British capitalist system ... It is mere cant to talk of German militarism when Britain has led the world in the navy business' (Crick 1984: 268). The SLP, particularly active in Scotland and the north of England, also resolutely

opposed the war. Though large anti-war demonstrations were held in London and other places, the anti-war minority proved unable to mobilise significant numbers of workers against war.

Though few workers came to oppose the war in principle, considerable working-class discontent arose over such matters as conscription, food shortages, and inflation (prices outstripped wages throughout the war; by 1918 average real wages of cotton workers were only 75 per cent of pre-war levels: Jones 1987: 37). A sense that working-class people were bearing an unfair share of the burden of war emerged. In Scotland, the BSP and SLP led vigorous battles against rent increases and in defence of working conditions. By 1917, after nearly three years of war, unrest was becoming widespread. In Lancashire, weavers were angered by increased prices, arguing that 'profitmongers' had exploited food shortages while 'some six million men have been giving their blood on the battlefields' (Amalgamated Weavers Association 1917). In 1917 and 1918 large-scale strikes erupted in many industries. In Lancashire, for instance, there was a mass strike of engineering workers and a general strike in the cotton trade. The Russian Revolution of 1917 prompted ruling-class apprehension that the British working class too would revolt.

Not coincidentally, the government began to respond to demands for reform. Its Reconstruction Committee, established in 1917 in response to working-class discontent, promised reform. Much of this was delivered. An Education Act, for instance, raised the school leaving age to 14 and abolished half-time education (until the passing of the Act children aged 11 and 12 were allowed to work half-time and go to school half-time). But the most important reform was the huge expansion of the electorate in 1918, which gave the parliamentary vote to virtually all men of 21 and over and to householder women of 30 and over; previously only around 30 per cent of working-class people had been able to vote in parliamentary elections (further legislation in 1928 gave the vote to women on the same basis as men). This Act, which massively expanded Labour's potential electoral base, was instrumental in transforming the fortunes of the party: it went from third-party status to becoming the principal party of social imperialism.

It was never likely that Labour could have won in the jingoistic and pro-government ideological climate in which the general election of December 1918 was held (shortly beforehand Germany had sued for peace). But from 1919 there were several years of acute class conflict and rising working-class class consciousness, of which the Labour Party was the principal beneficiary. In the municipal elections of 1919 – the first held under the expanded householder franchise (under which the voting age for women was 21, not 30) – Labour made impressive advances in many industrial towns and cities. These advances were probably due to Labour's vigorous demands for housing reform. Housing had become a crucial electoral issue by 1919. The British prime minister Lloyd George's famous 'Homes Fit for Heroes' speech was the result of grasping the electoral potential of promoting improved working-class housing. The king too advocated a much more interventionist approach to housing. At Buckingham Palace he had told representatives of local authorities that 'it is not too much to say that an adequate solution of the housing question is the foundation of all social progress' (Burnett 1978: 215).

Britain's failure to eradicate slum housing – though local authorities did build more than a million good houses for working-class people between the wars (Malpass 2005: 40) – gave rise to the myth, widely held among labour movement activists, that wartime promises of social reform had been broken. In fact, significant reforms were enacted between the two world wars. One of the most important was a series of Unemployment Insurance Acts passed between 1920 and 1922, which provided for unemployment benefit for all industrial manual workers and lower-paid white-collar workers. Meagre and increasingly under attack as unemployment relief was in the inter-war period, such relief should be contrasted with the almost total absence of poor relief in India and the rest of the empire (a point made by Gandhi during his famous visit to Lancashire in 1931), as should the expansion of the electorate in Britain with the increasingly repressive regime in India.

Such matters were regarded as reprehensible by those European socialists who took any notice of them. But even they usually regarded the colonial question as a peripheral matter. Socialists believed that it was in the advanced capitalist countries that the decisive

revolutionary battles were to be fought, after which the colonies would be given their freedom. The annual conferences of the ILP, 'while maintaining a certain interest in such issues as conscription and war, made virtually no effort to discuss the colonies' (Porter 1968: 96–97). Moreover, what interest there was in colonial matters tended to be tinged with paternalism. Hobson, socialists' mentor on imperialism, opposed enfranchising black Africans on the grounds that they were 'still steeped in the darkness of savagery' (Young 1984: 53–54). At the 1904 Amsterdam congress of the International, a resolution on India from British delegates, while opposing the existing form of colonial rule in India, nevertheless affirmed that the International recognised 'the right of the inhabitants of civilised countries to settle in lands where the population is at a lower stage of development' (Braunthal 1966: 311–312).

At Easter 1916 the revolutionary wing of Irish nationalism staged an armed revolt and issued a proclamation of independence (at that time the whole of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom, but effectively a colony) and thus presented a test of the British left's internationalism. Few on the British left were prepared to support the revolt. It was hardly to be expected that official Labour would support a colonial revolt at the height of the war with Germany. Sylvia Pankhurst's Workers' Socialist Federation (WSF), one of the organisations which were to found the CP a few years later, was the only organisation of the British left to give unqualified support to the rebellion in Ireland. Far more typical was the response of the ILP, which announced that 'In no degree do we approve of the Sinn Féin rebellion. We do not approve of armed rebellion at all, any more than any other form of militarism or war' (Beresford-Ellis 1985: 232). The BSP, by then in the hands of the internationalists, was equivocal. It had nothing to say for several weeks and then disdainfully remarked that 'In every demand made by the Sinn Féin movement there is the spirit of nationalism ... to rise, as the men in Dublin rose ... was foolish', but it could 'understand this effort of the Irish people to throw off the alien yoke' (*The Call*, 9 July 1916). It was not until after the formation of the CP that British Marxists began to take seriously such national movements as that in Ireland.

In post-war opposition, the Labour Party criticised the British Government's savagery

in the Anglo-Irish War of 1919–21 and its bloody suppression of the independence movements in India: but in office its record was little better, despite affirming during the general election of 1918 its support for 'freedom for Ireland and India' and pledging to 'extend to all subject peoples the right of self-determination' (Labour Party 1918: 3). J.H. Thomas, the colonial secretary in the first Labour Government of 1924, famously remarked on taking office that he was there 'to see that there is no mucking about with the British Empire' (Ward 1998: 185). Labour took office not long after Britain had conceded a measure of independence to Egypt after a revolt which had begun in 1919 (though never a formal British colony, Egypt, nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, had been under British control since 1882). Naively, the leaders of the Egyptian independence movement assumed that a Labour government would be sympathetic to their demand for full independence. They were disappointed. Moreover, an upsurge in the independence movement was ruthlessly suppressed.

As for India, Labour had the opportunity during its second term of office in 1929–31 to make some progress towards independence, but showed its Euro-centric paternalism by refusing to accept Nehru's draft constitution for an independent India (Porter 1984: 297). While it is true that Labour could not command a parliamentary majority for Indian independence, it did possess executive authority over India and in 1930–31 presided over the savage repression of an upsurge in the Indian independence movement. Thousands were injured and hundreds killed, including the leaders of an uprising in Sholapur, who were hanged (Ahmed 1987: 261).

Such was Labour's response to the post-war upsurge in national liberation movements. What of the CP? Founded in 1920, mainly by the BSP and a minority of the SLP, the party inherited much from the Second International, including its half-hearted commitment to supporting colonial independence. Only months prior to the party's founding congress, British troops had killed 379 and wounded around 1200 people at a peaceful pro-independence gathering at Amritsar. Yet the congress did not find it necessary to discuss the colonial question. But home truths regarding the party's

indifference to the colonial question heard at the second congress of the Communist International (Comintern) led to a greater theoretical appreciation of the importance of the national and colonial question. The influence of Comintern theses – which asserted that the national revolutionary movement in the colonies was an integral part of the world revolutionary movement against imperialism and must be fully supported by the communist movement (Hessel 1980: 68–76) – could from then on be clearly discerned.

A long article in the party's journal *The Communist* referred to 'the belief in some quarters [clearly in the CP itself] that the national idea is being overemphasised'. It was right to reject 'Rule Britannia and all that rubbish [but there is] a vast difference between the nationalism of a dominant nation and that of an oppressed nationality' (*The Communist*, 7 October 1920). Nevertheless, there was considerable tardiness into translating this theoretical appreciation into practice. In 1921 the party leadership set up several committees to direct the party's practical activities (*The Communist Review*, October 1921), but a colonial committee was not established until 1924. In 1922, in its report to the party's annual conference, the leadership had nothing to say on imperial matters, nor did any branch submit a resolution on such matter (CP 1922).

One problem, of course, for any party wishing to support movements against British imperialism is that most British workers would have regarded such a stance as treachery, a point made by a British delegate to the first congress of the Comintern. This may well explain why the CP seems to have devoted more energy to lending assistance to the movement in India than to trying to raise support for that movement in Britain. Certainly, these had been the priorities of those attending the first meeting of the party's Colonial Committee (CP Colonial Committee 1924). While the party's publications did begin to cover the colonies more frequently and supported national movements within them, they made only spasmodic attempts – one such was 'Down with Empire' demonstrations on Empire Day (an annual event aimed at raising popular enthusiasm for the empire) in 1930 – to build practical support for anti-colonial struggles among British workers.

Even so, some credit should be given to the internationalist sentiments which led quite a

few of its members to travel to India to help the Indian party. Two of these members, Ben Bradley and Philip Spratt, were among those arrested in 1929 and charged with conspiracy. Bradley and Spratt were eventually sentenced to long prison terms, but were released after an international outcry. Relations between the British and Indian parties at this time were difficult. The manifesto of the first congress of the Comintern had shown the lingering influence of the paternalism of the Second International when it declared 'colonial slaves of Africa and Asia: the hour of proletarian dictatorship in Europe will also be the hour of your liberation!' (Riddell 1987: 227–228). Thus, the CP insisted in 1925 that it should exercise leadership over the Indian party (Overstreet and Windmiller 1969: 75). It was no doubt this attitude which led Indian communists to complain of the 'Empire Consciousness', 'bossing', and 'big brotherly' attitude of the British party towards its Indian counterpart (Gupta 1997: 78). It seems very likely that British communists took to India with their internationalism a side-order of paternalism.

Even such lukewarm commitment to internationalism began to fade away as a new international crisis developed in the 1930s. The Wall Street Crash of 1929, the resultant international depression, and the victory of fascism in Germany in 1933 were all the product of the fundamental contradictions of imperialism, which had led to, but had not been resolved by, the imperialist war of 1914–18. A second imperialist world war began to seem probable. The Labour Party and, increasingly, the CP both viewed the threat of war through Euro-centric spectacles. Both parties saw the looming war as an anti-fascist war and, in the case of the CP, as a war in defence of the USSR. Its essentially imperialist content was increasingly hidden by a fog of anti-fascist rhetoric.

Only the tiny Trotskyist sects argued that war was the inevitable result of the contradictions of capitalism and saw in the looming war the possibility of revolutionary advances. Labour and (eventually) the CP both argued that diplomacy and resolute action against the axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan could prevent war. The CP and (to a lesser extent) the Labour Party were keen too that Britain, France, and the US should ally with the USSR. A strong pacifist element in Labour led it to oppose rearmament at first, but this

opposition was dropped as the threat to British from German imperialism became clearer. The CP too initially opposed rearmament, arguing that only a left-wing People's Government could be trusted not to use arms for imperialist purposes. But the threat of Germany led the CP to begin to support the government's war preparations, eventually ending its opposition to conscription.

When diplomacy inevitably failed, both parties declared their support for the British war effort (the ILP took refuge in pacifism). Labour's support for war is perfectly explicable; in office it had shown that its internationalism was only skin-deep and that it was an imperialist party. But how could the CP, born out of the revolutionary left's opposition to the first imperialist war, support the second imperialist war? The conventional answer is Soviet diplomacy (the USSR had sought to build anti-German alliances with Britain, France, and the US). There is much truth to this, but a more fundamental factor is that the Comintern and the CP had not made a clean break with the Euro-centrism and social chauvinism of the Second International. In 1935 the Comintern held its seventh congress, which was marked by a breach with the revolutionary internationalist outlook adopted at its first two congresses. The congress adopted a new Euro-centric strategy in which the general revolutionary interest was subordinated to the defence of socialism in the USSR. Central to this strategy was the defence of democracy (in practice, the defence of the national interest) in France and Britain.

Until 1935 the CP had been insistent that it would never support its 'own' government in war because, it argued, any war in which an imperialist Britain participated would be an imperialist war. But at the seventh congress it was claimed that the bourgeoisie of those imperialist countries threatened by fascism could no longer be trusted to defend the nation. The policy of the dominant section of the British imperialists towards the expansionist axis states was to appease them, to make concessions in the hope that war could be avoided, perhaps to turn Germany and Japan against the USSR, and, if war did come, to have had time to prepare for it. This was a policy of national survival, not national betrayal; but many, from Winston Churchill to Harry Pollitt, the leader of the CP, saw it as such. At the seventh congress, the leaders of the European parties argued that the

communists must take up the role of defenders of the nation. Pollitt took up this theme with alacrity: Communists, he argued:

must prove that we love our country so well that our lives are dedicated to removing all the black spots on its name, to removing poverty, unemployment and the bloody oppression of colonial peoples. We must show that the working class alone is the true custodian of the honour and rights of the British people. (Pollitt 1935)

This outlook chimed with the sentiments of many others on the British left, including influential elements of the Labour Party. In the mid-1930s fascism seemed to many a serious threat in Europe, where the Nazi triumph in Germany had encouraged the European far right. In France in 1934 monarchists and fascists had united in an attempt to overthrow the republic. In Britain the British Union of Fascists was attacking Jews in London's East End.

Probably the most influential of the left-wing bodies fighting for left unity was the Socialist League, the rump of the ILP. In 1932 its members had elected to remain in the Labour Party after the ILP majority split from Labour. Many of the most influential members of the Labour left were active in it, including G.D.H. Cole, Stafford Cripps, Aneurin Bevan, and Harold Laski. Inspired by the victories of popular fronts of all anti-fascist parties in Spain and France, the league hoped to build a popular front in Britain. In the autumn of 1936, prompted by the fascist revolt against the Spanish republic, unity negotiations began between the CP, the Socialist League, and the ILP.

Euro-centric indifference to the struggles of the colonial peoples surfaced at the first of the negotiating meetings. Pollitt asked the representatives of the Socialist League why all reference to the colonies, including a demand for independence for India, had been dropped from their draft of the proposed joint manifesto. Bevan replied that the labour movement paid too much attention to international matters and that another member of the Socialist League was opposed to Indian independence because it would cause difficulties for India. Pollitt did not press the matter (CP Political Bureau 1936). As a result of these negotiations, a unity campaign with a popular front programme, not including colonial freedom,

was launched in January 1937 but lasted only until Labour disaffiliated the Socialist League in the spring.

There was some success in forging unity between the CP and elements of the ILP. Attempts to build anti-fascist unity between the two organisations had started shortly after the Nazi victory in Germany, and 40,000 people took part in an anti-fascist rally in March 1933. But the main spur to unity came from an Italian threat to the British Empire. In the autumn of 1935 Italy invaded Abyssinia (today Ethiopia). This constituted a clear threat to British interests in the Middle and Far East, in particular the passage to India through the Suez Canal. In response, the CP unsuccessfully demanded that the British Government join with other states in the League of Nations to institute sanctions against Italy. The ILP opposed this policy, prompting a substantial number of its members to leave for the CP.

The CP was still adamant that only a left-wing People's Government could be trusted to defend Britain against fascism, but as the threat of war loomed ever closer, CP discourse increasingly stressed German aggression rather than the international economy in which Britain was the principal imperialist exploiter. Pollitt remarked, shortly after the German reoccupation of the Rhineland in March 1936, that 'one of the important differences between 1936 and 1914 is this, that in 1914 you could not say which is the aggressor. In 1936 it stands out for all to see' (CP Central Committee 1936).

The implication was clear. But before the CP could urge the working class to assume the responsibility of defending the nation there was an apparently insuperable ideological and political obstacle to overcome. Had not Marx and Lenin argued that the working class had no country? Of course, it could be argued that now the working class did have a country, the USSR. But even so, how could working-class support for the war effort of an imperialist country be justified? Shortly after the Munich agreement of 1938, which the British and French imperialists hoped would help to turn Nazi Germany against the USSR, the Comintern tackled this issue: Once, it was argued, the idea that 'the proletariat has no country was a profound and bitter conviction'. But things had changed. Through the class struggle the working class had 'gradually won a place in the nation for themselves' and 'began to revise its relationship

with the nation ... the working class and the Communist Party are [now] the only consistent defenders of national independence' (Communist International 1938: 24).

A year later Britain and France declared war on Germany after Germany invaded Poland. The Labour Party had no hesitation in giving its full support to the war. Labour ministers were appointed to the War Cabinet in the spring of 1940, as the 'phoney war' ended with the German invasion of Norway, France, and the Low Countries. The party was not deflected from its support for the British war effort even when the imperialist nature of the war became very clear indeed as the initial European war which had broken out in 1939 spilled over into North Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East.

But what of the CP? Early in 1939, when war seemed inevitable, a pamphlet issued in Pollitt's name, *Will it Be War?*, suggested that if war came British Communists would not be found wanting:

Our country and our people will never fall victims to fascism. The people of Britain will fight if necessary better than any other people in the world. They stand now unafraid in a land led by capitulators ... people who are afraid to stand on their own feet, people who will whine about the 'horrors of war', blind to the fact that a real policy of defence means the only sure shield for preventing war. And if it fails, the people of Britain will fight as never before.

It would be cynical not to see here an emotional commitment to fighting fascism. The CP's stance on the war was complex and ambiguous. It had no doubt that Britain should be defended, but other factors – distrust of what it regarded as a pro-fascist government, a desire to defend the USSR, and even simple patriotism, as opposed to social chauvinism – were at play. Immediately after the outbreak of war it therefore called for a 'war on two fronts' – against Germany certainly, but also against the 'enemies of democracy' in Britain (*Daily Worker*, 2 September 1939).

But shortly afterwards the Comintern intervened to declare that the war was an imperialist war and could not be supported. Most CP members fell into line. Neither the Comintern nor the CP had suddenly rediscovered Leninism: their opposition to the war



was the result of British and French refusal to ally with the USSR against Germany. The CP was therefore well placed to resume its support for war once the Soviet–German pact of mutual convenience, concluded shortly before the outbreak of war, was ended by the German invasion of the USSR in June 1941. But by then the ambiguity and complexity present in 1939 had dissolved into a determination to support the British war effort and defend the USSR, fuelled no doubt by Britain's desperate situation in the war and the disastrous defeats of the Red Army. There were no more calls for a 'war on two fronts'.

Working-class support for another war with Germany was firm, though not enthusiastic. There was no repeat of even the limited anti-war protests of 1914, but neither was there a repeat of the enthusiastic scenes which had then greeted the outbreak of war (though they were much exaggerated by propagandists and historians). Labour movement support was however given with some misgivings. Continuing deprivation in the industrial districts, where there was still much poverty, poor housing, and unemployment, had led to the belief that the sacrifices of 1914–18 had not been adequately rewarded, that promises of reform had been broken to grow deep roots (though, as we have seen, there had been significant reform).

In Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, a leading trade unionist doubtless spoke for many when asserting that working-class people would not be "led up the garden path" after this war like they were after the last'. Trade unionists were 'watching the workers' interests at the same as they were backing the country 100 per cent' (*Ashton Reporter*, 9 February 1940). The implicit assumption here, of course, is that the problem is not that the working class had supported an imperialist war, but that they had been inadequately rewarded for doing so. But Labour movement doubts were assuaged after promises of reform emerged in the wake of the British defeats in Norway and France in 1940. Once in the Cabinet, Labour ministers dominated domestic politics and mainly determined the shape of post-war politics. Anti-fascism and complacent talk of a 'people's war' cloaked labour's social-imperialist collaboration with capital.

Assumptions that there would be substantial post-war reform accelerated after the British victory over German and Italian forces

at El Alamein in North Africa in late 1942. Not coincidentally, the Beveridge Report, which urged an end to the five 'giant evils' of squalor, ignorance, want, idleness, and disease, was published shortly afterwards. This report and the other two principal wartime foundations of the post-war welfare state, the 1944 White Paper on Employment, which promised full employment, and the 1944 Education Act, which provided for post-war free secondary education for all and the further raising of the school leaving age, were all broadly welcomed by the labour movement.

Chimerical hope of colonial reform emerged in the course of the war, notably after the adoption in 1941 by Britain and the US of the Atlantic Charter, which promised post-war self-determination for all. But the Labour Party's support for war was not at all diminished when Churchill made it clear that he did not regard the promise of self-determination as applicable to the British Empire. Nominally, Labour was in favour of post-war self-determination: but its record in post-war office suggests that Labour's fundamental attitude was revealed when one of its most senior leaders, Herbert Morrison, remarked that the notion of self-government for many of the colonies was 'ignorant, dangerous nonsense ... it would be like giving a child of ten a latch-key, a bank account and a shotgun' (Louis 1977: 33).

Labour's stance on India revealed in practice Labour's social chauvinism. Nominally committed to Indian independence, Labour ministers were as adamantly opposed as the Conservatives to granting wartime independence, leading to the abject failure of the 'Cripps Mission' in 1942. Stafford Cripps (known to leaders of the Congress Party of India as 'Stifford Crapps') flew to India in 1942 with an offer of independence after the war. The Congress Party of India was unimpressed and launched the 'Quit India' movement, a campaign of civil disobedience intended to force the British to grant independence. The campaign was savagely repressed. Congress leaders, who had earlier been released from prison as a concession to the independence movement, were sent back to gaol.

The precondition for domestic and colonial reform was of course a defeat of the Axis powers and a defence and, where necessary, reconquest of British bases, colonies, and spheres of interest in the Mediterranean,

North Africa, Middle East, and Far East. But it became clear in 1944–45, as the war turned decisively in the allies' favour, that promises of self-determination for the colonial peoples were false. British rule was forcibly reimposed in such places as Burma and Malaya. In late 1944 Britain also militarily intervened in Greece, long a British dependency, to prevent communist-led partisans from taking power. There were protests from left-wing Labour people over these matters, but they continued to give overall support to the war.

The CP's overriding concern was the defeat of fascism (in which category, with some dialectical ingenuity, it included Britain's principal Far Eastern rival, Japan) and the defence of the USSR. It was therefore reluctant to fully support anti-colonial campaigns. While it supported demands for wartime reform for India, including some measure of self-government, it tried to use its influence with Congress to persuade it not to resort to civil disobedience when these demands were not met. In the final stages of the war British colonial reconquests in the Far East were given a warm welcome, if usually accompanied by platitudinous remarks that desires for colonial freedom should be respected. The CP maintained this ambivalent stance – for instance criticising the use of British troops to restore Dutch rule in Indonesia – until the eruption of the Cold War in 1947 necessitated a more militant position.

Labour won a landslide victory in the general election of 1945. Labour's programme was a settlement of the imperial bargain struck between labour and capital in 1939–40. Making full employment the primary objective of economic policy and establishing a comprehensive system of social insurance and free health care greatly improved conditions for working-class people, thereby bolstering British imperialism's social base. The Conservative Party quibbled about some aspects of Labour's programme, but raised no fundamental objection.

Internationally, Labour was the main agent of British imperialism's attempts to restore the pre-war imperial order. Ernest Bevin, foreign secretary in the 1945–51 Labour Government, was quite unapologetic about this, telling the House of Commons in 1946 that he was 'not prepared to sacrifice the British Empire ... I know that if the British Empire fell ... it would mean that the standard of life of our constituents would fall

considerably' (Ramdin 1987: 132). Indeed it would: Malayan rubber, for instance, sold for dollars, played a crucial role in financing post-war reconstruction at home (Cain and Hopkins 1993). Not long after Bevin's remarks, Britain began a war against a communist-led national liberation war against British rule in Malaya. Labour's apologists usually refer to the granting of independence to India in 1947 to affirm the party's internationalist credentials. But in truth, there was little alternative. Unrest in India made attempts to prolong British rule unfeasible. Moreover, pressure from the US to grant independence could not be resisted, given Britain's increasing dependence on US finance and arms.

Overall, this is a sorry tale. The co-operation of the labour movement with British capital in the two world wars meant that British imperialism felt relatively secure at home while it pursued imperialist objectives abroad. Moreover, the reforms enacted after both wars bolstered imperialism's domestic social base and made it even less likely that British labour would seriously threaten the rule of capital. There always have been and still are British people who have opposed British imperialism – Sylvia Pankhurst, for instance, was a consistent opponent of British rule in India and Ireland – but these have tended to be on its margins or not even on the left. Its mainstream organisations, especially when faced with the test of war, have either, like the Labour Party, unquestioningly supported imperialism or, like the CP, ultimately capitulated to it.

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## China: Anti-Imperialism from the Manchu Empire to the People's Republic

Renowned American historian Charles Beard in 1947 warned that a US policy of military interventionism in defence of economic interests would lead to 'perpetual war for perpetual peace', a phrase that would be used over and over again by critics of US foreign policy, from the historian William Appleman Williams to the playwright and man of letters Gore Vidal. Imperialism would lead to this in China and much of the world.

There are three major organisational systems which have been used by imperialist powers in modern history. The first and best known is colonialism – the establishment of formal colonies; for example, the British in India and later Chinese Hong Kong, the French in Indochina, the Japanese in Korea and later Chinese Taiwan, and the US in the Philippines, all before the First World War. The second, establishing 'protectorates' or 'satellites', is characterised by indirect control: establishing military bases and economic control through direct investment or

marginal taxation on investments, one-sided trade agreements, with military intervention when its power is threatened. The third and broadest is sphere of influence, characterised by multilateral and bilateral trade and investment agreements granting the imperialist nation special privileges compared to its international rivals.

Until the rise of industrial capitalism in the 19th century, imperialists sought to establish colonies to which they could export raw materials. These colonies would purchase finished goods from metropolitan centres, and expand protected markets at the expense of rivals, leading to wars in which colonies were often used as pawns.

In the later 18th century, these wars led to the first successful anti-colonial revolution in history: the American Revolution against the British Empire. Within two generations, this was followed by South and Central American anti-colonial revolutions against the Spanish and Portuguese Empires as Europe and Britain were embroiled in wars against first the French Revolution and then Napoleon.

While these wars and revolutions swept Europe and the Western Hemisphere, an industrial revolution developed, firstly in Britain. Despite the loss of its American colonies, Britain would use its new economic power to establish the largest empire in human history, inaugurating a world system which would come to be termed 'imperialism' by the end of the 19th century.

### Imperialism and the Chinese Empire

China, with its landlord-scholar bureaucrat power structure and its rationalist Confucian ideology, existed for millennia in large part because it absorbed conquerors and prevented internal capitalists and others who might threaten its Empire. It had engaged in trade (silks, porcelain, tea) with European powers, restricting their access to China. It had expanded over much of East Asia for centuries by a policy of assimilating groups to Chinese Confucian culture (a process known as 'Sinification'), defining itself as the 'Middle Kingdom', the centre of civilisation, seeking to limit contact with all outsiders. But the landlord class, its mandarin state machine ruling through Confucian ideology, could not withstand the assault of British-led industrial capitalism, which in the name of

'civilisation and progress', 'free markets', and 'the rule of law' sold opium that destroyed the bodies and minds of millions of Chinese people, seized Chinese territories, and established unequal treaties between China and the imperialist powers.

The powerful East India Company, which controlled all of India as a corporate fiefdom, found itself by the late 18th century losing to Chinese tea in the international tea trade on the world market. Furthermore, the Chinese state sold tea only for silver, leading to a major British deficit in the balance of payments for trade. The British government and East India Company responded by exporting large quantities of Indian opium to China. The opium trade expanded in 1834 when Britain, committed to a policy of 'free trade,' ended the East India Company opium monopoly and opened up the trade to 'entrepreneurs', including Americans who sold Turkish opium in China.

'Free-market' competition worked to lower opium prices and increase sales in China, where local merchants and corrupt officials profited from the trade, which was centred in Canton, through which all Chinese trade went. When a Chinese official, Lin Lexu, governor of Canton, banned the trade, an international crisis followed in which, in the name of 'free trade' and bringing China under 'international law,' Britain launched the First Opium War (1839–42). The British won, seizing Canton and Shanghai and compelling the Chinese court to sign the Treaty of Nanking (1842), a model for later imperialist incursions into China. First, Hong Kong was ceded to Britain (as a gateway to China). Five new ports (including Shanghai) were also opened to foreign commercial interests, who were given both residency rights and 'extraterritoriality,' meaning that they were not subject to Chinese law but to the laws of their respective nations.

As a final humiliation, China was compelled to pay an indemnity to the opium sellers for the lost opium confiscated and destroyed during the war. France and the US then demanded similar concessions, as China found itself in the midst of a civil war, the Taiping Rebellion (1850–68), which would cost more lives than any conflict in history until the First World War. Although the Taiping Rebels adopted a hybrid version of Christianity to advance a revolutionary populist programme (their leader, Hung

Hsiu-ch'uan, claimed that he was the younger brother of Jesus come to establish a 'heavenly kingdom' of economic and social equality in China), Britain, France, and the US supported the Manchu dynasty while treating the civil war as a further opportunity to force new concessions.

Britain demanded the opening of all ports and exemption from all tariffs against British imports, joining with France, the US, and tsarist Russia to launch the Second Opium War in 1858. Over the next two years, China suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of British and French naval and land forces, culminating in the destruction of the emperor's Summer Palace in Beijing and widespread looting of Chinese treasures by civilian and military forces. China again was compelled to pay large indemnities to foreign governments and business interests, and to open itself up entirely to foreign business travellers and missionaries. Also, a British subject, Sir Robert Hart, was brought in to serve as the inspector-general of China's Imperial Maritime Custom Service, collecting tariff payments for the Manchus, 'modernising' the port system, and serving essentially as a representative of all the imperialist powers over the 'China market'.

Imperialist powers now demanded more of everything (raw materials, markets; most of all, cheap indigenous labour). They also had devastating new weapons. In Asia and Africa, traditional ruling groups found themselves caught between foreigners whom they did not want and masses of people whom they feared to mobilise. China was much larger but no different. Its leaders sought policies of 'self-strengthening' to produce or purchase modern weapons with which to retain the existing system. But they could no more do that than keep opium out of the country. They were fighting a world system, which they never understood.

The treaties which followed the Second Opium War included provisions for the export of Chinese indentured labour throughout the world, labour which, for example, was crucial in the construction of the western tier of the US transcontinental railroad after the US Civil War. A Chinese diaspora was created. In the aftermath of the Taiping Rebels' defeat, the commanders of the Manchu armies began to become regional warlords, further undermining the central government.

Finally, Japan, itself a target of imperialism, saw a section of its nobility launch the

'Meiji Restoration' in the 1860s. This was a revolution against the feudal system which, over a generation, suppressed both Samurai and peasant rebellions and established a government committed to the rapid development of industrial capitalism at home and an aggressive imperialist foreign policy abroad, seeking to join the imperialist powers. China by the 1890s had become and would remain the centre of Japanese imperialism's attempt to develop an Asia-Pacific Empire.

And the incursions multiplied. France colonised Indochina against feeble Chinese opposition in the 1880s. Semi-feudal tsarist Russia threatened Chinese Manchuria. Reformist elements began to develop inside China and in the growing Chinese diaspora. For example, Sun Yat-sen, a resident of the Independent Kingdom of Hawaii and a Christian convert, returned to China and involved himself in a failed plot to overthrow the dynasty in 1895. Japan declared war on China and won a decisive victory over it, seizing Chinese Taiwan as a colony and acting for the first time in its history to extend its influence on the Asian mainland, an unwelcome member of the imperialist 'club' whom the German Kaiser called the 'Gelbe Gefahr' (Yellow Peril).

After Kang Yu Wei, a Mandarin reformer, failed to advance moderate reforms in 1898, dividing the imperial court, all the imperialist powers began to actively carve up China into regions for themselves: a 'race for concessions', as it was called. These events prompted the US to seize the Philippines in the 'Spanish American War' of 1898, abandoning its anti-colonial traditions. In US thinking, the Port of Manila was a stepping stone to the 'China Market', a myth that energised all the imperialist powers, who found it convenient to believe that a capital-poor China could purchase huge quantities of their goods.

Secret societies had long played a role in China, both as a centre of popular resistance to the Manchus and as a tool for various factions. In 1899, secret societies touched off anti-foreign uprisings directed against Christian missionaries and all foreigners. The Manchus first sought to use this movement to improve their position against the imperialist powers, but were pushed by the rebels to declare a half-hearted war, laying siege to the foreign legations district of Beijing which

they could easily have overrun. After that, the imperialist powers launched a multinational naval and land-based military intervention (the largest of its kind ever until the First World War), to crush the rebellion.

The European and US press were filled with accounts of the atrocities of the 'Boxer' rebels (their use of martial arts suggested the name 'Boxer Rebellion'). The looting in Beijing and other cities, and the rape and murder of Chinese bystanders, received limited recognition, although there were accounts of these events for which the imperialist powers generally blamed each other. In the aftermath of the Rebellion, the Manchu Government, saddled with a huge indemnity, lost all influence as its regional commanders increased their power and the imperialists fought over its territories.

Russia and Japan then fought a war over Manchuria and Korea, resulting in a de facto Japanese victory in 1905. The US, committed to an 'open door in China', was in negotiations with the Japanese even before the Russo-Japanese War had officially ended. In the Taft-Katsura Agreement, it accepted Japanese control of Korea in exchange for Japan's acceptance of US colonial control of the Philippines. Access to the Chinese trade and investment stood behind the US 'open-door' policy, which did not extend to either Korea or the Philippines.

Britain, still seeking to control the most valuable region inside China (the Yangtze Valley), negotiated an alliance with Japan against Russia directly and Germany and the US indirectly, both of whom, as Britain's major industrial rivals, were pursuing non-colonial imperialist policies. Imperial China found itself an onlooker to these developments: deteriorating into something like a national slum; cities filled with impoverished masses; foreigners living in luxurious protected enclaves; and a class of Chinese compradors, merchant middlemen growing rich through their connections with the imperialist powers. In the countryside, bandits and warlords made the hard life of poor peasants and landless labourers even more miserable than before.

### **Imperialist powers and the first Chinese revolution**

The Confucian Mandarin state had for centuries connected status and political power with

formal learning, producing a great respect for formal education. As this system decayed rapidly, a large number of students and scholars who had studied to obtain positions found that these posts no longer existed. Western ideas ranging from Social Darwinism to Marxism began to reach Chinese students and intellectuals via Europeans and Americans in China, the Chinese diaspora, and groups in Japan interested in bringing 'modern civilisation' to China.

Sun Yat-sen, in exile in Japan, had organised the Kuomintang (KMT): a political party which called for the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty and the establishment of a Chinese republic. In 1911, uprisings among workers, peasants, and students with the support of urban merchants brought down the Manchu state, and Sun and the KMT moved forward in an attempt to channel the revolutionary movement into the creation of a republic. Although Sun clearly represented the sort of China which the imperialist powers had spoken of since the First Opium War, they gave him no support.

Instead, an International Banking Consortium representing these powers gave their support to a Manchu general and de facto warlord, Yuan Shih-k'ai, who had failed to use his army to support the Manchus and now turned on the revolutionaries. Yuan would give the imperialist powers the economic concessions they wanted, even though he had no real popular support and rapidly began to act as a military dictator. Frank J. Goodnow, the president of Johns Hopkins University and the former president of the American Political Science Association, served as his most important foreign political adviser, drafting the two constitutions that Yuan sought to inflict on the Chinese people. His response to US critics was that the Chinese were not 'mature enough' for political democracy. But Yuan's attempts to consolidate his power largely collapsed in face of opposition from the popular masses, peasants, and workers, and a nascent, urban, Chinese, national, capitalist class. After a failed and ludicrous attempt to make himself emperor, Yuan died in 1916, and China was in effect governed by the remnants of the imperial Mandarin civil service while cliques of warlords, former henchman of Yuan, fought with each other for power, backed by the various imperialist powers as the First World War raged elsewhere.

In China itself there were important new developments. Intellectuals organised journals which became the centre of a 'new culture' movement. This condemned Confucianism's emphasis upon social harmony through obedience to familial elders and a scholar Mandarin class as the major barrier to progress. There spread an eclectic interest in the political and social philosophies that were being imported into China along with the goods of the imperialist powers. Like many Chinese students and intellectuals, Chen Tu-shiu (a leading figure in this new movement) and Li Ta-chou (chief librarian at the University of Peking) turned to Marxism with the coming of the Soviet Revolution, attracted by its call for an anti-imperialist world revolutionary movement.

The Soviet Revolution and Germany's defeat eliminated two of the imperialist powers jockeying for power in China. But the victorious Britain, France, US, and Japan remained. During the war, Japan had made '21 demands' on China, demands which would have transformed it into a Japanese protectorate/satellite and left Manchuria subject to Japanese colonial settlement. The US vigorously opposed this and negotiated in 1917 the Lansing Ishi Treaty. By its provisions, Japan pulled back from direct action to enforce its demands but conceded nothing, while the US restated its commitment to an 'open door' in a unified China. When the Versailles Conference 'transferred' German economic concessions in northern China to Japan, protest demonstrations by students, workers, and national capitalists spread throughout urban areas from 4 May 1919 onwards. These demonstrations ignited a much higher level of organised resistance. Sun Yat-sen, once more in China, found himself organising military forces to fight warlords, and established a KMT-led military government at Guangzhou (1921), dedicating himself to a united China.

The Comintern, committed to fighting imperialism and organising both Communist parties and anti-imperialist movements in the colonial regions of the world, worked with Chen, Mao, and other pioneers of Chinese Marxism to establish a Communist Party of China (CCP) in 1921. At the same time, Chinese students in Europe (many on exploitative 'work-study programmes') organised a student section of the Chinese Communist

Party abroad. Chou En-lai and his younger protégé Deng Xiaoping were drawn from the ranks of these students, and later became major figures in 20th-century China.

The communist movement grew rapidly among urban workers and intellectuals in China while the imperialist powers continued to support their warlords. With Comintern representatives playing a central role, a United Front was forged between Sun's KMT and the CCP. The Whampoa military academy, headed by Sun's protégé Chiang Kai-shek with Chou En-lai as political commissar, was established, along with a policy of uniting China through a Great Northern Expedition that would defeat the warlords and their imperialist political backers. Through the United Front, the KMP and the CCP strengthened their positions and both were actively opposed by all the imperialist powers.

The death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925 led to a complicated power struggle in which Chiang Kai-shek emerged as the dominant figure in the KMT. This created a crisis in the United Front, as many CCP members feared that Chiang, supported by capitalists connected to the compradors, would turn on the United Front. However, the United Front was maintained and the Great Northern Expedition was launched against the warlords in 1926, with nationalist and communist forces uniting to win major victories against the warlords and their allies.

But the imperialist powers, who had never supported Sun or the KMT, much less the KMT-CCP alliance, used their power to defeat the campaign. In March 1927, a combined force of US and British ships and troops attacked KMT troops in Nanking as they assaulted the property of the foreign legations. A month later, an event which changed both the history of imperialism in China and Chinese history itself took place: the April Shanghai massacre. As communist workers and students gained control of Shanghai to welcome troops they saw as liberators, Chiang Kai-shek ended the United Front with great brutality, ordering his soldiers to join with Shanghai criminal gangs to massacre workers, students, and all communists. Li Ta-chao, the CCP's most important founder, was murdered as KMT forces invaded the Soviet embassy. Chou En-lai barely escaped with his life. An estimated 80,000 were killed, and the terror

continued as Chiang's forces and local warlords united to hunt down and kill suspected communists.

Now, for the first time, the European imperialist powers and the US recognised and threw their support behind Chiang, who could be counted on to protect their interests in a way they had hoped Yuan would do a dozen years before. Japan, which sought to control all of China, did not support Chiang. The urban CCP was decimated. Attacks launched by communist military forces against urban areas were repulsed. A commune established by communist activists in Canton was crushed. New CCP leaders, supported by the Comintern, failed to implement policies to reverse the tide.

However, Mao Zedong, a CCP founder and leader who had, in an analysis of the peasant masses in his native province of Hunan, come to see them as not simply an ally of the working class but, given Chinese conditions, a prime revolutionary force, emerged as both the theoretical and practical leader of the party. He established a liberated territory in the northern Kiangsi province (the Kiangsi Soviet) as a base area and a model for a peasant-supported revolutionary army, one in which the party, army, and the masses would be united.

Chiang's KMT regime then focused its attention on destroying the Kiangsi Soviet, prosecuting a civil war with the aid of various warlords. While the world depression intensified, Japanese imperialist penetration advanced. The various imperialist powers had their warlords and some warlords shifted alliances between the KMT and the imperialist powers. The Japanese however, were different from the other imperialist powers in that they sought to control all of China for themselves.

First, the Japanese-controlled Manchurian warlord Chang Tso-lin participated in the anti-communist terror of April 1927, which spread to other cities. He invaded Beijing and helped to murder the leading communist Li Ta-chao, who was instrumental in Mao joining the communist movement. The following year, when he tried to break with the Japanese and join Chiang, the Japanese murdered him and replaced him in Manchuria with his son Chiang Hsueh-liang. When the latter, who inherited his father's position and warlord army, tried to break with the Japanese in 1931, they invaded Manchuria and established a 'protectorate' which they called Manchukuo.



Here they installed Pu Yi (the last Manchu emperor, ousted when he was a small child in 1911) as their puppet ruler.

Japan expanded its role in northern China, buying off local warlords and seeking to turn their regions into protectorates. Meanwhile, Chiang's army, with US and German military advisers (the Germans had begun their activities here in the late Weimar period, and continued into the early Nazi era), successfully encircled the main forces of the Kiangsi Soviet. Under Mao's leadership, the revolutionary Chinese communist army began a two-year march to escape a myriad of murderous enemies and establish a new base area. It was a trek through northern and western China which claimed the lives of two-thirds of its fighters and represents in contemporary Chinese history what Lexington Concord, Bunker Hill, and Valley Forge put together stand for in US history.

By 1936, a series of events rapidly transpired that would lead to full-scale war in China within a year. Chang Hsueh-liang, the former Manchurian warlord who had participated in Chiang Kai-shek's war against the CCP, now urged Chiang to end the war and join with the CCP to fight the Japanese. When Chiang refused at a conference in Sian, Chang held him hostage and threatened to kill him if he did not establish the United Front. CCP leader Chou En-lai then negotiated a United Front settlement which in effect saved Chiang's life. The Japanese, threatened by the United Front (like the Italian and German fascists in Europe, they had used anti-communism to rationalise their attacks on China), then signed a treaty with Nazi Germany. This Anti-Comintern Pact (an anti-communist alliance that served as the origin of the Axis alliance) was designed to intimidate Chiang (who had previously received aid from Nazi Germany) to break the United Front. When that failed, they provoked an incident in Beijing to justify launching a full-scale (albeit undeclared) war against China. In reality, this was the beginning of the Second World War. Within a year, the Japanese military had conquered the major eastern and northern Chinese cities, carried out the infamous mass killing in Nanking, and initiated a war which would claim an estimated 10–20 million Chinese lives.

The response of the imperialist powers was 'neutrality' and continued business with Japan. While the Roosevelt Administration

had begun by 1938 to provide limited aid to Chiang's regime, which had relocated to the western Chinese city Chung-king, the US did not invoke its neutrality legislation, since Japan had not formerly declared war. US oil companies and other corporations continued to supply fuel and other goods used by the resource-poor Japanese Empire for its war machine. Britain's Chamberlain Government, which pursued an appeasement policy in Europe towards Nazi Germany, also pursued a pro-Japanese appeasement policy in Asia in the vain hope that it could turn them away from a fully fledged alliance with Nazi Germany.

While millions of Chinese civilians perished, the CCP in the North expanded its revolutionary armies and mobilised an increasingly effective guerrilla war against Japan. Although the United Front was still in effect, KMT and CCP forces clashed in many instances and Chiang's regime, especially after war broke out in Europe, began to look to the US, in particular, and Britain to eventually defeat the Japanese so that he could continue his civil war against the CCP later.

After the Japanese invasion, Chiang had said famously 'The Japanese are a disease of the skin, the Communists a disease of the heart', a statement with which all of the major imperialist powers (save of course the Japanese themselves and possibly the US under the Roosevelt Administration) would have agreed. After the Nazi conquest of Western Europe, Japan negotiated a 'tripartite pact' with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in which the three powers pledged to come to the aid of each other if any of the three became involved in conflict with a power not involved in either the European war or 'undeclared' war in China, a treaty aimed at the time at both the US and the Soviet Union.

When Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, the Japanese militarist leadership, divided over whether to join its European allies against the Soviets or to attack British, Dutch, and US positions in Asia, decided on the latter course. By arrangement with the Vichy French collaborator government, Japan occupied French colonial Indochina. The US responded by freezing Japanese assets, and establishing a complete embargo on exports to Japan, especially oil. This had the effect of strengthening the Japanese plan to attack Pearl Harbor and destroy the US Pacific Fleet, a plan that had been developed before the

Nazi invasion of the USSR and the Japanese invasion of Indochina. For the Japanese militarists, the war in China, which was tying down millions of Japanese soldiers and the foundation of their imperialism, was the decisive factor in their decision to attack the US and Britain in the Pacific.

Chiang's China now joined the Allies and received extensive aid from the US in the war. Japan intensified its anti-guerrilla war against the CCP, launching a campaign of 'loot all, burn all, kill all' which led to massacres of Chinese civilians comparable to the Nazi slaughter of the Soviet people. The CCP, although its ranks were initially decimated, grew stronger as the war progressed, winning over millions of poor peasants and landless labourers as it merged a war of national liberation with one of social revolution. US officials in China were aware of this, some foreign-service officials and military officials coming to respect and admire the CCP activists for their courage and honesty compared to the corruption of KMT military and civilian officials. US attempts to encourage Chiang to advance land and other social reforms to liberalise his government failed completely.

As the war ended, the CCP became the de facto government of over 100 million people in northern China. Chiang's regime, having used the US to defeat Japan, now hoped to use it to defeat the CCP in a new civil war. The Truman Administration, in the very early stages of what would by 1947 be called a 'Cold War' against the Soviet Union, the global communist movement, and diverse anti-imperialist revolutionary forces emerging from the war, was glad to try and oblige. The Japanese armies were not demobilised after the Japanese surrender but kept initially by the US as a police force to prevent, as Truman would later admit in his memoirs, CCP forces from sweeping to victory throughout northern China, gaining control of Beijing, Shanghai, and other major cities.

The mission by General George Marshall to establish a coalition government of the KMT and the CCP in 1946 broke down. The CCP was willing to participate, believing that it would triumph in elections, but Chiang was not. The Truman Administration then provided more than £3 billion in aid to the KMT, and arms and advisers for its elite divisions as it launched a major military offensive against the CCP in war-weary China. Although the

Truman Administration knew through its internal reports that Chiang lacked mass support, it continued its aid as the military tide turned decisively against the KMT and rampant inflation devastated the Chinese economy.

In Western Europe, the US Marshall Plan was put in place to rebuild infrastructure destroyed during the Second World War. But there was no such plan to rebuild the devastated Chinese economy. The US offered only military aid for a corrupt regime seeking to restore the pre-1937 status quo ante. Tens of millions of Chinese actively joined the revolution and hundreds of millions simply withdrew any support from the KMT. The Truman Administration ended its aid in mid-1949, shortly before the fall of Beijing, blaming the defeat entirely on the KMT leadership but offering nothing to the new People's Republic of China.

There were to be important consequences for China, the US, and the world from these events. First, in the developing Cold War, Truman's Republican opposition blamed his administration for the 'loss of China', reasserting the imperialist fantasy that the country was theirs to begin with. Senator Joseph McCarthy built upon these charges to transform the anti-communist Cold War consensus into a national hysteria. McCarthy was even to accuse General Marshall of being a communist and Soviet agent because of his earlier failed mission to negotiate a KMP-CCP coalition.

Unlike Britain and its other allies in the newly formed North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the US refused to recognise the People's Republic of China and used its veto in the to block the country's admission to the new United Nations. The successful Chinese Revolution was also a factor in encouraging the newly created National Security Council (part of the reorganisation of US Military/Overseas Intelligence in response to the Cold War, created by the National Security Act of 1947) to advocate a globalising of the US 'containment' policy which would require a quadrupling of US military expenditures.

These events prompted the Truman Administration to intervene in late June 1950 in the civil war that broke out in Korea, the former Japanese colony which the US and the USSR had divided into occupation zones at the 38th parallel with no consultation of the Korean people. After the outbreak of the

Korean War, the US intervened directly in the Chinese civil war, preventing the People's Republic, which now controlled all of mainland China, from gaining control of Taiwan, where Chiang's KMT Government had retreated and whose fall virtually all international observers considered inevitable. No one expected Chiang's forces on Taiwan to survive, since they had no navy to stop a People's Liberation Army invasion, and had already put themselves in a bad position with the Taiwanese who had been a Japanese colony since 1895 and were in conflict with the KMT mainlanders. In fact, a number of high officials in Chiang's government, including relatives, had already resettled in the US, expecting Taiwan to fall rapidly. When US troops of the UN, led by General MacArthur, ignored warnings from the People's Republic and advanced to the Yalu River on the Korean–Chinese border (six months after the US had sent the Seventh Fleet into the Formosa Strait to protect Chiang's new Taiwan government), hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops intervened.

The newly created US Central Intelligence Agency began to work with anti-communist elements in Chinese Tibet and former Chinese warlords who had fled to Indochina and gone into heroin production to support attempts to destabilise the People's Republic. Finally, fearful of 'communist expansion' and the 'Sino Soviet World Communist Conspiracy against the Free World' following the victorious Chinese Revolution, the US began to fund the French colonial war in Indochina in 1950. Following the French military defeat, it created a protectorate in 'South Vietnam' in violation of the Geneva agreement which had ended the conflict. These were contentions that the British imperialists who fought the Opium Wars in the name of 'free trade and the rule of law' and all of the imperialist powers who put down the Boxer Rebellion to defend 'civilisation' would have well understood.

Norman Markowitz

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## Cold War Imperialism and Anti-Imperialist Protests at the End of the Cold War

Although the emergence of the US as a global hegemon had roots in national and international conditions prior to the Second World War, that war provided it with the historical opportunity to expand its informal empire globally and establish a de facto global hegemony. Even before the end of the Second World War, the political elites of the US were envisioning and planning for a post-war global order that would conform to long-standing economic and political imperatives for freer trade and a political order of pro-Western governments and institutions in the developed and colonial world. Integral to the post-war global order were the economic arrangements promulgated at Bretton Woods in 1944 that established US financial dominance through institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Additional post-war geopolitical

projects were embedded in international and multilateral organisations such as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. For more covert imperial operations, the Central Intelligence Agency was developed to foster favourable governments around the world through interventions and regime change, albeit US interventions and regime changes predated the creation of the CIA (Kinser 2006). US global hegemony in the post-war period was not only a consequence of economic, political, and military superiority, but also a reflection of the diffusion of cultural and ideological orientations that advanced US moral and intellectual leadership. Among those ideological postures was the articulation of the 'American Century'. On the eve of the US entrance into the Second World War, Henry Luce, editor and owner of *Time-Life* magazines, proclaimed the American Century in the pages of *Life*. Luce's vision of the American Century was predicated on the belief that the US had both the natural right and ordained responsibility to wield political and military power as a guarantor of progress and prosperity throughout the world. Accordingly, 'U.S. global dominance was presented as the natural result of historical progress, implicitly the pinnacle of European civilization, rather than the competitive outcome of political-economic power' (Smith 2005: 20).

On the other hand, competition to US pre-eminence in the post-war period materialised in the form of the Soviet Union and the spectre of communism, especially as an alternative model for economic and social development. Not without its own messianic presumptions and imperial ambitions, the Soviet Union became the spur for a Cold War. In turn, the Cold War provided the US with an ideological cover for the domestic growth of a military-industrial complex and national security state while perpetuating its global hegemony. Under the geopolitical strategy of 'containment,' the US expanded the global reach of its interventions, especially in the post-colonial Third World, while tethering European and other allies, like Japan, to its imperial projects. As noted by historian Bruce Cumings, 'the Cold War consisted of two systems: the containment project, providing security against both the enemy and ally; and the hegemonic project, providing for American leverage over the necessary

resources of our industrial rivals' (Cumings 1992: 88–89).

Although the Cold War 'officially' ended with the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the 1980s witnessed flashpoints of conflict from Central America to the Middle East and from Afghanistan to Southern Africa. As a consequence of the aggressive foreign and military policies of the Reagan Administration, people in those regions were embroiled in 'proxy wars'. Even Europe did not escape the spectre of war, given the placement of nuclear-armed missile systems (McMahon 2003: 143–168; Westad 2007: 331–363). Yet, the transformations in Cold War imperialism, especially around intervention in Central America and nuclear weapons deployments, were not just the result of the decisions by the political elites and external and internal contradictions. Indeed, the active mobilisation by grass-roots campaigns implicitly challenged the legitimacy of Cold War imperialism and hastened its erosion. According to James Carroll (2006: 375), 'a groundswell of ordinary people brought the Cold War to a head'. However, as a consequence of how deeply Cold War imperialism was embedded in the politics and policies of post-1945 America, the anti-interventionist and nuclear disarmament campaigns of the 1980s were more often articulated as moral than political critiques, the latter implicit in the former. Therefore, in addition to an analysis of the anti-interventionist protests and projects against US policies in Central America, a comparative perspective will be offered in the instance of the nuclear disarmament campaigns in order to identify the national and ideological constraints that undermined long-term success of the anti-imperialist content of these protests while highlighting their transnational content.

In order to identify the anti-imperialist content of these protests in the 1980s, one needs to consider the transformations in US hegemony up to this period. Following Immanuel Wallerstein's interpretation of the 'Curve of American Power' in the post-1945 period, one can see how the 1970s were a transformative moment in that hegemony. As a consequence of the defeat in Vietnam, the rise of OPEC, the declining legitimacy of US political systems, and the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, fissures were created, both domestically and internationally, that opened up new terrains for ideologically

driven economic and geopolitical strategies (Wallerstein 2006: 77–94). In addition, the increasing globalisation of capital with its intensification of migrations and expansion of new systems of communication not only led to the reconstitution of imperial projects but also new sites of political engagement and resistance. Linked to what Christopher Chase-Dunn and Barry Gills call the ‘globalization of resistance’, new forms of grassroots participatory democracy were created that attempted ‘to build bridges and solidarities’ across national boundaries (Chase-Dunn and Gills 2005: 53).

What were the particular social spaces and political sites around which both national and transnational protests coalesced in the 1980s and the means by which they articulated their anti-imperialist critiques vis-à-vis the hegemonic project of US Cold War imperialism in Central America? Certainly, as noted by Odd Arne Westad, ‘the Cold War system of domination was superimposed on nineteenth and early twentieth-century trends, especially as far as Central America and the Caribbean are concerned’ (2007: 143). Beyond the continuities informing US imperial interventions in Central America, ‘conservative activists used (Central America) to respond to the crisis of the 1970s, a crisis provoked not only by America’s defeat in Vietnam but by a deep economic recession and a culture of skeptical antimilitarism and political dissent that spread in the war’s wake’ (Grandin 2007: 5).

Against this background, and facing insurgencies and revolutions throughout Central America, US policymakers turned to a variety of strategies to suppress and derail those insurgencies and revolutions. Although the Carter Administration tried to forestall the Sandinistas from coming to power in 1979 in Nicaragua, it was the Reagan Administration that committed itself to destroying the potential for the success of the Sandinista revolution. While the key to undermining the Sandinista Government was sponsoring the Contras, a collection of the remnants from Somoza’s national guard and other disgruntled individuals and groups, who, with the encouragement of Reagan operatives, wrecked havoc on the country while murdering and torturing Sandinista supporters, the US also pursued a strategy of influencing civil society in order to support and foster political opposition to the Sandinistas. Forced initially into covert campaigns against the Sandinistas

because of active domestic opposition from religious and peace groups and their allies in Congress (who, in 1984, passed legislation prohibiting the funding of the Contras), the Reagan Administration pursued a wide range of activities from economic embargoes to illicit fund raising and arms brokering (embodied in the notorious Iran-Contra networks) to the internationally condemned mining of Nicaraguan harbours. At the same time, under the guise of ‘democracy promotion’, the Sandinista Government was kept under siege, losing in the process much of its capacity to deliver on its promises. Although the machinations of the Reagan Administration did face resolute opposition by the Sandinistas, its international supporters, and the US-based solidarity networks, such as Witness for Peace (more on these networks below), the Reagan Administration eventually managed to bleed Nicaragua and to alienate its besieged population into abandoning the Sandinista Government.

While the bleeding in Nicaragua, as a consequence of so-called low-intensity conflict, was insidious but steady, the blood-letting in El Salvador and Guatemala was even more evident and massive during the 1980s. In order to stem the growth of guerrilla movements in these two countries, the Reagan Administration relied on supporting authoritarian military regimes and their brutal counter-insurgency operations that, in turn, led to extensive repression and massacres. According to Greg Grandin, ‘US allies in Central America during Reagan’s two terms killed over 300,000 people, tortured hundreds of thousands, and drove millions into exile’ (Grandin 2007: 71; on the Salvadoran and Guatemalan massacres, see p. 90 and *passim*). This violence and repression was rationalised by the Reagan Administration, especially by its UN ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, as essential to demonstrating the political and moral resolve of the US to contest so-called ‘totalitarian’ regimes like the Sandinistas, and any insurgent movements in the ‘soft underbelly’ of US imperial hegemony.

As a consequence of the violence aided and abetted by the Reagan Administration in Central America and its framing of the conflicts in terms of Cold War threats to US hegemony, there rapidly developed solidarity campaigns and anti-interventionist protests. Those protests built upon the extensive

networks of Central American migrants and refugees. In particular, Salvadoran and Guatemalan migrants, along with religious and political networks in the US, organised a number of human rights and solidarity groups in the 1980s that addressed the human rights abuses in Central America and the problems encountered by refugees and migrants from these countries. Those organisations included the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA). Given their stated solidarity efforts, continuing right-wing hysteria about 'communism', and budding government obsession with 'international terrorism', CISPES and other Central American solidarity activists were subjected to surveillance and even harassment and intimidation.

The fact that the Reagan Administration made Central America a prime target of its foreign policy meant that their framing of the public debates and the mainstream media parroting of Administration claims created an obvious opportunity to challenge and repudiate their ideological assertions (Grandin 2007: 87–158; see also Smith 1996: esp. 18–56). In effect, this protest was as much a consequence of the attempts by the Reagan Administration to set the public agenda as it was a result of the interactions between Central America and the US. It was out of these mobilised networks that key oppositional movements developed around Reagan's Central American policy. In addition to those mentioned above, three specific organisations – Sanctuary, Witness for Peace, and the Pledge of Resistance – mobilised tens of thousands of US citizens who were prepared to transgress whatever legal and/or legislative restrictions the Reagan Administration tried to impose in order to manifest transnational solidarity.

One of the leaders of Witness for Peace underscored how Reagan's Cold War rhetoric on Nicaragua backfired, especially among those who visited that Central American country as members of Witness for Peace delegations: 'Ronald Reagan made such a big deal about Nicaragua ..., and it wasn't hard to prove him wrong ... We just took them down there and they could look around and see it wasn't a 'totalitarian dungeon' ... We owe him a lot for the strength of the movement (because) his rhetoric was just so infuriating' (Nepstad 2004: 121). Another

anti-interventionist and solidarity activist affirmed the power of visiting Nicaragua and observing how conditions there challenged the rhetoric and policies of the Reagan Administration: 'Nicaragua became the prime foreign policy obsession of the Reagan people and it was close enough that loads of people could go there and see for themselves. Ninety-nine percent of them came back disillusioned with the Reagan stance' (Nepstad 2004: 124). That disillusionment translated into both a discursive and action critique of Reagan's policies in Central America, implicitly and explicitly understood as functions of US imperialism.

As a consequence of the activities and protests of organisations like Witness for Peace, religious missionaries, Church delegations, and testimonies of Central American refugees, anti-interventionism and solidarity led to widespread and influential anti-imperialist protests. In particular, the first-hand stories of Central American refugees, who fled to the US to escape the violence in their countries in numbers close to one million during the 1980s, moved a lot of US citizens to become part of an anti-imperialist protest movement. After hearing some of these stories, one man asked a question many other listeners must have repeated: 'Why is our government sending all this money to a place where people were being slaughtered?' Another woman testified that the refugee narratives 'gave people a human face to the reality in Central America, to this foreign policy debate that was going on in Washington' (Nepstad 2004: 131–133; see also Smith 1996: 133–168). Taking note of how US policies during this period victimised Central Americans and how and why tens of thousands of US citizens 'committed themselves fully to the side of the victims', in a visceral and cognitive sense, Van Gosse helps to situate the solidarity networks in the context of moral protest (Van Gosse 1988: 43).

The impact was acknowledged by those protesting Reagan policies and those inside the Administration. One woman activist noted: 'We had a friend who worked in the State Department as this time who, with his wife, had been traveling around in all kinds of little towns throughout the US. He told us he couldn't understand before why this movement was so strong. Yet, in every single town they went to, at some bookstore, or on a corner or a bulletin board somewhere, there

was an announcement of an event with someone who had been to Nicaragua, or someone who was coming to speak on El Salvador. He said it was everywhere, everywhere' (Nepstad 2004: 127). Catholic missionaries, in particular, motivated by the spirit of Vatican II and liberation theology, translated their experiences in Central America into active critiques of the Reagan Administration's policies. One Maryknoll nun's missionary experience in Nicaragua led her to conclude: 'I was very aware that there was something wrong with US policy' (57). In turn, those religious orders and their lay supporters put increasing pressure on Congress to contest Reagan policies in Central America. William Casey, Reagan's first CIA director, deplored the influence that religious networks had on Congress, asserting 'if Tip O'Neill [the Democratic Representative from Massachusetts who was speaker of the House] didn't have Maryknoll nuns who wrote letters, we would have a Contra program' (53). The Reagan Administration's first-term assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs also deplored the impact that religious organisations and their moral critiques had on Central American policies: 'Taking on the churches is really tough. We don't normally think of them as political opponents, so we don't know how to handle them. They are really formidable' (165).

Certainly, the faith-based communities created a moral context within which anti-imperialist protests emerged. According to Sharon Nepstad, 'protest was not simply a strategic means of changing US foreign policy; it was an expression of commitment to ... religious principles and values' (161). Using religious discourse helped to inform and motivate this constituency, as well as moving these individuals and groups to pressure political representatives both locally and in Washington. As a consequence of this activism and pressure, the Reagan Administration faced legal constraints on its Central American policies (e.g. the Boland Amendment that prevented Congressional funding of the Contras) that amounted to a provisional success for anti-interventionist activists. Unfortunately, as asserted by one study of Reagan policies towards Central America: 'Had the White House actually followed the provisions of the US Constitution and other statutes, the movement could have claimed much greater success, especially

with Nicaragua' (Smith 1996: 372). Instead, Reagan's White House subverted both US and international law. The pursuit of these illegal activities by the Reagan Administration eventually led to criminal prosecution, especially for those involved in the Iran-Contra scandal. In effect, an anti-interventionist politics clearly influenced and, indeed, altered the terms of the debate and imperialist policies in Central America in the 1980s.

Another transnational protest of the 1980s owed its coalescence to a different aspect of Reagan's foreign policy. As a direct response to Reagan's intent to expand the placement of nuclear weapons and missiles in Western Europe, the traditional peace movements in the US and Europe saw a huge increase in their ranks. Although the new weapons systems, such as the MX and Pershing II missiles, had been given the green light by the Carter Administration in the late 1970s, Reagan entered the presidency in 1981 committed to ramping up not only the development and deployment of these and other new nuclear weapons systems but also the Cold War rhetoric. In particular, the unilateral and bellicose assertion by the Reagan Administration to deploy Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in a number of Western European countries as a warning about US first-strike capabilities aroused massive opposition, resulting in demonstrations in late 1981 and early 1982 by hundreds of thousands in Bonn, London, Paris, Rome, and Amsterdam. For peace activists in the US, such European activism operated as a potential catalyst. Wrote one such activist: 'This movement has created hope and therein lies the hope for us all. They send us a challenge: Why do you not scream, America?' (Meyer 1990: 75).

Certainly, the Western European demonstrations and subsequent anti-nuke campaigns inspired US peace activists, as well as garnering attention from the mainstream media (124–126). As the US Nuclear Freeze campaign kicked into gear and mobilised for what would be the spectacular demonstration in June 1982 of one million people in New York City, it appeared that a significant protest would emerge. However, there were clear limitations to the Nuclear Freeze movement in the US that prevented it from developing a full sense of anti-imperialist politics, unlike what transpired in Western Europe. As argued by David Cortright and Ron Pagnucco,

'The US sociopolitical environment made it difficult for the (Freeze) to move beyond a bilateral Cold War orientation' (Cortright and Pagnucco 1997: 82). In highlighting some of the developments and limitations of the Freeze movement, as well as particular eruptions within the peace activist and anti-imperialist networks in the US and Europe during this time, the degree to which such protests were either able to emerge or hampered in their emergence will be underscored. Such an investigation should provide further insight into the formation of transnational solidarity and the globalisation of resistance against Cold War imperialism.

Of course, print communication and global exchanges by peace activists at the time provided vehicles for constituting transnational protests. Such intellectuals and activists as British historian E.P. Thompson and Australian paediatrician Helen Caldicott could be seen as cognitive catalysts in their work. Thompson wrote an impassioned essay in the January 1981 edition of the US progressive journal *The Nation* which implored citizens of the US to mobilise against the installation of cruise missiles in Europe (Meyer 1990 151–152). While there were many more voices added to his, the eloquence of his plea and the persistence of the work of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), for which Thompson worked, inspired activists in the US. Caldicott's revival of the organisation, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and her outspoken dramatic appeals against nuclear weapons and nuclear power also had a major impact on public awareness (102).

However, to the degree that public awareness was also shaped by the mainstream media, it placed certain constraints on the Freeze movement and its capacity to project its own political analysis and strategies. As the movement gained momentum in 1982, especially at the grass-roots level with New England town meetings passing resolutions aimed at calling on the US and USSR to impose a freeze on the production, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons and missiles, both television news and mainstream newspapers began to run extensive news stories that actually helped to generate public sympathy and support. Nonetheless, many of those stories conveyed a media frame that trivialised and distorted the Freeze movement in a way that depoliticised that movement and added to its own internal contradictions

(119–135). Although those contradictions were evident with the development of the Freeze as a public campaign to attract the middle class and lobby Congress for arms control measures, 'the media had legitimated and appropriated the nuclear fear underlying much freeze support and had translated it into a humanitarian concern that had little to do with policy. This concern was expressed as so moderate and apolitical that it could continue to demonstrate very high levels of support in public opinion polls without having any effect on politics or policy' (133).

Certainly, for those who had been among the founders of the Freeze movement, such as Randall Forsberg, their vision of the movement did embody a more radical and transnational approach. In her presentation to the World Council of Churches International Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament in November 1981, Forsberg discussed the need to 'mobilize the middle class, to give them hope and to bring them actively into the ranks of those who oppose the arms race'. Such a mobilisation, then, 'would show that human beings can direct their own destiny; that we can harness the arms race; that together, we are stronger than the military-industrial complex .... It would demonstrate that we can "democratize" and therefore eventually abolish the ancient, pernicious, elite institutions of warfare and exploitative foreign policy' (quoted in Meyer 1990 162; on Forsberg, see Martin 2011: 5–9). In effect, Forsberg attempted to create a new constituency beyond the previous limited efforts by scientists and policymakers to control nuclear arms. Yet, Forsberg's idealistic rhetoric came crashing down around the narrowly constructed class constituency of the white middle class and the almost exclusive focus on lobbying Congress and electoral politics, impeding in the process the anti-imperialist thrust of the protest.

Nonetheless, within the arena of nuclear arms control, Forsberg and the Freeze influenced the national agenda. Commenting on the role of local and congressional Freeze resolutions, one of the most outspoken congressional Freeze supporters, Ed Markey (Democrat, Massachusetts), noted: 'Within a very brief time, the Freeze had taken education at the grass roots and translated it into political muscle at the ballot box, delivering to the White House a resounding vote of no confidence in its nuclear buildup'



(quoted in Cortright 1993: 21). Responding to this shift in public opinion, the Reagan Administration first tried to paint the Freeze as a tool of Moscow, but with increasing support from religious leaders, members of Congress, and former government officials, this charge was difficult to verify and sustain. Instead, according to one White House speech-writer, Reagan's rhetoric was readjusted: 'We tried to portray Reagan not as the crazy cowboy ... but as having a more thoughtful position' (94). Responding to the clamour over the Freeze, Reagan declared as early as 1982: 'To those who protest against nuclear war, I can only say I'm with you' (95; on the Freeze and Reagan's attempt to co-opt its rhetoric, in particular, see Carroll 2006: 385–395).

Such rhetoric continued through the 1984 presidential election and into Reagan's second term, culminating in the Reagan-Gorbachev summit meetings of 1985 and 1986 which, in turn, led to the agreement in 1987 between the US and the Soviet Union on nuclear weapons, specifically entitled the Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) treaty. To the hawks in the Reagan Administration, such as Kenneth Adelman, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Reagan's nuclear policy 'metamorphosed ... into extreme anti-nuclear talk that resembled the nuclear bashers of SANE' (Cortright 1993: 98). On the other hand, Gorbachev acknowledged that without the anti-nuke activism the INF might never have been concluded. Moreover, according to one study of the impact of the INF and all that led up to it, 'the disarmament agreement was the central catalyst for the end of the Cold War' (Mekata 2006: 190; on the overall impact of the Freeze movement, see Wittner 2003).

While gaining legitimacy and creating a national agenda around arms control, the Freeze deliberately distanced itself from those peace and justice activists who wanted a broader and more radical and anti-imperialist agenda. This was especially evident in the June 1982 demonstration when voices urging denunciation of Israel's invasion of Lebanon and condemnation of US intervention throughout the Third World were dismissed (on the dissent within the 12 June coalition around such issues, see Mekata 2006: 184–188). In effect, the Freeze created a public awareness and movement with limited national goals while constraining those

who wished to generate transnational protests linked to anti-imperialism and global resistance.

On the other hand, the context out of which the Freeze operated did motivate other groups and networks, some of which existed prior to the Freeze, to move towards anti-imperialist transnational protest. One such group was the Women's Pentagon Actions (WPA). Growing out of the radical pacifist organisation, the War Resister's League, the WPA mounted its first demonstration in November 1980, shortly after the election of Reagan. Poet and activist Grace Paley announced their solidarity with women and oppressed people around the planet, underscoring in the process their desire to build another world. The second demonstration in November 1981, built on the inspiration of the activism in Western Europe, linked their efforts to express a feminist anti-militarism with a larger political perspective.

While the WPA with its global vision was central to an emergent transnational protest, it was, nevertheless, marginal to the larger anti-nuke movement in the US. On the other hand, what materialised in Western Europe did qualify as an anti-imperialist transnational protest. As a consequence of its ability to look beyond the bilateralism and Cold War politics that constrained the anti-nuke forces in the US, those in Western Europe – such as the CND in Great Britain, the Interchurch Peace Council in the Netherlands, and the Green Party in West Germany – were able not only to challenge the deployment of cruise and Pershing II missiles in their countries but also to mobilise around a global vision of disarmament and peace. In Great Britain, women set up a peace camp outside of the Greenham Common US Air Force base in 1981 that became a lightning rod for transnational women peace activists. In West Germany, a traditional Easter Peace March dating back to 1960 that had been almost moribund gained momentum in the 1980s, reaching half a million by 1986 (Mekata: 188–189; Rochon 1988: 3–8, 11–14 and *passim*). Hence, at local and national levels, anti-imperialist transnational protests were flourishing in Western Europe as a response to the nuclear threat.

One of the most significant catalysts for that mobilisation and for an anti-imperialist transnational protest was one of the founders of the West German Green Party, Petra Kelly.

Born in 1947 in Bavaria, Kelly adopted her last name from her stepfather, an American Army officer. Educated in both Germany and the US, Kelly became the perfect bridge to make transnational connections after she returned to West Germany in 1970 and began her work with the Greens at the end of the decade. That involvement and its connections to the anti-nuke movement, chronicled in the compilation of her writings and speeches in *Fighting for Hope*, offers further insights into the political parameters of the transnational and anti-imperialist protest that contested the Cold War imperialism of the US and the Soviet Union (Kelly 1984).

Having spent extensive time in the US and being thoroughly versed in ongoing political activities among Catholic anti-nuke activists, Petra Kelly acknowledged the necessary links to America. 'The changes that have been taking place in the US, especially among American Catholics, have not sunk in yet over here. But we should look towards America with hope as well as apprehension. Over there, security is not necessarily identical with weapons, and people have not yet surrendered to a provincial cynicism where sentimentality is mistaken for morality, as is so often the case here' (7). For Kelly, then, the moral witnessing and dramatic actions by Catholic activists served as an inspiration to those in Germany. Throughout her writings, Kelly cited the civil disobedience of priests Daniel and Philip Berrigan (61–62), Molly Rush (62), their fellow Catholic co-conspirator who entered a General Electric weapons factory to hammer on a missile nose cone, and several Catholic bishops – Hunthausen of Seattle (59–60) and Matthiessen of Amarillo (64) – who not only urged their parishioners to refuse working in any nuclear weapons facility but also declared, in the case of Hunthausen, a refusal to pay part of federal taxes as a protest against Pentagon weapons manufacturing. She also quoted from the long statement made at the first Women's Pentagon Action in November 1980. All of these instances were intended to move her German compatriots to new levels of militancy against the weapons of nuclear war being installed in their own backyard.

On the other hand, Kelly was also cognisant that there was a global movement embracing the power of non-violence not only as a form of resistance but also as a new way of living. In her essay 'The Power

of Non-Violence' (27–32), Kelley cited both well-known classic and lesser-known recent advocates of non-violence from Thoreau to Gandhi to King to Cesar Chavez and German Catholic women activists Dorothee Solle and Ingeborg Drewitz. In addition, she alluded to wide-ranging examples of non-violent resistance from Poland to Bolivia, all of which reinforced her point about the constitutive role of non-violence in shaping what constituted transnational anti-imperialist protest. Bringing all of this home to the Greens, the emergent political movement in West Germany that Kelly helped to build, she posited: 'The Greens seek a new life-style for the Western world, as well as in their own personal lives. They would like to see an alternative way of life without exploitation, and they aim for non-violent relationships with others and with themselves ..., relationships free from fear and based on mutual support' (20).

Beyond those personal and social transformations, Kelly envisioned the Greens as a different kind of political party, one she designated as an 'anti-party party' (17). Clearly, there was some thought being given to thinking and acting outside of a limited institutional framework. As she noted, 'Nuclear energy, the nuclear state, and the growing use of military force threaten our lives. We feel obliged to take public, non-violent action and to engage in civil disobedience outside and inside parliament, throwing a spotlight on the inhumanity of the system' (18). For Kelly, it was the job of the Greens to expand and revitalise democracy through protests connected to anti-imperialism and global resistance. 'We are living at a time when authoritarian ruling elites are devoting more and more attention to their own prospects', she Kelly contended, 'and less and less to the future of mankind. We have no option but to take a plunge into greater democracy' (11).

At almost the exact same time as Kelly was articulating the need for greater democracy, a leading intellectual luminary of the Hungarian democratic opposition, George Konrad, was completing his book *Anti-Politics*, which shared similar sentiments about war and peace and the need to get beyond the rule by authoritarian and imperialist elites, whether in the East or West. 'Anti-politics', argued Konrad, 'offers a radical alternative to the philosophy of a nuclear ultima ratio .... Anti-politics is the ethos of civil society and civil society is the antithesis of military

society. There are more or less militarised societies – societies under the sway of nation-states whose officials consider total war one of the possible moves in the game. Thus, military society is the reality, civil society is the utopia' (cited in Kaldor 2003: 57–58). Along with other Eastern European dissident intellectuals, from Adam Michnik in Poland to Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia, civil society became the beacon around which transnational protests mobilised.

Linking the emergent ideas about civil society in Eastern Europe with the ferment in Western Europe around war and peace in the early 1980s, Mary Kaldor analysed the common thread of a demand to end the stultifying politics of the Cold War and to develop a mutual solidarity in the creation of another world (2003: 50–77). For her, E.P. Thompson provided the clearest articulation of this need for mutual solidarity. 'We must defend and extend the right of all citizens, East and West, to take part in this common movement and to engage in every kind of exchange', asserted Thompson. 'We must learn to be loyal not to East or West but to each other and must disregard the prohibitions and limitations imposed by any national state' (quoted in 2003: 61).

From Kaldor's perspective, the political ferment unleashed by thinking beyond the binaries of the Cold War and the reinvention of civil society in a transnational context opened up new frames of meaning and new opportunity structures for citizens and non-state actors to intervene on the global level. Thus, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 had been prepared by the dismantling of Cold War mental blockades. According to Kaldor, 'the year 1989 did represent a profound rupture with the past that is difficult for us to comprehend. In the stirrings of thought that developed beneath the structures of the Cold War were the beginnings of some new concepts and practices that can help us analyze our immensely complex contemporary world' (2003: 77). For Kaldor, the key concept was global civil society that 'offers a way of understanding the process of globalization in terms of subjective human agency instead of a disembodied deterministic process of "interconnectedness"' (2003: 142). In effect, new actors in a variety of formats and from diverse sites were prepared to engender and expand these emergent anti-imperialist and global protests beyond the 1980s.

However, while the tools of social media that blossomed in the 1990s and into the 21st century facilitated and complicated the emergence of new and diverse anti-imperialist protests, the residual effects of Cold War imperialism in the so-called 'war on terror' impeded those protests in the US. Perhaps, nowhere was the role of the new social media with its attendant transnational global consciousness and connections more evident than in the massive global demonstrations that mobilised tens of millions of people worldwide on 15 February 2003. As a response to the Bush Administration's threats to attack Iraq, protest marches were organised with the aid of new networks and technology that facilitated what has been called the first truly global anti-war demonstration. From Barcelona to Berlin to Buenos Aires to Bangkok, from Manila to Mexico City to Moscow to Madrid, from Nairobi to New York, from Sao Paulo to Sydney to Seoul to San Francisco, from Toronto to Tokyo to Tel Aviv to Tegucigalpa; in short, in hundreds of cities around the world, on every continent, millions marched, constituting in the process a post-modern version of an anti-imperialist protest. According to Joss Hands, 'the sheer diversity of participants across the globe was self-evidently not sharing a specific set of localised reasons for action but rather, on a global level, the marches were co-ordinated through an orchestration of aims, which were loose enough to mobilise the common interests of all participants: peace, democracy, and human rights, all made concrete by the injustice and illegality of the pending war' (Hands 2006: 232).

Even with this massive outpouring, the persistence of Cold War imperial policies in the aftermath of 9/11, especially in the so-called 'war on terror' and the US military intervention in Afghanistan, undermined the capacity to sustain and develop such protests, especially in the US. Although the US attack on Afghanistan had supposedly been in response to the Taliban support for Osama bin Laden, the history of US involvement in Afghanistan and the actual prosecution of the war, under both Bush and Obama, once more demonstrated the residual repercussions of imperialist policies. Those policies, originally rooted in Cold War gamesmanship, had their covert inception in 1979 with the CIA supporting Afghan warlords and Muslim guerrillas fighting against a Soviet backed government in Kabul. Working in the 1980s with the

Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, the Reagan Administration began funding the mujahidin most favoured by the ISI, among them, Osama bin Laden. When the Taliban began to achieve prominence in the guerrilla war in the 1990s, the US under Clinton continued its support out of the desire, among other reasons, to help US oil companies construct a pipeline that would avoid going through Iran.

Through now almost a decade of US military intervention in Afghanistan, the war's lingering ghosts of Cold War imperialism are haunting a land often referred to as the 'graveyard of empires'. However, as the body count of dead in Afghanistan mounts, there has been a failure to develop robust anti-imperialist protests. While there have been protests against the war in Afghanistan, they have been mostly sporadic and marginal. Certainly, in an era of heightened national security and increased privatisation, there may be a hesitancy to take up the banner of anti-imperialist protest. Given the remoteness of Afghanistan, the lack of pre-existing solidarity networks, the complications in identifying clear allies and alliances, the rise of anti-Islamic prejudices, and the deliberate marginalisation of the conflict by mainstream media, one can better understand why such an anti-imperialist project has not coalesced around the war in Afghanistan. And, yet, if this US imperial venture in Afghanistan and throughout Central Asia is to be challenged, one must recognise that the US military machine with its additional privatised and secret operations will not collapse on its own, even as imperial overstretch erodes its hegemony. Perhaps, as noted by Mahmood Mamdani, 'Humanity is now left with a challenge: how to subdue and hold accountable the awesome power that the US built up during the Cold War'. Indeed, the final disappearance of Cold War imperialism still awaits more persistent and efficacious anti-imperialist protests.

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## Dollar Diplomacy: Roosevelt to Taft 1890–1913

By the 1890s, many US leaders had begun to have new attitudes toward imperialistic adventures abroad. The reasons for this were numerous. At the forefront of those pushing for an aggressive American policy abroad were various industrial leaders who feared that the US would soon produce more than it could ever consume. New dependent states could prove to be markets for these goods. Some in business also perceived that in the future, industries would need raw materials that could simply not be found in America (e.g. rubber and petroleum products). In the future, the US would need dependent states to provide these materials. After experiencing

a series of economic downturns in the 1870s and 1880s, the US economy had endured enough by the panic of 1893. Soon, business and political leaders needed to look no further than their own industrial over-production for the cause of their economic ills.

In 1912, President William Howard Taft claimed that his administration ‘sought to respond to modern ideas of commercial intercourse’ and that such ‘policy has been characterized as substituting dollars for bullets’. Taft’s remarks gave formal definition to the term ‘dollar diplomacy’, a phrase synonymous with the diplomacy his administration pursued between 1909 and 1913. Dollar diplomacy would serve diplomatic means in turning the US into a commercial and financial world power. Ever the lawyer, Taft surrounded himself with like-minded corporate lawyers and the bankers and businessmen who were their clients. The object of foreign policy became concentrated on assisting US businessmen in the protection and expansion of investment and trade, especially in Latin America and the Far East. Such efforts would raise significant dilemmas regarding the division of public and private responsibilities (Rosenberg 2003: 3).

In *The New Empire* (1963), Walter LaFeber argues that America’s ‘expansionist’ policies were a direct result of the maturation of industrialisation. Business and the capitalist economy needed new markets and this meant foreign ones. They would be backed up by a new navy and military power that would easily take away Spain’s former colonies in 1898 (and influence most of the Western Hemisphere). LaFeber also incorporates early labour and immigration policies into his argument. He highlights that Secretary of State Seward (1861–69) advocated importing ‘cheap labour’ and created the 1868 treaty with China to bring in ‘unskilled’ workers. This was, LaFeber argues, part of his plan for US expansion or imperialism. A central point of his work is that policymakers (mostly presidents, secretaries of state, and businessmen) feared class unrest at home (as strikes and violence reached unprecedented levels in the later decades of the 1800s). Expansion abroad would quell this by unifying the nation and providing jobs both in the Navy and in revitalised industry. The expansion of US economic and militaristic might clearly held implications not only abroad, but at home.

In the first three decades of the 20th century the US would emerge as a major economic power. US investment bankers would come to play an important role in international lending. During this time, those nations that were deemed stable and had already been incorporated into the world financial system were able to attract capital investment through US private bank loans. Those which were considered unstable, and thus unattractive investment opportunities, became the locations where dollar diplomacy would flourish. These nations would be given loans on condition that they would be under the US government’s direct financial supervision in what is best understood as a receivership. Such practice involved the co-operation of three groups: private bankers, financial experts, and government officials. The process began with private bankers considering which of the ‘risky’ nations they would lend to, followed by the financial experts who would bear the task of fiscal reorganisation and administrative management of the borrowing country. Finally, government officials would be responsible for orchestrating the entire deal under the guise of furthering global economic integration and strategic alliances for both US national and international interests.

### The open-door policy

The basic strategy of the ‘open-door’ policy, as developed by Charles A. Conant and Paul S. Reinsch, was an alternative to war through developing a worldwide system of investment, rather than one that was globally segmented. It was intended to offer shares in world development rather than spheres of influence closed off by annexationist empires. Its doses of ‘insular imperialism’ allowed for more emphasis on investment in exercising expansion as opposed to the older territorial forms of imperialism. Reinsch, in particular, saw how investing would require new political relations between the investing and host societies (Sklar 1988: 84). This would be the primary method by which the US would begin its expansion into the Pacific, developing island stepping-stones to the major market areas. The modification was not outright colonialism, but its effects could be just as damaging. Historian Martin J. Sklar provides a detailed description of his conception of

the basis for globalism and the theory behind establishing the Bretton Woods institutions (81–82).

America's entry into the Spanish-American War and later annexation of territories such as Hawaii, Wake, Guam, and the Philippines was not a reflection of the Manifest Destiny credo, nor the venting of a 'psychic crisis'. In *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, historian Richard Hofstadter expresses US imperialism in the forms of 'destiny and duty', suggesting that 'annexation of the Philippines in particular and expansion generally was inevitable and irresistible' (1965: 174–185). These new territories were specific targets for the implementation of coaling and cable systems and naval stations that would integrate a trade route which could facilitate America's primary reason for entering the Pacific: to penetrate and eventually dominate the fabled China market (McCormick 1963: 156). It also marked a significant turn for US capitalism, which up to that point had been primarily focused on territorial expansion within North America. Such expansion was the result of a westward push to seize what had been Native American land and later nearly half of the Mexican territories at the end of the US–Mexican War (1846–48).

In 'The Economic Basis of Imperialism', Conant held that advanced nations had maximised their investment in production to what was considered profitably manageable. They now faced a 'superabundance of loanable capital' with rapidly diminishing rates of return. Eventually, Conant explained, restless capital would need to turn 'to countries which had not felt the pulse of modern progress' to find profitable rates of interest. Conant claimed it was 'only a matter of detail' whether the US took possession of other lands, established quasi-independent protectorates, or developed a strong naval and diplomatic strategy as the promotional avenue for investment in uncolonised areas. Regardless, the endgame was the restoration of profits and prosperity to the imperial nation while simultaneously spreading productive enterprise to areas receiving US capital (Rosenberg 2003: 15–16).

Ingrained in Conant's theory was a belief that both over-production and declining profits could be identified as the forces driving imperialism in the late 19th century. Both J.A. Hobson (1938) and V.I. Lenin (1939) would follow in developing similar theories. Yet, unlike Conant, these later theories had more

to say about the adverse social conditions that would follow as a result of such practices. Since the late 19th century, Hobson and Lenin had recognised that colonial annexation in the era was a qualitatively new era of capitalism: the monopoly or imperialist stage. Hobson, in particular, argued that the emergence of widespread monopoly forms would eventually lead to under-consumption (or over-saving), growing foreign investment, and imperialist expansion. Both theorists held imperialism accountable for the formation, development, and expansion of the world market, one built on a competitive search and annexation of colonies as a means of extracting surplus and bringing natural resources back to the imperial acumen. According to Lenin, since the 15th century, the world capitalist system had been created and consolidated on a foundational practice that divided the core capitalist powers from peripheral economies. The process permitted the regimes in the developed metropolis to exploit under-developed colonies in the global South by extracting profit, payment, or tribute through a system of unequal exchange where capitalist monopolies controlled and dominated international trade and investment. To assist in the process, a ruling class in the periphery functioned as intermediaries by maintaining an interest in the corresponding patterns of production. As a result, Conant believed that prosperity and profits in the advanced nations would ripple out into moral uplift where all would benefit. Such an economic interpretation is viewed as a celebration of both capitalism and imperialism (Rosenberg 2003: 16).

By 1900, opposition to colonialism grew to be so formidable that policymakers had to assume that force was no longer an option for the US when acquiring new territory. Still, such a policy was not conducive to US interests. During the first five years of the 20th century, the Roosevelt Administration developed clear and expansive policies that sanctioned the creation of dependencies but not colonies. New justifications, such as spreading civilisation and securing a favourable economic and geopolitical position, were now the rationales for dollar diplomacy. The aim was to establish a level of control that did not require outright colonial possession (32).

The transition here is a significant one in understanding the changes occurring in the practices of colonialism itself. Harry Magdoff

has contributed greatly to our understanding of formal control and direct colonialism or settlement. He argues the importance of considering imperialism as a necessary means of reshaping the social and economic institutions of many of the dependent countries to the needs of metropolitan centres. In the case of the global South, and the US need for it, there is an intended exchange of capital accumulation for economic stimulus. After capitalist reshaping of local institutions has taken effect, economic forces (the international price, marketing, and financial systems) develop into adequate means of dominance and exploitation by the imperial centre. Reshaping allowed for political independence without making any essential changes or altering the initial conditions for conquest. Such reshaping can be another means of understanding the transition for an older imperialism to what is now referred to as 'new imperialism'. We could surmise colonialism as merely a phase in the process. However, the primary distinction involves the development of two historical factors: (1) the loss of British hegemony and a global competition for territorial influence by advanced capitalist states; (2) the rise of monopolistic corporations in becoming the dominant actors in all the advanced capitalist states (Magdoff 2003: 17). Similarly, Lenin emphasised that imperialism did not necessitate formal control. Lenin said as much in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* when describing British imperialism in the 19th century: 'The division of the world into ... colony-owning countries on the one hand and colonies on the other' did not discount the core-periphery relations between nation states (Lenin 1939/1916: 85). Lenin went on to claim that there was no distinction between dependent countries and those which were 'officially' politically independent.

Western observers have often treated the global South's 'under-development' or economic crisis, that was frequently the pitch for securing dollar diplomacy as an original historic condition. It would be as if prosperity has never touched certain regions of the world due to their barren, infertile land or their unproductive people. In *The Political Economy of Growth*, Paul Baran analysed the role of imperialism in reinforcing the economic under-development of those countries considered to be in the Third-World periphery. He questioned the common practice of

assuming all in those poorer peripheral economies had always been relatively backward. He questioned the lack of capitalist development in the periphery, unlike those core regions of advanced capitalist nation states. In addition, he explored the reasons why forward movement in the periphery had either been slow or altogether absent (Baran 1957: 136). In his analysis, Baran provided evidence that showed how European conquest and plundering of the rest of the globe had generated the great divide between the core and the periphery of the capitalist world economy that persists today. The analysis provided was clear: incorporation on an unequal basis into the periphery of the capitalist world economy was itself the cause of the plight of underdeveloped countries. This was the 'development of underdevelopment'. Baran concluded that imperialism was inseparable from capitalism. Its central underpinnings were to be found in the mode of accumulation operating in the advanced capitalist world. An international division of labour had evolved which geared production and trade of the poor countries in the periphery significantly more toward the needs of the rich countries in the centre or core of the system than toward the needs of their own populations (Foster 2002).

### Roosevelt's Corollary en route to dollar diplomacy

In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt announced his corollary to the Monroe Doctrine to Congress, which stated that the US had the right to intervene in any country in the Western Hemisphere that did things 'harmful to the United States'. Along these same lines, the corollary also stipulated that the US would intervene in Latin America when nations in the region acted improperly. This was essentially a declaration that the US had cast itself as the 'police officer' in the region. 'Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship', Roosevelt said. 'Chronic wrongdoing, however ... may force the United States to exercise an international police power'. This was particularly true in the case of the Dominican Republic, which had repeatedly failed to repay loans to both Italy and France. Instead, by implementing the Roosevelt Corollary, the US intervened and seized control of Dominican customs collections and took responsibility for distributing the funds to repay both European nations.



During Roosevelt's term, the US used the threat of military power to bring about its foreign-policy objectives in Latin America and the Caribbean. US marines were often deployed to Central America. While the foreign-policy approach of Taft's presidency is referred to as 'dollar diplomacy', Roosevelt's has been referred to as 'gunboat diplomacy'. The Roosevelt Corollary strengthened US control over Latin America, and justified numerous US interventions in Latin American affairs in the 20th century. As Roosevelt's successor, President Taft was not as aggressive in foreign policy and favoured 'dollars over bullets', stating that US investment abroad would ensure stability and good relations with nations abroad. Dollar diplomacy should be regarded as the process by which US capitalism became deeply rooted in the political economy of the global South.

Unlike Roosevelt, Taft saw a more significant role for US business to play in foreign policy. Having been long concerned with foreign trade, he recognised an over-abundance of produced goods in the US and an overwhelming need to increase exports. It was by no mere coincidence that in 1910, under the Taft Administration, the US began to export more manufactured goods than raw materials. Herein, the focus of trade changed from industrial nations in need of raw materials to less developed countries that required finished products. Accordingly, those developing areas of Latin America and East Asia were vital in discovering new economic opportunities that provided many benefits. The shift in policy, according to Taft, would provide the solution to the over-production problem plaguing the US economy. In addition, the change would benefit recipient nations, allowing for economic progress and eventually political stability. Such stability would allow for economic development of US interests in these under-developed areas. In his first annual message at the end of 1909, Taft clearly indicated that the mission of 'American capital' was to seek 'investment in foreign countries' so that 'American products' could more readily seek 'foreign markets'.

To fill his cabinet, Taft wanted lawyers, which is why Philander C. Knox was an ideal candidate for secretary of state. Knox was a wealthy conservative lawyer and former US attorney general and senator from Pennsylvania. He had been what is now known as a corporation lawyer, the Carnegie

Steel Corporation being one of his clients. He was thus sympathetic to big business. Knox also shared Taft's position that the protection and expansion of economic interests should be the focus of foreign policy. In doing so, the State Department would begin to support US financiers and businessmen by finding opportunities abroad. Certainly, the introduction and development of dollar diplomacy is significant because it was contrary to normal lending practices. However, its political and economic significance lie in the creation of 'controlled loans' as the vehicles of social reconstruction originally envisioned by Conant.

### Fertile soil: Latin America

In Latin America, where objectives of dollar diplomacy included deterring European intervention and maintaining regional stability, the Taft Administration's approach represented an extension of both the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary. Together Taft and Knox viewed Latin America as a region ripe with opportunity for US interests to expand, while offering a jumpstart to what they considered to be an under-developed economy. Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala, Colombia, Cuba, and Nicaragua were but a few of the states in the region targeted by Taft's dollar diplomacy.

In China, where the US was a relative newcomer in terms of serious economic engagement, the goals of dollar diplomacy did not stretch far beyond the creation of a safe environment for US banking capital and surplus production. Since the Monroe Doctrine and its Roosevelt Corollary did not apply to the Far East, the Taft Administration relied on the open-door policy crafted in 1899, in which the US decreed that all nations should have equal trading rights in China, as the basis for its dollar diplomacy there.

As president, Taft sought to extend what Roosevelt had established with his Corollary in securing the US position around the Caribbean. Rather than removing European influence from the region, as the Roosevelt policy had done, Taft and Knox sought to control the finances of the Caribbean countries. The means of doing this was by taking over custom houses as the Roosevelt Administration had done in the Dominican Republic. According to the Taft-Knox doctrine, it was important to get the Caribbean nations to repay European debts by means of

loans from US businessmen or at least from multinational groups in which Americans participated. Concerned by the general instability of the Central American governments, Taft and Knox set a goal of stable governments and prevention of financial collapse. Fiscal intervention would make military intervention unnecessary. As Knox told an audience at the University of Pennsylvania on 15 June 1910: ‘True stability is best established not by military, but by economic and social forces .... The problem of good government is inextricably interwoven with that of economic prosperity and sound finance; financial stability contributes perhaps more than any other one factor to political stability’ (Rosenberg 2003: 63).

Such statements did not mean that Taft and Knox were unwilling to use military power in the Caribbean. They did use it. They thought that fiscal control would lessen the need for intervention. They believed that the US and nations of the Caribbean would both benefit. For the US, an increase in trade, more profitable investments, and a secure Panama Canal would result. For the local inhabitants, the benefits would be peace, prosperity, and improved social conditions.

The flow of foreign capital to Latin America has been massive. Even more than resources or markets, capital comes in search of cheap, easily exploitable labour. Commodities, produced with Latin America’s most precious resource (its labour), are destined for export to countries with well-developed markets which make selling at high prices easier. What results is a familiar enough story in under-developed countries. Dominated by foreign capital, they perpetually produce what they do not consume and consume what they do not produce.

## Nicaragua

By 1909, relations between the US and Nicaragua had soured, largely due to the embittered reaction of Nicaraguan president José Santos Zelaya to the US building a canal in Panama rather than Nicaragua. Relations worsened as Zelaya accumulated European debt, was increasing hostile toward his country’s Central American neighbours, and made repeated threats to end the US–Nicaragua concession, a US-owned mining property.

In October 1909, the US supported a faction of rebel nationalists in a revolt against Zelaya. Taft, aligned with opposition leader

Juan Estrada, sent US gunboats and other military forces to Nicaragua to assist in removing Zelaya from power. As Zelaya’s successor, Estrada formed a provisional government in 1910 after securing a loan from the US for the stabilisation and rehabilitation of the Nicaraguan economy. In January 1911, the US formally recognised the Estrada Government. However, after a turbulent start, Estrada stepped down after only six months in office. His replacement, Adolfo Díaz, signed a financial agreement called the Knox-Castrillo Convention, which in essence was a dollar-diplomacy package tailored for Nicaragua.

Under the new agreement, the US would provide a \$15 million bank loan to pay off Nicaragua’s European debts. For their part, the US government would gain control of the Nicaraguan customs house to ensure loan payments, and would have the right to intervene in Nicaragua to maintain order when necessary. Additionally, Nicaragua would allow US banks to control the National Bank of Nicaragua and the government-owned railway. Praising the treaty, Taft said it was ‘of inestimable benefit to the prosperity, commerce, and peace of the Republic’ (Maurer 2013: 108).

At home, the Knox-Castrillo Convention faced stiff opposition, particularly in the Senate where it failed to win approval due to growing concern about its interventionist aspects. The reaction among Nicaraguans was equally hostile, resulting in a revolt against Díaz in June 1912. Taft responded to the crisis by sending several warships and a contingent of 2,700 marines to restore order and protect US interests. In the end, the Knox-Castrillo Convention was never ratified. Instead, it was replaced by the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty, a watered-down version that lacked the interventionist powers of its predecessor. The new agreement was signed by both nations in 1914, when Taft was no longer president. In addition, as a result of revolt and the need to protect American interests, a US military presence would remain in Nicaragua until 1933.

## Cuba

Of those nations that were ripe for dollar diplomacy, Cuba was probably the most fertile. After failing to achieve sovereignty at the end of its campaign for national independence ended in 1898, Cuba was first ruled by a

provisional US military government and then became a protectorate of the US, as stated by the Platt Amendment to the 1902 Cuban Constitution. Such US influence was expected to ensure the creation of strong institutions and an underlying prosperous attitude, but neither materialised. Instead, the island nation was victimised by a wave of unrestricted foreign capital.

Foreign capital was an attractive short-term solution to finance the costs of reconstruction. It also promised to get the economy off the ground after 30 years of disruption. Employment, tax revenues, and exports were expected to soar. People would have money to spend and the government would obtain the necessary resources to finance projects of reconstruction. These promises were sufficient for the Cuban government to open the doors of the island to US money. The sugar industry became the main beneficiary of foreign investment, so much so that the national economy became almost entirely dependent upon its exports. In 1909, the year in which Taft was inaugurated and dollar diplomacy was made official, the total amount of US investments (not just sugar) in Cuba was \$141 million. In 1924, US investment totals were nine times that of the previous figure, nearing \$1.25 billion, of which \$750 million, or 60%, were invested directly in the sugar industry.

During the dollar-diplomacy era, with the resurgence of sugar production, companies sought and purchased plots of land previously owned by local families in order to create large, profitable land-holdings. It wasn't long before large numbers of peasants were unemployed as families lost ownership of land which had always been their most basic source of security. Foreign investment forced a shift in the state of affairs in two separate yet dependent areas. First, the infusion of foreign investment as a means to resuscitate sugar production allowed for it to become the focus of the Cuban economy. Second, the social structure was vastly changed with the transition in land ownership from medium-sized family-owned plots to large landholdings owned by foreign capitalist corporations.

In the dollar-diplomacy era, however, capitalist forces prompted a change. Because companies were constantly on the lookout for cheap labour to cultivate and harvest their immense landholdings, jobs became insecure and temporary. Seasonal workers had to leave the household during both the dry

and the wet seasons in order to obtain a salary. Men were roaming the fields or the city streets for most of the year, which meant that a stable family life was no longer possible. For rural Cuba, this was a new state of affairs that furthered poverty and fuelled unrest. Jobs offered by US companies attracted record amounts of immigration and caused the breakdown of the traditional family structure. This allowed for a shift in the agricultural market in Cuba from one that was community-based, subsistence, and small-scale farming to one where large portions of land were owned by a single entity. The new system was wage-based and demanded large numbers of workers to maximise productivity.

The change in land ownership also reconfigured the system of labour to one that was wage-based and more conducive to capitalist enterprise. The new system also attracted record amounts of immigration from Haiti, Jamaica, and Spain, which caused rising populations on the island never seen before. The overcrowding also adversely affected the labour market as wages decreased with the rising demand for jobs. Due to the lack of sustainable employment, more men were forced off the plantations and into the cities to find work. This caused an increase in impoverished female-headed households and a significant drop in consensual unions. What the influx of foreign direct investment failed to account for was the stabilising societal power that the traditional family nucleus had provided. What was intended to increase the potential of becoming a prosperous nation had resulted in the destruction of the traditional family culture and an increase in the struggle to sustain a living (Smith 1966; Timoneda 2008).

### Imperial legacy

Imperialism is often explained primarily as an outcome of economic expansionism. This is certainly the case in Latin America, where, for example, in the cases of United Fruit in Guatemala and International Telephone and Telegraph in Chile, political and military initiatives were undertaken largely to support the interests of particular corporations and to create the political climate for the expansion of US economic interests as a whole (Harvey 2003: 49). However, in the development of neo-liberal capitalist imperialism there has also been the drive to maximise profits by

lowering labour costs. The global South has offered numerous opportunities to discover new sources of cheap labour. Repeatedly, the arm of the US state has assisted corporate needs through enhanced government policies designed to lower the cost of labour by any means. This has allowed businesses to take advantage of the massive global over-supply of labour. In his own analysis, Stephen Hymer focused on the enormous ‘latent surplus-population’ or reserve army of labour in both the backward areas of the developed economies and in the under-developed countries, ‘which could be broken down to form a constantly flowing surplus population to work at the bottom of the ladder’. Like Marx, Hymer equated the ‘accumulation of capital’ with an ‘increase of the proletariat’. Herein, the Third World provided a vast ‘external reserve army’ that would supplement the ‘internal reserve army’ that already existed within the developed capitalist countries. According to Foster and McChesney (2012), this would serve as ‘the real material basis on which multinational capital was able to internationalise production’, by maintaining a steady stream of ‘surplus population into the labour force’ (150). It was Hymer’s contention that this would eventually weaken labour globally through a process of ‘divide and rule’ (Hymer 1979: 262–269).

Early in the 20th century, when the US began to emerge as a global power, the central question concerning architects of US foreign policy was not whether the US should be a global power, but rather how the US should best go about becoming one. Between 1909 and 1913, President Taft’s answer to that question was dollar diplomacy, a series of policy initiatives that attempted to broaden the scope of US economic and political influence around the world through financial measures such as bank loans to developing nations. When those measures alone proved insufficient, dollar diplomacy relied on more traditional foreign-policy practices, such as military intervention, to achieve its objectives.

In the end, dollar diplomacy created more havoc than it originally intended to prevent. The question for the US has never been whether or not it should become a global force, but rather how it should become one. Taft’s implementation of dollar diplomacy from 1909–13 was yet another attempt to extend the borders of influence under US control. The exchange of capital accumulation for economic stimulus (the force driving dollar

diplomacy) was later reinstated through the Washington Consensus and again by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the 1980s and 1990s. The imperialist nature of the US state is driven by the ever expanding nature of capitalist political economy and has been marked by more than a century of continuous military and economic intervention abroad.

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## Dutch Imperialism in the Caribbean

In the 17th century, the Netherlands – at that time called the Republic of the Unified Netherlands – ruled over a vast empire stretching from Asia to the Southern Cape Colony and coastal trading ports in Africa and, ultimately, to the New World. It was the interest in sugar, slaves, and salt – a core component of the lucrative herring trade – that led the Dutch in the 1630s to establish vital commercial ports and colonies in the Antilles including the Leewards islands of Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire just north of the Spanish main and the Windward islands of St Eustatius, Saba and St Maarten. Ousted from northern Brazil by the Portuguese in 1667, the Dutch moved northward and established a colony in Surinam. Private trading companies such as the Dutch West India Company (WIC) administered these scattered territories. The Society of Surinam, which governed Surinam between 1683 and 1795, was owned jointly by the WIC, the city of Amsterdam and the Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck family, relatives of the founding colonial governor. However, the riches – in pursuit of which the Dutch justified colonisation and the brutality of slavery – proved elusive. And in spite of the waning economic importance of their West Indian colonies by the 19th century, the Dutch have remained in the Caribbean to this day.

Today, the enduring trans-Atlantic ties that bind the Dutch Caribbean to the former metropole are rooted in the legacy of imperialism. This essay chronicles the evolution of these relations in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles, and Surinam from the turn of the 19th century until the present. In these roughly 200 years, imperialism in the Dutch Caribbean has followed an unlikely course: ranging from metropolitan disinterest at the zenith of the age of 'new imperialism' to, strikingly, an intensified post-colonial investment in the West Indies as Antilleans

have insisted on their right to remain within the Kingdom. While other European powers in the 19th century undertook 'civilising missions' that stimulated pride and nationalism in the metropole, Dutch officials and their countrymen remained largely apathetic about the flagging colonies of the Netherlands Antilles – then called 'Curaçao and dependencies' – and Surinam. A nadir in this history is the maintenance of slavery until 1863, decades after both the British and French had abolished it. Politically, relations between the metropole and West Indies remained colonial until the Second World War, after which the governing autonomy of the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname were significantly broadened. In the period of radical anti-imperialism during the 1960s and 1970s, only Surinam followed the seemingly normative model of decolonisation when it exited the Kingdom in 1975. Meanwhile, Antilleans have repeatedly broadened definitions of anti-imperial resistance by insisting that self-determination includes the right to remain under Dutch sovereignty. The tremendous diversity in experiences throughout the Antilles and in Surinam lays bare the ambivalent impact of the imperial project to make the Caribbean 'Dutch'.

### Colonial governance

In the 19th century, the administrative organisation of Dutch colonies in the Caribbean began to take a more lasting shape with the transfer of authority from private trading companies to the Dutch government. Despite a more centralised approach to colonial administration in the West Indies, the 19th century in the Antilles and Surinam reads in many ways against the grain of 'new imperialism.' Indeed, as the commercial importance of the Dutch Caribbean waned by the 19th century so too did the zeal for the imperial project there. Unlike in the East Indies, imperialism in the Caribbean was never a source of pride and national celebration in the metropole. Nevertheless, the structures of governance and patterns of rule that metropolitan and colonial officials forged would endure into the 20th century.

With the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 and the establishment of a Kingdom in the Netherlands, the first Dutch king, Willem I, assumed direct rule over Dutch colonies in the Caribbean. During the Napoleonic Wars

and French occupation of the Low Countries, the British had temporarily gained control of Dutch possessions in the Caribbean, which also included the colonies of Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo. When Wilem I took over the Dutch West Indian empire in 1815, only Surinam and the six Antillean islands – Curaçao, Aruba, Bonaire, Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten – were returned to the Netherlands. To streamline colonial governance after the demise of the WIC, in 1845 the West Indian empire was divided into two administrative entities: Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, which until 1948 retained the name 'Curaçao and dependencies.'

In political terms, the administrative relationship between the colonies and metropole throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries remained essentially colonial. For most of the 19th century, the Crown appointed a governor in each colony who held executive and legislative authority. Governing regulations implemented in 1866 introduced colonial councils (*Koloniale Staten*) to the governing apparatus of West Indian colonies, yet these bodies were advisory in nature, lacked any legislative authority, and were appointed largely by the governor himself. Further, the governor retained the right to adapt any of the councils' suggestions. Predictably, governors and members of the colonial councils were born in the Netherlands or else members of the European colonial elite. Until 1962, the governor of the Netherlands Antilles was invariably a European Dutchman with a military or academic background.

Managing colonial economies was one of the most important tasks of imperial governments. By the mid-19th century, the West Indian colonies failed to turn a profit. Because of this economic state of affairs, The Hague insisted on its right to intervene in the colonies' budgets if they were not balanced. Thus, in spite of the 1866 governing regulations that aimed to broaden the autonomy of colonial governance, the fact that the budget was not balanced in Surinam until the 1940s and in the Antilles until the 1930s meant that into the 20th century The Hague maintained tremendous authority in approving and adapting colonial budgets.

### **Slavery and racial hierarchies in colonial societies**

One of the metropole's most significant interventions in the life and economy of its West

Indian empire came in 1863 with the abolition of slavery. For the WIC, who ruled over much of the colonies in the Americas and whose monopoly on the African slave trade ended only in 1730, the traffic in African slaves to the new world was essential business. Indeed, from 1600–1808 – when, during their occupation of Surinam, the British abolished the slave trade – the Dutch were responsible for bringing an estimated half-a-million slaves to the New World. The migration of enslaved Africans profoundly shaped the societies of the Dutch Caribbean, where free European settlers remained in the minority and indigenous populations were virtually non-existent in the Antilles owing to earlier Spanish contact.

Since the initial founding of their colonial empire, the Dutch struggled to impose a rigid racial hierarchy on what was a thoroughly heterogeneous colonial population. The organisation of social relations in Aruba, Curaçao, and Surinam attest to the tremendous variety throughout the Dutch Caribbean. On Aruba, which unlike the other Antillean islands did not have a majority enslaved population of African descent, Amerindians migrating from South America settled on the island and in many cases mixed with the small European population.

Curaçao, the most populous and economically significant of the Antilles, emerges as an outlier amongst Caribbean colonies. Its commercial character and function as a free-trade hub created an atmosphere of relative openness amongst the resident population, although the conditions of life under slavery remained brutal and oppressive. Given the island's commercial character and its arid climate, which prevented the development of large-scale plantation agriculture, slaves worked on the docks, as sailors and domestic servants, and produced food for local consumption. The relatively large segment of a free coloured population on Curaçao is also striking. Although the elite Dutch Protestants and Sephardic Jews of colonial Curaçao married endogamously to protect wealth and privilege, lower-class European Dutch who arrived in the 18th century as petty officers and labourers began to marry light-skinned middle-class creole women. Indeed, such marriage patterns attest to the low number of Dutch women who migrated to the New World and the prevalence of unions – both

official and unofficial – amongst males of European descent and females of African and Amerindian descent. White elites viewed this group with anxiety, fearful that a mulatto middle class would upset the boundaries of the colonial racial hierarchy.

Although plantation agriculture was scarcely imaginable in the arid or else small and mountainous terrain of the Antilles, by the 18th century Surinam had emerged as a quintessential plantation colony. Contemporary observations about the unique cruelty of planters in Surinam bear out statistically, where each year more slaves died on plantations than were born there. The negative birth rate demanded the merciless importation of more slaves from Africa, upon whose labour tropical cash crops such as sugar and coffee were produced and destined exclusively for Dutch markets. From 1668–1828, between 300,000 and 325,000 slaves were sold to planters in Surinam. On the eve of emancipation in 1863, some 36,000 individuals remained enslaved and 216 plantations continued to operate.

If the nature of colonial slavery varied throughout the Dutch Caribbean, so too did forms of resistance. The jungles of Surinam's vast and uninhabited interior served as a sanctuary to communities of runaway slaves, known as maroons, who often formed tribes alongside the native Amerindians of the rainforests. In the 18th century, Dutch officials were forced to conclude a peace treaty with maroon leaders, granting them their autonomy. By the time of emancipation in 1863, maroon communities along the Surinam River constituted a nation within a nation, including some 8,000 people living in isolation from colonial authorities.

On Curaçao, slave revolts erupted several times in the 18th century. One of the largest occurred in 1795 and was influenced by the principles of freedom and equality emanating from the Haitian Revolution. On 17 August 1795, about 50 slaves on the plantation De Knip refused to work and deserted the plantation. What initially began as an apparent strike grew in the coming weeks to attempt an island-wide revolt that included some 2,000 – a significant portion of the island's 12,000 slaves. Despite early successes, by September the slave militias had been brutally suppressed by Dutch forces. Today on Curaçao, Tula, the proclaimed leader of the 1795 slave revolt, is recognised as a national hero and 17

August is annually commemorated as a milestone in the struggle for freedom.

Although slave resistance threatened the security of planters and colonial elites, the institution of slavery would not be abolished until 1863. Who was responsible for abolishing slavery and what were their motives? Scholars of Dutch Atlantic slavery have debated the explanation and significance of late abolition – indeed, the British had abolished slavery in 1833 and the French in 1848. Whether metropolitan officials were motivated by the poor economic performance of the colonies, humanitarian reasons, or perhaps simply because they appeared backward amongst their European neighbours for maintaining slavery, what is clear is the lack of a strong abolitionist movement in the Netherlands. Tellingly, one of the most intense debates surrounding abolition, and one that contributed to its late date, concerned the remuneration of planters, not slaves.

Whereas slave labour had already lost its economic importance throughout much of the Antillean islands by the mid-19th century – in fact, in St Maarten slaves had already declared themselves free in 1848 when slavery had been abolished on the French side of the island – in Surinam official emancipation in 1863 and its aftermath would have a different impact. Given Surinam's plantation economy, Dutch officials prepared for a dramatic labour shortage by inviting indentured workers initially from British India and later from Java and China. This second wave of immigration to Surinam in the mid-19th century resulted in the creation of Latin America's most diverse society, with sizable Hindustani (British Indian), creole or Afro-Surinamese, Javanese, Chinese, Maroon, and Amerindian enclaves. Although in the colonial period more people spoke Dutch in Surinam than elsewhere in the Caribbean, the widely spoken creole language of Sranan Tongo reflects the diverse peoples and colonial history of Surinam, as it includes English, Portuguese, Dutch, and Central and West African influences. Meanwhile, the colonial economy in Surinam continued its downturn in the latter half of the 19th century. Faced with increased global competition and declining prices, sugar plantations after 1863 did not recover and the dearth of capital prompted planters to abandon their estates, which were subsequently broken down into small farm plots and typically cultivated by former slaves.

The post-emancipation period in the Antilles and Surinam continued to be characterised by racial inequality, metropolitan disinterest, and elite colonial dominance in the realms of politics and economics. In Surinam, which garnered more metropolitan investment than the Antilles given its larger population and abundance of natural resources, the metropolitan state subsidised Christian missionary activities in the education and conversion of former slaves and their descendants. Although efforts at Afro-Surinamese assimilation were ambivalent at best, a Dutch-language educational curriculum enabled a class of creoles – typically the progeny of white planters and civil servants and Afro-Surinamese female concubines, the so-called ‘Surinamese marriage’ – to initiate colonial careers. It would be this group who first called for self-government in Surinam.

### **Resistance, independence, autonomy**

With changes in colonial social organisation underway by the turn of the 20th century, the next 100 years would bring dramatic transformation in trans-Atlantic relations. The Second World War is a watershed in this history, ending centuries of colonial rule. Yet unlike familiar narratives of post-war decolonisation entailing bloody struggles for national liberation, in the Dutch Caribbean demands for immediate territorial sovereignty have proven the exception, not the rule. As enduring partners in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the experiences of the Antillean islands demonstrate that struggles for equality need not manifest in demands for unequivocal independence.

Until the Second World War, modernising reforms in Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles proved half-hearted. Even after a representative council was introduced in the Antilles in 1936, only 5 per cent of the population was eligible to vote. For metropolitan and colonial officials, parliamentary democracy and fully autonomous governance in the West Indian empire were simply not options.

During wartime, however, a devastated and powerless Dutch government in exile began to accept that colonial governance must change if the empire were to survive. In 1942, Dutch officials proposed reforming the post war Kingdom to become a commonwealth of equal-partner states, each

possessing autonomy in internal affairs. The primary purpose of this concession, however, was to maintain Dutch influence in Indonesia, which in 1945 had proclaimed independence. Following a protracted and bloody struggle for sovereignty, the Netherlands at last relinquished control of Indonesia and, for the first time in over a century, was compelled to focus on its lingering imperial investments in the Caribbean. In 1948 the Netherlands honoured Antillean and Surinamese petitions for governing reforms. That year, ‘Curaçao and dependencies’ became known as the Netherlands Antilles. Both here and in Surinam, parliamentary democracy and the extension of the franchise replaced the powerful rule of colonial governors and undemocratic councils. At this stage, no official mentioned the possibility of independence.

It took until 1954 to produce a comprehensive constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. During a series of round-table conferences initiated in 1948, delegates throughout the Kingdom attempted to strike a constitutional balance between full independence and metropolitan integration. On 29 December 1954, the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands was proclaimed that enacted a new constitutional order for the three ostensibly equal states of the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles, and Surinam. While the latter two possessed governing autonomy in internal affairs, the Netherlands was careful to ensure that many responsibilities for Kingdom-affairs remained grounded in The Hague. Among them, nationality, foreign affairs, defence, and the guarantee of good governance would be administered from Europe.

Although the Netherlands undoubtedly retained the upper hand in Kingdom affairs, trans-Atlantic relations after this point can no longer unequivocally be characterised as colonial. The extension of the franchise and the introduction of autonomous and democratic governing institutions issued a fundamental break from the governing regulations laid down a century earlier. Nevertheless, the absence of any Kingdom-wide representative body or judiciary ensured that the Netherlands – its parliament and judicial courts – would have *de facto* authority throughout the Kingdom.

In an era of heightened radical anti-imperialism, in the late 1960s Curaçao and Surinam



began to press for further changes within the Kingdom. On Curaçao, frustration evolved out of a labour dispute amongst workers at the Shell oil plant. In the 1920s, oil refineries established on Aruba and Curaçao brought significant industrial changes to the Antilles, expanding the industrial working class and drawing immigration of skilled technicians from the Netherlands and labourers from throughout the Caribbean and Latin America. Employment cutbacks and the increased reliance on sub-contracted labour by mid-century disproportionately affected the black working class on Curaçao, who received lower wages than immigrant workers. After negotiations failed, on 30 May 1969 downtown Willemstad became the site of a violent protest. Moving beyond its origins as a labour dispute, the protestors railed against the vestiges of Dutch colonialism and the endurance of racial inequality and economic exploitation. Local police struggled to contain the revolt as protestors looted businesses and burned buildings. The Dutch, owing to their promise of mutual aid and the guarantee of defence as outlined in the Charter, aided Antillean authorities in ending the revolt.

*Trinta di mei*, or '30 May 1969,' although subdued in just a number of days, was a major milestone in the struggle for Antillean equality. For the first time ever, a political party representing the interests of the Afro-Curaçaoan working class came to power on the island. Although May 1969 brought relations between the Netherlands and Curaçao to a head, the event also heightened tensions between Curaçao and neighbouring Antillean islands. Aruba, which had long complained of political dominance by Curaçao, worried in particular about the ascendance of radical working-class politics there.

In The Hague, the revolt of May 1969 troubled the new centre-left governing coalition, whose members grew concerned that the perpetuation of 'neo-colonial' ties would frustrate an increasingly progressive Dutch self-image and foreign policy agenda. For Dutch officials, ushering the former colonies to total independence seemed the only course of action. In 1974, the Surinamese government under the leadership of Prime Minister Henck Arron unexpectedly announced its intention to accept independence the following year. Dutch officials were enthusiastic about the prospect, and negotiations over the next two years culminated in the

peaceful transfer of sovereignty to Surinam on 25 November 1975. Although some radical nationalist movements percolated in the years leading up to independence, no popular referendum on Surinam's political status had ever been issued, and what transpired in 1975 was largely a closed-off, political affair. Popular scepticism surrounding independence is perhaps best expressed in the dramatic exodus that occurred between its announcement in 1974 and 1980, when the Netherlands ceased to recognise the Dutch citizenship of Surinamese. During this time, upwards of one-third of Surinam's population left permanently for the former metropole.

As this dramatic postcolonial exodus suggests, political independence did not meet all of the nationalist aspirations in Surinam. Within five years of the transfer of sovereignty, a military coup led by Desi Bouterse, a former soldier, overthrew the democratically elected government. During his military dictatorship, Bouterse was accused of killing 15 of his top opponents and opening the country to drug trafficking and crime. Although independence has delivered on other expectations in Surinam, the country's tumultuous post-independence history became a cautionary tale for other would-be nationalists throughout the Antillean islands.

Aruban leaders cautiously observed the evolving state of affairs in Surinam. Curiously, it was not separation from the Netherlands that Aruba sought but distance from Curaçao, perceived as a hegemonic political force in the Antillean state. Dutch officials had long been reluctant to break apart the six-island Antillean state, believing the unity of the islands to be crucial for later realising independence. In 1983, however, Dutch officials acquiesced to Aruban separatist leader Betico Croes and agreed to recognise Aruba as a separate constituent country of the Kingdom on the condition that Aruba accept full independence within the next decade. When Aruba achieved its *status aparte*, or separate status in 1986, Aruban officials worked quickly to revoke the guarantee of eventual independence. Strikingly, as this and subsequent changes in the Kingdom reveal, calls for Antillean independence have originated largely in The Hague. Antilleans have resisted such moves while asserting that sovereignty rests in the right to disavow independence and choose amongst forms of associated statehood.

### Towards the Kingdom of today

By the 1990s, The Hague began to accept that their role in the Caribbean would be a permanent one and, barring independence, grew anxious about further decentralising the Netherlands Antilles. Although opinion polls conducted throughout the Antilles in the 1990s indicated general support for the maintenance of the five-island state, by the turn of the 21st century, perceived dominance by Curaçao amongst the smaller Antillean islands and Curaçao's mounting resentment over its responsibility to the 'little brothers' of the Antilles led to a drastic overhaul of the five-island state. Referenda issued throughout the Antilles after 2000 ultimately laid bare the deep dissatisfaction with the state. Of the four options on the referenda – total independence, separate status within the Kingdom, direct constitutional ties with the Netherlands, or maintenance of the Netherlands Antilles – Curaçao and St Maarten chose to pursue separate status within the Kingdom while a majority of voters on Bonaire and Saba wished to develop direct ties with the Netherlands. Only St Eustatius voted to maintain the Netherlands Antilles, and in a reissued referendum sided with Bonaire and Saba in forging direct ties with the Netherlands.

Overhauling the Antillean state per the referendum would be a significant endeavour for the Netherlands: tremendous Antillean debt to the Netherlands would need to be forgiven in order for economies, in particular in the newly created states of Curaçao and St Maarten, to function independently. And the exact nature of 'direct ties' with Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba, known as the BES islands, would involve years of intense negotiations ultimately resulting in the extension of Dutch borders overseas. By 2006 a plan for constitutional restructuring was in place: on the symbolically chosen date of 10 October 2010 (10/10/10) the islands of the Netherlands Antilles would secede from one another, though each of them would remain within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Curaçao and St Maarten would become autonomously governing member states of the Kingdom, joining Aruba and the Netherlands. The BES islands would forge direct ties with the Netherlands according to Article 134 of the Dutch Constitution, bringing the smallest and least populous of the Antilles under direct constitutional rule as 'public

entities' of the Netherlands. In effect, the BES islands would integrate into the European Netherlands, electing representatives in The Hague and being subject to Dutch law.

Despite intense negotiations over debt, government corruption in the Antilles, and the dramatic change in governing coalitions in both Curaçao and Bonaire, which intermittently threatened to halt the process, on 10 October 2010 the next historic phase of Kingdom relations commenced when the Netherlands Antilles — a state that was created and, for most of its history, maintained as a colonial administrative unit — dissolved. For the residents of the former state, little love was lost for a country that many felt had only ever existed in the eyes of Dutch officials.

The dismantling of the Antilles, a major diplomatic undertaking for all parties, pointed up the difficulties of building a more equitable Kingdom. First, Antillean restructuring failed to address the Kingdom's so-called 'democratic deficit.' Member states do not answer to a single Kingdom-wide legislative or representative body. Although residents of the BES islands now vote for members of Dutch parliament, the fact that Dutch institutions stand in for most Kingdom-wide affairs while representing only constituents in the Netherlands remains a perennial problem. Secondly, discussions over Antillean dismantlement in the Netherlands occurred in a political climate where debates over immigration and increased government spending are flashpoint issues. Proposed measures to restrict the immigration of high-risk Antillean youth to the Netherlands – perceived as poorly assimilated and overrepresented in criminal statistics – have heightened tensions between the Netherlands and the Antilles, for whom Dutch citizenship and access to the Netherlands is a primary reason for remaining within the Kingdom. Lastly, for many in the BES islands, the near total legal assimilation with the Netherlands has threatened traditions of political and cultural autonomy. Controversially, some standards for social security, schools, and hospitals remain lower in the BES islands, while the Dutch parliament has insisted, alternatively, that the islands accept Dutch law on same-sex marriage, abortion, and euthanasia. Sensitivity to these issues amongst religious and political leaders on the islands is compounded by a perceived sense of marginalisation in negotiations over the evolving relations between the

Netherlands and its Caribbean public entities, evoking fears of ‘recolonisation’ on the islands. Here as elsewhere throughout the former Dutch Antilles, contentment over this new phase of post-colonial relations remains under evaluation.

### Conclusion

The history of colonialism and inequality that has characterised trans-Atlantic relations throughout most of the past four centuries looms large in contemporary Antillean and Dutch political imaginaries. Although most experts dismiss independence amongst the Antillean islands as an unlikely outcome, the rhetoric of territorial sovereignty continues to resonate – in the Antilles and the Netherlands alike. In the European Netherlands, ascendant anti-immigrant political parties like the Party for Freedom (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*) have notoriously proposed selling the islands on *marktplaats.nl*, an e-commerce website akin to Ebay. In the Antilles, political parties like Curaçao’s leading Sovereign People (*Pueblo Soberano*) continue to proclaim eventual sovereignty as a core component of their platform.

Nevertheless, the Netherlands and the Antillean islands are more closely intertwined as post-colonial partners today than they were two centuries ago. The hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Suriname and the Antilles currently residing in the Netherlands have blown open the long silenced history on the Dutch slave and colonial past, debates that also concern enduring anxieties around racial equality and post-colonial statehood. The fact that in 2010 three Caribbean islands became juridically ‘Dutch’ after a half-century of political autonomy raises questions about the enduring and ambiguous legacies of imperialism. What remains to be seen, however, is whether an enduring multinational Kingdom can be made more equitable for all its citizens.

Chelsea Schields

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## Easter Rising (1916)

On Easter Monday, 24 April 1916, an estimated 1,500 Irishmen and Irishwomen attempted to seize Dublin with the intention of breaking with the British Empire in Ireland and creating an independent republic. They issued a Proclamation declaring Ireland to be an ‘independent state, guaranteed religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities’ to all citizens of Ireland. They set up a provisional government. After six days of severe fighting, the British army (with vastly superior numbers and artillery) suppressed the Easter Rising, securing the unconditional surrender of the insurgents on 29 April. In terms of casualties, the Rising is estimated to have led to the death of 78 insurgents, 126 police and military, and 256 civilians, along with enormous damage to the city of Dublin (Foy and Barton 1999; McGarry 2011; Townshend 2005).

From an anti-imperialist perspective, the 1916 Easter Rising was not simply part of a series of Irish rebellions against British rule but part of a wave of challenges to imperialism globally. In 1916, Ireland represented the weakest point of the British Empire, the colony from which most pressure could be exerted.

From an internationalist anti-imperialist perspective, Easter 1916 was not so naive a proposition as it was subsequently represented. By 1916 many of the eastern European nations colonized by Russia were also at the point of insurrection, and many colonies of the European empires were already in open revolt – for example, the German Cameroons in 1914, Nyasaland in 1915, Dahomey, French Indochina and Niger in 1916, Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) in 1917, as well as Chad, Egypt, India, the Ivory Coast, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia, Uganda and, most successfully, Libya. The year before the Easter Rising, Indian Sikh soldiers mutinied in Singapore and successfully took control of the city. They hoped that, with German help, they would then be able to drive the British out of the Malay peninsula and eventually from the whole of the Far East. (Young 2001: 303–304)

The strategy behind the Singapore mutiny bears some similarity to that of the insurgents in Dublin.

But the importance of the Easter Rising from an anti-imperialist perspective is that, compared to these other rebellions, it took place in Europe and not in some distant colony. In his defence of the Irish insurrection, Lenin underlined its explosive political effects:

The struggle of the oppressed nations in Europe, a struggle capable of going to the length of insurrection and street fighting, of breaking down the iron discipline in the army and martial law will sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe infinitely more than a much more developed rebellion in a remote colony. A blow delivered against British imperialist bourgeois rule by a rebellion in Ireland is of a hundred times greater political significance than a blow of equal weight in Asia or in Africa. (Lenin 1970: 33–34)

The rising was not simply a pivotal event in Irish history. It also signalled the beginning of a revolutionary wave in Europe that reached its highest point in Russia in 1917. Lenin wrote that ‘the tragedy of the Irish’ was that ‘they rose too soon’; before the revolution had matured in other countries.

The 1916 Easter Rising had a very significant impact and influence on anti-imperialist

movements worldwide, at the time particularly on those in India and Egypt. The Chittagong uprising in India, for example, was inspired and modelled on the 1916 Rising and therefore called the ‘Easter Rebellion in Bengal’ (Silvestri 2000). The 1916 Easter Rising also influenced movements working for the emancipation of subordinate racial groups; it provided, for example, the major ideological mainspring for Marcus Garvey’s radical political transformation. The Easter Rising had more impact on the Universal Negro Improvement Association than the struggles against imperialism in India, China, and Egypt (Hill 1983: lxx ff.).

The Easter Rising also had a significant impact on imperial rule. Leading establishment figures saw Ireland as a vital link in the chain that bound the British Empire together, so to lose Ireland would mean to lose the Empire. After the 1916 Rising, Unionist leader Edward Carson warned the British government of the consequences of defeat in Ireland for the Empire: ‘If you tell your Empire in India, in Egypt, and all over the world that you do not have the men, the money, the pluck, the inclination and the backing to restore order in a country within twenty miles of your own shore, you may as well begin to abandon the attempt to make British rule prevail throughout the Empire at all’ (Ryan 1994: 22–23). In response to the Irish demand for independence, British prime minister David Lloyd George observed: ‘Suppose we gave it to them? It will lower the prestige and the dignity of this country and reduce British authority to a low point in Ireland itself. It will give the impression that we have lost grip, that the Empire has no further force and will have an effect on India and throughout Europe’ (ibid.).

On 29 May 1916, one month after the Easter Rising, Lloyd George wrote to Unionist leader Edward Carson: ‘We must make it clear ... that Ulster does not, whether she wills it or not, merge in the rest of Ireland’ (Curtis 1994: 284). The British Empire’s determination to meet the challenge from Ireland as exemplified by the Easter Rising led to the partition of the country; a settlement that became a colonial model for imperialism. Thus, according to Sir Ronald Storrs, the British governor of Jerusalem under the British mandate and the brain behind Lawrence of Arabia, the purpose behind the Balfour Declaration and the partition of Palestine was for the British Empire to set up ‘a loyal Jewish Ulster in a sea of potential

hostile arabism' (Machover 2012: 185, 270). The Irish model was also a significant influence on the partition of India (Mansergh 1978).

What ultimately gave the 1916 Easter Rising a global significance was that it represented a blow against the idea of empire and imperialism. 'The Dublin Rebellion was the beginning of the disintegration of Imperialism, the initiation of a pattern which was to repeat itself in India, Cyprus, Palestine and Egypt, Malaya, Kenya and Algeria' (O'Connor 1975: 90–91). In 1965, Nicholas Mansergh, a leading Irish and Commonwealth historian, summed up its effects when stating: 'The contribution of Ireland was successively to weaken the will and undermine belief in empire. Beyond a certain point, it was not worth it. Stanley Baldwin summed it up when he said there must not be another Ireland in India' (Mansergh 2003/1965: 288–289). Subjugated peoples everywhere found inspiration in the Easter Rising; Gandhi and Ho Chi Minh, for example. 'Its imaginative power hastened the end of the imperial and colonial age and, critically, its wider context as both cultural and political revolution created a template that changed the world' (McGurk, 2006).

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## European Imperialism in West Africa

### Introduction

It is important to note from the outset that an essay on European imperialism in West Africa cannot be comprehensive as the imperialist venture in West Africa was vast and spanned many years and epochs. No doubt the topic is the subject of entire textbooks and university courses. Because of this, this essay is by its nature skeletal and selective. It will give a brief definition of imperialism, highlight some aspects of imperialism in West Africa, look at some reasons for imperialism in West Africa, examine the effects of imperialism in West Africa, present some of the responses to imperialism, and thereafter conclude. The study is done from a critical anti-imperialist point of view.

The term 'imperialism' can be defined in a broad or narrow sense. In the broad sense it includes all that the dominant centre does to dominate and control peripheries that may be outside it, while in the narrow sense, as A.K. Dutt states, it is how the 'dominant economic and political elements of one country appropriate for their own benefit the land, labour, raw materials, and market of other countries' (2010: 393). A.K. Chaturvedi writes that imperialism is 'the extension of control by one country over another. This can take the form

of colonialism, the attempt to establish overt political control and jurisdiction over another country; neo-colonialism, control exercised through economic domination; or cultural imperialism, the destruction or weakening of an indigenous culture and the imposition of an alien one' (2006: 143). This is a very broad and inclusive definition. In fact imperialism includes all of the above. For A. I. Okoduwa and S.E. Ibhasebhor, 'imperialism can be seen as a situation in which a particular country or a group of countries impose its control on another. It involves expansion of economic spheres of influence and sometimes the forceful plunder and exploitation of the economic resources of the countries so dominated' (2005: 7). But the subject of this essay is the classic form of imperialism as colonialism that took place in West Africa. This is no longer in place, as all the countries of West Africa have gained independence from their former imperial powers such as Britain and France. Classic imperialism, as O. Igwe writes, involves a 'coerced unequal relationship between states or peoples, especially between a victorious imperial state and its militarily vanquished empire' (2005 197). This form of classic imperialism was imposed upon the peoples of West Africa as they were subdued, oppressed, and exploited by the European imperial powers.

### Imperialism in West Africa

European interests in West Africa date back to the beginning of recorded history. Y. Akinyeye (2012), citing Herodotus, writes of the quest for a road that would lead to the gold reserves of the Negroes of the Sudan. Akinyeye states further: 'The French and the British were also engaged in brisk business in gold with West Africa, which they called Guinea, at this time, from the 15th century. By the 17th century, the British were already toying with the idea of conquering West Africa as a way of undermining the Moorish trade in that commodity. The British were making plans for the conquest of the major rivers such as Niger, Senegal, and Gambia. Even though not much came out of this plan, there is no doubt that Europe benefited immensely from the gold trade in West Africa, through North Africa' (2012: 148–149). As Akinyeye writes, when Germany and Italy grew more powerful around 1871, Germany displaced France as it had a larger population after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71 a larger percentage of the German

population was between 18 and 35 years and could bear arms in war:

This was at a time when France nursed the hope of revenge against Germany for her humiliation in the Franco-Prussian War, and victory in battle was still largely a function of number under arms than fire power. In case of another war, therefore, France was more vulnerable to defeat by Germany. She needed to look for extra-European sources of manpower for her army. As already shown elsewhere, West Africa was the most advantageous area to recruit soldiers to offset French numerical disadvantage in relation to Germany. This quest for military manpower both for the defence of metropolitan France and overseas imperial ventures was the major idea behind the French policy of 'la force noire'. (Akinyeye 2012: 149–150)

France also needed abundant supplies of iron and coal as she had lost the coal-mining towns of Alsace and Lorraine in the Franco-Prussian War, and at the same time her iron ore was not very profitable for the making of steel because it contained too much phosphorus (Akinyeye 2012). For all these reasons France needed an overseas territory such as West Africa. As for Britain, after 1870 her naval power was threatened by the emergence of the German Empire, especially when Emperor Wilhelm II argued for the creation of a strong navy to enable Germany to control the seas (Akinyeye 2012). This undoubtedly meant that the 'German market could no longer be assured for British industry and Germany herself would need overseas market. Also, the naval rivalry could lead to war and in that case adequate arrangements had to be made for British security' (Akinyeye 2012: 150). The British acquired coaling stations in Freetown, Accra, Lagos, and Portharcourt, and from these places they began to make inroads into the hinterland of West Africa. As for the French, they acquired Dakar and some other locations along the coast from which they would control the French West African territories.

It is important to note that earlier, from the 16th century to the middle of the 19th century, European powers had been involved in the transatlantic slave trade. As France's involvement in West Africa grew, with its attention focused on the Senegal River, it began

to implement a policy of assimilation; this meant that its West African territories effectively became part of France. At the same time, the British were also expanding their hold on the region. By the time of the Berlin Conference in 1884–85, each European power already had an area of influence and control; from that time onwards the French controlled Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Guinea, Ivory Coast, and Niger, though they did not implement a policy of assimilation in all of their territories.

While European powers acquired some territories in West Africa forcefully, through military tactics, many other areas were acquired by means of treaties. These treaties varied, and the African people involved often did not know their full implications. A European company, such as the Royal Niger Company (RNC), would make an agreement with the local chiefs or leaders that permitted it to trade, and soon afterwards it would invite its own government to take over the territory in order to protect it. In some cases a treaty came about as a result of a local chief himself inviting the colonial power to come in and protect its territory without seeing the implications. For instance, before Nigeria was under the control of the RNC until it became a British colonial territory in 1900.

The British colonies in West Africa included the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Ghana. As a result of the slave trade and the search for resources such as gold and ivory, British merchants already had trading posts in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Ghana, and elsewhere. S. Chilsen (2009) notes that with the abolition of the slave trade, the movement for industrialisation in Europe, and the loss of the American colonies to revolution, there was a need to be more involved in West Africa. This led to many explorers going to Africa in the 1870s and the beginning of the scramble for Africa at the Berlin Conference of 1884–85, at which the European powers divided up the continent of Africa. Two articles produced at the conference indicated how territories were to be acquired and controlled.

In order to establish effective control over the territories that she claimed, Britain used the RNC until she was able to assert control and to rule, and exploit them directly. The RNC was invested with political rights and had its headquarters in Asaba, with a police force, a high court, and many agents to handle its trading posts (Okoduwa and

Ibhasebhor 2005). Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor (2005) show that in 1897 the RNC and its forces fought and defeated Bida and Ilorin and began the process of the conquest of north Nigeria; but because of challenge from France, the British Government abrogated its charter and took over the territories.

### **The consequences of imperial activities in West Africa**

The effects of imperialism have been recounted by many African authors and others. Walter Rodney (1972), without fully acknowledging some limitations and weaknesses in Africa's past, blames the imperialists for depriving Africans of their capacity to develop the resources of nature, administer themselves, and make military progress and for replacing these with European models of exploitation. Frantz Fanon (1968) also has examined how colonialism made Africans 'the wretched of the earth'. According to Kwame Nkrumah (1965) there is no doubt that the purpose of the Europeans was the economic exploitation of Africa. As Rodney (1972) puts it, the Europeans, with their superior navigational equipment, ships, machines, and weapons, turned the ports of Africa into economic satellites and ensured that all the roads and railways led to them in order to facilitate the exportation of resources to Europe.

White European powers showed no regard for the dignity and rights of West Africans, who were seen as less than human. The region was carved up arbitrarily into various countries to be ruled by the British and French without regard for the West Africans. At the Berlin Conference in 1884–85 they were fought over and divided up without their consent. What mattered to the imperialists was what would enhance their exploitation of the peoples, the land, and its resources. They had no respect for traditional land boundaries, sacred rivers and mountains, languages, or cultures. Peoples who had lived together and shared a common language and culture all of a sudden found themselves in different countries separated by artificial national boundaries. Fanon is largely right when he writes that 'European opulence is literally scandalous, for it has been founded on slavery, it has been nourished with the blood of slaves and it comes directly from the soil and from the subsoil of that underdeveloped world. The well-being and the progress of Europe have

been built up with the sweat and the dead bodies of Negroes, Arabs, Indians, and the yellow races' (1968: 96). It is not true, however, that all that Europe has accomplished comes from its exploitation of other peoples.

One of the fundamental effects of imperialism is what it has done to the African psyche. The imperialists condemned most of the aspects of African culture and life that they encountered. They condemned African traditional religion as pagan and superstitious and regarded whatever they could not understand as magic and evil. They viewed Africans as having no knowledge of the true God. Seeing African names as evil, they renamed geographical features and locations. They made Africans see themselves as inferior, and this is the mentality that many Africans still carry today.

P. N. Chikendu (2004) classifies the effects of imperialism in political, cultural, and economic categories. In the political area, he writes that West Africans lost their autonomy and sovereignty, for instance when the British colonised Lagos in 1861 in order to control the governance of Lagos: an alien political system was imposed on the colonised country. The people of West Africa also lost their cultural autonomy: their spiritual, religious, and social beliefs, attitudes, and practices were subjugated, and a way of life that was foreign to them was imposed on them through education. In terms of the economic effects, the colonies were milked of their resources and made to work to export crops to Europe, for little or no pay.

### **The reasons for imperial activities in West Africa**

One of the main motives that drove imperialism was the search for raw materials and other resources in foreign territories (Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor 2005:7). For some writers, such as John Hobson (1902), it was the drive for new markets for goods produced by the imperialists that propelled the conquest of other foreign countries: they had surplus goods and services which the purchasing power of the working class could not meet, and so customers had to be found in foreign countries. Vladimir Lenin (1917) viewed imperialism as the inevitable consequence of capitalism, stating that the goal of capitalists is a global monopoly of the market forces and the domination and exploitation of other nations'

resources. It has been argued by Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor (2005) that in Hobson imperialism is a result of capitalist maladjustment, but in Lenin it is the necessary consequence of capitalism.

With regard to imperial activities in Africa, including West Africa, Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor (2005) indicate that there were economic, political, and social factors. The economic factors included 'the quest for raw materials for manufacturing industries in Europe', 'the search for markets', and 'investment of surplus capital'; among the political factors were 'the need to maintain balance of power in Europe', and the social factors were the 'need to solve socio-economic problem in Europe' and 'racialism' (Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor 2005: 21–26). According to Dutt, the reasons for imperialism in West Africa may have included 'the dominating nature of human beings and groups; strategic and security advantage; giving other people a superior way of life or freeing them from tyranny; and obtaining access to resources, investment outlets, and markets for the products of the center' (2010: 393).

There are those who justify imperialism as being humane and beneficial to the colonised. While it is true that there may have been some benefits that came from colonialism, the damage it did to West Africans was greater and should not be overlooked. Chikendu (2004) quotes Lugard, a governor-general of Nigeria, who argued that colonialism benefited the colonised because they received services from the colonisers in return for raw materials and a cheap market. Chikendu (2004) also cites Kipling, who claimed that Africans were wild beasts and needed to be civilised by the white race.

### **The response to imperial activities in West Africa**

The main response to imperial activities can be summed up in the word 'nationalism'. The experience of West Africans during the Second World War opened their eyes to the need to struggle for their right to govern themselves. Before nationalist movements organised for national independence, there were various other responses that are important to note here. They include anti-colonial organisations led by Kwame Nkrumah, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, P.S. Nije, and Dauda Jawara, aimed at immediate



socio-political, cultural, and economic national self-administration.

Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor (2005) have described various patterns of African response to European invasion, which are summarised in this paragraph. African leaders did not surrender their territories to the Europeans voluntarily: the European took them by force, false treaty, or hand-twisting diplomacy. In Ghana, the Asante people fought the British and defeated them in 1864, but eventually the British captured Kumasi in 1896 and exiled their king, Prempeh. In Nigeria, the Sokoto caliphate resisted with bows and arrows until it was defeated. Samouri Toure fought the French between 1882 and 1898 to preserve the Senegambia area until he was defeated. In other places African leaders entered into diplomatic treaties with the Europeans supposedly to protect their areas, but these were effectively traps, as very often the Africans did not understand their full implications. For instance, in 1880 Seku Ahmadu of Senegambia signed a treaty of protection with the French, but the French were nevertheless bent on acquiring his territory, and he had no option but to resist through force until the French defeated him in 1893. In West Africa, according to Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor (2005), Professor E.A. Afikpo affirmed that there were many Igbo people in south-east Nigeria who resisted through the use of medicine and by calling on spiritual powers to destroy the white man. Again according to Okoduwa and Ibhasebhor (2005), A.I. Asiwaju (1977) stated that some resisted the French in French West Africa by migrating from their territories because they did not want a physical confrontation with the French.

The major response to imperialism or colonialism in West Africa occurred in the form of the nationalist movements. This response is summarised here from information given by Chikendu (2004). There were both nationalist uprisings and nationalist movements in French West Africa and British West Africa. In Nigeria the Nigerian National Democratic Party was initiated by Herbert Macaulay in 1923, arising from an elective principle in the 1922 Clifford Constitution. According to A.A. Babatunde (2014), the Clifford Constitution gave birth to a new legislative council for the Colony of Lagos and the Southern Protectorate that replaced the 1914 Nigerian Council; in the north the governor

general remained the sole legislator. Though it was an advisory council, as the governor general had a veto power, the elective principle in the constitution encouraged the formation of political organisations through which the people could express their political aspirations, and it was during this period that Herbert Macaulay set up the first political party in 1923 (Aghalino 2006).

The formation in 1934 of the Lagos Youth Movement, which later became the Nigerian Youth Movement, also fanned the flames of nationalism. In 1944 the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons was formed. Other parties would eventually be formed in Nigeria, such as the action group formed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the Northern People's Congress. With the nationalist drive informing more constitutions and conferences, Nigeria eventually became independent of British imperial rule on 1 October 1960. In Ghana, the former Gold Coast, after the First World War, Joseph Casely Hayford founded the National Congress of British West Africa. In the 1930s the global economic depression led to restiveness the world over, including Ghana. A youth conference was founded in the country by Dr J.B. Danquah. With the end of the Second World War, nationalistic agitations grew rapidly in the 1940s, precipitating the formation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) in 1947. When Dr Kwame Nkrumah returned to Ghana from studies abroad he joined the UGCC; he eventually left and formed the Convention People's Party (CPP) with two others. Nkrumah was sentenced to prison in 1950, but while he was in prison the CPP won overwhelming victories in the municipal elections and the governor-general, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, released him; upon his consequent electoral victory, Nkrumah became Ghana's first independent prime minister in 1957. In the Gambia, the first of the four British West African countries, the first of her main political parties, the United Party, was formed in 1957, followed by two other political parties, the People's Progressive Party and the People's Society on Progress for the Protectorate. The Gambia became an independent nation in 1965 with Sir Dawda Jawara as prime minister. In Sierra Leone, owing to the presence of two distinct groups of peoples, the Westernised freed slaves along the coast and the Islamised people in the interior, nationalism did not begin until the

introduction of a new constitution in 1952. Through the leadership of Sir Milton Margai the country gained independence in 1961.

Chikendu (2004) has indicated that Francophone West Africa was administered as an integral part of France, and so nationalism was late in coming. Because of the French policy of assimilation, educated Africans were regarded as full French citizens and could be elected into the French national assembly or chamber of deputies from 1946. When the educated Africans came to realise that assimilation estranged them from their African roots they began to agitate for independence, often inspired by the writing of Aimé Césaire, especially his essays on *Négritude*. Because of the unusually inhuman treatment meted out to Africans, the African members of the chamber of deputies formed a non-party bloc to argue for their African interests (Chikendu 2004). Nationalistic feelings heightened when in 1946 a group of African leaders, gathering in Bamako, Mali, formed the political organisation *Rassemblement Democratique African* (RDA). With inspiration from the RDA, nationalism grew in French West Africa, and eventually French West African countries gained independence like their British counterparts.

## Conclusion

It is insufficient to attribute the entire range of failures of West Africa, and indeed of all of Africa, to imperialism. While it is true that imperialism raped and ravaged West Africa, West Africans have also contributed to the sufferings of their sub-region through ethnicism and tribal rivalries that followed independence, corruption and embezzlement of public funds, inept leadership, wars over natural resources, and so on. There is a need for Africans to become mentally free and to take the challenge of the development of their regions of the continent into their own hands. It is true that European imperialism damaged and impeded the development of West Africa and of the entire African continent. It is now time for Africans who have long been politically independent to ensure that they draw on their authentic African and global values to build up their continent. It is important to note that Africans did not surrender to imperialism. Many brave and courageous Africans resisted imperialism, and many lost their lives in the struggle for freedom and formal

independence. The nationalist movement also contributed, and several African countries gained their independence through the struggles of various nationalists. Imperialism was essentially for the European interest. Yet, in spite of the havoc it caused, it is now time for Africans to assert their freedom in every area of human existence.

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## France and Imperialism

### The construction of empire

Like other European nations in the 19th century, France had numerous, varied, and contradictory reasons for constructing a colonial empire. Economically, a newly industrialised France sought to monopolise vast sources of raw materials to feed its emerging factories, as well as new export markets in which to sell its growing supply of manufactured goods. Politically, the rising tide of nationalism throughout Europe led French politicians, intellectuals, and social commentators to view imperial expansion as a source of national prestige and even of geopolitical survival. Culturally, many Frenchmen and women saw it as their moral duty to spread 'civilisation' to the 'backwards' peoples of the world. And yet, the harsh if rarely acknowledged reality of imperial rule was its utter reliance on exclusion, racism, and violence. For this reason, throughout its roughly 130-year existence, France's empire drew intense criticism from its colonial subjects. Ultimately, only an end to institutionalised exclusion or, failing that, the use of violence itself would finally bring France's imperial epoch to a close.

As part of its first colonial empire, France's Bourbon monarchy controlled present-day Haiti, Guadeloupe, Martinique, La Réunion, coastal Senegal, and much of North America. In the mid-18th century, however, this empire began to disintegrate. First, France lost its colony of Quebec to Great Britain in the Seven Years' War (1757–63). In 1803, amidst the chaos of the French Revolution, Napoleon then sold France's largest landholdings in North America to the US. Finally, France's most profitable sugar-growing colony, Saint-Domingue, successfully defeated the French army and renamed itself the independent nation of Haiti in 1804.

This essay will focus on France's second colonial empire (1830–1962), as the

19th century saw a politically and economically resurgent France move away from the Western Hemisphere and begin to colonise large parts of Africa and South-East Asia, eventually constructing an empire second only to Great Britain's in size and population. This empire would take many forms, from formal colonies d'exploitation in Indochina, French West Africa, and French Equatorial Africa, to the so-called protectorates of Tunisia and Morocco, and, later, to the mandates of Syria and Lebanon. Formal colonies entailed direct rule over French imperial subjects; protectorates ceded part of their sovereignty to France while their inhabitants retained their own nationalities. The League of Nations gave France control over newly created mandates after the First World War with the stipulation that France prepare these territories for formal independence in the distant future.

France's most prized asset, however, was the North African settler colony of Algeria, due to its proximity to Europe, its large and diverse European population, and its unique legal status. The invasion of Algeria in 1830 represented the beginning of France's second wave of imperial expansion. From Algeria, the French army would spread south and west throughout much of Africa. To be sure, the initial invasion met with heavy resistance under the leadership of the charismatic young marabout Abd-al-Qadir (1808–83), who organised Algeria's tribal leaders under the banner of an Islamic holy war against the French invaders. According to one contemporary, French soldiers had free reign to 'kill all the men above fifteen, take all the women and children ... in a word, annihilate all of them who do not grovel at our feet like a dog' (Lucien François de Montaignac, quoted in Crapanzano 2011: 41–42). Only in 1847, after 17 years of fighting, did the French ultimately quash Abd-al-Qadir's resistance. Nevertheless, from this point forward, Islam would serve as a useful rallying cry for uniting Algerians against colonial rule.

Despite such violence, Algeria's proximity to Europe and fertile coastal farmland rendered it an attractive place of settlement for Europe's labouring and peasant classes. By 1848, amidst a republican revolution in France, the estimated 115,000 Europeans in Algeria convinced the French National Assembly to legally assimilate Algeria to the French metropole. Algeria would henceforth

consist of three French departments – Oran, Algiers, and Constantine – each of which would have the right to send French representatives to the French legislature and, theoretically, to govern itself with the same republican institutions used in the metropole. In 1848, the French government also extended limited citizenship to the inhabitants of its ‘old colonies’ in the Caribbean and coastal Senegal. In Algeria, however, French settlers saw the practice of Islam – especially the use of Sharia law – as incompatible with democratic governance, and used this belief to withhold all political rights from indigenous Algerians. Throughout the imperial epoch, Algeria’s Muslims had to renounce their Islamic legal and familial status in order to gain French citizenship, a requirement which only a handful of Algerians fulfilled in the 130 years of French rule. (In 1870, the Crémieux Decrees granted automatic citizenship to Algeria’s roughly 5,000 Jews.)

The creation of a society based on the racial and religious exclusion of the majority of the population only engendered continued violence. On 1 March 1871, a rebellion broke out in the mountainous northern region of Algeria known as Kabylie. The rebellion stemmed from the extension of French civilian rule over previously self-governing tribal areas, and from a horrific famine in 1867 that caused at least 300,000 Algerian deaths. Led by the young tribal leader Muhammad al-Muqrani (?–1871), whose call for religious jihad inspired over a million native Algerians, the rebellion occupied the French military until October 1871. In the end, the French crushed the uprising, killed al-Muqrani, and responded with intensified land confiscation of 500,000 ha and total reparations of Ff65 million francs. The rebellion only hardened the French desire never to extend citizenship rights to the Muslim population of Algeria.

France ruled Algeria for 50 years before it looked to expand elsewhere. In the 1880s, however, prime minister Jules Ferry (1832–93) began a series of colonial wars that consolidated the empire overseas. As Ferry informed the French Senate in 1884, ‘The considerations that justify the policy of colonial expansion [are] the need for outlets ... and places of supply, shelters, and ports for defense’ (Ferry 1897). These economic and military needs led Ferry and his successors to incorporate Tahiti and Polynesia in 1880, Tunisia and Indochina in 1881, Djibouti in 1885, and Madagascar

in 1886. Further, after intense military campaigns in West and Central Africa, France fixed its two largest administrative units to include French West Africa (Senegal, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Guinea, French Sudan, Mauritania, and Niger) with its capital at Dakar, and French Equatorial Africa (Western Sudan, Gabon, Middle Congo, Oubangui Chari, and Chad) with its capital at Brazzaville.

Again, this effort met with heavy resistance. In the Tukolor Empire of West Africa, the army struggled repeatedly to overcome raids led by Sultan Ahmadu Seku. In Western Sudan (Mali), Samori Touré, leader of the Islamic Wassoulou Empire, rallied 35,000 men in a 13-year campaign against the French military before he was finally subdued in 1898. In France, meanwhile, leaders like Paul Déroulède on the right argued that the military should work to retake the territories of Alsace and Lorraine that it lost in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 rather than expand abroad. On the left, socialists like Jules Guesde saw imperial expansion as a distraction from working-class politics. In the end, neither could compete with the nationalist rhetoric of prime minister Léon Gambetta, who proclaimed that France ‘lies not just between the Atlantic and the Alps, the Vosges and the Mediterranean, but wherever there are French interests and wherever French industry and trade are active’ (quoted in Conklin et al. 2011: 68).

### **Colonial administration, the *indigénat*, and the civilising mission**

By 1914, France and its empire encompassed 100 million people, 60 million of whom were colonial subjects. These subjects fell under the jurisdiction of about 4,000 French administrators and their indigenous auxiliaries. Beginning in the 19th century, the government in Paris divided each colony into administrative units under the rule of a governor general, who in turn subdivided his territory into districts (*cercles*) led by a French civil commander (*commandant*) responsible for collecting taxes, facilitating commerce, and administering justice.

Despite touting a republican rule of law at home, the French instituted a different legal regime abroad. First used in Algeria in 1881, the *Code de l’indigénat* applied exclusively to indigenous subjects and allowed French

authorities to mete out arbitrary justice for even the smallest infractions. It was, in the words of one historian, 'perhaps the most important element of the administrative tool kit.' (Mann 2009: 334). Under the *indigénat*, French officials could administer fines and jail sentences of up to 15 days for offences ranging from travelling without a permit to failing to show proper respect for colonial officials.

Enforcement of the *indigénat* varied from colony to colony and, because it was never codified, depended on the whim of the local commandant. In 1930s French West Africa, a French official invoked the *indigénat* to force villagers to wade into the Niger Delta in the middle of the night and slap the water with their hands in order to quiet the incessant din of frogs that interrupted his sleep. Elsewhere, commandants in Senegal applied the *indigénat* to jail or even physically bind peasants for failing to collect enough peanuts or for growing too much pepper. More prosaically, the colonial regime could require indigenous subjects to provide unpaid labour every month to build roads and undertake other 'public works' to promote trade.

The *indigénat*, as a 'regime of exception', coexisted uneasily with the official justification for French empire, the *mission civilisatrice*. The French used the ideology of the civilising mission to sell their empire both at home and abroad. The paradox of this ideology stemmed from its two opposing goals: it at once sought to 'uplift' France's imperial subjects and assimilate them to French 'civilisation' and, at the same time, to preserve these subjects' 'essential' cultures and traditions. As prime minister Jules Ferry told the Chamber of Deputies in 1883: 'Gentlemen, we must speak more loudly and more honestly ... the higher races have a duty to civilize the inferior races' (Ferry 1897). This duty took many forms. Here, we will consider the mission as it took shape in education, religion, urban planning, and bourgeois culture.

The French saw education as key to the civilising mission. Despite an almost unceasing stream of educational rhetoric, however, at no time in any French colony did more than 10 per cent of the native population ever set foot in a French school. The handful of colonial subjects who did attend such schools learned primarily that they were racially and ethnically different from their French rulers. One 1920 elementary textbook exhorted students to recite the following: 'I live in Africa.

I am an African. I have black skin. I belong to the black race. I am a black African'. Students then repeated similar statements about the 'whiteness' of their French teachers (quoted in Kelly 2000: 192). Ultimately, this system of colonial education produced a small cadre of educated elites or so-called *evolués* – some of whom, such as Franz Fanon, Léopold Senghor, and Ho Chi Minh, would later become anti-colonial critics – and a rather larger number of low-level colonial functionaries.

At times, religious missionaries could offer a better, if no less contradictory, educational experience. By 1900, an estimated 58,000 Catholic missionaries had fled anti-clerical persecution in France to open up schools, orphanages, and hospitals throughout the empire. Indeed, despite the growing scorn for Catholic clergy in metropolitan France in the decades before the First World War, one of the leading anti-clerical politicians, Léon Gambetta, could proclaim that 'anti-clericalism is not an article for export', especially not to the French colonies, where missionaries provided valuable services for little or no pay (quoted in Ageron 1972: 196–197). The Jesuits, who were expelled from metropolitan France in 1881, continued to work with colonial authorities in places like Madagascar, where they served as geopolitical allies in the fight against English Protestant rivals. Politically naïve missionaries, however, could also invoke the ire of the colonial state. In one notorious incident from 1888, French adventurer Charles-David de Meyréna used missionaries in Indochina as guides through the jungle, eventually proclaiming himself King Marie I of the Sedang tribe, an act that put him into direct competition with French authorities.

In addition to teachers and missionaries, engineers and architects also hoped to use the colonies as laboratories for their own pet projects. By the 1890s, French engineers had set up vast networks of railroads and canals that transported colonial cash crops and resources to coastal capitals like Dakar, Brazzaville, and Algiers on their way to the French metropole. Hubert Lyautey (1854–1934), the governor general of Morocco, undertook what was perhaps the most ambitious engineering initiative. In 1912, he began to capitalise on a lack of building codes and bureaucracy to construct a model 'rational' city that could both 'civilise' Moroccans and provide a template for urban planning in France itself. To

this end, he expropriated property, levied exceptional taxes, and co-ordinated zoning policies to construct the ideal modern city. Lyautey's project, however, remained dogged by a lack of finances and the stubborn refusal of Moroccans to accept their new built environment. Elsewhere, urban initiatives were designed to separate the French from their colonised subjects. In Indochina, the colonial 'hill station' of Dalat provided a refuge from both the tropical climate and Indochinese subjects alike. Similarly, in large cities such as Hanoi and Saigon, colonists built entire French quarters of residential and commercial districts off limits to non-Europeans.

Finally, the civilising mission entailed attempts to impose European bourgeois culture on indigenous families. This effort provided one of the rare opportunities for French women to actively partake in empire building. Many Frenchmen felt that women's 'apolitical nature' and 'natural maternal instincts' rendered them perfect vessels for spreading proper notions of motherhood and domesticity to indigenous women (Horne 1998: 35). Feminist groups like the Society for the Emigration of Women to the Colonies (established in 1897) or the Society for the Protection of Cambodian Children and Mothers (established in 1926) hoped that Frenchwomen could both keep European men from 'going native' and train indigenous mothers in the arts of childcare and house-keeping. French colonial wives like Marie Bugéja actually saw Muslim women as 'the fulcrum by which the Algerian Muslim population could be elevated to the level of French civilization' (Bowlan 1998: 177). In response, colonial authorities invoked the 'degraded' state of women under Islamic law to argue that Muslim men did not deserve political rights or citizenship. Still other commentators contended that the French should respect Islamic law by not undermining a 'naturally patriarchal' society. In any event, these claims served to mask very real gender inequalities in France itself.

In the end, whether in the realms of education, religion, industry, or family values, the civilising mission repeatedly ran up against the reality of economic imperatives. For only through the use of authoritarian rule and forced labour could French officials coerce colonial subjects into contributing to an economic system that redounded only to the benefit of the French themselves.

## First World War and the inter-war years

The First World War (1914–18) marked a turning point in the history of the French Empire. For the first time, the war effort required that large numbers of colonial subjects come to the metropole itself. Ultimately, this experience would provide many of them with a first-hand glimpse of the rights and privileges enjoyed by French citizens on European soil. These men would in turn draw on French traditions of liberty, fraternity, and equality to demand an expansion of their political and social rights. Only when this effort failed did many begin to demand full independence for themselves as members of new nation states.

Despite not enjoying the rights of citizens, colonial subjects owed both taxes and military service to the French state. In 1914 the military enlisted upwards of half-a-million colonial soldiers, or *troupes indigènes*, and 220,000 colonial labourers to contribute to the war effort. Colonial workers received less pay, put in longer hours, and became the objects of more intense scrutiny than their European counterparts. French authorities worried in particular over the inevitable interracial intimacies that arose between Frenchwomen and colonial men, as such relationships reversed the customary colonial practice of Frenchmen taking indigenous concubines. As a military censor noted in 1917, for a colonial man to have sex with a French woman 'was not only a pleasure ... but also a form of vengeance' (quoted in Fogarty 2009: 54). To keep knowledge of such subversive relationships from spreading to the colonies, French censors worked tirelessly (and illegally) to read and confiscate the mail sent home from France by colonial soldiers and workers.

The war's end led to further unexpected changes for the empire. First, the newly created League of Nations granted France 'mandate' – or tutelary – power over the former Ottoman Empire's territories of Syria and Lebanon. Second, France now had to confront the prospect of thousands of colonial subjects remaining in the metropole. Although nearly 80,000 colonial soldiers lost their lives fighting for France, their service and continued presence only heightened the public's fear of interracial relationships and 'racial degeneration'. French author Ludovic Naudeau warned that immigration from the colonies would 'blur the boundaries between the ruler and the ruled', adding further that,

'France will not sustain our place in the world if we do not remain what we have always been: a white nation' (quoted in Camiscioli 2005: 228). Such anxiety led to a new citizenship law in 1918 requiring colonial subjects to prove that they and their families were 'accustomed to a French lifestyle and education' before gaining French citizenship (Conklin 1998: 75).

Despite such trepidations at home, the demographic and economic losses of the war only bolstered efforts to consolidate French influence abroad. On the most fundamental level, the empire finally began to make economic sense. By 1939, France aimed fully 40 per cent of its exports at the colonies, which in turn accounted for 37 per cent of its imports. Much of this trade resulted from an increased emphasis on colonial *mise en valeur*, or rational economic development of agriculture, infrastructure, and social services. To be sure, the economic benefits of such development continued to elude the large majority of colonial subjects.

To tout the supposed success of this new policy, Paris hosted the ostentatious European Colonial Exposition of 1931. Organisers provided European tourists with 'authentic' re-creations of the 'natural habitats' of colonial subjects, accompanied by images of the massive public-works projects undertaken by the French government to modernise such habitats. As the exposition's official guidebook boasted, 'for the first time in Paris, Morocco appears to us in its entirety' (Anon. 1931: 87). Tourists could also dine at food stalls 'served by indigenes themselves'. The event's centrepiece, a full-scale reconstruction of the Cambodian temple of Angkor Wat, depicted the glorious but supposedly long stagnant history of Indochina. Ultimately, such pavilions portrayed an ahistorical colonial culture in order to demonstrate the superiority of French civilisation and the necessity of spreading it abroad.

And yet, the inter-war years also saw a handful of intellectuals from Africa and the diaspora embrace this caricatured portrayal of their supposedly static and irrational culture and use it to push for French citizenship. Léopold Senghor (1906–2001) and Aimé Césaire (1913–2008) helped found the largest such movement, *Négritude*. Writing in journals like *La Revue du Monde Noir* and *L'Étudiant Noir*, Senghor and Césaire hoped to probe the limits of European reason and

the capitalist and exclusionary society it fostered. Senghor, like many other colonial intellectuals, received an elementary education from French missionaries near Dakar and later graduated from the University of Paris. Drawing from elements of both Surrealism and Marxism, his poetry valorised unreason, instinct, and emotion as necessary antidotes to Western individualism. Similarly, Césaire, a French-educated poet and dramatist from Martinique, rewrote African history in a triumphalist narrative in an attempt to rescue it from decades of European condescension, which itself had provided the ideological foundation for the civilising mission since the 1880s.

Finally, a handful of Algerian intellectuals in the inter-war years began to contemplate the idea of full independence from France. To attenuate such demands, France's coalition of leftist parties known as the Popular Front, led by Léon Blum, drafted the Blum-Viollette proposal in 1936 (named after Algerian governor general Maurice Viollette). The bill would have extended citizenship to French-educated Algerians while still allowing them recourse to Islamic law in social matters such as divorce, child custody, and inheritance. Although the proposal would have only enfranchised 21,000 out of 5 million native Algerians, the colony's European community (later known as the  *pieds-noirs*, or 'black feet') stymied the move before it could even come to a vote in the National Assembly.

Regardless, Algerian activists like the young Messali Hadj (1898–1974) rejected the bill for not going far enough. Messali, an Algerian of Turkish origin who resided in Paris, founded in 1926 the first modern movement for Algerian independence, known as the *Étoile nord-africaine* (North African Star). The group called for freedom of the press and association, universal suffrage, and an increased focus on Arabic schools in Algeria. In 1927, Messali attended the Anti-Imperialism Congress in Belgium, where he met Ho Chi Minh and won initial support from the French Communist Party. In 1929, however, the government banned the Star and Messali lost communist support as he narrowed his focus from workers' rights in general to Algerian nationalism in particular. Messali returned to Algeria in 1937 and created the *Parti du peuple algérien* (PPA) to incorporate the working classes into the independence movement. Although his

efforts proved invaluable in organising both military and political resistance to French rule, in the 1950s the PPA would ultimately be eclipsed by a new, more radical nationalist group known as the Front de libération nationale, or FLN.

## Second World War and the end of empire

The onset of the Second World War marked the beginning of the end of the French Empire. First, Germany's rapid defeat of the French army revealed its relative susceptibility to armed resistance elsewhere. Second, the numerous human rights abuses committed by the Nazi regime only served to galvanise post-war public opinion against similar abuses in the European colonies. Third, for the second time in a generation, colonial troops proved invaluable to the Allied war effort and now saw either more equitable incorporation with the metropole or outright independence as the only forms of just recompense. Finally, once the possibility of equitable integration became more than empty rhetoric, French taxpayers proved less than willing to foot the bill for extending metropolitan labour laws, healthcare, and education to colonial subjects-cum-citizens.

The empire's disintegration began during the war itself and took many forms. After the fall of France to Nazi Germany in 1940, the Free French Resistance movement, spearheaded by General Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970), granted independence to Syria and Lebanon to prevent them from falling into Nazi hands. Next, in September of 1940, the Nazi-allied Vichy regime in France allowed the Japanese military to occupy the colony of Indochina. Elsewhere, the majority of French colonial administrators remained loyal to the Vichy regime throughout the war. Only Félix Eboué, the Guadeloupe-born governor of Chad and the only black governor in France's entire empire, worked to aid the French Resistance effort.

At the war's close, France sought to salvage the remnants of its empire by granting significant concessions to its colonial subjects. These concessions marked a shift in the very conception of empire – from the belief that 'colonies were supposed to pay the costs of their own repression' to the concept that colonies formed an integral part of France and as such deserved access to metropolitan social

benefits (Cooper 2003: 5). In 1946, a newly formed constituent assembly invited elected deputies from throughout the empire to help draft a new constitution for the Fourth French Republic. In the ensuing debate, representatives like Lamine Guète from Senegal and Félix Houphouët-Boigny from the Ivory Coast succeeded in abolishing the notorious *indigénat* legal code. In addition, Réunionnais deputies Raymond Vergès and Léon de Lepervanche joined with Caribbean deputies Gaston Monnerville and Aimé Césaire to push for and win full integration of the old colonies of La Réunion, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Guiana as French overseas departments (*départements d'outre-mer*, or DOM). As such, departmental prefects now replaced governors general to bring the former colonies more in line with metropolitan departmental administration. Finally, the resulting constitution of 1946 officially renamed the French Empire the French Union and granted all colonial subjects the opportunity to join the Union as full French citizens.

Much of the intellectual fodder for these and later reforms came from activists like Senegal's Alioune Diop (1910–80), an early member of the Négritude movement who in 1947 founded the journal (and, later, publishing house) known as *Présence Africaine*. The journal invited writers from Africa and the diaspora to contribute articles and poetry that rehabilitated African cultures and promoted the liberation or equitable assimilation of peoples under colonial domination. In 1956, editors at the *Présence Africaine* helped to organise the first international Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Paris. Diop invited Pablo Picasso, whose cubist paintings themselves drew inspiration from African art, to design a commemorative poster for the event. The intellectuals who gathered at the Congress would go on to form the influential Society for African Culture. Overall, the journal, congress, and society all shared the belief that a common cultural identity existed among all peoples of the African diaspora and that this identity had to be celebrated and liberated from European tutelage.

Elsewhere, however, colonial activists unwilling to join the new French Union resorted to violence to win full independence. In 1947, anti-colonial violence flared in Madagascar, where French troops killed as many as 100,000 Malagasy nationalist fighters. This continued obstinacy would lead



to two of the most protracted and bloody wars in the history of decolonisation: first in Indochina from 1946–1954, and immediately after in Algeria from 1954–1962.

Organised resistance to French rule in Indochina dated from the 1930s and revolved around the Communist Party and its leader Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969). An attendee at the founding of the French Communist Party in Tours in 1920, Ho organised his own Vietnamese Communist Party and guerrilla forces known as the Viet Minh to reject French rule in the inter-war years. After helping to repel Japanese invaders during the Second World War, Ho established a provisional government in 1945 to negotiate Vietnamese independence with the Allied forces. To his dismay, however, the Allies divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel and returned the southern half to France. In 1946, French military commander Thierry d'Argenlieu then moved to retake the North by bombarding the port city of Haiphong, leading to 6,000 casualties. The Viet Minh retreated to the countryside, where they formed rural guerrilla squadrons to ambush French forces. The decisive battle occurred at the strategic valley of Diem Bien Phu, where in March 1954 Vietnamese General Vo Nguyen Giap began a two-month siege of French troops. Ultimately, although Viet Minh casualties reached upwards of 30,000, compared to 7,000 for the French, Giap succeeded in taking the valley.

This defeat forced the imperial government in Paris to either commit more troops – an option favoured by few – or to concede defeat. In 1954, Pierre Mendès-France was elected prime minister on a platform of ending the war and on 20 July 1954 he signed the Geneva Accords, which granted independence to the Indochinese colonies of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Again, Vietnam was divided at the 17th parallel, with Ho Chi Minh gaining control of the North and the Catholic politician Ngo Dinh Diem presiding over the South. Ultimately, in an effort to prevent a communist electoral victory in South Vietnam, the US unilaterally cancelled elections scheduled for 1956, thus marking the beginning of American-Vietnamese hostilities that would last until 1975, when a unified Vietnam finally gained independence.

No sooner had France extricated itself from the war in Indochina than it entered another war, this time with its most prized

possession. Although Tunisia and Morocco would win independence peacefully in 1956, Algeria, as legally assimilated to the metropole and as home to nearly a million European settlers, presented a more complicated puzzle. Despite his desire to end the war in Indochina, Mendès-France himself asserted that 'the Algerian departments are part of the French Republic ... Between them and metropolitan France there can be no conceivable secession' (quoted in Crapanzano 2011: 49).

Violence began in 1945, when the end of the Second World War sparked celebrations throughout Europe and the colonies. In the town of Sétif, parades turned into protests as Algerians unfurled banners calling for independence. The French police responded by firing on and killing a number of protesters. Violence quickly escalated and, after 103 *pieds-noirs* were murdered, the French undertook brutal reprisals that cost anywhere between 6,000 and 45,000 Algerian lives. For nationalists like Ahmed Ben Bella (1916–2012), the Sétif massacre 'succeeded in persuading me in the only path: Algeria for Algerians' (47).

By 1954, Ben Bella and Hocite Ait Ahmed had assumed leadership of the nationalist movement known as the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) and its military wing the Armée de Libération Nationale (ALN). This consolidation of power entailed the brutal suppression of nationalist rivals in Algeria and France, including Messali Hadj's Mouvement National Algérien. In the so-called Café Wars of Paris, the FLN used military cells to wipe out its Algerian rivals, resulting in as many as 5,000 deaths. When the war moved to Algeria, the FLN's adoption of terrorist tactics drew influence, in part, from the writings of Franz Fanon (1925–61), a French-educated doctor from Martinique. Fanon argued that colonial revolutionaries must resort to violence in order to overthrow colonial regimes that were themselves founded on coercion and domination.

The Algerian War began on All Saints Day, 1 November 1954, when FLN militants co-ordinated 30 attacks across Algeria using bombs, fires, and armed combat. These 'events' – as the French government labelled them until 1999 – quickly escalated and by 1956 the French had sent upwards of 400,000 troops to Algeria. The FLN targeted French civilians and ambivalent Algerians alike, murdering

and mutilating men, women, and children in an attempt to turn the French public against the war and to intimidate hesitant Algerians into supporting independence. The French military, for its part, resorted to systematic torture of anyone suspected of aiding the FLN. Waterboarding, electroshock, and rape all comprised what prime minister Guy Mollet called 'extended questioning' tactics. The French public remained largely unaware of such torture until Henri Alleg, a journalist and member of the French Communist Party, published *La Question* in 1958. The book recounted Alleg's own torture at the hands of the French military and helped erode global support for the 'events' in Algeria.

The war's turning point came with the ten-month-long Battle of Algiers. The battle began on 30 September 1956, when the FLN recruited three women to detonate bombs in two popular European cafes, the Milk Bar and the Cafeteria, and in an Air France airline office. Throughout the battle, the FLN imposed a general strike on Muslim workers in Algiers that coincided with the United Nations debate on the escalating crisis in Algeria. Although France won the battle militarily – capturing FLN leader Saïdi Yacef and killing his chief lieutenant Ali la Pointe – it lost the support of global public opinion. Further, when the government in Paris began to contemplate an exit strategy, French generals under the leadership of Jacques Massu took control of the city of Algiers and threatened to stage a military coup to overthrow the government in France itself.

Ultimately, this uprising led to the fall of the Fourth Republic, and on 1 June 1958, a 67-year-old Charles de Gaulle was invited by the National Assembly to form a new government under the name of the Fifth Republic. General de Gaulle immediately visited Constantine to announce his 'peace of the brave' plan, which would have allowed Algerians to join France as equal citizens. After FLN leaders rejected this proposal, de Gaulle reversed his position and, in 1959, first uttered the words 'self-determination'. De Gaulle opened talks with the FLN at the town of Evian in May 1961 and, after a series of stalled negotiations, finally agreed on a ceasefire on 10 March 1962. In an ensuing referendum, 91 per cent of the French electorate and 98 per cent of the Algerian electorate voted for an end to the hostilities and an independent Algeria. Only the pied-noir community

and the right-wing terrorist branch, the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS), continued to support French Algeria.

Despite, or perhaps because of, their refusal to see Algeria as anything other than part of France, Algeria's European community chose to immigrate to France en masse following the ceasefire. The French state welcomed these settlers as 'repatriates'. For the 200,000 Muslim Algerians who remained loyal to France throughout the war, however, the government proved less accommodating. Known as Harkis, these Algerians scrambled desperately to flee to France and escape FLN reprisals. The French government classified them as 'refugees,' and ultimately only about half were admitted to the metropole, while as many as 40,000 died at the hands of the FLN in Algeria. In total, historians estimate at least 800,000 Algerians and 25,000 French died during the war for independence.

In Algeria and elsewhere, however, even independence did not end conflicts that began in the colonial era. Further, many Africans continued to favour equitable integration to France over formal independence. African politicians were still debating the issue when, in 1960, the French government itself voted to break formal ties with its federations of French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. Léopold Senghor, as the first president of an independent Senegal, quickly moved to suppress his more radical rivals and in 1962 imprisoned his prime minister Mamadou Dia (1910–2009) for allegedly planning a coup. Dia – a teacher who had attended the French-run William Ponty School in Dakar – had supported independence long before Senghor, who up until 1958 still hoped to keep Senegal part of the French Union. The two erstwhile allies eventually split over the issue of socialism, as Dia hoped to reform the lucrative groundnut industry that was controlled by wealthy Islamic marabouts previously allied with French business interests. This radical move sparked the alarm of Senghor, who with French support had Dia imprisoned from 1962–1974.

Despite the formal end of empire, 2.5 million French citizens continue to live in overseas departments today, and they continue to divide French opinion. In the 1960s, the government in Paris initially hesitated to extend social welfare legislation to overseas citizens because of the continued belief that such people were 'naturally poor'. Ironically,

it was conservatives like one-time prime minister Michel Debré (1912–96) who, as a deputy from La Réunion in 1963, helped create the Fonds d'Action Sanitaire et Sociale Obligatoire (FASO) to provide subsidised housing, healthcare, and employment opportunities for the largely impoverished indigenous communities. In doing so, Debré hoped to outflank local Communist Party calls for full independence. This 'welfare colonialism' (Finch-Boyer 2013: 133) remains an attractive alternative to national sovereignty in France's overseas departments today.

Finally, the legacy of empire continues to shape metropolitan France as well. Since 1962, an estimated 5 million post-colonial immigrants and their families have fled to France in search of work or refuge. Most of these immigrants are concentrated in the notorious *banlieus* – or suburban slums – that encircle large cities like Paris and Marseilles. France's 4 million residents of North African origin have in particular struggled to gain acceptance in a society that mandates strict *laïcité*, or an absence of religion from public spaces. The right-wing National Front party has famously called for an expulsion of all North Africans – even those born in France – due to their supposed failure to integrate into French secular society. This fear culminated in a 2004 law that prohibited Muslim girls from wearing the headscarf, or 'veil', in all public schools. In 2011, a similar ban prohibited Muslim women from wearing face-covering veils in any public space whatsoever. As these laws demonstrate, France continues to struggle, as it did throughout its period of imperial rule, to accept cultural, religious, and ethnic differences within its supposed belief in universal republicanism.

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## German Colonialism and Nazism as Anti-Imperialism

### A change of perspective

To approach Nazism as anti-imperialism might at first glance lead to some

consternation. Extensive research has addressed the imperial or colonial nature of Nazi Germany. The German concept of *Lebensraum* or living space in the East, the war of extermination, and Auschwitz indicate the atrociousness of Nazism as an aggressively imperialist and colonising power. On the other hand, it may be argued that the anti-Semitic drive for total extermination defies the categories of colonialism or imperialism. Approaching Nazism as anti-imperialism, however, places the focus on Nazi sources, their self-conception and self-projection, their ideology and propaganda. The perception of being the victim of long-lasting domination by foreign powers in a struggle for sovereignty is not to be underestimated as a main reason for the radicalism and totality of Nazi German foreign, settlement, war, and extermination policies. Nationalism and anti-imperialism, drawing on modern concepts of sovereignty and national self-determination, were intertwined with racist and imperialist notions of German superiority, and most importantly with the anti-Semitic idea of powerful and threatening Jewish aggression from both outside and within.

This essay sets out to situate Nazi anti-imperialism within the history of German imperialism and colonialism with and without colonies. After discussing imperialism and colonialism as phenomena of capitalist modernity, it will briefly sketch out the genesis of racism, anti-Semitism, and Darwinism. The question of whether and to what extent European colonialism, and especially German genocidal policies in Africa, contributed to creating the conditions in which Auschwitz somehow became 'thinkable and executable' (Zimmerer 2005: 211) will then be addressed. The First World War and the Weimar Republic will be dealt with as a caesura of utmost importance, as the Versailles experience melded perceptions of racist and imperialist superiority with ones of 'colonised' and powerless inferiority. The impact and importance of anti-imperialist elements in Nazi thought will be thematised by drawing upon Carl Schmitt, Goebbels, and others who construed and depicted as reactive and defensive the pursuit of an imperial sphere of influence. The idea of a 'natural' order along the lines of race or *Volkstum* contrasted with the purportedly aggressive and imperialist universalism of democracy. By addressing Germany's

main enemies – Britain and later on the US – as ‘plutocracies’, Nazi thought and propaganda used a specific term encompassing all of the ideological ingredients of Nazi anti-imperialism. Furthermore, Nazi propaganda outside of Europe, which at its core presented the Reich as an anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist power, has long been understudied. Thus, in the final portion of this essay, the main topics and themes of Nazi foreign propaganda will be outlined, taking the massive propaganda effort aimed at the Middle East and North Africa as an example.

### Capitalist modernity

German colonialism falls into the period of high imperialism between 1880 and the First World War. That said, the entangled history of imperialism and colonialism makes it necessary to delineate these concepts first. Imperialism could be defined as the (direct or indirect) policy of (economic and/or military) force to externally safeguard a nation state’s interests, presupposing the modern nation state and the logic of capital accumulation, and incorporating, although not necessarily, colonialism. Reinhard (2008: 1) characterises colonialism as the territorial acquisition and domination of people based on the ‘economical, political and ideological exploitation of the developmental differential’ between two groups. Osterhammel (1997: 16–17) supplements this account by suggesting that colonialism is a system of domination resulting from the process of territorial acquisition and is a hegemonic ‘relationship between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders’. According to him, the ‘fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis [on “imperial infrastructure” see van Laak 2004]. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule’ (Osterhammel 1997: 16–17). Osterhammel refers to a pursuit of capitalist interests. The acquisition by force of luxury goods and raw materials for the developing industry and market expansion were cause and effect of unfolding capitalism. Bourgeois society and Enlightenment thought were

materially based on slave labour and colonial trade and commerce (Cheney 2010); it can be argued that ‘the economic practice of slavery – the systematic, highly sophisticated capitalist enslavement of non-Europeans as a labour force in the colonies – was increasing quantitatively and intensifying qualitatively to the point that by the mid-eighteenth century it came to underwrite the entire economic system of the West’ (Buck-Morss 2009: 31).

Through slave labour and the overhaul and restructuring of local economies towards metropolitan needs during early globalisation of markets and production, indigenous and transferred populations were integrated into the evolving system of a global division of labour, under conditions of coercion and violence (Braudel 1981–84; Wallerstein 1989; 2011). This is also emphasised in Sebald’s study on Togo under German rule: by preventing indigenous populations from accessing education, confining them to the lowest echelons of colonial administration, enforcing the cultivation of cotton for export, determining low purchase prices and employing forced or low-wage labour, the colonialists actually ‘broadened the socio-economic development differential between colony and metropole’ (Sebald 1988: xxi).

This process was paralleled by ideological knowledge production: the mapping, classification, and hierarchisation of a world that was penetrated by European traders, missionaries, soldiers, and scientists. The fundamental difference between those who possessed at least the abstract commodity of their own manpower and those whose body was somebody else’s property (and who were thus not producers of exchange value) was at the core of the modern racialisation of ‘blacks’ as opposed to ‘whites’ (Schmitt-Egner 1975). Racism was the ‘ideological justification for the enduring hierarchization of the workforce and its highly unequal distributions of reward’ (Wallerstein 1983, 78), as social inequality had to be reconciled with universalistic principles such as freedom and equality, even more so following abolition of slavery.

The central ideological process of modernity, it could be argued, can be identified as the colourisation, ethnicisation, or biologisation of the social. By the end of the 19th century, the discourse on the *Other* had become fully biologised, reinforced by scientific discourses and Darwinist notions of evolution and selection that were transferred to the

human sciences (Foucault 2003; Miles and Brown 2003). In the Indian or Arab colonies, the European colonists deemed the respective populations 'unfit' to rule due to the 'Orientals' lower level of development. The colonists not only artificially preserved 'traditional' structures and elements of society, but also overhauled local economic structures, thus preventing local accumulation and creating arbitrary boundaries between or through territories and ethnicised groups (Al-Khafaji 2004; Beinín 2001: 1–20; Gran 2009; Maddison 1971: 35–70). In Europe, processes of state building paralleled by the advent of nationalism led to the formation of 'imagined communities' whose members conceived of themselves as the same, and different from the Other, on the basis of an ethnicised national identity 'regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each' (Anderson 1991: 7; Hobsbawm 1991). Colonial projects or imperialist discourses stabilized and shaped these 'imagined communities' through the externalization of social tensions and nationalist homogenization (Wehler 1969). The idea of an ethnic nation (Volk in the German context) rooted in the soil gained ground, and nation and race became reality as 'discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid' (Foucault 1980/1977: 194). The Other outside (e.g. the indigenous colonial subject) was complemented by the Other within; modern anti-Semitism associated Jews, who had been 'imprisoned' in the Holy Roman Empire's sphere of economic circulation for hundreds of years, with the abstract, the incomprehensibility of modern capitalism and its circulation sphere (Adorno and Horkheimer 2002; Postone 1986). Inherent in this fatal association was the claim to explain 'a world which had rapidly become too complex and threatening for many people' (Postone 1986: 305). Modern and traditional, abstract and concrete, maritime and continental, 'a conspiracy bent on world domination on the one hand, and a principle of upright openness on the other' – in its various expressions this 'dichotomy's initial pole is one of the opaque forms of society's principles of exchange: Tauschen that Carl Schmitt linked, in an etymologically suggestive manner, with a principle of Täuschen – of deception' (Diner 2000: 34).

## German colonialism

In 1940 George Orwell wrote that Nazi Germany was turning 'the subject peoples into a reserve of slave labour. It is quite practicable, so long as the myth of "inferior races" is believed in. [...] Hitler is only the ghost of our own past rising against us. He stands for the extension and perpetuation of our own methods' (Orwell 2001: 170). At the same time, Orwell criticised pacifists and others who opposed the war, stating that he 'would sooner side with the older imperialisms – decadent, as Hitler quite rightly calls them – than with the new ones which are completely sure of themselves and therefore completely merciless' (172). So what is imperialist and what is German in German imperialism?

As Conrad sums up in his concise colonial history:

German colonialism was [...] linked to global economic competition and the hunt for raw materials and new markets for the industrializing countries, to global political conflicts between the European powers, and to the ideologies of evolutionism and Social Darwinism, which were increasingly linked to discourses of racial differences. (2012: 17)

The colonial project was preceded by discursive as well as political shifts in the wake of the founders' crash and crisis that led to more interventionist and protectionist policies of the Bismarckian state; for example, the 1879 introduction of protective tariffs. Moreover, colonialism was promoted by the trade and industrial associations, with their growing concentration of economic power and their protective and expansionist aims. In this shift, liberal economics were abandoned in favour of a straightforward nationalist perspective in discourses of *Weltpolitik* (world politics) and *Lebensraum* (living space) (Smith 1986: 52–111). While *Weltpolitik* focused on overseas colonies and maritime armament against the background of the competition between global powers, the theoreticians of *Lebensraum* focused on 'traditional' agriculture and, geographically, on Central and Eastern Europe. The latter's romantic and anti-modern discourse at times clashed, at times merged, with *Weltpolitik*. The Reich was seen as strong enough to steer the economy towards expansion and as entitled to do so

(Schinzinger 1984: 163). Colonial fantasies were fuelled by:

liberal models of a benign, protective father state that would naturally release its children from tutelage once they had grown up; by growing nationalist resistance against French military and cultural imperialism, accompanied by a drive for national unification; and, eventually, by the militantly competitive assertion of difference and strength vis-à-vis all of Germany's European neighbors. (Zantop 1997: 202)

German colonialism was started by private enterprises, as Bismarck focused on Europe and relations with Britain. Merchants bought land in what later became German South-West and East Africa. Later, Togoland was claimed by an 'Imperial Commissioner' to secure areas of interest for German trade companies and missionaries. All of the colonies were then enforced by the German military (i.e. the Navy), which established its own colony in Kiautschou, vis-à-vis local and European powers. The latter colony is also symbolic of the great powers' 'informal imperialism' in China, which at times relied upon brute force (Kuß and Martin 2002; Leutner and Mühlhahn 2007). Trade in and administration of these 'protected areas', or *Schutzgebiete*, was to be organised by private actors to reduce the Reich's burden, yet after a few years all colonies were placed under direct imperial administration. The history of German colonialism has been researched more thoroughly in recent years, whether concerning German South-West Africa (Kaulich 2003; Zimmerer 2001; 2003), German East Africa (Baer and Schröter 2001; Becker and Beez 2005), Togo (Knoll 1978; Sebald 1988; 2013) or Cameroon (Schaper 2012; Schulte-Varendorff 2011), to name the best-known examples. The German colonial enterprise had direct and indirect economic and fiscal effects (Schinzinger 1984). While the share of colonial goods in German trade was marginal, the construction of railways reduced the costs of the transport of raw materials and goods and led to an increase in stock turnover in German colonial ports, to the benefit of shipping and trading companies. Moreover, railway projects and the massive expansion of the fleet as the main guarantor of the colonial enterprise brought

an economic upswing for German industry, especially the iron, steel and mechanical engineering industries and shipyards. However, state expenditures significantly exceeded the revenues (Schinzinger 1984: 156, 160).

That said, it is not the economic history, but rather the history of colonial ideas and of colonial genocide that remains the focus of researchers. The German extermination campaign in South-West Africa killed at least 70,000 people and is generally seen as the first genocide of the 20th century and the first German genocide (Schaller 2011; Zimmerer 2001; 2003; 2011). With a focus on 'law and administration of the racial state' and 'unfree labour, expulsion, and genocide as elements of population economics' (Zimmerer 2011: 40–138), the controversial question of the connection between the philosophies of colonial rule and administration on one hand and the Nazis' later genocidal quest for *Lebensraum* in Eastern Europe on the other is raised (Baranowski 2010). Some scholars underline 'the decidedly colonial nature of the Nazi geopolitical project and the largely colonial dimensions of Nazi genocide' (Kakel 2013: 3), and explain 'the Nazi Holocaust as part of the emerging global histories of imperialism, colonialism and genocide (rather than a "unique" historical event)'. In this narrative, Auschwitz is described as 'colonial genocide' or 'exterminatory colonialism' (Kakel 2013: 4). This question of continuities or causalities is not new, as Orwell, cited above, was only one of the first to discuss it. Later, Hannah Arendt argued that the period of German imperialism was a 'preparatory stage for coming catastrophe', setting the stage 'for all possible horrors' (Arendt 1958: 123, 221). Arendt stressed the destructive and self-radicalising principles of expansion as 'a permanent and supreme aim of politics' and of power as an end in itself, hinting on parallels in the economic sphere. In so doing, she was building on Luxemburg's argument for a fundamental conflict between production capabilities, and consumption driving capital to market expansion. Capitalism is understood here as a mode of economy 'which tends to engulf the entire globe and to stamp out all other economies, tolerating no rival at its side', at the same time being in need of 'other economic systems as a medium and soil' (Luxemburg 1951: 467). Arendt pointed to the connection between exploitation and racism, as well as the 'totalitarian' consequences of the idea of

'natural laws' and man as the incarnation of the forces of history, not acting as an individual or on behalf of a group of individuals, but as the agent of a collective greater than the sum of its parts or of its will. This calls to mind Elie Kedourie's critical history of nationalism and the ideas of sovereignty and general will since the French Revolution: 'Consciousness of right bred a righteousness which excesses could never destroy, but only confirm' (Kedourie 1961: 18).

There is no question that there are many important connections between German colonialism and Nazi imperialism. The colonial project was driven by and reinforced scientific and popular discourse about the Other (Grosse 2000). Bolstered by Darwinist and other scientific theories in the second half of the 19th century, modern ethnologists and anthropologists were important actors in racist knowledge production. Laboratories, as well as the popular *Völkerschauen* ('human zoos'), were supplied with material appropriated by a host of German actors in the colonies (Baer and Schröter 2001). *Völkerkunde*, anthropology, eugenics, and connected scientific discourses influenced modern science and (bio-)politics in Europe and North America at least until 1945, delegitimised only by the sheer atrociousness of the German 'racial war'. The basic 'truth' shared by most scientists, journalists, and politicians of the time was that of a world divided into races, each race having biological features that determined its intellect and behaviour as different from others. Society was understood and described in biological terms. Ethnic nations (*Völker*) were engaged in a 'fight for survival', a 'natural struggle for existence', necessarily expanding as a 'healthy' nation or declining to be exterminated (Schmitt-Egner 1975: 82).

In the colonies, natural or primitive peoples (*Naturvolk*) were differentiated from cultural nations (*Kulturvolk*), unproductive from productive labour. The indigenous populations were forced into wage labour; resistance was interpreted as stubbornness and laziness (Schmitt-Egner 1975: 96–97). In concepts of the 'education of the negro', superior or differentialist racism and Christian missionary universalism at times formed forceful symbioses (for the German context, see Bade 1982). Legislation constructed and enforced colourised (i.e. 'visible') borders between self and Other, especially in the matter of mixed

marriages, or *Mischehen*. Debates on public health and morals attacked the mixing of races as a threat to Volk and nation.

Finally, the colonial wars, especially the 1904–07 war against Herero and Nama, constituted a turning point regarding the administrative organisation and bureaucratisation of genocide. In a centrally planned and controlled 'war of pacification', physical extermination:

was no unintended by-product of brutal warfare [...] but the aim almost from the beginning. Moreover, the war combined the genocidal massacre with ethnic cleansing and extermination through neglect in internment camps. This also reveals the extent of ideological firmness and political centralization that seems to be absent in other colonial contexts. (Zimmerer 2011: 22)

### Colonialism without colonies

In the words of Enzo Traverso:

the guillotine, the abattoir, the Fordist factory, and rational administration, along with racism, eugenics, the massacres of the colonial wars and those of World War I had already fashioned the social universe and the mental landscape in which the Final Solution would be conceived and set in motion. All those elements combined to create the technological, ideological, and cultural premises for that Final Solution, by constructing an anthropological context in which Auschwitz became a possibility. (2003: 151)

It is obvious that there is a 'road from Windhuk to Auschwitz' (Zimmerer 2011), but only in the sense of *necessary conditions*. While Nazi policies imply racial discourse, colonial (even genocidal) practice and experience (collectively 'remembered' and institutionally retained), scientific and popular knowledge of the Other, and a modern bureaucratic state, they are not an inevitable result of the latter (see Traverso 2003: 152). In the words of Arendt, the latter are the *origins*, not the *causes* of the former (for the ongoing debate on the origins and causes of the Shoah, see Bauer 2001: 1–118).

Moreover, for Nazi radicalisation and extermination policies to become reality, these origins had to coincide with modern



anti-Semitism and a specific anti-imperialist self-perception and worldview under specific social and political conditions. The early enthusiasm for and subsequent brutality of the First World War remained a formative element for generations. At the same time, the deep penetration of enemy lands in the early days of the war had aroused colonial desires at unprecedented levels. Between 1914 and 1939, after the Great War had forced the end of the German colonial project, dozens of popular and research works on colonialism, different colonies, missionary enterprises, and the 'colonial question' in general were published. Against the backdrop of this 'colonialism without colonies' a German history of colonisation and conquest since the Early Middle Ages was imagined and constructed. It was based on an extensive corpus of colonial 'fantasies' that had accompanied and supported German colonial policies since the very beginning and were associated with 'positive identificatory figures such as Columbus, Humboldt, and "German" conquistadors' of the past (Zantop 1997: 202). It was stated that:

We Germans are the best colonizers, but not the best colonial politicians. The former is based on the strength and talent of our nation [Volk], the latter has its basis in the age-long fragmentation of the state and powerlessness [Ohnmacht] of the German nation. However, the latter is a result of the former, and thereupon our right to colonial possessions is based. It is impossible to exclude the best nation of colonizers from colonial policy forever after it is finally molded into a cohesive state unit. (Jacob 1939: 8–9)

At the centre of the post-1918 discourses on *Weltpolitik* and *Lebensraum* stood the 'colonial guilt' of Germany's enemies, who had 'brought war to Africa', 'robbed the German colonies' and 'tarnished the reputation of the white race' (13). While attacking the 'lie of German colonial guilt' (e.g. allegations of bad treatment of the indigenous populations) in books, magazines, and *Völkerschauen*, Germans indulged in memories of a glorious colonial past, complaining about injustice and foreign arbitrariness. The loss of the colonies was integrated into the greater revisionist discourse on the Treaty of Versailles, which, according to the Social-Democrat Scheidemann, was intended 'to extort the

declaration of its own unworthiness' and the 'consent to merciless fragmentation' from 'a great nation' and could be summarised with the words: 'Germany waives, waives, waives!' (Philipp Scheidemann's speech of 12 May 1919 to the National Assembly, cited in Heidegger 1956: 334; on German social democracy and colonialism, see 175–83) A German colonial project beyond the equator was on the German and especially the Nazi schedule at least until 1941 (Linne 2008; Ustorf 1995). While *Lebensraum* in the eastern provinces had already been a relevant topic for discussion and state policy since the 19th century, it became the focus of public attention with the formation of a Polish state and the loss of those provinces, which, in the words of the first foreign minister of the Weimar Republic, were the cause of 'severe damage' for 'the nutrition of our nation [Volksernährung]'. Internally, the government discussed Versailles, the 'diktat of shame', and its results for the 'German East', referring to the ethnic or racial composition of the provinces and the *völkisch* will of its population (e.g. Reichsminister 1919). At the time, the differentiation between ethnic nationalities (*völkische* or *Volksgruppen*), associated with the right of nations to self-determination in the ambivalent tradition of the French Revolution, was common among all members of the League of Nations. Prior to the First World War, as nationalist discourse took up Darwinist and biologised concepts of nation and state, many had already been looking to ('dreamland') East or South-Eastern Europe for 'space' to be settled and 'cultivated' (Jureit 2012; Thum 2006). Romantic criticism of modernity propagated agriculture and the need for 'living space', associating modernity with the overwhelming process of industrialisation, with unemployment, rural exodus, and urbanisation, with isolation and alienation. Simultaneously, the modern nationalist conception of the natural and necessary identity of state, nation, and *Volk* made the question of national or *völkisch* space and its borders an urgent matter. In the 19th century, Friedrich Ratzel had already presented a theory of ethno-spatial evolution in which he described spatial expansion as the final stage of a *Volk's* process of taking root in the soil. It was in this tradition that geographers would state in the 1920s that 'German national soil' (*Volksboden*) is where the German nation settles (Jureit 2012: 241–244). This sounds

similar to what Hitler wrote in the same year: land and soil exist 'for the Volk that has the strength to take it and the diligence to cultivate it' (Hitler 1943: 147). The ideological processing of a claustrophobic panic prompted by perceived existential loss of space after Versailles (Jureit 2012: 219–220; Smith 1986: 196–230) is notably captured in Hans Grimm's successful and influential 1926 novel *Volk ohne Raum* (Nation without Space). The story of a farmer's son confronted with 'crowdedness' and 'density', coupled with the alienation of industrialisation and urbanisation that threaten his natural sphere of life, struck a chord with feelings of constriction and impotence experienced by a major section of German society in the Weimar years; a society in permanent crisis and contingency in the social, political, or familial spheres in times of general insecurity (Jureit 2012: 266; Peukert 1987). Grimm's 'nation without space' is situated in the area of tension between the German colonial project in Africa, the post-1919 colonialism without colonies which laments the victors' 'robbery of German lands' in Africa and 'Germany proper', and the discourse on 'living space' and the 'German East'. The novel connects with the nationalist, Darwinist, and anti-Semitic interpretive paradigms and thought patterns of the time and builds upon the dominant understanding of Versailles as a violation of the German nation and its natural rights: 'We demand the justice of space for all nations according to number and performance [Leistung]' (Grimm 1926: 1243). As a result of the distorted perception of the reparation regime after Versailles, nationalist and racist chauvinism fused with self-perception as the victim of aggression, colonisation and foreign domination; merging the struggle against Napoleon during the constitutive phase of German nationalism with the political critique of England and France in Versailles and the anti-Semitic conception of Jewish domination of the nation, foreign and domestic at the same time (Koller 2005).

Corresponding but not identical with *völkisch* nationalism was the 'conservatist' current ('Konservative Revolution') around Oswald Spengler, Carl Schmitt, Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, and others (see Weiß 2012); to take a comparative look at other European countries might be especially worthwhile in this context. In Italy, to give just one example, concurring proto-fascist

and fascist intellectual currents like Enrico Corradini's nationalism and Paolo Orano's or Robert Michels's 'revolutionary syndicalism' theorised the 'proletarian nature' of the 'corporate' Italian nation since the beginning of the 20th century, defending colonialism and war as preconditions for national redemption (Sternhell et al. 1994). As 'socialism empowered workers against the bourgeoisie', it was argued, nationalism or a 'national socialism' would 'empower Italians to transcend their decadent state and revive the nation, both morally and materially' (Marsella 2004: 208).

### Nazi anti-imperialism

Nazi anti-imperialism is not the analysis and critique of imperialism as defined above. An ideological form of thought, it purports to explain complex economical and political conditions and relations through personalisation. It merges anti-Semitism and reactionary chauvinism with ethno-nationalist or *völkisch* geopolitics, political geography, and law. Taking up the formula of 'nation without space', its theoreticians wanted geopolitics to 'expand and recover' the 'constricted and mutilated Middle European living space' to solve the question of 'overpopulation' (Haushofer 1928: 49). Coining terms like *Volksdruck* (population pressure) and *Raumkörper* (space body), one of these theoreticians defined Germany as a major nation [*Großvolk*], the only one of seven 'world powers' that is 'oppressed, enchained and not free to arm and defend itself [*wehrfrei*]'. Apart from the assumption that one-third of its 'national comrades' or *Volksgenossen* were separated from its *Raumkörper*, 'the distress caused by a density that is the result of an unbearable overpopulation of living space' was perceived as forcing the state to push the frontier of this very *Raumkörper* (Haushofer 1934: 84). Resulting from this density and pressure, the natural right to expand arises for nations like Germany, Italy and Japan, 'an enormous ethical difference' in contrast to the plain material motivation or attraction to power behind the French and British colonial projects according to Haushofer (*ibid.*). Thus, Haushofer sets the just, natural, and defensive expansion of a *Volk* against an unjust, unnatural, and aggressive expansion, associated with imperialism, capitalism, and Britain, the 'nation of merchants'. German geopolitics could therefore be defined as 'an ideology legitimising international domination

through putatively natural, hence timeless or unchanging principles' (Diner 2000: 27). While industrialisation, mechanisation and urbanisation are associated with 'the Jewish', the category of *Raum* (space) signifies 'a positive existential form that, while connected to reigning circumstances, stands opposed to them'. As anti-Semitism thus is the internal or domestic manifestation of 'Haushofer's simultaneously rationalized and mystagogic rejection of and struggle against abstraction, seen as the product of Western capitalist social formation [...] Haushofer's anti-British stance, apparent in his attack on the "plutocrats", represents its external dimension' (Diner 2000: 31). The same applies for Carl Schmitt, whose theory of a new ethno-national or *völkisch* 'order of greater spaces' in International Law – introduced shortly after the German occupation of Czechoslovakia – relates to Haushofer's works. Schmitt picks up the core principles of the US Monroe Doctrine, applying it to the European or 'Greater German' context, emphasising the 'prohibition on intervention by external powers', or rather powers 'alien to the space [*raumfremd*]'. Based on the idea of *völkisch* racial substance or belonging as the prior, natural category of order, Schmitt devises an 'order of greater spaces' that revolves around the principle of 'protection of the ethno-national character of every ethno-national group [*Volksgruppe*]' and the idea of dominant 'greater powers' to forcefully organise and structure the greater space following this criterion. According to Schmitt, who takes up earlier concepts of *Lebensraum*, 'greater' encompasses not only the merely quantitative, but also the qualitative meaning, implying a completely new conception of space (Schmitt 1941: 75–76). The Reich, a 'concrete order', should replace the abstract state, led by the dominant Volk carrying the political idea of this new order. Thus, German hegemony would be natural and just – as opposed to the arbitrary and 'only political' concept of the US doctrine. Already, in 1932, Schmitt had criticised US 'economic imperialism' and the Monroe Doctrine, questioning its theoretical legal basis and its practical arbitrariness, but ignoring the economic context of European imperialism (Schmitt 1940a/1932). In this way, he wanted to highlight the dangers of imperialism 'for a nation on the defensive'. According to him, the Allies were still waging war against Germany –

after Versailles by other, 'legal' means (Schmitt 1940b/1938: 247). Final defeat would only follow the acceptance of the alien vocabulary and concept of law, chiefly international law (Schmitt 1940a/1932). It is on the basis of this understanding that Schmitt elaborates his concept of an ethnopolitical new order of greater spaces, paying heed to the assessment that imperialist hegemony is founded in international acceptance and thus legalisation of a major power's exclusive right to define, interpret, and apply a doctrine regarding its foreign affairs.

Moreover, Schmitt theorises the National Socialist attack on equality (*Gleichheit*) as abstract and artificial sameness opposed to racial homogeneity (*Gleichartigkeit*), associating the radical universalistic idea of equality with imperialist aggression against the concrete particular, and the universalistic world principle of the abstract state with the violation of concrete territory as a *völkisch* space (Diner 2000: 60–63). With a complex ethnic mosaic in the East and South-East, where ethno-national or linguistic demarcations were impossible, the German Reich was the only entity capable of taking the lead. Schmitt thus legitimises German imperialist expansion based on and propagating an anti-imperialist anti-universalism or particularism implying hierarchisation. From this point of view it is exactly the radical racism of National Socialist law that renders it 'non-imperialistic and non-aggressive'; to protect blood as the 'fact' that organises mankind is totally defensive. The universalistic totality of states as tools of an indirect power or an 'international class' – associated in Nazi thought with 'plutocrats', 'democrats', 'capitalists', 'freemasons' or 'Jews' – would yield an 'international civil war'; only the idea of 'völkisch totality' or the primacy of the Volk in the state would enable a stable international order (Schmitt 1940c/1938: 256; 1940d/1939: 286).

Goebbels and the Nazi propagandists used the term 'plutocracy', rule of the rich, to defame Great Britain and later also the US as aggressively capitalist states steered by rich and powerful elites, Jews, and freemasons (Goebbels 1997–2006). Through a homogenised concept of *Volksgemeinschaft* and the dichotomous distinction between 'creating' and 'money-grabbing' capital, the contradictions of modern capitalist conditions were projected outside (Britain and the US) and onto the Other. German industry

was considered productive as opposed to the unproductive sphere of circulation that was associated with the Jews and ‘plutocrats’, whose aim was understood to be the colonisation and exploitation of Europe by any means. In this view, the First World War and Versailles represented two sides of the same coin.

### **Nazi anti-imperialism abroad – the case of the Middle East**

Nazi propagandists went to great lengths to fight international ‘plutocracy’, even using a host of underground radio stations appealing to English workers and pacifists. Moreover, a massive propaganda effort focused on Middle Eastern and North African countries that had been a target for German economic penetration since the end of the 19th century and for military and propaganda activities during the German comradeship-in-arms with the Ottoman Empire in the First World War (Lüdke 2005; Schwanitz 2004).

Propaganda leaflets and broadcasts easily blended the Nazi’s *völkisch* and anti-Semitic anti-imperialism with anti-colonialist attacks on the British (and French to a certain extent) and the Zionist project in Mandatory Palestine (Goldenbaum 2014; Herf 2009), reaching out to or communicating with the political public spheres of local elites and urban *effendiyya* who were struggling for their share in state power under secular or Islamised discourses on national sovereignty (Schulze 2002). The single most important vehicle for German foreign propaganda was short-wave radio, which was broadcast across Middle East and North Africa in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. The broadcasts had been established to ‘spread out the Empire’s embarrassing issues’ after the BBC had started German-language broadcasts in the wake of the occupation of Czechoslovakia. Recent research has found that the programmes consisted mainly of international and local news combined with daily political and weekly religious talks (Goldenbaum 2014). From the outset, the chief idea was to counter any critique of German imperialist aggression by attacking British imperialism and policies in the colonies, especially in Mandatory Palestine. In line with the Schmittian differentiation between German defensive *Raumpolitik* and English colonial despotism, the broadcasts presented world affairs as an historical

struggle between ‘young nations’ longing for sovereignty and independence from the British, French, and later also US yoke on one side, and their democratic (meaning plutocratic) oppressors fighting to preserve foreign domination on the other. In Germany, and since 1941 at the latest also in the foreign-language broadcasts, Russian ‘Bolshevism’ threatening Europe and the rest of the world joined the ‘plutocrats’ as an eternal enemy. As the latter were associated with an aggressive universalism of democracy, so the Soviet Union was associated with an aggressive universalism of communism, both being connected through the alleged Jewish conspiracy targeting nations and cultures. News on the nationalisation of Romanian oil companies hinted at foreigners and ‘rich Jews’ being forced out of the country, while news on the collapse of the French front contained reports of Jews fleeing the country carrying gold bars (*ibid.*).

The message was clear: in Europe and the region, the nations were engaged in a three-fold struggle against colonisation; the direct colonisation of their countries by the imperialist democracies and the indirect economic colonisation of their countries by the Jewish plutocrats as well as the Zionist colonisation in Mandatory Palestine aiming ‘to deport the Arabs from Palestine, Syria and Transjordan’. The radically anti-Semitic appeal – including the one to Islam and tradition – is to be situated between the diverse regional and trans-regional discourses of nationalism and self-determination on the receivers’ side. The local conflict in Palestine that was taken up by nationalist elites in the region as a central rallying point, playing an important part in secular and Islamised debates in the Arab political public sphere, was skilfully associated in the German broadcasts with the anti-Semitic themes and imagery used to legitimise and describe racist and anti-Semitic aggression in the European theatre (*ibid.*).

It was stressed again and again that Germany as a young sovereign nation, led by its *Führer*, having just emerged from the Versailles yoke of foreign domination, was attempting to establish a ‘new order’. An emphasis on German military might and the homogeneity of the nation appealed to powerless nationalist activists. Local social and political conflicts in the colonies were used to defame the colonialists’ malicious chauvinism and the dysfunction of democracy. Nationalist collaborators

would appear in the broadcasts to declare that 'the English turned out to be the bitterest enemies and the cruellest oppressors of the Arab countries'. They complained that Britain had 'sacrificed the blood of foreign nations and fobbed them off with phrases instead of truly granting them freedom, justice and sovereignty' (Das Archiv 1942: 102). While the German propaganda effort could build on the fact that the colonial situation and thus the 'economical, political and ideological exploitation of the developmental differential' (Reinhard 2008: 1) was a reality, and German radio was widely listened to, it is wrong to assume that the audiences in the region would automatically have adopted the contents of the propaganda or generally identified with National Socialist Germany. Speculations along these lines have been criticised with good reason in recent publications (see Nicosia 2015: 1–17). Listeners followed different and competing broadcasts. A pro-German or pro-Allied stance during the Second World War cannot necessarily be derived from positive or negative attitudes towards the colonial powers or towards the political situation in general (see Gershoni 2014).

Starting from this observation, and regarding assumptions of 'ideology transfer' as too simplistic, a shift of focus might prove insightful: in comparing the historical context of modern anti-Semitism's genesis in Europe with the context of its reception as Nazi anti-imperialism in the Middle East during the 1930s and 1940s, the connection between the two becomes obvious. During the 'crisis of classical modernity' (Peukert), a form of thought gained ground:

in which the rapid development of industrial capitalism with all of its social ramifications is personified and identified as the Jew. It is not that the Jews merely were considered to be the owners of money [...], but that they were held responsible for economic crises and identified with the range of social restructuring and dislocation [...]: explosive urbanization, the decline of traditional social classes and strata [...] etc. In other words, the abstract domination of capital, which [...] caught people up in a web of dynamic forces they could not understand, became perceived as the domination of International Jewry.

(Postone 1986: 306; cf. Claussen 2005: 29–36)

The urban spaces in the Middle East and North Africa targeted by German propaganda were at the time in a similar situation of societal transformation. The main recipients of the broadcasts were urbanised elites and the precarious *effendiyya*, disconnected from their traditional and the urban colonialised context at the same time. Secular and Islamist groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, which at the time corresponded with and was the focus of German propaganda, participated in the secular nationalist discourse and struggle even though the form of the Islamist discourse was Islamic (Schulze 2002: 9–11, 73). If Nazi anti-imperialism had a lasting impact on the region or rather on actual processes of the formation of ideologies, it was through the provision of anti-Semitic semantics to explain the dynamic forces that people could not understand; not just the economic forces in the process of integrating the region as a periphery into the evolving system of a global division of labour, but also the world historical and political forces that led to the creation of Israel and the 'Palestinian *nakba*'. It is anti-Zionism, often anti-Semitic, that at times was, and is, used by post-colonial regimes to mobilise and distract their populations. It is anti-Semitism that became one of the most influential forms of thought in the region in the second half of the 20th century.

Nazi anti-Semitic anti-imperialism – as well as racial discourse and colonial (genocidal) practice and experience – was not only a necessary condition for the radicalisation of German policies in Eastern Europe that culminated in the war of extermination and the death camps, it also globalised its own anti-Semitic semantics that pretended to explain the upheavals of modernity. Furthermore, German propaganda played a role in the internationalisation and politicisation of the 'Israeli-Palestinian conflict' at a time when Jews were fleeing the Reich or were being exterminated in the East, and before Israel was even founded in the shadow of this 'caesura in civilization', Auschwitz.

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## German Imperialism and Social Imperialism, 1871–1933

This essay provides an overview of the development of the German working class in relation to the imperialist character of the German state and society. It focuses on the political aspect of *embourgeoisement* as entailing working-class incorporation within a state based on policies of conquest, plunder, and super-exploitation. The essay relates the economic and political development of the German working class between the founding of the German Reich in 1871 and the voting into power of fascism in 1933 to the phenomenon of social imperialism (*Sozialimperialismus*). It argues that between 1871 and 1933, the better-off German workers, as represented politically by the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) and organised within the the SPD-affiliated Free Trade Unions of Germany (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*, ADGB), were prepared to compromise with imperialism insofar as it secured for them a rising standard of living and enhanced political representation.

Before proceeding, it is useful to clarify the terms ‘imperialism’ and ‘social imperialism’. Imperialism is the product of the concentration and centralisation of capital on a world scale. The tendency to monopoly at home compels rival national capitals to acquire larger markets, secure control of key raw materials, and expand production so as to super-exploit relatively cheap foreign labour. In so doing, an increasing part of the imperialist country’s wealth is created abroad and transferred home by a variety of means,

including through taxation, debt servicing, profit repatriation, and unequal exchange. Modern imperialism is thus the military and political effort on the part of advanced capitalist countries to siphon and extort surplus (value) from other, typically underdeveloped, countries.

Social imperialism is the attempt by the imperialist bourgeoisie to assimilate the core-nation working class into the capitalist polity by means of granting (sections of) it political, cultural, and material gains (Neumann, 1943: 153–155). The benefits afforded this ‘labour aristocracy’ can take the form of extensive enfranchisement, increased leisure time, higher wages, legal pay arbitration, the right to organise, public welfare services, higher education and relative cultural esteem. Within an imperialist country, there is a strong tendency for an inter-class national alliance to be formed, ideologically expressed through what Lenin called ‘social chauvinism’; that is, support for the retention and/or extension of said benefits on the basis of the status quo ante.

### Social imperialism and the German working class (1871–1914)

As an area geographically marginal to the conquest of the New World and the subsequent slave trade, the bases upon which ‘primitive’ capital accumulation was accomplished, by the mid-19th century Germany was in European terms a comparatively backward feudal economy. Rubinson (1978) describes how Germany moved from this semi-peripheral position to becoming a core country in the capitalist world system. For Rubinson (43), Germany could move toward core-nation status only because the geographic expansion of capitalism that had taken place between 1800 and 1870 opened up enormous opportunities, within the British Empire especially, for investments in the construction of the world’s railways and in cash-crop agriculture. The ascent of Germany to the semi-peripheral *core* of the world economy in the course of the 19th century thus related directly to the growth of capitalism in its colonialist and empire-building phase; that is, to the enlargement of the peripheral and exploited Third World. As Rubinson notes:

The expansion of the size of the peripheral areas of the system allows for the

expansion of the size of core areas for two basic reasons. First, increased peripheralization means an increase in the amount of labour in the system, and this increase allows more areas to capture a larger share of the value produced by this increase of labour. Second, with such an increase, more areas can shift their position in the division of labour to specialise in core activities and benefit from the structure of unequal exchange between core and periphery. (44–5)

Germany's industrial revolution occurred between 1850 and 1873 (Wehler 1970). From 1862, under Prime Minister, later Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, capitalist industry began to consolidate its institutional power within the state, having become allied to big agrarian interests (partly as a political move to halt the liberal-democratic tide). German capitalism had matured within the national market created by the customs union, or *Zollverein*, including all of the component states of Germany, established in 1818 and the subsequent unification of the country between 1862 and 1867. The German Empire (*Kaiserreich*) was founded in 1871 on the basis of Prussian dominance in the new military-state and the traditional 'alliance of steel and rye' between landlords and industrialists. This alliance had first been established in the aftermath of the abortive 1848 revolution (the last gasp of German liberal democracy before 1919) and was later renewed in Prussia's National Liberal Party finance minister Johann von Miquel's consensus policy (*Sammlungspolitik*) of 1897–98. *Sammlungspolitik* was subsequently cemented through the 1902 *Bülow tariff*, and consolidated in 1913 through the support of petty-bourgeois groups from the 'old *Mittelstand*' (middle-class). As Fischer (1991: 40) notes, persisting as the hard-core of reaction within German society, these groups played a decisive role in the rise to power of Nazism in 1933.

### Monopoly capitalism and the origins of social imperialism in Germany

Imperialism and social imperialism were born of the Depression. The world economic crisis of 1873 was caused by overproduction precipitated by the increasing mechanisation

of industry and improved transportation networks. France and Germany especially saw demand for their agricultural output slump insofar as grain could be purchased and imported more cheaply from North America, Argentina, and the Ukraine (Hamili 2009). The ensuing period of depression up to 1896 in Germany saw the rapid growth of monopoly capitalism (Lenin 1970/1916). Syndicates and cartels were formed to limit production, divide territorial markets, and set prices, whilst the need to expand production demanded credit which only powerful banks could provide (*ibid.*).

In response to German industrialisation, British capitalism was compelled to expand its colonial empire (the foundation of its supposed 'laissez-faire' economy) (Patnaik 2006) and introduce preferential tariffs (Krooth 1980: 19). The landed Junker aristocracy (Germany's former absolute rulers) shifted from a position of dependence upon free trade with Britain to demanding protection from foreign competition. At the same time, Germany's hitherto free-trading commercial bourgeoisie sought guaranteed foreign markets to absorb the enhanced productive capacity of industry. Both of these fractions of capital came to advocate naval armament and a militaristic colonial foreign policy. The Navy League (*Flottenverein*), formed in 1898 to garner mass support for Germany's naval programme, was the largest and most successful interest group in Imperial Germany, larger in terms of membership than even the SPD. Whilst some socialists opposed the subsidisation of shipping lanes to the Far East and Australia as an 'imperialist levy', a majority of the SPD supported it, arguing that it would help the working class by encouraging employment (Kitchen 1978: 183). Whereas, previously, German capitalism could afford to conduct its business outside of the state's direct intervention, after 1870 sections of German capital actively sought the help of the state to secure and protect colonial territories wherein they would enjoy supreme economic privilege (Geiss 1976: 46). East German scholars have explained the relative failure of German colonial ventures in the Bismarck era by emphasising the unwillingness of bankers and industrialists, as opposed to shipping and trading concerns, to engage in colonialist activities. Germany's colonialism was launched before the nation had reached the stage of mature monopoly capitalism.

Banking and industrial interests had at that time no urgent need for colonial supplies or investments (Dorpalen 1985: 255), though, as Dorpalen argues, the few profitable opportunities in the specific territories acquired by the Reich would certainly have discouraged any potential investors. Studies have borne out Lenin's thesis on the intimate connection between imperialism and capital exports in the German case:

[It] was the abundance of British and French foreign investments and the lack of sufficient exportable capital on Germany's part that so greatly concerned German political and financial circles during the pre-1914 period and that played into the hands of the warmongering forces. (276)

Ardent colonialists established a number of interest groups that were to have a considerable impact, amongst which the German Colonial Association (*Deutsche Kolonialverein*) and the Society for German Colonisation (*Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kolonisation*) were the most important. The former was established in 1882 on the initiative of *Freiherr von Moltke*, and its members included not only middle-sized businessmen, professionals, and merchants, but also leading bankers, industrialists, aristocrats, and Reichstag members. These groups were to persuade the Bismarckian state, and its successor from 1890 under Kaiser Wilhelm II, that colonialism was an essential part of a wider anti-cyclical strategy to achieve economic stabilisation. Moreover, men such as landowner and colonial propagandist *Ernst von Weber* argued that Empire alone would be able to overcome Germany's chronic crises of overproduction and overpopulation. Its absence, he averred, must ensure that the country would be faced with a bloody social revolution (*Kitchen* 1978: 180).

### German colonialism and imperialism

By 1906, Germany had built up a colonial system consisting of bases, duly settled by its 'white' citizens, in East Africa, South-West Africa, Cameroon, New Guinea, Togo, the Caroline, Pelua and Marianne Islands, the Marshall Islands, Samoa and Kiauchau. On the eve of the First World War, the German

Colonial Empire had a landmass of 1,140,200 square miles, an area roughly the size of India (the world's seventh largest country at 1,147,949 square miles) today (*Henderson* 1962: 131). Germany took a predominating influence over national economy in Italy, Russia, Switzerland, Belgium, Bulgaria, Romania, and, above all, Turkey (*Krooth* 1980: 35–36). Its hegemonic ambitions in Europe, however, were restricted by the intransigence of the ruling Osmanlis, Bulgars, Magyars, Poles, and Austrians. Moreover, even with an economic union of the four Central Powers (Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Turkey), it would be a long time before the Bulgarian and Turkish peasants could apply the intensive land cultivation needed to feed Germany's growing working class population. Moreover, Asia Minor could not furnish the copper, copra, India rubber, or palm oil required by German industry. Germany feared the Entente, and feared above all that Britain would monopolise such tropical products from the colonies, products that Germany could not herself produce (38).

It was therefore imperative that German monopolies control sources of raw materials. On a world scale, the Caribbean, South America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania provided all rubber, about 73 per cent of all colonial produce, some 54–60 per cent of all oilseeds, almost 50 per cent of all textiles, about 34–35 per cent of all cereals and other foodstuffs, 24–28 per cent of all fertilisers and chemicals, and 17 per cent of all cereals alone. Indeed, only in fuels and wood pulp did the imperial nations produce more than half of the world's production of raw materials (*Krooth* 1980: 84, citing data from League of Nations 1926: 9–20). German imperialists foresaw that colonial raw material production could be increased over the longer term, and German industrial dependence on foreign competitors thereby reduced in key fields.

Moreover, German banks contemplated the profits to be made from railway building and economic development. Indeed, profit rates were high in the colonies:

The German East Africa company (*[Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft]* DOAG), which had a monopoly in the colony – it controlled the biggest trading network, the only land concessions, the big plantations and the two banks – paid a 5% dividend between 1906 and 1908, 6% in

1909, 8% in 1910 and 1911, and 9% in 1912. The South Cameroon Company also prospered after adapting to the [anti-settler] changes in colonial policy: it paid 8% in 1910 and 1911, and 5% in 1912. The biggest plantation in the German colonies, the West African Victoria Company, paid 15% in 1910 and 1911, 18% in 1912 and 20% in 1913, and its shares rose from 75% in 1907 to 450% in 1914. [Stoecker 1977: 202]

Yet such investments were a small fraction of total foreign investments, with only 2 per cent of German foreign investments going to the colonies in 1905 (Kitchen 1978: 198). As such, whilst individual companies made handsome profits from the colonies, the expense to the Reich was high.

Capital export was not the only way that the German *haute-bourgeoisie* was able to fleece the workers of underdeveloped countries with which Germany had economic relations (as noted below, non-equivalent exchange in trade was also important, especially in Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire). However, by 1914, Germany was the third largest exporter of capital in the world, after Britain and France. Germany exported RM23.5 billion in 1914, of which approximately RM13.8 billion was invested in underdeveloped countries; that is, in Russia, Turkey (including Asiatic Turkey), European countries outside Austria-Hungary, France, Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal, Africa (including German colonies), Latin America, Asia (including German colonies), and other areas. This is a larger sum than the RM20 billion Germany was to pay as reparations to the victorious Allied powers in 1921 (Craig 1981: 437). Crucially, in the case of the

non-capital-exporting countries, the transfer of value thus effected was entirely one-way. Not only did this process allow higher profits per se for the net value-importing country, but insofar as workers in the export dependencies were remunerated at levels below those prevailing in the imperialist country, it meant greater quantities of surplus value and, hence, higher rates of profit than would otherwise have prevailed. Nominal German wages in industry were around RM1,000 in 1914 (Broadberry and Burhop 2009). Even if only a quarter of German investment in underdeveloped countries was for the purposes of hiring labour-power there, then, making the conservative assumption that workers in underdeveloped countries received the same wage rates as did German workers, we may safely estimate that the labour of 3.5 million foreign workers was transferred to Germany in 1914. At least half of this was certainly surplus value not paid for by German capital. There were approximately 9 million German workers in 1914, so surplus value imported from underdeveloped countries would thus have represented perhaps one-fifth of that created domestically. It is, therefore, not hard to see how the wage levels of the upper stratum of German labour were sustained.

Undoubtedly, German imperialism was much more than colonialism and its main thrust was in Europe and the near East, rather than Africa and the Pacific. Yet colonies, obtained and kept by brutal military force (including the infamous massacre of around 60,000 Herero people residing in what is today Namibia between 1904 and 1906) (Curry 1999), not only enriched private treasuries and thereby sustained the profit rate in Germany, but also improved

Table 1 Geographical distribution of German long-term foreign investment in 1914 (billions [US] of marks)

Europe		Outside Europe	
Austria-Hungary	3.0	Africa (including German colonies)	2.0
Russia	1.8	Asia (including German colonies)	1.0
Balkan countries	1.7	US and Canada	3.7
Turkey (including Asiatic Turkey)	1.8	Latin America	3.8
France and Great Britain	1.3	Other areas	0.5
Spain and Portugal	1.7		
Rest of Europe	1.2		
	12.5		11.0

the country's international status and fed her national chauvinism. Notably, overseas colonial expansion stimulated German capitalism's avaricious demand for rich raw materials and markets closer to home, from the heavy metals of eastern France to the granaries of the Slavic steppes (Krooth 1980: 26). Furthermore, the meagre economic significance of its existing colonies make it abundantly clear why Germany was bent on seizing or penetrating the colonies of other powers and, in particular, why it pursued the aim of a German Central Africa (Mittelafrika). The racial theories developed in German South-West Africa provided fuel to the fire of master race (*Herrenvolk*) thinking which, as Kuhl (1994) shows, was developed in its Nazi form with direct reference to its US eugenics pioneers. Indeed, as Schmitt-Egner (1975: 51 cf. Sarkisyanz, 2002) writes, 'all the decisive elements of the later fascist ideologies were perfected [in colonial ideology]'.

### Social Democracy and imperialism before the First World War

Within the labour movement, the formal internationalism of the SPD, and opposition to the use made by capitalists of the imperial ideal, led to the more militaristic brand of social imperialism being greeted with hostility by workers (as during the state-orchestrated events of 1913 celebrating the centenary of Germany's liberation from Napoleonic rule). In practice, the social imperialist policy proclaimed by the Second Reich sat uneasily with the repression meted out to the labour movement. However, despite its ambiguity and internal contradictions, the reality of social imperialism in Germany can be witnessed in the incorporation of leading and increasingly well-off sections of its working class into the structural mechanics of the monopoly capitalist state. Crucially, what Dahrendorf (1968: 15) has referred to as the survival of 'authoritarian and anti-democratic structures in state and society' resulted less from workers' 'blind prostration before the imperial myth than because [they] perceived good reasons for associating the chances of reform with the fortunes of empire' (Eley 1976: 287). This was particularly true of the best-off workers organised within the SPD and the ADGB.

Those sections of the German working class which were most strongly unionised and

better paid tended to be employed in industries in which monopoly was most clearly present (export-oriented industries; the chemical, armaments, and mechanical engineering industries; and certain steel works) and where employers could thus afford concessions to trade union demands. Unions were also strong in the expanding urban construction industries (where labour was in very high demand), the mechanical engineering industries (where labour was highly skilled), and in those industries where the labour form most closely resembled those artisanal trades which were strongly unionised earlier in the imperial period (leather workers, book printers, typesetters, and wood-workers) (Tenfelde 1990: 252).

The SPD drew the bulk of its membership from this labour aristocracy. Thus, Wilhelm Liebknecht (co-founder of the SPD with August Bebel in 1869) frankly stated at the Party Congress of 1892: 'The greatest portion of you who sit here are certainly to a considerable extent aristocrats among labour – I mean with respect to income'. According to prominent Russian Bolshevik Grigory Zinoviev (1984: 488): 'The predominant mass of the membership of the Social Democratic organization consists of the better-paid strata of labour – of those strata from which the greatest section of the labour aristocracy arises'. Blank (1905: 520), meanwhile, estimated that non-proletarian supporters of the SPD approximated one-quarter of the total, equating to three-quarters of a million votes in 1903 (cf. Marks 1939: 345).

Statistics from 1886 to 1911 demonstrate that wages in Germany were rising more rapidly than the cost of living, although the intensity of labour may also have increased and the labour aristocracy undoubtedly 'won a much greater increase in real wages than did the mass of the proletariat' (Marks 1939: 339, 342) (see Table 2).

On top of these unevenly distributed wage-earnings must be counted the system of social insurance instituted by Bismarck, which considerably enhanced the material and legal position of the German working class. Germany's social insurance system, a forerunner of the welfare state as such, was built up in three stages: health insurance was introduced in 1883, followed by accident insurance in 1884, and old age and invalid insurance in 1889. Each new law covered cumulatively larger sections of the working class. Over the same period,

Table 2 Real wages in Germany (1887–1914)

Years	Mass of workers	Labour aristocracy
1887–94	100.0	100.0
1894–1902	102.0	111.1
1903–09	106.1	116.1
1909 to 1913–14	105.1	113.2

Source: Kuczynski (1934: 25); Marks (1939: 341).

the Reich introduced pensions, national medical provision, and the right to education. State insurance for ill or disabled workers was coupled with stringent efforts to control and repress communist agitation (Berghahn 1994: 251–253). In 1907, economist Sartorius von Waltershausen wrote:

The present age of social politics, which operates towards favouring the mass of the people and burdening the well-situated minority by means of direct taxes, contributions to workers' insurance, legal regulations, and administrative measures, is particularly suited to rear a middle-class out of the lower class. (von Waltershausen 1907: 429, cited in Marks 1939: 342)

As the wages of the German labour aristocracy rose with the expansion of big business, the SPD came to constitute a social-liberal opposition to capitalism, focusing on democratic reform and conservative trade unionism to the exclusion of all other political considerations actually or potentially facing the workers' movement (Rosenberg 1936: 1–68, *passim*). Through reformism, the expanding trade union movement and the survival of petty bourgeois artisan traditions, the SPD quickly became assimilated to the existing social order in Germany. Thus, 'revisionism' (avowed commitment to revolutionary socialism at the same time as advocating contrary ideals or practices) in Germany was based on the reality that socialist success at the parliamentary and municipal levels could translate into real gains for the working class and the trade union movement. As Fletcher (1984: 108) notes:

[Conditions] appeared to be improving after [the curtailment of the anti-Socialist laws in] 1890, holding out some hope of a peaceful, piecemeal working class integration into the political nation. In any event,

such developments as the gradual bureaucratization of the labour movement, the growth of a labour aristocracy and rising working class affluence made a revolutionary upheaval increasingly improbable.

In the decade before the First World War, the mainstream of the German labour movement had shifted decidedly to the right both in terms of its domestic strategy and regarding imperialist and militarist foreign policy, with the SPD's Reichstag deputies introducing resolutions to improve pre-military youth training in the public schools and to procure for Social-Democratic co-operatives a share in supply contracts for the army (Schorske 1983: 245). The centre of the SPD, represented above all by Karl Kautsky, envisioned the peaceful resolution of inter-imperialist conflict, tacitly identified with imperialism as such. Kautsky explicitly affirmed that with the military rivalries of the Western European countries set aside, czarist Russia would be contained by a 'Western alliance for the mutual, rather than competitive, exploitation of the underdeveloped sectors of the globe' (*ibid*). Kautsky considered that the German middle classes would be supportive of this agenda, thus providing a convenient platform to consolidate a wider base for SPD electoralism.

Social-Democratic views on imperialism before the First World War can be divided into four main tendencies. First were the avowed 'social imperialists' in the SPD, amongst whom Ludwig Quessel was particularly influential, who considered that the workers' interest was in fully supporting the state in the imperialist struggle (263). Second, Eduard Bernstein was committed to the 'ethical' mission of imperialism, but balked at supporting German militarism, particularly as directed against Britain. Third, the group represented by Kautsky, Hugo Haase, Theodor Liebknecht,

and Georg Ledebour would go on to form the Independent Social Democratic Party as a non-revolutionary anti-war grouping. These placed various degrees of emphasis upon the need to work against war within the capitalist framework of promoting the development of international cartels (264). Finally, the 'left radicals' in the party tended to focus on the negative aspects of imperialism for workers (higher tax burdens and costs of living and the increased difficulties of trade union struggles), ignoring the potentials of harnessing imperialism to a reform agenda (*ibid*). They urged the use of mass action against war. None of these sections of German socialism were able to mount an effective revolutionary opposition to imperialism or prevent the impending inter-imperialist war.

### Republicanism, imperialism, and the German working class (1918–33)

The decline of the semi-feudal Ottoman Empire brought rivalry between Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia as to who would gain control over its territories. Russia sought to dominate those southern Slav states, particularly Serbia, under weakening Turkish control. By doing so it would have control over the major trade routes through the Balkan straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Great Britain, meanwhile, sought to safeguard its interests in the Turkish sphere of influence, and Austria-Hungary to extend its sway in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary's imperial ambitions thus clashed with Russia's. When Archduke Ferdinand, the heir to the Habsburg throne, was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist, Austria-Hungary demanded burdensome concessions which Serbia refused. In support of Serbia, Russia mobilised its armies. Germany, allied to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, agreed to support its claims on Serbia, and declared war on Russia and France. After Germany invaded Belgium, Britain declared war on Germany and Austria. All of Europe was then at war for the first time in a hundred years (Kennedy-Pipe 1998: 14–15).

The First World War was the product of imperialist nationalism on the part of the Great Powers of capitalist Europe (Bayly 2004: 472; Schevill 1951: 706). Germany's general aims in the First World War were twofold.

First, it sought the elimination of France as a great military, economic, and financial power, thus creating a 'Mitteleuropa economic system [embracing Austria-Hungary, a Poland severed from Russia, and possibly other neighbouring states, including Romania – ZC] dominated by German interests' (Fischer 1991: 57–58). Second, the 'general aim of the war' was to drive Russia eastwards, and to cripple her permanently by separating her 'non-Russian vassal peoples' from her. As early as 6 August 1914, the German imperial chancellor, von Bethmann Hollweg, personally described the object of the war as 'the liberation and military protection of the peoples (*Stämme*) oppressed by Russia, the repulse of Russian despotism back to Moscow' (*ibid*).

During the First World War, German monopoly capital and businessmen like Krupp, Stinnes, Thyssen, Hugenberg, Roetger, as well as their representatives in the Reichstag and the Prussian diet (politicians such as Gustav Stresemann and Ernst Bassermann of the National Liberal Party) advocated the annexation of Longwy-Briey in France and the acquisition of the entire French market in Luxembourg, Belgium, Ukraine, the Transcaucasus, Romania, rump Russia, Turkey, and, not least, in France's colonial empire. To placate agriculture, industry advocated the concession of Eastern European land in Lithuania, Courland, Livonia, Estonia, and possibly Byelorussia either indirectly or through annexation. A trade treaty was to be imposed upon Russia as well as an 'independent' Poland and Lithuania for the unrestricted admission of seasonal rural labour. Throughout this new German colonial and neo-colonial empire, there was to be unlimited right of entry for German manufactures and unhindered export of raw materials for industry and its workforce. The internal colonisation considered a threat to the economic wherewithal of the large estates was to be diverted to the eastern Reich through the acquisition of land for an involuntary resettlement of small farmers and war veterans, thus also serving as a social and political counterweight to urbanisation and the concomitant growth of the potentially revolutionary industrial workforce. Agricultural and demographic scientists were recruited to plan for 'living space' (*Lebensraum*) in the North East of the 'New Germany' (Fischer 1991: 64–65).

Aside from the Bulgarian Workers' Social Democratic Party, the Serbian and

Rumanian Social Democratic parties and the Russian Social Democratic and Labour Party (bolshevik), all of the parties of the Second Workingmen's International, including the SPD, voted for war credits for their own government in the months preceding the First World War. In 1918, however, German imperialism was forced to admit defeat.

### **Social Democracy and the reconstruction of imperialism**

In 1918–19, the SPD augmented the capitalist *Sammlung* in Germany at the expense of the revolutionary Spartakusbund (the Spartacists, led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht) and the Independent Social Democratic Party (Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, USPD), a loose-knit coalition of anti-war defectors from the SPD. SPD politician Phillip Scheideman proclaimed the Weimar Republic on 9 November 1918, to counter a declaration of the 'Free Socialist Republic' made (under pressure from his radical supporters) by Spartacist leader Karl Liebknecht, and became its first chancellor. After commander-in-chief Gustav Noske of the SPD (inaugurated as such by Colonel Reinhardt, Prussian minister of war), Colonel Maercker and other officers led six Free Corps (Freikorps) units under the command of General Luttwitz against the striking workers of Berlin in January 1919, another general strike called in protest was shot down during the week of 8–15 March. In this period, around 1,500 men, women, and children were executed under the orders of Social-Democrat ministers (Crook 1931: 503–504).

In the space of two months, the elite that had led Germany into the First World War were safely ensconced in their briefly tenuous positions of power. They had seen off the attempt by revolutionary communists, left-wing social democrats, and anarcho-syndicalists (who would in 1921 combine to form the Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands, KPD) to institute a socialist regime based upon the nationalisation of heavy industry, the abolition and purging of the monarchy from governmental positions, and the breaking-up of the large estates. The Republic's first president the SPD's Friedrich Ebert – of whom Field Marshal and later President Paul von Hindenburg of the Centre Party commented that he was 'a loyal German who loved his fatherland above everything' (Carsten 1967: 94) and who declared in 1918 'I hate revolution like sin' – and his first

defence minister, the SPD's Gustav Noske, instead placed their faith in the newly formed Free Corps (Freikorps, illegal paramilitary formations of private volunteer armies raised to evade the military restrictions imposed on Germany by the Versailles Treaty) and the goodwill of the ruling class.

Subsequently, the Weimar Government employed martial and semi-martial law to repress revolutionary organisations of workers, notably, the Spartacist risings of 1919, the communist workers of the Ruhr in 1920 (Jones 1987), and the SPD-KPD Coalition Government of Saxony in 1923 (Price 1999: 155–157). On May Day 1929, communist demonstrations were shot at on the orders of Berlin's SPD police president Karl Zorgiebel, with many casualties ensuing. Later the same year, the KPD's Red Front Fighter's League (Rotfrontkämpferbund, RFB) and the League of Struggle against Fascism (Kampfbund gegen den Faschismus, KgF) were banned by the SPD minister of the interior in Prussia, Carl Severing (Merson 1985: 316n).

Throughout the Weimar period, the SPD persistently rejected all KPD overtures to an anti-imperialist and anti-fascist United Front of the working class parties (see Johnston 1999: 165; Olgin 1935: 115; Peukert 1976: 48; Schmidt and Burger 1995: 191–192). Instead, it preferred to pin its hopes on the 'moderate' forces of German big business, including in its pre-fascist and semi-fascist forms of rule (Dutt 1978: 186).

### **Colonialism and imperialism in the Weimar era**

Aggressive foreign policy was not far from the political surface in Weimar Germany. Hitler's aim of colonising Eastern and South-Eastern Europe was anticipated and partially realised by the Weimar Government's pursuit of informal economic hegemony in what was referred to in the 1914–18 'war aims' debate as the *Österreich* (the eastern part of the greater 'German Empire'). Indeed, the SPD was extremely anti-Soviet and, in matters of foreign policy, favoured concerted Western opposition to the USSR even more than did Conservative German politicians. Kochan (1954) documents the course of German foreign policy towards the USSR and the SPD's part in its formulation. The KPD consistently accused the SPD of an anti-Soviet and pro-imperialist bias in foreign policy. On



5 December 1926, for example, the SPD newspaper *Vorwärts* ran a story about an alleged Junkers arms factory operating in Russia. August Creutzberg, a KPD deputy in the Reichstag, accused the SPD of trying to curry favour with Britain: ‘Come what may you want to bring about a breach between Germany and Russia’ (quoted in Kochan 1954: 121). Creutzberg pointed out that the SPD was not the enemy of the Reichswehr it claimed to be since it had recently and willingly employed its services against the working class. Ebert had previously declared himself ‘surprised and embittered’ at the signing of the 1922 Rapallo Treaty (quoted in Kochan 1954: 58), which cemented German–Soviet diplomatic and economic ties. The SPD was undeniably a political opponent of the Rapallo Treaty and supporter of the Locarno Treaty of 1925 which consolidated the ties between Germany and Western European imperialism.

With the traditional German ruling class secured in its position by force of arms sanctioned by Social Democracy, ‘Wilhelmine concepts of Germany’s Great Power status and her position as a “world power” remained intact beyond 1918 to influence Weimar foreign policy in varying degrees’ (Lee and Michalka 1987: 149–150). Indeed, there was real continuity in the foreign policy of the Second and Third Reich, and the intervening Weimar Republic: ‘[Following] the Great [1929 Wall Street] Crash, Berlin concentrated both economic and foreign policies on Eastern and South-eastern Europe, so that Hitler had only to take up the threads of this policy’ (151).

Politicians and senior diplomats in the Weimar period conceived of German trade policy as a means to impose economic and political hegemony upon the underdeveloped nations of the non-Soviet East. Weimar Germany thus attempted to set up a ‘penetrating system’ of financial investment ‘in the weak and impressionable economies of the newly-liberated Eastern states’ (91). The over-reliance of Polish capitalism, for instance, upon the products of German heavy industry (particularly iron wares, shovels, coal, machine oil, tipcarts and chloride explosives, salt, and leather) created a situation of non-equivalent exchange whereby these were traded for Polish agricultural produce (potatoes, clover seeds, lupines, ores, pit props, meat, and eggs) (Spaulding 1997: 153). Germany strove to restrict the export of machinery and capital goods that would

boost the industrial productivity of the Eastern European countries and imposed tariffs upon the products of those industries which might compete (particularly the non-cartelised coal, iron, and steel industries of Poland). The labour movement supported such tariffs in the name of protecting German jobs, but pleaded for trade concessions to Polish agricultural producers in the name of cheaper food for German workers (158). Meanwhile, the dynamic export sector of German industry (which relied upon Polish markets for its goods) put up only half-hearted resistance within the Reich Association of German Industry (Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie, RDI) to the protectionist demands of heavy industry. German politicians welcomed signs of Polish economic distress in the hope that the Polish state (whose leaders grossly overestimated its short-term capacity for capitalist self-reliance) might collapse and its frontiers be revised in Germany’s favour. Throughout the period of Weimar *Östhandel* (Eastern European trade policy), Germany’s political negotiators connected trade rights with border issues and the right of Germans to settle on Polish territory (the so-called ‘right of domicile’) (159).

A pseudonymous article by Politicus in Moscow’s *Mezhdunarodnyia Zhizn* (International Affairs) argued that after its late start in the pre-1914 race for colonies and after having suffered from the loss of its fleet and its overseas possessions at Versailles, German imperialism was resurgent: ‘Objectively Germany is once again being pushed into an activation of her foreign policy with the aim of consolidating favourable conditions for the expansion in every way of her industrial exports and for the resumption of the export of capital’ (quoted in Kochan 1954: 144). Hence, Germany signed trade treaties with and made large-scale investments in Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Persia, South America, Greece, Yugoslavia, China, and Siam. Politicus even spoke in Bismarckian terms of a *Drang Nach Osten*, a yearning for the East, only, of course, in relatively ‘pacific’ forms. These tendencies led in the 1930s to the threat, and then the actuality, of war over preferential trade agreements, tariff barriers, trade routes, protected markets for investments and manufactures, and sources of raw materials (Hehn, 2002).

In the imperialist countries of the 1920s, as Krooth (1980: 76) writes, ‘the monopolists, the farmers and workers teamed up with the

bankers' in a national alliance which could only lead to war. Indeed, in the inter-war period, the SPD was directly committed to the furtherance of specifically colonial ambitions in the Weimar era. The prominent SPD politician Eduard David wrote in the SPD journal *Vorwärts* in June 1918 that 'we would have no objections ... if our colonial possessions were rounded off and enlarged by way of compensation and agreement' under the terms of a peace treaty (Ruger 1977: 298). The right wing of the SPD attempted to convince the German workers that the colonies would become the nationalised property of a social-democratic republic and would assure all German citizens of an 'increase in production and wealth', full employment and 'human happiness'. At the International Socialists' conference held in Berne in February 1919, the SPD openly protested the fact that the Versailles Treaty had divested Germany of its colonies and called for their restitution (300). In arguing for the 'civilising role' of imperialism in the colonies, Eduard Bernstein approvingly quoted Ferdinand Lasalle, founder of the General German Workers' Association in 1863, the SPD's precursor: 'People who do not develop may be justifiably subjugated by people who have achieved civilisation'. Whilst there were differences in ideological emphasis between the openly colonialist right wing of the SPD (Gustav Noske, Ludwig Quessel, Max Cohen, Hermann Kranold, Max Schippel, Paul Lobe, Paul Kampffmeyer, and others around the leading revisionist journal the *Socialist Monthly* (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*), the 'moderate' majority of the SPD preferred to call for mandates for German colonies to be awarded by the League of Nations (307). On 8 May 1925, the SPD involved itself in the formation of a colonialist lobby in the Reichstag with deputies from the Catholic Centre Party (Zentrum), the German Democratic Party (Deutsche Demokratische Partei, DDP) and the DVP, whose leader, Foreign Minister von Stresemann, had recently resurrected First World War colonial official Hans Grimm's (the 'German Kipling') slogan of 'Volk ohne Raum' (people without space) to further popularise the colonial mission. In 1925, at the Second Congress of the Labour and Socialist International in Marseilles, SPD spokesman and finance minister Rudolf Hilferding again demanded colonies for Germany (Edwards 1978: 39).

### The political economy of imperialist social reformism

Imperialism in Weimar Germany combined pursuit of the trade interests (*Handelspolitik*) of monopoly industry with social policy (*Sozialpolitik*) aimed at securing the loyalty of the organised working class to the state (Abraham 1986). Social imperialism was seen as very much in the interests of capitalist development by the dynamic export fraction of German industry and their political and intellectual representatives:

The re-establishment of Germany's economic potential and international stature required a national consensus, which would be based on reintegration of a chastened but still strong SPD. The anti-socialist bloc gave way to a class-compromise bloc, a fragile compact for a period of limited growth and progress. It was possible for ascendant members of the dominant economic classes, in this case the dynamic-export fraction, to abandon the interests of other economically dominant fractions, wholly or in part, in favour of more thoroughgoing collaboration with parts of the organized working class. [125]

Both export and heavy German industry in the Weimar period were dominated by monopolies. However, only the export sector was truly dynamic and competitive on a world scale. Heavy industry required protection from imperialist rivals and could not afford the social policies which export industry supported. Heavy industry was not social-imperialist until the Nazi dictatorship began to provide it with the produce of colonised land and labour. In Britain, by comparison, the colonies allowed for social-imperialist platforms for both fractions of monopoly capital to pursue their divergent agendas (Cope 2012: 95–96).

The advance of Weimar *Sozialpolitik* can be witnessed in the following figures: employer contributions to health insurance rose 58 per cent between 1925 and 1929 and then declined 31 per cent by 1932; state expenditures on social insurance rose by 57 per cent between 1925 and 1930 and then declined only 13 per cent through 1932; state spending rose a full 25 per cent from RM8 billion to RM10 billion in three short years from 1925 to 1928, declining only 2.4 per cent in 1930; public spending for education (significantly easing pressure on the job market) was in

1925 already 45 per cent above pre-war levels and in 1929 rested at 208 per cent of 1913 levels. As rising unemployment threatened the contractual, social-partnership basis of *Sozialpolitik* after 1929, organised labour successfully obtained a transfer of RM2.4 billion from the General Treasury, a sum equivalent to 45 per cent of the amount paid in by all employers and employees and a full 28 per cent of the entire tax revenue of the reich and lander governments.

Given the general economic upturn occasioned by increased industrial productivity and the stagnation and subsequent decline of agricultural prices, for employed workers both nominal and real wages rose substantially after 1924. At the start of 1924, average wage rates were 10 per cent below 1913 levels. Yet from 1924–30, the cost of living rose modestly (by about 15 per cent) while nominal wages rose substantially (over 60 per cent). Hourly real rates rose by 40 per cent from 1924–29, more than 20 per cent above 1913 levels. Real hourly and weekly earnings rose even further than the corresponding real rates; almost 55 and 60 per cent respectively. Real hourly earnings kept rising until 1931, at which time they were 30 per cent above pre-war levels. As Abraham (1986: 238–242) notes: ‘If the gross annual earnings of full-time employees in the fifteen largest industries is indexed (1913 = 100), then annual earnings in 1929 and 1930 exceeded 180 – a level not reattained until the late 1950s at the earliest’.

In sum, Abraham suggests that organised labour made dramatic material (in terms of real wages and working hours), political (in terms of representation), and legislative (in terms of the extension of trade union rights, legally binding collective wage agreements, and a system of compulsory arbitration) gains in the Weimar period. These were made possible by the high profits accumulated by dynamic export industries in the 1920s, which were able to tolerate welfare taxation and wage rises.

When the economic crisis of 1929–33 came, however, the heavy industrial fraction of capital favouring policies of protection and the demolition of the welfare state, in renewed alliance with the agrarian lobby, saw the destruction of the so-called *Gewerkschaftsstaat* (‘trade union state’) as imperative. The Great Depression of 1929–33 saw capitalist industry in Germany become

politically united to overcome the gamut of economic and political policies of *Sozialpolitik*. Hitherto, the dynamic and export fractions of monopoly German industry had been opposed to the price fixing and quotas of the heavy industrial cartels in iron and steel which raised their own production costs considerably. Since these dynamic and export fractions of German capitalist monopoly made super-profits through international trade in which they were highly competitive and had a high organic composition of capital, they could afford to ally politically and electorally with the ADGB and the SPD and deliver social reforms that improved the lives of most, if not all, German workers. This alliance pressured the heavy industry monopolies into mitigating their demands and ensuring that the protectionism which they craved was not fully implemented to the detriment of Germany’s international trade.

Once the world market became moribund with the onset of world depression, however, the dynamic and export industries became more dependent upon the home market for their profits and thus more committed to reversing the social and wage gains of organised labour. The latter was prepared to see the German Republic collapse into oblivion rather than abandon *Sozialpolitik*. It thus refused to revive parliamentarianism whether of the left (allying with the burgeoning forces of the KPD) or the right (allying with the DDP). By 1931, fissionary German industry was seeking ‘a Bonapartist solution to the political crises and an imperialist solution to the economic crisis’ (Abraham 1986: 157). Politically, by July 1932, the Nazi Party was the only force which might ‘provide a mass base while conceivably offering a program acceptable to both fractions of industry’ (16).

### Conclusion: Social Democracy and social fascism

The SPD sacrificed its liberal principles to enter into an alliance with the imperialist elite of the German Empire, ostensibly to prevent a drift towards extremism of the left or right. The predominant section of the German working class in the Weimar period, like its middle-class compatriots, refused to be proletarianised or pushed into an alliance with the KPD (whose sole base of support lay in the working class, including the unemployed). But the social forces to which

its reformism was indissolubly wedded guaranteed that capitalist militarism and imperialism were to undermine the foundations of the alliance more or less rapidly.

Space prevents our discussing here the details of the Nazi seizure of power or the role of the SPD in facilitating it (Harsch 1993). Suffice to note, however, that despite its being almost an article of faith among historians of the Weimar Republic that the KPD line that Social Democracy paved the way for fascism in Germany was wrong and resulted in a disastrous political strategy, there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that the label of ‘social-fascist’ had a real frame of reference at the time of its coinage. The analysis of Social Democratic policy as social fascist was first put forward by Zinoviev in 1923 and was based on SPD support for the DVP’s Stresemann rather than KPD politician Heinrich Brandler. It was then discarded only to return with redoubled force between 1928 and 1934, during which time the KPD gained many supporters. Ukrainian-born Dmitry Manuilsky, a member of the Comintern executive committee, defined social fascism thus:

If in the epoch of the general crisis of monopoly capitalism, its general tendencies lead to fascization, i.e. to the abolition of the social and political gains of the working class, to an increased resorting to methods of political terror and the growth of reaction, a party which in practice repudiates the proletarian revolution, and therefore stands for capitalism, cannot help passing through the whole of capitalism’s process of evolution, together with it. (1933: 28)

Social democracy’s emphasis on fascism as being based on the negation of parliamentary democracy, whilst formally correct, does not address the precise class composition of fascist reaction. Instead of confronting capitalism and its major social pillars (the imperialist bourgeoisie and its beneficiaries), the social-democratic conception of fascism tended to obscure the difference between fascism and its revolutionary opposition. It posited an unbridgeable chasm between fascism and other forms of capitalist rule where, in reality, there are elements of class dictatorship in monarchies, constitutional monarchies, and bourgeois republics with narrow and broad franchises. Fascism is a change in

the form much more than the composition of class rule (though it allows for sections of the hitherto politically marginal petty bourgeoisie to exercise power and accumulate wealth).

The German fascist state was an exceptional historical form of the bourgeois German state. German socialist Richard Löwenthal (1983/1933: 338–339) excellently summarised the conditions for fascist power:

Fascism comes to power that much more easily in a country, the deeper its economic crisis and the smaller the reserves it has to alleviate it. It also comes to power that much more easily the fewer areas of imperialist influence, colonies, etc. the country has in relation to the needs of its capitalist class. It comes to power more easily in a country dependent on imported capital and with international debts, than in a capital exporting country which can live off its revenues. It comes to power more easily in a country with a large number of economic dead-weights which reduce its international competitiveness, than in a country enjoying rapidly increasing production and an expanding world market. It is therefore an essential characteristic of fascism that it has to make the most vigorous assertion of its imperialist claims, precisely because the basis for such claims is relatively weak. Fascism exemplifies the imperialism of those who have arrived late at the partition of the world. Behind this imperialism lies a huge need for expansionary opportunities, but none of the traditional weapons for realising them. It is a form of imperialism which cannot operate by means of loans, since it is so much in debt, nor on the basis of technical superiority, since it is uncompetitive in so many areas. It is something novel in history – an imperialism of paupers and bankrupts.

In 1933, there occurred what one historian has said amounted to a ‘quasi-guerrilla warfare’ in Germany’s poorest areas, with the superior force employed by the Brownshirts winning the battle of the streets and destroying the KPD’s last bastion in society (Evans 2003: 243). As the battle raged, the German middle classes strongly sympathised with the Nazis, preferring the protection of their property to forestalling the drive toward one of history’s most terrible bloodbaths. Along with 5–6 million European Jews (Hilberg

1986) and 5–6 million Poles, imperialist Germany's invasion of the USSR (1941–45) cost that country between 25 and 30 million deaths. During the war, about 15 per cent of Soviet women aged 20–49 died, while the mortality rate of men in the same age group reached the rate of 40 per cent (Allen 2003: 115–116).

Zak Cope

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## Global War and the Battle for Afghanistan

Throughout the endless occupation of Afghanistan, many people in the West have continued to believe the myth that this country is a remote, worthless land populated by backward, hostile people. The influential author Andrew Bacevich (2009) wrote: 'NO SERIOUS [sic] person thinks that Afghanistan – remote, impoverished, barely qualifying as a nation-state – seriously matters to the United States.' Given the general level of ignorance about Afghanistan perpetuated by intellectual elites, political and military leaders, and mainstream media it is not surprising so few of the taxpayers footing the bill and the families sacrificing their loved ones for the ongoing military expedition question the story of why a small coalition of states, led by the US, invaded Afghanistan and continue an occupation with no end in sight. The accepted story is that the invasion was a necessary act of retaliation that would eliminate the terrorists responsible for the 9/11 attacks, which in the process would somehow liberate Afghan women and girls, give democracy to Afghans, and generally make the world a safer place. The passion for war has ebbed as the toll in blood and resources mounted and the combat mission has been transformed into a mission to train Afghan forces. Still, the myths used to justify the invasion and ongoing occupation of Afghanistan prevail.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to counter the myth that Afghans are backward

and hostile. It suffices to repeat what some Afghans told me during my visits: 'If you come to Afghanistan as a guest we will treat you with the greatest hospitality, but if you come as an imperialist – as a thief to steal from us – we will kill you.' I would reply: 'If you invite me to your home, I will come in friendship to enjoy your hospitality; I will not search through your cupboards looking for whatever I can steal.' I can attest to the fact that when one visits on these terms, Afghans are extremely hospitable. Moreover, many Afghans – even many considered illiterate by Western standards – are acutely aware of their place in the historical progression of global political economy. Many Afghans maintain that they defeated the British and Soviet imperialists of the 19th and 20th centuries and contend that they will ultimately defeat the US-led forces whom they also perceive as imperialists. This is not to suggest that most Afghans seek isolation from the West: many would welcome engagement and trade on fair terms; however, many fear they are sacrificial pawns in this latest rapacious mode of militarised capitalist expansion. Depictions of Afghanistan that suggest the ongoing warfare is rooted entirely in tribal, ethnic, and religious conflicts, or a supposed global clash of civilisations, obfuscate the many material rationales rooted in an expanding global political economy that Afghans identify for the successive foreign occupations of their land since the beginning of the 19th century (Skinner 2013). The tribal, ethnic, and religious conflicts that stretch beyond the borders of Afghanistan throughout the region of greater Central Asia are certainly important factors in understanding warfare in Afghanistan, but these are issues beyond the scope of this essay. These are not causal issues; they are symptomatic. None of these issues – even if they did indeed threaten world peace and the very foundations of global civilisation, unlikely as that widely propagated explanation seems – explains the real strategic and economic interests the most powerful and wealthiest nation states have had in Afghanistan, since the beginning of the 19th century and to the present day.

This essay does counter the myth that Afghanistan is a remote and worthless land by examining the geostrategic value of Afghanistan in the context of the historical expansion and evolution of capitalism and the

emergence of an 'Empire of Capital' (Wood 2003). Afghanistan is a land of immense natural resource wealth; Afghan mineral resources are estimated to be worth one trillion US dollars (Najafizada and Rupert 2010; Risen 2010), and the total value of all extractive resources, including oil and gas reserves, may be as much as three trillion US dollars (Najafizada 2011). Afghan resources are of significant value, but their greater value lies in catalysing the development of a trans-Eurasian network of transport, energy transmission, and communications infrastructure with Afghanistan as a central node – Afghanistan lies at the geopolitical centre of the struggle to expand an emerging Empire of Capital throughout Eurasia. Barely more than two centuries after Elizabeth I granted the East India Company its royal charter in 1600, the paramilitary forces of the East India Company pushed northwards through India to make their first forays into Afghanistan. The expansion of capitalism was, however, stalled at the borders of Afghanistan for almost another 200 years until the US-led forces 'liberated' Afghanistan with the invasion of 7 October 2001. Feel-good propaganda stories aside, few Afghans and especially few Afghan women and girls were liberated by the invasion. International investors, however, were truly liberated – investors are now free to profit not only by extracting Afghanistan's wealth, but even more so by developing the infrastructure to make use of its strategic position at the centre of expanding capital across Eurasia. Afghanistan is a geopolitical and economic keystone poised to become a central node of transport, energy transmission, and communications networks spanning Central Asia that will ultimately connect the disparate regions of the Eurasian supercontinent. The US Government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) call this initiative the 'New Silk Road' (Clinton 2011).

Building physical infrastructure, however, is only part of developing the New Silk Road. Hillary Clinton's (2011) comments when announcing the New Silk Road demonstrate that creating the political-legal-economic infrastructure, which she described as 'new rules for the 21st century', are equally important. The strategic and economic importance of global trade in various resources wax and wane with changes in technology or consumers' whims, but a remaining constant is the growth of the physical transport, energy

transmission, and communications networks, as well as the less tangible but no less real political-legal-economic infrastructure of empire. Building this superstructure of dominance lies at the heart of building empire. The Bush and Obama administrations' expanding regime of new rules, which is enforced by military dominance at least as much as political influence, strengthens the concept of New World Order originally conceived by Woodrow Wilson. This New World Order, nearing its centenary, relies on the hegemonic leadership of the US in partnership with other powerful wealthy capitalist states – partnerships tied together by a growing matrix of state, sub-state, and supra-state governance and military organisations; non-governmental organisations (NGOs); and corporations. The theorist Ellen Meiksins Wood (2003) describes this complex matrix of domination as an 'Empire of Capital'.

In this essay, I first examine the vast resource wealth of Afghanistan. Second, I examine the development of the New Silk Road as a means not only to exploit this wealth but more importantly to expand US and allied dominance in Central Asia and throughout Eurasia. Third, I argue that the invasion of Afghanistan was not necessary in the legal sense defined by international law; however, the invasion and continuing occupation are necessary, from the perspective of geostrategists, to expand capital and maintain US dominance in the global political economy. I conclude that the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan constitute one battle of many in an endless global war for the expansion of capital that demonstrates the emergence of an Empire of Capital. The US continues to compete for global dominance, but the empire that the US leads is becoming increasingly multinational in composition as the most powerful and wealthiest capitalist states ever more closely align their interests towards global and not exclusively national capital expansion. The invasion of Afghanistan failed to liberate most Afghan women, but it successfully liberated capital, by destroying Afghan normative systems of collective ownership.

### The wealth of Afghanistan

On 31 January 2010, Hamid Karzai, then president of Afghanistan, announced that an 'almost-finished' report by the United States



Geological Survey (USGS) indicated that Afghanistan's non-fuel mineral resources are worth a trillion US dollars (Najafzada and Rupert 2010). More recent surveys show that Afghan oil and gas reserves may be worth as much as an additional two trillion US dollars (Najafzada 2011; USGS 2011). The story of Afghan resource wealth had been reported for decades in the business pages and extractive industries journals in North America and Europe; however, it was never front-page news until 13 June 2010, when the *New York Times* published a headline proclaiming, 'U.S. Identifies Vast Mineral Riches in Afghanistan' (Risen 2010). The *New York Times* journalist James Risen wrote that US geologists had 'stumbled across an intriguing series of old charts and data at the library of the Afghan Geological Survey in Kabul that hinted at major mineral deposits in the country'. News of the occupation forces accidentally stumbling upon hints of vast Afghan mineral wealth may have surprised many in the West; however, Afghans, no doubt, found the idea that their unexploited riches were only recently 'discovered' preposterous.

For at least five millennia, the various peoples who populated the territories that would later make up Afghanistan mined their vast resource wealth and traded their products throughout Eurasia and North Africa via the ancient Silk Road. The immense copper resource of Mes Aynak is one of many resource sites that have been mined for centuries and in many cases millennia and which demonstrate the historical wealth of Afghanistan. The archaeological site at Mes Aynak shows evidence of five thousand years of copper mining. Located 40 km (25 miles) south-east of Kabul, Mes Aynak covers an area of 450 square km (280 square miles). A five-thousand-year-old Bronze Age mining town lies below a Buddhist city that reached its height of prosperity in the fifth to seventh centuries (Afghanistan MOMP 2014). Today, the Aynak copper deposit is recognised as the second largest in the world, containing as much as 20 million metric tons of exploitable copper (Huntzinger 2008: 24). In 2007 – in a deal that will be analysed more thoroughly later in this essay – the government of Afghanistan awarded the concession to extract the copper at Aynak to a joint venture consortium of two Chinese state enterprises, with China Metallurgical Construction Corporation (CMCC) as 75 per cent owner

and Jiangxi Copper Company (JCC) as 25 per cent owner. It was widely reported that the consortium paid \$3 billion for the concession, but documentation shows a payment of \$4.39 billion (Hong Kong Stock Exchange 2008). Yearly copper extraction at Aynak could be as high as 200,000 metric tonnes, which is 1.3 per cent of current annual world production. Afghanistan could become among the top 15 copper producers in the world on the strength of only this one of several rich copper deposits in the country. Gross revenues from Aynak are expected to reach \$1.404 billion per year, with annual profits after tax of \$304 million. A 15 per cent royalty will net an annual state income of \$390 million (Huntzinger 2008: 24–29). The entire mining sector was forecast to generate annual revenues for the government of Afghanistan of between \$500 million and \$1.5 billion by 2016 and more than \$3 billion by 2026 (Global Witness 2012: 7). Recent events demonstrate that the forecasts for development time were overly optimistic, but the fact remains that investors will ultimately exploit Afghanistan's vast resource wealth. The immense multi-billion-dollar mining project in Aynak and an iron mining project currently being developed by an Indian–Canadian consortium in Hajigak are the first of numerous projects of similar scale, with many smaller projects also in early production stages (Skinner 2008, 2013).

As early as 1808, surveyors embedded within the paramilitary units of the British East India Company scrambled through Afghanistan attempting to exploit its riches ahead of their Russian competitors (Elphinstone 1815: 306; Shroder 1981). A primary objective of the first commercial expedition to Kabul, led by Captain Alexander Burns in 1836–37, was to find coal to power the East India Company's Indus River fleet (Grout 1995: 192). Unfortunately, Burns's expedition had greater success in propelling the East India Company into the First Anglo-Afghan War of 1839–42. Another captain of the East India Company, Henry Drummond (1841), documented one of the first modern geological surveys of Afghanistan, which he conducted during the war. In his report, Drummond refers to an earlier 'voluminous Geological Report' prepared by Captain Herbert, which attracted the attention of 'practical men and capitalists in London' (Drummond 1841: 76). Drummond reported

that, in addition to the many mineral deposits he surveyed, the extent of existing excavations as well as quantities of slag at various Afghan mine sites bode well for the profitability of mining investments. Drummond observed excavations at the Aynak copper mines 'so large, that they have more the appearance of caverns than mining galleries' (1841: 79), indicating the massive amounts of copper that had been mined during five millennia of artisanal mining.

In a rationalisation of imperialism prescient of the arguments that political and military leaders would make again in the 21st century, Captain Drummond claimed the 1839 British invasion of Afghanistan would not be perceived as an 'act of aggression', because the reorganisation of the existing system of Afghan mine management and improvements in the working conditions of Afghan miners would lead to an 'era of peace, of prosperity, and of permanent tranquility in Afghanistan' (quoted in Grout 1995: 193–194). The British envoy to Kabul, Sir W.H. Macnaughten, wrote in 1841 that developing Afghanistan's resources would employ the 'wild inhabitants ... reclaim them from a life of lawless violence' and increase the wealth of the Afghans as it increased the wealth of the East Asia Company (quoted in Grout 1995: 193). However, the British never did secure enough of a foothold in Afghanistan to establish commercially viable mines. Nonetheless, they maintained 'a comprehensive interest' in Afghanistan's resources throughout the 19th and 20th centuries until the British army and air force finally retreated from Afghanistan in 1919 to end the Third Anglo-Afghan War (Ali and Shroder 2011: 5).

After the last British retreat, in 1919, a new Afghan government – a democratic parliamentary monarchy based on the British system – encouraged exploration and development. In 1927, a Soviet surveyor, Vladimir Obruchev, published a report titled 'Fossil Riches of Afghanistan' and detailing his oil and gas discoveries (Ali and Shroder 2011: 5). The Obruchev depression in the natural-gas-rich Amu Darya Basin still bears his name (Klett et al. 2006a). In the early 1930s, the Afghan Government granted the American Inland Oil Company a 25-year exclusive concession to oil and mineral exploration rights. However, the company withdrew from the deal, upsetting the Afghans in 'their first real experience with voluntary

foreign penetration' (Shroder 1981: 44). After the Second World War, the Afghan Government initiated large-scale geological exploration. It sought technical and financial assistance from American, Western European, Czech, and Soviet sources, often pitting First-World and Second-World surveyors against one another on overlapping but secretive exploration projects. By the 1970s, more than 700 geological reports indicated that a wealth of resources awaited exploitation (Shroder 1981; Tucker et al. 2011). The Afghanistan Ministry of Mines and Resources and the United Nations (UN) in Kabul concealed numerous reports containing 'information on resources perceived to be world-strategic and therefore a threat to Afghan independence should too much notice be attracted' (Shroder 1981: 45).

A USGS website claims: 'During the 1980s and 1990s, the USGS conducted broad regional oil and gas resource assessments in northwestern Afghanistan' (USGS n.d.). Considering that north-west Afghanistan was occupied by Soviet troops during the 1980s, this claim seems contentious. It may indicate that USGS surveyors worked with the American-backed mujahedin during the 1980s. During the 1990s, in view of the close relations between the US and the mujahedin military commanders, the USGS may have conducted assessments on the ground. 'Mujahedin' – the plural of 'mujahedi' – translates as strugglers, or the fighters of jihad. In the Afghan context, seven rival mujahedin organisations, based on political, regional, tribal, ethnic, and religious differences, gained power in different parts of Afghanistan during the anti-Soviet jihad of the 1980s. All of the mujahedin organisations maintained bases in Pakistan and all received financial and logistical support and arms supplies, from the US as well as from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, during the Soviet occupation. US support continued after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 until one of the mujahedin factions – Jamaat-i-Islami, led by Burhanuddin Rabbani – succeeded in invading Kabul to overthrow the socialist government in 1992 (Coll 2004; Rashid 2000, 2008). A number of mujahedin factions financed their anti-Soviet insurgency not only with US support, but also via mining (DuPée 2012). One particularly successful mujahedin commander, Ahmad Shah Massoud, financed his military campaign with his

profitable gem-mining industry in Panshir. When Jamaat-i-Islami seized power from the nominally socialist government to establish the first Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in 1992, Massoud, became defence minister and nationalised his gem mines. With assistance from the Polish company Intercommerce, the Panshir mines generated US\$ 200 million of revenue per year during the rule of the short-lived Islamic republic (DuPée 2012: 12). Following the Taliban takeover in 1996, the deposed Jamaat-i-Islami and two other rival mujahedin factions coalesced as the United Islamic and National Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (UINFSA), better known in the West as the Northern Alliance. The UINFSA commanders operated nearly 100 emerald mines prior to the US-led invasion in 2001 (DuPée 2012: 13).

Despite Afghanistan's holding some of the world's largest known deposits of fuel resources and minerals, only limited development of oil, gas, salt, coal, building materials, emeralds, lapis lazuli, and various other gemstones began after the Second World War. The American authors of an influential book published during the Soviet occupation, titled *Afghanistan: The Great Game Revisited*, argued that the Soviet invasion was a resource grab for Afghan minerals, oil, and gas, as well as a strategic gambit to gain access to the Persian Gulf oil fields (Klass 1987). However, during the Soviet occupation, industrial-scale development was limited to the few areas the Soviets could secure, such as the northern gas fields. Nevertheless, from the early 1970s to the early 1990s, Afghans derived much of their foreign exchange from natural gas sales to the USSR (Noorzoy 1990, 2006). The Soviets also briefly mined uranium at two locations during the 1980s (McCready 2006: 8). During the civil war of 1992–96, development all but halted. After the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 1996, the US initiated negotiations, which ultimately failed, to develop various projects, including the Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan (TAP) gas pipeline, with both the Taliban, which controlled most of Afghanistan, and the UINFSA, which controlled some territory in the north (Foster 2008; Gilman 1997).

On 20 March 2002, the USGS published its first post-invasion report, listing more than 1000 deposits, mines, and occurrences in Afghanistan on the basis of a compilation of existing data and literature (Orris and

Bliss 2002). Subsequent reports have been informed by increasingly detailed ground and aerial surveys, including imaging spectrometer data collection conducted over most of Afghanistan in 2007 (Tucker et al. 2011). A partial list of the abundant minerals of Afghanistan includes copper, iron, gold, mercury, cobalt, lead, and uranium; rare metals including chromium, cesium, lithium, niobium, and tantalum; and rare earth elements. In 2002, the USGS also identified oil and gas reserves that far surpassed Soviet estimates (Klett et al. 2006b; *Oil & Gas Journal* 2006; Shroder 2007). Each subsequent assessment has shown larger deposits of oil and gas. In 2006, the USGS assessment of potential Afghan oil and gas listed 1.6 billion barrels of crude oil, 16 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and 500 million barrels of natural gas liquids (Klett et al. 2006a: vii). In 2011, the assessment was increased to 1.908 billion barrels of crude oil, 59 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and 667 million barrels of natural gas liquids (USGS 2011). In 2012, Chinese state enterprises began oil and gas production in Afghanistan (; Hall 2013, Shalizi 2012) and construction of a \$700 million oil refinery (Baraki 2012). A joint venture between an American company, FMC, and an Afghan company is building another oil refinery which is projected to generate annual revenues of \$400 million per year (Wadsam 2012).

In view of the extensive history of resource exploration and extraction in Afghanistan, Risen's (2010) claim that American geologists were ignorant of Afghanistan's vast resource wealth until 2004 when they fortuitously 'stumbled' upon some old Soviet-era documents is ludicrous. The numerous post-2001 joint studies conducted by the USGS, the British Geological Survey, the Afghanistan Geological Survey, and the Canadian Forces Mapping and Charting Establishment (USGS 2008) confirmed the facts known in the West, since the 19th century, that Afghan mineral and petroleum resources were of vast quantity and of significant economic and geostrategic importance. The only news in Risen's front-page article of 2010 was that Afghanistan's natural resource wealth, previously estimated to be worth billions of US dollars (Skinner 2008), could instead net trillions. Clearly, throughout the 20th century, American and allied strategic planners were either knowledgeable of Afghanistan's vast resource wealth or incredibly negligent in their duties.

Despite its economic and geostrategic significance – or arguably, precisely because of this significance – exploitation of Afghanistan’s resource wealth was constrained throughout the 20th century. A key obstacle throughout the century was the lack of transport, energy transmission, and communications infrastructure. Political instability since the early 1970s and the Soviet invasion on 25 December 1979 created even greater obstacles. Foreign investors might have hoped that the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, and the US-backed mujahedin victory over the nominally socialist government in 1992, would have opened Afghanistan to foreign investment. However, the internecine civil war that immediately erupted between rival mujahedin factions precluded hopes for development. In 1996, the Taliban seized control of Kabul, fracturing Afghanistan into two quasi-states, with the US-supported UINFA entrenched in the north. Yet, despite these many physical and political obstacles blocking Afghan resource development, the greatest obstacle dissuading foreign investors throughout the 20th century was a fear of nationalisation, because ‘minerals were traditionally considered state property’ (Shroder 1981: 49). Even the mujahedin warlord Massoud nationalised his profitable gem mines when he became defence minister of the first US-backed Islamic republic in 1992.

If the US-led ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ invasion of 2001 accomplished nothing else, it secured the freedom for foreign investors to profit from Afghanistan’s resource wealth by destroying the last vestiges of its poorly developed and badly broken state enterprise system. The US Department of State (2010) reports that Afghanistan ‘has taken significant steps toward fostering a business-friendly environment for both foreign and domestic investment’. Afghanistan’s new investment law allows 100 per cent foreign ownership and provides generous tax allowances to foreign investors, but does not provide protection for Afghan workers or the environment (Noorzoy 2006). A few analysts have employed crude analyses to argue that the US-led coalition invaded Afghanistan simply to secure possession of its resource wealth, but the potential of reaping a few trillion dollars’ worth of natural resources is not an adequate rationale for launching a military expedition that cost at least as much or more.

Resource extraction in Afghanistan, nonetheless, plays an increasingly large strategic role in catalysing development of a New Silk Road, which is an integral factor in expanding capital in Central Asia to ensure dominance of the US-led Empire of Capital throughout Eurasia (Skinner 2008, 2013).

### The New Silk Road

Clearly, Afghanistan is of significant value as a source of economically and strategically significant natural resources, but is it as remote as popular mythology would have us believe? On the contrary, Afghanistan is poised to become an important node in a trans-Eurasian network of transport, energy transmission, and communications infrastructure. For millennia, the land now known as Afghanistan was a strategic land bridge at the centre of a trans-continental trade network known as the Silk Road. The various peoples who populated this land not only exported the gems and minerals they mined, as well as the once bountiful agricultural products they produced; they also profited by maintaining the trans-Eurasian trade routes and providing logistics and security to facilitate transporting trade goods through their territories. However, with the advent of cheaper, faster, and more reliable sea travel from the 15th century, caravels and eventually supertankers and container ships superseded the camels, donkeys, and horses that travelled the ancient Silk Road.

Although Afghanistan lost its central place in global trade from the 15th century onwards, it resumed geopolitical significance in the 19th century, for a different reason: the leaders of the British, Russian, and Persian empires used Afghanistan’s rugged terrain as a barrier to separate their empires (Rubin 1995). The East India Company’s initial forays into Afghanistan as early as 1808 ultimately resulted in the ignominious defeat of the British in three Anglo-Afghan wars fought between 1839 and 1919. Unable to effectively exploit its riches, the British had to be content with using Afghanistan as a strategic barrier to protect the Indian jewel of the British Empire to the south from the Russian Empire to the north. After forcing the British military forces out of Afghanistan to end the Third Anglo-Afghan War in 1919, Afghans enjoyed a brief period of freedom from military interventions, and they had hopes of opening the

country to trade and commerce on their own terms. However, during the Cold War, the US and USSR resumed using Afghanistan as an inter-imperial barrier (Rubin 1995). Consequently, the development of modern transport, energy transmission, and communications infrastructure that took place elsewhere in the region throughout the 19th and 20th centuries bypassed Afghanistan. With the collapse of the USSR, the strategic need to use Afghanistan as a barrier separating rival empires also collapsed; instead, Afghanistan can now be used as a bridgehead to expand capital.

The transition of Afghanistan from a barrier separating rival empires to a bridgehead from which to further expand the reach of capitalism is a key to strengthening the US-led Empire of Capital. As the former national security advisor to the Carter Administration, Zbigniew Brzezinski, argued, 'the distribution of power on the Eurasian landmass will be of decisive importance to America's global primacy' (1997: 51). The nation state or empire that can dominate trade on the supercontinent will dominate the globe; dominance over the process of reconnecting Eurasia via Afghanistan and the Greater Central Asia region is an integral component of this strategic quest for power. The shortest routes between China and Europe, as well as between India and Russia, are via Afghanistan. Railways, highways, oil and gas pipelines, electrical transmission lines, and fibre-optic cables will eventually criss-cross Afghanistan to connect Eurasia. As in previous imperial ages, the empire that achieves primacy is the one that, among other aspects of power, establishes itself as builder, protector, and arbiter of trade routes. Development of Afghanistan is inevitable, but the US and its closest allies have no economic advantage to dominate development in this region; their only clear advantage is military power. The 9/11 terrorist attacks provided a convenient pretext to exercise this power. This is not to argue that the 9/11 attacks and subsequent invasion of Afghanistan and Global War on Terror are necessarily part of some vast conspiracy: opportunistic strategists seized the opportunity provided by the terrorists. The wealth and strategic importance of Afghanistan may not be well known in the West, and were no doubt purposely obfuscated by effective propaganda, but they were not a state secret.

Hillary Clinton announced the US Government's New Silk Road strategy in Chennai, India, on 20 July 2011. In her address, Clinton called on Indian leaders to help build a New Silk Road as an 'international web and network of economic and transit connections'. 'That means', Clinton said, 'building more rail lines, highways, energy infrastructure ... upgrading the facilities at border crossings ... and removing the bureaucratic barriers to the free flow of goods and people.' Clinton also stated: 'It means casting aside the outdated trade policies that we are living with and adopting new rules for the 21st century' (Clinton 2011). Clinton's remarks indicate that creating the political-legal-economic regime is as critical as building the physical infrastructure. Throughout the centuries of expansion and evolution of capitalism, the strategic and economic importance of global trade in various resources waxes and wanes with changes in technology or consumers' whims. A constant that remains is the growth of the physical transport, energy transmission, and communications networks as well as the less tangible but no less real political-legal-economic infrastructure of empire. Building this entire infrastructure of dominance lies at the heart of building empire – a process evident in the battle for Afghanistan.

The idea of building a new Silk Road was formulated long before the invasion of Afghanistan. The Silk Road Strategy Act of 1997 (Gilman 1997) and Silk Road Strategy Act of 1999 (Bereuter 1999) did not pass into law; nonetheless, documentation of their debate demonstrates the strategic thinking of US decision makers in the 1990s. The initiator of the first failed act, Benjamin Gilman (1997), aimed 'to focus American diplomatic and commercial attention, as well as American foreign assistance, on the important regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia' in order to rebuild 'links to Europe and Asia'. While Gilman's bill focused on facilitating oil and gas exports to the West, it also aimed more broadly to establish 'economic interdependence' and to develop 'open market economies and open democratic systems' in the region. Gilman designed the bill to 'help promote market-oriented principles and practices', 'assist in the development of the infrastructure necessary for communications, transportation, and energy and trade', and 'support United States business interests

and investments in the region' (1997: 2–3). According to Doug Bereuter, who chaired the subcommittee meetings on the 1997 bill and sponsored the attempt to resurrect it in 1999, 'the collapse of the Soviet Union has unleashed a new great game, where the interests of the East India Trading Company have been replaced by those of Unocal and Total, and many other organizations and firms' (US Congress 1998: 6). As Gilman (1997) indicated in the bill, the US objective is to secure investors and liberate capital in general, of which the oil and gas sectors are vital commercial interests but by no means the only ones; mining is also of great concern. However, US legislators failed to pass either Silk Road Strategy Act into law, as US negotiators simultaneously were unable to finalise agreements with the rival governments of a divided Afghanistan. The Taliban ruled most of Afghanistan while the UINFSA ruled a rump state in the north. The invasion of 2001 eliminated the difficulty of having to negotiate with these rival Afghan governments. In their place the US-led invasion force installed an interim government headed by Hamid Karzai, composed primarily of warlords from the UINFSA (Skinner 2013).

Within days of the invasion, the editors of the *Christian Science Monitor* expressed concern that the US might be perceived to have invaded Afghanistan for control of its resources. The editors wrote:

As late as 1998, two years after the Taliban took over, the US company Unocal was negotiating with that radical Islamic regime about a pipeline that would run through Afghanistan and down to Karachi in Pakistan. Some Taliban officials even visited the US to discuss the matter. Also in that year, then-oil-industry executive and now Vice President Dick Cheney was captivated by the Caspian's potential. 'I can't think of a time when we've had a region emerge as suddenly to become as strategically significant as the Caspian,' he told a large group of oil-industry executives in Washington. (*Christian Science Monitor* 2001)

These editors were concerned that 'the conspiracy-minded in the Middle East and elsewhere will see the hand of Big Oil at work in creating a puppet government in Kabul'. However, by definition, conspiracy denotes

secrecy – the Silk Road strategy was not secret. Nor was Dick Cheney's proposal 'to preclude any hostile power from dominating a region critical to our interests' secret (1993: 4). Indeed, the institutions of the US state publicly identify US interests and objectives, even if these tend to be couched in euphemistic language.

The US National Security Strategy of 2002 outlines a two-track strategy. The first track is to *engage* currently compliant but potential challengers of US dominance in the globalising capitalist system – particularly China, but also Russia – in mutually profitable economic activities. The second track is to be prepared to militarily *contain* any rival state should it demonstrate non-compliance (Bush 2002). The forward presence of US and allied forces in Afghanistan facilitates achieving both objectives. Not surprisingly, according to a RAND publication, 'China feels very vulnerable where its sea lines of communication are concerned'; consequently, 'there is great interest in building pipelines' and other 'strategic passageways' to Central Asia, Russia, and Pakistan (Beckley, Ratner, and Scobell 2014: 25). American strategists seek to *engage* China along with all other states in the region in these industrial endeavours within the rubric of the US-led global economic system, while setting the rules to maintain dominance of American corporate and state interests. However, should any state not co-operate, the *full-spectrum dominance* and *forward presence* of the US military with the support of its closest allies will militarily *contain* any hostile power. The US-led combat mission in Afghanistan has been transformed into a training mission. Nonetheless, a sizeable foreign military training force will probably remain in Afghanistan indefinitely to maintain a forward presence to contain China or Russia if necessary and to continue the ongoing containment of Iran. This objective looms large among the other strategic objectives supporting resource extraction, development of the New Silk Road, and the general expansion and security of capital.

The Afghanistan Investment Support Agency advertises that 'Afghanistan is ideally situated to again function as a strategic gateway', offering 'a point of access to an extended regional market of more than 2 billion people' (AISA 2010). Afghanistan is a new frontier for capital development: building and operating the necessary

infrastructure to exploit this potential will be a capital-intensive but highly profitable and power-enhancing venture. A key agency in co-ordinating development of the New Silk Road, since 1996, is the Central Asian Regional Economic Coordination Program (CAREC) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Between 2001 and 2011, CAREC invested more than \$17 billion in 'regional infrastructure and initiatives to promote connectivity and trade' and open 'previously unexploited resources' throughout Central Asia (CAREC 2012: 1). Afghanistan remains the missing link in the system. Only 7 per cent of roads in Afghanistan are paved, four provincial capitals are not connected to the regional network, and 70 per cent of inter-provincial and inter-district roads are in 'poor' condition (ADB 2014: 2). In the late 1970s, the French rail company SOFRERAIL proposed building a railway linking Afghanistan with Pakistan and Iran to develop Afghanistan's then fledgling mining industry; however, the proposal collapsed because of disagreements between Afghanistan and Iran and the eventual political turmoil in Iran and Afghanistan (Shroder 1981: 47). The only railways existing in Afghanistan are 75 km of recently renovated railway from Uzbekistan, initially built to supply Soviet forces based near Mazar-e-Sharif, and the preliminary sections of an Iranian railway under construction from Iran that will terminate in Herat (Skinner 2013).

There is a symbiotic relationship between mines and railways, but co-ordinating investment in these correlated industries is difficult. The inherent conundrum is that investors will not invest to develop a large-scale mine not serviced by a railway, but investors will not invest in a railway unless there are reasonable prospects of profiting from existing developments. The fix for this conundrum in Afghanistan was to utilise state enterprises to aggregate these mutual interests. When the government of Afghanistan granted the development concession for the massive Aynak copper deposit to the consortium of CMCC and JCC, commentators such as Robert Kaplan (2009) and Michael Wines (2009) were incensed. Why, they asked, should the Afghans award the Chinese a treasure liberated by the sacrifices of US and allied soldiers and why should these soldiers protect the investments of Chinese state enterprises? But awarding the Aynak mine to

the CMCC–JCC consortium may have been a shrewd calculation on the part of US and allied strategists in co-operation with China and Afghanistan. The Chinese consortium will construct a 400-megawatt power plant to feed the mine and its smelters, develop a nearby coalmine to feed the power plant, and construct a railway that will stretch from west China through Tajikistan to the Aynak mine and on to Pakistan. This railway will also eventually link to the Herat terminus of the Iranian–Afghan railway. Excess electrical power will supply nearby Kabul, and the railway will service the equally massive Hajigak iron mine that an Indian–Canadian consortium is currently developing as well as many other future developments. On 22 September 2010, the Afghanistan Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MOMP) announced an agreement with the CMCC–JCC consortium to build a railway to service Kabul and the Aynak copper mine that will 'connect Afghanistan to the railways of Pakistan, India, and South East Asia and to the extensive rail system of China, Europe, and Central Asia'. The railway will be designed 'to carry the heaviest of loads ... and commercial goods for transit, agricultural products, passengers and normal freight', according to the MOMP (Afghanistan MOMP 2010). The railway will be built on the 'BOOT' principle – Build, Own, Operate, and Transfer. The Chinese consortium will own and operate the railway until it recovers its capital cost, at which time it will train Afghan staff prior to transferring ownership to the government of Afghanistan. Capital costs for the railway are estimated at between US \$4 billion and US \$5 billion (Afghanistan MOMP 2010). This is in addition to the US \$4.39 billion that CMCC–JCC paid for the mining concession, plus the unpublicised costs it will incur to build the mine. A Canadian mining company, Hunter-Dickinson, was initially expected to win the Aynak concession, but it was unlikely that any private company could have undertaken such a large project in view of the high capital cost for not only mine development but also the necessary railway and power-generation infrastructure, compounded by the political risks of investing in Afghanistan and the commercial risk of investing in a resource with high market volatility. The American, Canadian, and British governments operate state-financed insurance schemes to protect investors from political risk in foreign investments, but

they will not insure investments of this scale. The CMCC–JCC consortium clearly had an advantage of scale as a state enterprise that few if any private corporations could match. Moreover, China's growing economy needs a growing supply of copper regardless of its market price. Most importantly, by engaging China economically, the US and its allies align China's interests with the interests of the Empire of Capital (Skinner 2008, 2011, 2013).

Among other elements of the New Silk Road currently in development are the CASA-1000 and TAPI energy transmission projects. The CASA-1000 is a 1222-km network of high-voltage electricity transmission lines that will export high-voltage electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Pakistan and Afghanistan (CASA-1000 2015). This project is under the direction of the Central Asia–South Asia Regional Electricity Market (CASAREM) project with funding from the Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Finance Corporation, Islamic Development Bank, and World Bank. The TAPI (Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India) pipeline will transport natural gas from Turkmenistan across Afghanistan to markets in Pakistan and India (Hormats 2011). This project, which has facilitated cooperation between India and Pakistan as well as engaging both China and Russia as investors (Muzalevsky 2011), surpasses the ideas of the architects of the initial TAP pipeline and the Silk Road Strategy Acts of 1997 and 1999. Plans are now under way for an equally ambitious gas pipeline from Turkmenistan via Tajikistan and Afghanistan to China (Samimi 2012).

Clearly, the economic and strategic value of Afghanistan will be exponentially multiplied if the New Silk Road can indeed be realised. The geostrategic power of the US-led Empire of Capital will be strengthened by ensuring its hegemonic position in every aspect of development in Afghanistan and Central Asia, which is key to power across Eurasia. However, as during every historical epoch of rapid development and capital expansion, there will be vast differences between the winners and the losers. The leadership and investors in the Empire of Capital are manoeuvring to be the biggest winners. The losers will be Afghans who are dispossessed of their traditional lands and livelihoods to make way for development. Although the post-invasion

Afghan government instituted a legal regime purportedly to protect Afghans, it is inadequate and skewed to disproportionately protect investors' property rights. Consequently, continuing conflict is inevitable, and the foreign occupation to secure capital expansion in Afghanistan is unlikely to end in the foreseeable future.

### **The battle for Afghanistan: just war or just one battle of endless global war?**

The invasion of Afghanistan is often portrayed as the necessary war – the just war – in contrast to the unnecessary invasion of Iraq. The myth persists that, having been provoked and given no other option but war by the terrorists who attacked New York and Washington on 11 September 2001, the US and its closest allies fought a just war in Afghanistan. The 9/11 terrorist attacks are frequently compared to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. However, a more accurate historical comparison is with the terrorist attack that provided the pretext for Austria-Hungary to invade Serbia, which triggered the First World War. In that case, the allied victors – the US, the UK, and France – found Austria-Hungary and its ally Germany guilty of the international war crime of aggression. The act of terrorism that was the precipitating cause of the current global war, like the terrorist attack that precipitated the First World War, did not make war necessary; in both cases, the criminal terrorists could have been dealt with by numerous diplomatic, police, and military actions short of launching a global war. Instead, the US and its closest allies used the 9/11 terrorist attacks as a pretext to remove the recalcitrant Islamist Taliban regime from power; the assassination of Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo provided a pretext to remove the recalcitrant Serbian nationalist regime from power. In both cases, the precipitating cause of war was a criminal act perpetrated by a non-governmental terrorist organisation. In both cases, the immediate cause of war was the desire of the invaders to remove a recalcitrant regime that acted in ways contrary to the interests of the invaders. In both cases, the deep cause of the war was a complex of factors rooted in the tensions of expanding empires manoeuvring for geopolitical advantage. Opportunistic leaders of wealthy powerful states, in both cases,



seized the opportunity provided by a terrorist attack to launch retaliatory military actions with aggressive geostrategic objectives that reached far beyond merely eliminating or punishing the terrorists.

A notable proponent of the Global War on Terror, Michael Ignatieff, quipped: 'There might be reason, even though the awakening has been brutal, to be thankful to the barbarians. After all, they are, as the poet Celan said, a kind of solution. They have offered the empire a new *raison d'être* and a long-term strategic objective: the eradication of terror' (2003: 6). However, as Ignatieff also observes, the American public and its political leaders are uncomfortable with recognising they are citizens of an empire. Americans, according to Ignatieff, are 'a people who remember their country secured its independence by revolt against an empire, and who have often thought of their country as the friend of anti-imperial struggles everywhere. It is an empire in other words, without consciousness of itself as such. But that does not make it any less of an empire, that is, an attempt to permanently order the world of states and markets according to its national interests' (2003: 2). Consequently, the leaders of empire must continuously invent popular rationales for war as a façade for aggressive military actions.

When George Bush declared the Global War on Terror on 20 September 2001, he stated that the military operations to come would be retaliatory in intent, but would achieve 'far more than instant retaliation' (G.W. Bush 2001). In fact, since the invasion began on 7 October 2001, retaliation has disproportionately affected millions of Afghans who bore no responsibility for the 9/11 terrorist attacks. An astounding 96 per cent of Afghans have been personally affected by death, injury, disability, and the destruction of their homes, assets, and livelihoods (UN 2010: 2–8). Retaliation as a reason for war may have satisfied a critical mass of Bush's constituency. Retaliation was also politically useful for demonstrating that the US and its closest allies possess both the political will and the military capacity to punish any challengers, regardless of the human, material, and political costs. Retaliation, however, is an illegal rationale for war according to international law: only *self-defence* and *last resort* meet the legal criteria for war (Duffy 2005; Mandel 2004). Special Operations Forces from the US, the UK, Canada, Australia, and New

Zealand, with additional air support from Germany and France, unilaterally invaded Afghanistan, avoiding debate in the UN Security Council regarding the legality of this aggressive force. Proponents of the invasion argue that UN Security Council Resolution 1368 (UNSC 2001) sanctioned and legalised this use of aggressive force. The resolution is certainly a strongly worded condemnation of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which urges states to seek out and bring the perpetrators to justice, but it does not in any terms sanction the invasion of Afghanistan. In fact, no mention of Afghanistan exists in the document.

What did occur was that the US, with the support of a small but powerful military coalition, instituted new *de facto* international law by overtly violating the laws of war. The leaders of most other powerful states tacitly acquiesced. Unable to legitimise the invasion of Afghanistan on the criteria of extant law, President Bush attempted to justify launching a global war using broad philosophical rationales. Bush stated (2001): 'This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom ... Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom, the great achievement of our time and the great hope of every time, now depends on us'. Laura Bush (2001) added that the 'fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women' and because 'in Afghanistan we see the world the terrorists would like to impose on the rest of us'. A self-claimed right to illegal retaliation and abstract concepts of securing freedom and the rights of women and girls were the initial stated objectives of the Global War on Terror and its first battle – the invasion of Afghanistan, codenamed 'Operation Enduring Freedom'.

The Bush Administration later defined what it really meant by 'freedom' in *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (G.W. Bush 2002), popularly referred to as the Bush Doctrine. In a chapter titled 'Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Markets and Free Trade', the Bush Doctrine defines 'real freedom' as free trade (17–20). Pre-emptive warfare, which most analysts identify as the radical innovation of the Bush Doctrine, is a means to liberate capital; however, neither pre-emptive warfare nor wars fought to expand free trade are departures from the historical practice of the US state. The truly radical action of

the Bush Administration was to so clearly articulate the objective of free trade and to rationalise the use of aggressive pre-emptive warfare in its pursuit. Few state leaders objected to the Bush Administration's claim to these new *de facto* legal rights, nor did the Obama Administration repudiate the *de facto* international law that the Bush Doctrine invented. Instead, the Obama Administration tried to rebrand the global war as 'Overseas Contingency Operations' (Burkeman 2009; Wilson and Kamen 2009), but nevertheless expanded global warfare. We should take George W. Bush at his word when he declared a global war on 20 September 2001 – this is truly a war of global scale without end. Afghanistan was the first of many battlefronts in this global war with far-flung overt and covert operations in Pakistan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa, as well as in the Philippines, South Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean (G.W. Bush 2007; US Congressional Research Service 2009). The Obama Administration, instead of ending the war, has expanded it into Libya and Syria and has re-invaded Iraq. President Bush's declaration of global war and the subsequent Bush Doctrine overtly declared the mode of violence necessary to expand capitalism.

In the case of Afghanistan, the long-delayed exploitation of resources and transformation of the ancient Silk Road trade network into a modern transport, energy transmission, and communications infrastructure would eventually occur with or without Western investors. However, to maintain global hegemony, it is necessary that the US-led Empire of Capital manoeuvre not to only grab the eventual lion's share of profit from these processes, but, more importantly, to maintain its dominant position to rule over these processes. But the US and its closest allies have few political or economic advantages in Central Asia; military power is their only clear advantage in this region. The 9/11 terrorist attacks provided an opportunity to rationalise employing the military in *creative destruction*: this is warfare and state-building with imperial intent. The US and its allies may establish advantages in financing, designing, constructing, and servicing the trans-Eurasian transport, energy transmission, and communications infrastructure and developing resource extraction to expand capital. More importantly, the US and its allies

will determine the political-legal-economic regime to rule this trans-Eurasian network. Moreover, they will profit economically and politically from the military and security complex needed to protect this system, essentially as a regional affiliate of a global protection racket. The best-case scenario, from the perspective of imperial strategists, is to further engage China, Russia, India, and the less powerful states of the region in expanding capitalism in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Nonetheless, the US and allied militaries will remain in situ to contain any potentially hostile state from intervening in Central Asia outside the rules set by the Empire of Capital. Whatever the outcome in Afghanistan and Central Asia – even the worst-case scenario of a further collapse into total chaos and warfare in the region – investors in the military-industrial complex and its sibling, the development-industrial complex, profit from war (Skinner 2013).

### **The Empire of Capital: expanding and evolving capitalism**

In this latest stage of capitalism, the Bush and Obama administrations' expanding regime of new rules – enforced by military dominance at least as much as political influence – strengthens the concept of New World Order originally conceived by Woodrow Wilson. This New World Order, nearing its centenary, relies on the hegemonic leadership of the US increasingly in partnership with other powerful wealthy capitalist states – partnerships tied together by a growing matrix of state, sub-state, and supra-state governance and military organisations; NGOs; and corporations. An 'Empire of Capital', as Ellen Wood (2003) describes it, is emerging – this is a US-led empire that can no longer be described merely as an American empire. The dominant US state requires the support of closely allied *subdominant* states that not only act in concert with the *dominant* state, but can also substitute as the dominant state. For example, the US and the UK, playing its *subdominant* role, jointly declared their intentions to invade Afghanistan and later Iraq. When the US and the UK became preoccupied with invading Iraq, Canada fulfilled its *subdominant* role to temporarily command the occupation of Afghanistan. This *subdominant* role of imperial partnership contrasts with Canada's historical *subordinate* role within the

British Empire. The subdominant states of the Empire of Capital remain as independent nation states and competing national capitals, but act in concert within a unified empire when their interests are aligned and it is mutually beneficial to do so. One of the most important roles of the dominant US state in this empire is to aggregate the interests of competing nation states and their national capital.

This conception of an Empire of Capital contrasts with William Robinson's (2004) idea of transnational capital. While this emerging empire does demonstrate a distinct tendency towards transnational capital it, nevertheless, remains rooted, at present, within the existing multinational framework of competing nation states. Moreover, there are indications that an Anglocentric hierarchy persists to further mitigate movement towards truly transnational capital. For example the so-called 'Five Eyes' – the security-military apparatuses of the five Anglophone powers, the US, the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand – remain more closely linked to each other than to their counterparts in other allied states. The fact that the invasion of Afghanistan was led on the ground exclusively by the Special Operations Forces of this Anglophone quintet indicates not only the depth of security-military interoperability, but also the depth of interoperability at every level of state apparatuses. Nonetheless, this also demonstrates the exclusion of other allied states from this exclusive Anglophone club. It is not evident that state, military, and corporate leaders of the most powerful and wealthiest capitalist states have yet transcended xenophobic nationalism to move toward truly transnational capital. The brief renaming of French fries as 'freedom fries' across America was laughable, but also indicative of the fractures existing in this imperial system. The US-led Empire of Capital does, nevertheless, demonstrate an increasing degree of multinational co-operation and interdependence among the most powerful and wealthiest capitalist states.

There are significant fractures in the empire. For example, many analysts mistakenly refer to the invasion of Afghanistan as a joint action by the US and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). However, the US, the UK, Canada, and briefly Germany were the only NATO states to engage in combat prior to 2003, after which NATO

assumed command of the UN-sanctioned International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF). Moreover, the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom forces that unilaterally invaded Afghanistan remained separate from the less aggressive ISAF until the Obama Administration unified these separate forces under one command in 2008. The reticence of the European members of NATO to participate in the aggressive military actions of Operation Enduring Freedom may have come about because state leaders feared the limits of their own military capacities or the costs associated with aggressive combat. They must have recognised the fact that international law and the UN Charter, which show that the invasion of Afghanistan is a war crime of aggression, supersede NATO treaty obligations. Perhaps most importantly, European leaders certainly knew that popular opinion was against joining the invasion on the basis of the massive protests in their countries and around the world in September and October 2001, which demonstrated opposition to the invasion (Skinner 2013).

The social relationships of domination and subordination inherent in the capitalist system are extremely conflictual at all of the system's interstitial fault lines; thus the global expansion and intensification of capitalism require increasing securitisation and militarisation. To maintain their dominance to ensure the pursuit of their mutual interests, the wealthiest and most powerful capitalist states must co-ordinate a full spectrum of power to suppress any possible threats not only from non-compliant states, but also from any organisation or popular movement that demonstrates resistance to capital expansion. Throughout the 20th century, the US increasingly assumed the role of hegemonic co-ordinator to aggregate the interests of capitalist states. George W. Bush's declaration on 20 September 2001 of the Global War on Terror – a global war that is still expanding without either end or boundaries – is a conjuncture in the history of global political economy. Nonetheless, this latest global war demonstrates as much continuity as exception in the centuries-long history of the violent expansion and evolution of capitalism. Moreover, Bush's conception of New World Order is not a radical departure from the New World Order that Woodrow Wilson conceived at the end of the First World War. The Obama Administration rebranded its global

military expeditions as Overseas Contingency Operations in an attempt to differentiate its foreign policy, but, despite superficial differences, successive US administrations continue to build the regional infrastructures and overall superstructure of dominance of an expanding Empire of Capital to aggregate the mutual interests of the wealthiest and most powerful capitalist states. The inseparable structures of militarism and capitalism have expanded and evolved throughout the centuries of the emergence of capitalism. During the 100 years since the First World War, the most powerful and wealthiest capitalist states under the leadership of the US have increasingly co-ordinated these inseparable structures to the point where it is no longer possible to identify an American empire that is distinct from the emerging Empire of Capital. The battle for Afghanistan is one of many battlefronts in the global war of imperial expansion that illustrate the emergence of this multinational empire.

Violence is a necessary component of the Empire of Capital, because the remaining foundations of pre-capitalist systems, particularly any competing normative systems of collective welfare and reciprocity, must be destroyed if capitalism is to continue its expansion. Violence is needed to contain or destroy any state that fails to conform to the imperial standards dictated by the empire. Furthermore, violence is needed to suppress the popular resistance that flares up within the interstices of the imperial system in reaction to the destruction of traditional norms and livelihoods. Violence is also needed to suppress any popular resistance within the centres of empire. Finally, violence is needed to crush any possible alternative to the globalising Empire of Capital. In many respects, this latest violent mode of imperialism is not new, but merely a more overt iteration of past imperial practice. Nonetheless, this imperial system requires a radical reorganisation of the pre-existing international system and an increasing capacity for overwhelming military dominance by the US and its allies. What is truly unique at this historic juncture is the unrivalled position of power of the US and its closest allies in every facet of social relations and the relative weakness of any potential state-based challenger. Nonetheless, as Brzezinski (2009: 10) recognises, US global leadership is threatened not only because the 'global center of political and economic

gravity is shifting away from the North Atlantic toward Asia and the Pacific', but also because of 'intensifying popular unrest'. The Global War on Terror forcefully contains both of these perceived threats by strengthening the powers of state and private security forces throughout the empire to suppress popular resistance while aggressively thrusting a US-led military coalition deep into Central Asia in an endless occupation of Afghanistan. It is impossible to argue that the invasion of Afghanistan was a necessary response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Moreover, the supposed objectives of promoting democracy and liberating women and girls were not achieved. Nevertheless, from the perspective of imperial geostrategists, the necessity of this act of military aggression is clear: the invasion of Afghanistan did liberate capital.

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## 'Great Games' in the Literature of Imperialism

The term 'Great Game' was coined in the 19th century to describe the rivalry between Russia and Britain. Britain sent spies disguised as surveyors and traders to Afghanistan and Turkestan and, several times, armies to keep the Russians at bay. The Anglo-Afghan war of 1839–42 was precipitated by fears that

the Russians were encroaching on British interests in India after Russia had established a diplomatic and trade presence in Afghanistan. By the 19th century, there was already no such thing as neutral territory. The entire world was now a gigantic playing field for the major industrial powers, and Eurasia was the centre of this playing field.

The game motif is useful to describe the broader rivalry between nations and economic systems with the rise of imperialism and the pursuit of world power. This game goes beyond British rivalry with Russia over Afghanistan, for the heart of Eurasia really encompasses both Central Asia and the Middle East, what was once Turkestan, the Persian Empire and the Ottoman Caliphate, comprising the Persian, Turkic, and Arab worlds, peoples which are mostly Muslim.

To clarify the complexity of imperialist strategies from the 20th century onwards, I defined three 'games' in *Postmodern Imperialism: Geopolitics and the Great Games* (Walberg 2011). During the 19th-century imperial game (which I call Great Game I [GGI]), Britain kept Afghanistan, Iran, and the Ottoman Caliphate as nominally independent political formations, though in compliance with British interests. The former were carefully monitored by Britain, while in the latter, the weakened Ottoman rule had turned the Caliphate into a useful neutral actor allowing the various imperial powers to pursue trade in the region without resorting to war.

This situation changed radically with the First World War. This was a disaster for all the European imperial powers, and the Russian Revolution in 1917 was a declaration of war against the imperialist system itself. This marked the beginning of what is called here Great Game II (GGII): the Cold War between imperialism and communism, where the US united its former imperial rivals Britain, Germany, France, et al. to fight the anti-empire forces, though this game did not take centre stage till the end of the Second World War. The period from 1917 to the Second World War can be called the endgame of GGI.

In the Middle East, cynical British plans to carve up the Ottoman Caliphate after the First World War were exposed when the Russian communists immediately published British diplomatic correspondence with Tsar Nicholas II, much as WikiLeaks exposed diplomatic mendacity in 2010. Britain went ahead anyway in 1918, carving

up the Caliphate as a political compromise in the region with the rival interests of France, Germany, and imperial Russia was no longer necessary. Apart from the Turkish Anatolian heartland, the Caliphate was divided into quasi-colonies ('mandates') with a radical plan to create a Jewish state in the Palestinian heartland.

Turkestan was now part of the new communist politico-economic formation. Until the end of GGII, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, it remained out of bounds to imperialism, a backwater, an integral part of a kind of secular caliphate, where borders meant little and people were united around a stern communist faith rather than nationalism or religion. In the 1920s, the USSR divided it up roughly according to ethnicity into *pro forma* administrative divisions Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan (in order of population), the 'stans', plus Azerbaijan. These were developed in accordance with Soviet central plans, achieving a high standard of living compared to non-socialist neighbours Afghanistan, Iran, and colonial Pakistan, but at the expense of Islam, which was largely repressed. (Stalin had approved an Islamic Directorate for Central Asia and Kazakhstan during the Second World War to mobilise Central Asian Muslims against the Nazi invasion and from the 1960s madrasahs in Tashkent and Bukhara were allowed to function, but observing the faith was severely restricted.)

As the Soviet Union was not viewed then as an imperial threat to British India, Afghanistan, a weak monarchy, lost its geopolitical importance as a Russian gateway to India during the GGI endgame. Iran, which straddles the Middle East and Central Asia, was also a weak monarchy, but by the late 19th century was becoming far more important than Afghanistan, as vast oil reserves had been discovered there, and coal was being replaced by the much more practical oil as the fuel to run the growing empires. Iran was occupied by Britain and imperial Russia during the First World War, and again by Britain and the Soviet Union in the Second World War, during the GGI endgame, to keep it from siding with Germany and to ensure access to its oil. It became vital to the support of the empire in GGII but took on a radically different role as GGIII got underway.



### The Great Game II endgame

The embrace of Islamists by Reagan and the collapse of the Soviet Union were a page-turner. Truth is indeed stranger than fiction.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc in 1989–91, and the beginning of what is called here Great Game III (GGIII), the Middle East and Central Asia once again came together as a new Silk Road, stretching as it did a millennium earlier from Italy to China. It is once again accessible to all comers and takes in at least 17 new political entities: the former Yugoslav republics of Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and Kosovo in the Balkans; Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in the South Caucasus; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia; with Moldova and Ukraine in eastern Europe.

But instead of being united under Islam or the Mongols, today it is largely under the sway of the US and its multilateral military arm the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). The way stations on NATO's 21st-century caravan route from the Atlantic Ocean to the Chinese frontier reveal the nature of the current game. All the above new countries have official ties with NATO, and two former Yugoslav republics (Slovenia and Croatia) are now full members. Most have provided troops for US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The US has military bases in Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, is directly arming and training Georgia's military forces, occupies Iraq, and is waging war in Afghanistan from Pakistan.

The region, from the Balkans to the borders of China, has been one of intrigue and war for a century, more so now than ever. US-NATO interest in this vital crossroads is keen. The region is important in geopolitical-strategic terms: US control there means containing Russia, China, and Iran, the dream of British strategists in GGI and of American strategists in GGII and III. It is also the location of most of the world's petrochemical resources, from Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf in the south to Kazakhstan in the north and Iran in the east. This, of course, might explain why the US is so keen to take and keep control of it and has gambled its all in pursuit of this goal over the past decade. The three major wars conducted by the US in the past decade – Yugoslavia (1999), Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) – all lay on this legendary Silk Road.

### Pre-modern, modern and post-modern states

An important GGIII institutional innovation has been the shaping of a new type of state out of the traditional GGI and GII nation states and the remains of the socialist bloc. The collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia resulted in the creation of 22 new states (15 ex-Soviet, 7 ex-Yugoslav), all of which were eager to carry favour in Washington, up to and including permission to establish bases via Status of Forces agreements. These states have been dubbed post-modern as opposed to pre-modern (or failed) and modern (the traditional post-Second World War nation state). 'The postmodern system in which we Europeans live does not rely on balance; nor does it emphasize sovereignty or the separation of domestic and foreign affairs. The European Union has become a highly developed system for mutual interference in each other's domestic affairs, right down to beer and sausages' (Cooper 2002).

The political elites of the new states of the socialist bloc and ex-Soviet Union were eager to renounce whatever sovereignty necessary to join the European institutions, and welcomed NATO commissions which proceeded to restructure them militarily and politically in accordance with US-NATO requirements. Even Iraq's new army and security forces are supposedly being structured and trained in accordance with US-NATO requirements. EU president Herman Van Rompuy confirmed this when he said that 'the time of the homogenous nation state is over' (quoted in Johnson 2010); hence, the notion of post-modern imperialism.

### Review of new Great Game literature

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, there came a rush of 'new Great Game' literature dealing with the obvious political manoeuvrings of the US in Central Asia in search of the Mackinder/Brzezinski Holy Grail, almost exclusively focused on oil. Apart from Dugin (1997), the collapse of the Soviet Union is seen as merely an opportunity for 'brash new, Wild West-style entrepreneurs' and securing long-term US energy needs. Most, like Baer (2004), Engdahl (2004), and Johnson (2007), argue that the US-British strategy is dominated now by oil security.

The classic work in this field is *The Grand Chessboard* by Brzezinski (1997), which inspires his protégé Obama's 'geostrategy' in Eurasia.

The defeat and collapse of the Soviet Union was the final step in the rapid ascendance of a Western Hemisphere power, the United States, as the sole and, indeed, the first truly global power. ... For America, the chief geopolitical prize is Eurasia. (Brzezinski 1997: xiii)

Brzezinski marvels that throughout history, world affairs have been dominated by Eurasian power but that 'for the first time ever, a non-Eurasian power [the US] has emerged not only as the key arbiter of Eurasian power relations but also as the world's paramount power' (31). Fortunately for America, Eurasia is too big to be politically unitary. For Brzezinski, history began in the 15th century; however, he rightly identifies 'the Eurasian chessboard' as 'the setting for "the game"' (31, 35).

His vision of the future is of a world in thrall to US cultural imperialism with post-Soviet Russia a post-modern state much like his native Poland, a willing handmaiden of a US world order, with only China to be cajoled into acquiescence. The era of direct invasions ended with the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The much more sophisticated US would be able to co-opt local elites and feed them on Hollywood blockbuster to establish the necessary control over Eurasia.

He condemns the neo-con wars, but his hubris blinds him to his own vital role in preparing the stage for precisely today's nightmare. He remains unapologetic about his policy of supporting Islamists against the Soviet Union (thereby facilitating the anti-imperialist Islamic awakening), ignores Israel completely in his analysis and policy prescriptions, and desists from calling the US an empire, referring to a 'common global community': a 'trilateral relationship among the world's richest and democratic states of Europe, America, and East Asia (notably Japan)' (Brzezinski 1993: 221–222). Even without the neo-con nightmare, he is pessimistic about the future of this 'community' unless the US discards its consumerism and overcomes its 'spiritual emptiness', apparently oblivious to his own argument that US

mass culture is an essential tool in the imperial project.

The term 'new Great Game' has become prevalent throughout the literature about the region, appearing in book titles, academic journals, news articles, and government reports. The mainstream literature simply compares the British–Russian 19th-century stand-off with the 21st-century situation, granting that the playing field is complicated by transnational energy corporations with their own agendas and the brash new entrepreneurs who have taken control after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Kleveman argues, 'Regional powers such as China, Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan have entered the arena, and transnational corporations (whose budgets far exceed those of many Central Asian countries) are also pursuing their own interests and strategies' (Kleveman 2004: 3).

Mullerson, a 'liberal' imperialist, argues that the pre-First World War Great Game and the current one have 'as their components respective missions civilatrices' (Mullerson 2007: 98). There are many games now and players change teams depending on what game is being played. China and Russia are watching how the West and the Muslim world exhaust each other in the war over terrorism (78), yet Washington co-operates with China and Russia on 'terrorism' and drug trafficking. The games are not always zero-sum competitions. Russia and China too are competitors in Central Asia for markets, resources, and political influence, but on a world level are allies, counterposed to US hegemony. Europe is a faithful member of the US team and plays no independent role in either Central Asia or the Middle East.

Mullerson dismisses religion as a legitimising factor in general and in Central Asia in particular. He argues that Islamic parties there such as the Islamic Renaissance Party (Tajik), which was part of United Tajik Opposition that fought Tajik authorities in a five-year civil war, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (renamed the Islamic Party of Turkestan), and Huzb ut-Tahrir are really political parties advocating 'religious totalitarianism' and using terrorism. He cites Thomas Friedman and Bernard Lewis (112), approving their view that these ideologies must be wiped out to end terrorism. The West must carry on with its *mission civilatrice*. 'The road to democracy, as the Western experience

amply demonstrates, is long and hard, full of pitfalls and obstacles' (112).

A Johns Hopkins University paper 'The Key to Success in Afghanistan: A Modern Silk Road Strategy' tries 'to visualize the kind of Afghanistan that might come into existence after US troops begin pulling out in 2011. The basic idea is that instead of being a lawless frontier, post-war Afghanistan should turn into a transit route for Eurasia, providing trade corridors north and south, east and west', requiring more roads, railways, and pipelines, making 'Afghanistan a hub rather than a barrier' (Starr et al. 2010).

### Critique

The new Great Game literature is weak on important counts. Even where imperialism is alluded to, there is no acknowledgement that the politics of Central Asia is part of a larger game which centres on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, with Israel a major player. The Johns Hopkins study makes no criticism of the invasion and the right of the US to decide on how Afghanistan should be developed, and ignores the geopolitical aim to bypass Russia, Iran, and China. It draws inspiration not from the ancient silk route but from the conquest and subjugation of America itself which culminated in building the transcontinental railroad in 1869 to promote capitalism regardless of the wishes of the natives.

Only in relation to Russia is the overt imperial nature of US moves in Eurasia discussed openly and opposed in mainstream and popular writings. The Eurasian geopolitical theorist Alexander Dugin has provided a radical reinterpretation of the 19th–20th-century geopolitics of Mackinder and Haushofer in the context of post-Soviet collapse Russia, aimed at opposing US imperialism. In *The Foundations of Geopolitics: The Geopolitical Future of Russia* (1997), he declares that (and here I paraphrase) the battle for the world role of Russians continues, and Russia remains the central actor in a new anti-bourgeois, anti-US revolution. Dugin predicts that a Eurasian Empire will be constructed on the understanding of a common enemy: refusal to accede to Atlantism and US hegemony, both political and cultural, not necessarily leading to military conflict. Russia's natural resources and its strategic position at the heart of Eurasia should be used to oppose

US plans and to promote a new Russian-European alliance without US hegemony, based on a Russo-German axis, excluding Britain since it is part of the Anglo-American axis. He advocates rapprochement with Japan and encouraging China to assert its hegemony in South-East Asia rather than Siberia. His focus is Russian resurgence and he does not incorporate Israel into his analysis, though he promotes the idea of a 'continental Russian-Islamic alliance', based on a Russia-Iran understanding, dismissing al-Qaeda and 'international terrorism' as instruments of the West. US sponsorship of new postmodern players is a move in itself in the new Great Game, which is not acknowledged in the mainstream literature. The new states were created by undermining the Soviet Union, instigating the subsequent colour revolutions and invading Afghanistan and Iraq; all important moves by the imperial hegemon to reshape the entire Eurasian region to create a new playing field and a new game.

In GGI and GGII, too, British colonies and protectorates were shaped consciously by the colonial office to play quasi-independent roles in some future informal empire (depending on the type of colony, i.e. a privileged settler one like Canada or one like India). Over time, these players developed in ways sometimes unforeseen, such as Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq.

The Moscow-based Institute of Oriental Studies analyst Knyazev argues that the US strategy is to create its own secular 'post-modern caliphate' to encompass the Middle East and 'Greater Central Asia [which] calls for the dilution of borders between the five post-Soviet states and their merger with Afghanistan and Pakistan' which he dubs a 'geopolitical marasmus' (Radyuhin 2011). However, such an ambitious project of adjusting borders and state-creation is hardly within the scope of current US geopolitical capabilities, nor is Israel any help in bringing together Muslim nations throughout the region into a subservient commonwealth.

The qualitative difference between GGI, GGII and GGIII is not clearly seen in the literature. Edwards (2003) sees in the original Great Game (my GGI) the 'forerunner of the Cold War struggle' and in the current game 'the last remnant of the struggle between USA and Russia', conflating my GGII and GGIII. Mullerson (2007) refers to a Great Game II, which picks up where Kipling lay off,

ignoring imperialism as the underlying system, the subsequent Cold War, and the role of Israel.

Mullerson downplays historical parallels as 'more interesting than useful and more superficial than profound' (38) reflecting his lack of appreciation of the underlying continuity of these imperial games. He acknowledges that Washington is expanding its influence in region but denies it has any long-term interests in staying, and he condemns Dugin's Russian Orthodoxy-inspired messianism (not unlike US manifest destiny) preordained to clash with the West, as a reversion to Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, and Czarism.

Mullerson notes the interesting irony that, as sole superpower, the US has now lost its Cold War legitimacy as the leader of the anti-communist bloc, suffering the burden of providing world order and security (he is an Estonian immigrant to Britain). Therefore, today it 'needs more military power than would have been necessary ... since today it would be necessary to carry out the hegemonic burden on a global scale' (111). But he could just as easily argue that after collapse of the enemy the victor should need less military force. He thereby implicitly acknowledges that the current new world order the US is enforcing is not a voluntary association of free nations, that security and peace are defined by the US (i.e. by accepting US hegemony, you have freedom from subversion by the US). While he dismisses the Russian geopoliticians and their pursuit of Russian empire, is there really much difference between the peace and security of Genghis Khan and that of the US today?

His support of secularism and respect for Friedman and Bernard Lewis shows his ignorance of the long history of imperial use and promotion of Islamist 'totalitarian ideologies', and the fact that the US engineered the collapse of the Soviet Union using Islamists, allowing the Wahhabis to penetrate Central Asia and the Middle East, while supporting oppressive secular regimes. His proposal to snuff out these movements just adds fuel to a fire that the US has been stoking irrationally for decades.

An interesting description of post-Soviet Central Asia is provided by Rob Johnson, who sees it experiencing 'the recreation of a pre-communist Khanate' (2007: 33–34), with increasing unrest as a result of the break-up

of the Soviet Union: the 1988 Armenian/ Azeri war and riots in Ashgabat, conflict between Uzbeks and Meskhetian Turks in Ferghana in 1989, between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in Osh and between Tajiks and Armenians in Dushanbe in 1990, the Chechnya separatist uprising of 1991–2000, the Abkhaz and South Ossetian separatists in Georgia from 1990 on, civil war in Tajikistan 1992–97, the Uzbek uprising in 2005, and the riots in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. US interference in the form of 'democracy support' and pursuit of its geopolitical strategies is merely adding oil to the flames.

Ex-CIA agent Baer, while excoriating the US for the invasion of Iraq, would also like to nudge Central Asia (the whole Muslim world for that matter) towards a secular modernity, but at least he emphasises that we can't force this on tribal societies that will change only slowly (Baer 2004). The closest in the mainstream media to an accurate understanding of the source of terrorism and the need for the US and Israel to pull in their claws are so-called 'paleoconservatives', who have long criticised US imperial adventures. Voices crying in the right-wing wilderness include Ron Paul and Eric Margolis (2009), who, while agreeing that it's all about oil, call for the complete US withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan, and for Israel to make a just peace by granting the Palestinians a state.

None of them recognises the distinction between Muslim Brothers and what I call neo-Wahhabis, the former genuine followers of Islamic civilisational traditions, the latter adopting anarchist strategies of mass terror deriving from GGI and GGII; that is, from the imperialists themselves. The best analysts of the Great Game strategies, the GGIII wars, and the role of Israel include M.K. Bhadrakumar, Pepe Escobar, Israel Shamir, and others cited in the main body of Walberg (2011).

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## History, Transnational Connections and Anti-Imperial Intentions: The League Against Imperialism and for National Independence (1927–1937)

The League Against Imperialism and for National Independence (LAI) was established at the 'First International Congress Against Imperialism and Colonialism' in Brussels on 10–14 February 1927. This essay about it is based on my doctoral dissertation and book (Pettersson 2013). The Congress was attended by 174 delegates from 34 countries, representing 134 organisations, associations, or political parties.

On 13 February, the German communist and member of the German Reichstag Willi Münzenberg (1889–1940), the prime mover and organisational force behind the Brussels Congress, stated that '[O]ur congress requires no director [...] All parties and organizations, through the participation of their delegations and representatives, have unanimously agreed upon the establishment of a World League against Imperialism' (Munzenberg 1928: 4–10). This corresponded with Münzenberg's vision of gathering 'prominent' left-wing trade union and social-democratic leaders, bourgeois radicals, pacifists, and intellectuals, to stand side by side with 'liberal radical elements in the imperialist countries' and colonial delegates.

Participating at the congress were several characters who later assumed leading positions in the decolonisation process in the colonies after the Second World War: Jawaharlal Nehru as delegate of the Indian National Congress, the Indonesian Mohammad Hatta of Perhimpunan Indonesia, and Reginald Bridgeman, British socialist and devoted advocate of anti-colonial and pacifist ideals. Other well-known characters in Brussels were trade unionist Edo Fimmen from the Netherlands, Josiah T. Gumede from South Africa, and delegate of the African National Congress and the Senegalese delegate of the French-based Committee in Defence of the Negro Race Lamine Senghor. While Albert Einstein supported the foundation of the LAI,

and was appointed a member of its Honorary Presidium in Brussels, Mahatma K. Gandhi politely declined to get involved, informing the Hungarian communist Laszlo Dobos, Münzenberg's right-hand-man in preparing the congress, that this anti-colonial movement brings 'a certain fright'.

### **The Communist International, anti-imperialism, and the road to Brussels**

The original plan for the congress had been set in motion by Münzenberg in 1925 during the proletarian solidarity campaign Hands Off China in Germany. The process leading to establishment of the LAI and the euphoric anti-imperialist demonstration in Brussels 1927 was complex, involving the moral consent and material support of the principal provider: the Communist International (Comintern, Third International, 1919–43) in Moscow. The relationship between the LAI and the Comintern determined the decisions and activities of the organisation throughout its existence from 1927–37. The LAI was the result of the Comintern's aspirations to find a path to the colonies. After the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia in October 1917, and once the Comintern had been established in the shape of a 'world party' in Petrograd (3–7 March 1919), the colonial question represented an enigma that haunted the international communist movement. Regardless of the colonial disorder that had erupted on a global scale in connection with the peace negotiations at Versailles in 1919 (concerning Egypt, India, China, and Korea, for example), the symbolism of US president Woodrow Wilson's message of national self-determination and independence was not enough to curb the desire of anti-colonial activists residing in or visiting Europe. The prospect looked promising for the Comintern to assume authority over the colonial question, however, and despite several attempts to address it (e.g. the Lenin–Roy debate at the Second International Comintern Congress in Moscow, 19 July–7 August 1920), the 'First Congress of the Peoples of the East' in Baku (September 1920), the Sino-Soviet collaboration between Sun Yet-sen's Kuomintang and Chinese communists in China, frequent obstructions or difficulties contributed to keeping the Bolsheviks and the West European communist movement out of touch

with anti-colonial activists living in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Linked to this dilemma was the meticulous surveillance by national security services in monitoring communist activity in the colonies. The Comintern realised that Europe was the key for developing contacts between the communist and anti-colonial movement, especially in colonial power centres such as London, Paris, Amsterdam, and Brussels.

In 1924, Dmitri Manuilski (1883–1959), the Ukrainian communist veteran and leading secretary in the Comintern apparatus in Moscow, conceded that the Comintern had 'to win the revolutionary movements of liberation'; however, he was not capable of introducing any method to do so. Attempting to answer Manuilski's wish, the Executive Committee of the Comintern (ECCI) authorised the Indian communist Manabendra Nath Roy, by then considered the colonial expert in the Comintern, to lead the International Colonial Bureau in Paris, which aimed its activities at finding contacts with anti-colonial movements and prominent characters in France and Great Britain (Haikal 1993). The bureau turned into a futile undertaking, shaken by internal conflict and lack of resources, and when the French Sûreté deported Roy from France in January 1925, the initiative seemed to be lost.

Münzenberg is key to understanding the history of the LAI (Gross 1967; Petersson 2013;). The attempts described above were failures for the Comintern to manifest the colonial question in the international communist movement, or proved its incapacity to find reliable contacts within the anti-colonial movements in Europe. Münzenberg, acting as general secretary of the communist mass organisation the Internationale Arbeiterhilfe (Workers' International Relief, IAH, 1921–35), began to address the colonial question in various public campaigns in 1925. However, and in comparison to the imperialist nations in Europe (Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium), Germany had no colonies as a consequence of the Versailles Peace Treaty in 1919. The colonial question thus filled a political field in a Germany which felt humiliated by that treaty. From 1925–27, Münzenberg and the IAH conceived the anti-colonial project together with the decisionmakers at Comintern headquarters. In February 1927, this culminated in the Brussels Congress.

Paving the way for the congress involved staging and co-ordinating a number of public campaigns (relying upon the active involvement of European intellectuals) such as: Hands Off China (1925; in support of the Shanghai textile workers' striking in protest against the violence of the British mandate forces); Against the Cruelties in Syria Committee (1925–26; supporting the Syrian nationalist movement against the French military's bloody response); and protests against the 'draconian measures of oppression' by the Dutch mandate forces in Java and Sumatra in January 1927. Münzenberg succeeded in getting prominent intellectuals across Europe (known for their engagement in pacifist, leftist, or humanitarian questions) to sign petitions and resolutions, for example: the French author Henri Barbusse, Georges Pioch, Emilie Chauvelon, Léon Werth, Albert Fournier, Helen Crawford, Frances Countess of Warridge, Arthur James Cook, the British socialist George Lansbury, Arthur Holitscher, Alfons Paquet, Helene Stöcker, Otto Lehmann-Russbüldt of the League for Human Rights in Germany, the German authors Ernst Toller and Eduard Fuchs, the artist John Heartfield, the manager of the left-wing theatre Weltbühne in Berlin Erwin Piscator, and the well-known communist figurehead Clara Zetkin. However, Münzenberg realised in January 1927 that the frequent use of these names made them 'no longer that effective'.

The central fact to explain the birth of the LAI in 1927 was Münzenberg's idea of forming the League against Colonial Oppression (*Liga gegen koloniale Unterdrückung* [LACO]) in Berlin at the 'Rathauskeller' conference on 10 February 1926, an event which gathered 43 delegates representing anti-colonial movements in Berlin and Europe. The primary purpose of the LACO was to co-ordinate and prepare the Brussels Congress, something Münzenberg had been anticipating since the success of the Hands Off China campaign in Germany in 1925. The establishment of the LACO also signified Münzenberg's dependence on receiving support from the Comintern to sponsor the preparations for an international congress against imperialism and colonialism. This entailed giving the Comintern authority over the political direction of the congress and, later, the LAI. This was a task laid upon Roy in Moscow. After examining the

results from the LACO conference in Berlin, Roy introduced his conclusions to the ECCI secretariat in Moscow (and later sent them to Münzenberg), stating that 'the object of the League [LAI]' should be 'to act as a neutral intermediary between the Communist International and nationalist movements in the colonies' (RGASPI 542/1/3, 10–11).

### **Transnational anti-imperialism and the League Against Imperialism**

The Brussels Congress was Münzenberg's finale, arising from which he expected a massive demonstration against imperialism and colonialism, and recruits for communism. However, Münzenberg and the Comintern had not anticipated that the Brussels Congress would turn into such a huge political success, stirring up euphoric emotions among the participants and prompting widespread international attention in the press. The 'Organisation Resolution', adopted at the Brussels Congress, had stipulated the urgency with which the LAI should develop activity on a national basis; that is, establish national sections across the world. Yet, while trying to capitalise on the heady feeling of collective joy in the LAI and the anti-imperialist movement, the principal organisers and governance behind the LAI – Münzenberg's IAH and the Comintern – were initially at a loss about what to do next. For the nerve centre of the LAI, the International Secretariat in Berlin, and the individuals working there (Gibarti, the Indian nationalist revolutionary Virendranath Chattopadhyaya [Chatto], and the Chinese communist Hansin Liao of the Chinese National Agency), this caused confusion due to poor communications with Comintern headquarters. With questions about the LAI's organisational structure and relation to the Comintern leaving finances and budget unresolved after the Brussels Congress, the LAI's International Secretariat nevertheless advanced the project to establish sections in Europe (Germany, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium), the US and Latin America, and Japan. However, it soon became evident that it was difficult to organise sections in Asia, India, and Africa. The expansive phase of the LAI came to a halt after 1927, but aside from external factors such as the Kuomintang putsch against the communists in China in April 1927, increased antagonism from the Labour and

Socialist International, and scrutiny of the LAI by European national security services in 1927, the major damage was caused by the Comintern. By responding slowly and with suspicion to the magnitude of the LAI, both politically and organisationally, the Comintern's indecisive behaviour in settling the organisation's future direction after the Brussels Congress proved to be a serious setback.

The geographical setting of the LAI was global in scope and intent, aiming to question and criticise the system of colonialism and imperialism. Posing as an international petitioner against these systems, it was limited by the possibilities of political spaces and physical places to enact its activism. The centre for the LAI was Berlin, which housed about 5,000 colonial residents and resembled a 'global village' for the Comintern and communism during the inter-war years before the Nazi Party (NSDAP) assumed power in 1933. Other anti-imperialist centres of similar magnitude were few and far between. The LAI section and its secretary Reginald Bridgeman in London were under strict surveillance by MI5 and Scotland Yard and received almost no support from the Communist Party of Great Britain; the French section experienced an even more desolate situation, isolated by the *Partei Communiste Francais* and circumscribed by the *Sûreté*. The Dutch section had a promising position with *Fimmen* assuming a leading position, supported by Hatta's *Perhimpunan Indonesia*. However, the sectarian behaviour and methods of the Communist Party of Holland more or less broke up the section in 1928. The US section experienced a downward spiral despite receiving support from author Upton Sinclair, Professor William Pickens of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union. Despite using New York as the centre for its operations to connect with Latin America, Earl Browder, leader in the Communist Party of the USA, stated later in 1930 that the section had turned into a political space for 'fascist agents'. In conclusion, the British Home Office and the Colonial Office in India managed to thwart any anti-imperialist tendencies emerging in the country after the Brussels Congress, as highlighted especially by the infamous Meerut Conspiracy Trial (1929–33).

### Anti-imperial intentions and transformation of the League Against Imperialism

Berlin continued to function as the operative centre for the LAI. The Comintern had nonetheless expressed a wish to move the LAI's International Secretariat to Paris in 1927, the 'colonial metropolis' in Europe. This question developed into a dispute between Münzenberg and the Comintern, only reaching a conclusion once the Comintern acknowledged that the mooted relocation was impossible. From Berlin, the LAI developed anti-imperialist propaganda by issuing leaflets, pamphlets, and newsletters (*Pressedienst*; *Informationsbulletin der Liga gegen Imperialismus*; *The Anti-Imperialist Review*; *Der koloniale Freiheitskampf* to mention but a few), material intended for global circulation and perusal by the anti-imperialist movement. The LAI could not, however, avoid being caught in the ideological maelstrom of the international communist movement. This related especially to the Comintern's continuous policy shifts, reflecting the ongoing upheavals in the Soviet Union's societal and political scenery. While the LAI was established in the period known as the 'united front' (the second period was termed 'from above'), with the Sixth International Comintern Congress in Moscow in August 1928 the 'new line' was introduced: no collaborations outside of the communist movement, a political position characterised instead by the infamous epitome 'class against class'. The Tenth ECCI Plenum in Moscow (3–19 July 1929) corroborated this new policy as correct, which, as Comintern secretary and Finnish communist Otto W. Kuusinen explained at one of the sessions: 'The united front strategy, which we used to carry out from below, we have since then no longer pursued from below, but from above. We have through our tactic a stable position among the broad working masses, [and] in the mass movements of the proletariat' (RGASPI 495/168/120, 1–25). In 1930, Bohumil Smeral, Czechoslovakian communist, emissary of the Comintern, and secretary at the LAI's International Secretariat in Berlin concluded that it was 'unfortunate' for the LAI since it was established in the 'second period'. These policy shifts in the Comintern had the effect of 'epileptic zigzags' on the international communist movement, stated the Catalan communist Andreu Nín in 1928.



Smeral's pessimism was grounded in the political results and consequences of the LAI's 'Second International Congress against Imperialism and Colonialism' in Frankfurt am Main (21–27 July 1929). In comparison to the Brussels Congress, the Frankfurt Congress turned into a vitriolic scene of disputes and polarisation between the communist sector and non-communist delegates. The congress was, in size, a larger event than the Brussels one, attended by 263 delegates from 31 countries and regions representing 99 organisations, and preceded by an anti-imperialist youth conference on 20 July. The sources tell of a carefully planned plot by the communists, carried out to perfection for the sole purpose of showing who was in control over both the LAI and the anti-imperialist movement. The political leitmotif at the congress was twofold: to highlight the pending war threat against the fatherland of socialist construction (the Soviet Union); and to declare support for the Soviet Union. The effect of this scheme worked in reverse, exposing the communist nature of the LAI and leaving the organisation at a loss over how to act, plunging the anti-imperialist movement into a year of confusion. After the congress, the majority of non-communist members in the LAI Executive Committee left voluntarily (Fimmen, Nehru, Pickens, Hatta, and Baldwin). Albert Einstein (the honorary president) severed his ties after considering the LAI's attitude on the Arabic question to be anti-Semitic; whereas James Maxton, chairman of the LAI and leader of the British Independent Labour Party, was expelled by the British LAI section in September 1929. The ensuing crisis and organisational turmoil forced the decisionmakers at Comintern headquarters to reassess the very purpose of the LAI, a process that paved the way for turning it into a hub of the anti-imperialist movement in Europe. This latter undertaking was left in the hands of the LAI's international secretary Virendranath Chattophadyaya, with a focus on finding anti-colonial activists in Berlin, London, Amsterdam, Marseilles, and Hamburg to act as vital links in the global spread of anti-imperialism.

### **Fields of activity: propaganda, recruitment, and education**

The LAI succeeded in three particular fields: the creation of public campaigns to

raise awareness of global political events; the recruitment of anti-colonial activists in Europe; and the establishment in Berlin of an educational ethos at its centre for anti-colonial activists who lived in Europe from 1927–33 (Petersson 2013; 2014). First, the Meerut Conspiracy Trial was the central question for Bridgeman and the British LAI section, an operation sanctioned by Kuusinen and supervised by Münzenberg. Other campaigns involved: the political disorder in Latin America and against American imperialism; protests against the Manchurian crisis in 1931; attracting support in Europe for the defendants in the Scottsboro Trial in 1931; and developing the anti-war campaign in Germany in 1932. The latter idea resulted in the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress in August that year, and later evolved into the Amsterdam-Pleyel Movement in 1933, one of the first bodies of opposition to the Nazi regime and Hitler's rule over Germany.

The non-public side of the LAI was harder to define, but it was intended to function as a hub. This objective had been part and parcel of the Comintern's original idea in establishing an organisation 'to act as an intermediary' to the colonies. Chatto was the mastermind behind such activity, having at his side the active assistance of the Indian nationalist and journalist A.C.N. Nambiar and the 'Indian Bureau' in Berlin. The latter was a subsection of the International Secretariat, established with money from Nehru's Indian National Congress (INC) in February 1929. The bureau aimed, wrote Chatto, to function as 'a centre for recruiting students, for finding out the best and most reliable among them, to take up the question of sending literature and also for obtaining journals, books and other literature on India, which are not directly available without payment by the League' (RGASPI 495/19/312, 38–42). The bureau connected with other individuals of the anti-colonial community dispersed across Europe, originating from China, Japan, India, West Africa, and North Africa. Chatto advocated the use of curricular activities and academic courses on imperialism and socialism to test the 'candidates'; that is, by educating anti-colonial activists in the Marxist-Leninist conception of imperialism, the LAI International Secretariat examined if these candidates were useful, reliable, or suitable to undergo further education in one of the educational units of the Comintern in

Moscow (e.g. the International Lenin School, or the *Kommunisticheskii universitet trudishchikhsia Vostoka* [Communist University for Eastern Workers, KUTV]).

The above constituted an essential role for the Soviet Union and its foreign policy, in which the LAI was part of a larger network, engaged in accumulating intelligence on political and social events across the world. The organisational structure of the LAI facilitated this process. Hierarchical relations determined this method, working from top to bottom, and vice versa, having the International Secretariat answer to the decisionmakers at Comintern headquarters in Moscow (the Eastern Secretariat), while the national sections were obliged to gather and send information to the International Secretariat which then passed on the documents to the Comintern in Moscow for evaluation. Chatto's work to perfect the LAI as a hub fitted this scheme perfectly, as it created a network of trusted individuals in various parts of the world. However, while national security services feared the extent of this network, in reality it was a limited and fragile structure, sensitive to external or internal disruptions.

### **League Against Imperialism: dissolution and heritage**

Mustafa Haikal's study on the LAI in 1992 (the first study to use documents from the formerly secretive Comintern Archive in Moscow after its opening-up; see more below) concluded that the LAI began its 'disintegrative process' at the LAI General Council in Brussels (9–11 December 1927) (Haikal 1992). First, the LAI General Council met only once; and second, the sessions focused on solving 'organizational questions rather than discussing political issues', according to Münzenberg (Münzenberg 1928). The statement illustrates the LAI's inherent problems, characterised by the radical 'turn to the left' at the Frankfurt Congress in 1929 which was symptomatic of how Stalinisation transpired and manifested itself within the international communist movement and its 'Solar System' (the national parties, the mass and sympathising organisations). The LAI's charisma definitely vanished when the communists adopted a harsher attitude towards non-communist members as seen publicly at the Frankfurt Congress for the first time.

However, other factors are equally relevant for explaining the LAI's downfall: its International Secretariat in Berlin was gradually isolated because of the political milieu in Weimar Germany at the start of the 1930s, and with the national sections barely able to function due to lack of resources and repression from security services, the anti-imperialist network disintegrated. Further, Chatto was summoned to Moscow in 1931, accused of having committed 'political dishonesty', a case built on the charge that his *Europäische Zentralkomitee der Indischen Nationalisten* (an anti-British committee active in Europe, run by Chatto and Mahapragya Acharya in Berlin and Stockholm, also known as the 'Berlin Committee') had co-operated with, and received money from, the German government during the First World War. The accusation deprived Chatto of his position as international secretary, and in September 1937 he was executed in Moscow.

Chatto's departure from Berlin in 1931 confirmed the sectarian tendencies that had emerged in the LAI at the Frankfurt Congress in 1929. From this point on until the Nazi's assumed power in Germany on 30 January 1933, the LAI had to combat daily political struggles and humiliating police raids in Berlin, while the national sections barely existed on paper, aside from the British one, which focused its activities on the Meerut Trial.

With Hitler and the NSDAP gaining power after the General Election on 30 January 1933, this foreboded the end of German communism and socialism. On the night of 27 February, the end arrived with the Reichstag Fire in Berlin. However, the LAI's International Secretariat (which held its last meeting on 30 January), had prepared for the possibility of being forced to escape to Paris. In February, the German LAI functionary Allo Bayer dismantled the international secretariat and sent most of the bureau's material to Paris, but the greater part of these documents seems never to have made it across the German-French border.

By relocating the LAI's International Secretariat to Paris in March 1933, the ambition was to revive and reconstruct the anti-imperialist network. But for those involved, especially for Münzenberg (who escaped from Germany by car in the first days of March), it was no longer possible to resurrect the LAI. He requested the decisionmakers

at Comintern headquarters in Moscow to remove him from the position of general secretary, and to transfer the International Secretariat to London. Osip Piatnitsky, the Russian communist and administrative key figure in the Comintern apparatus, approved Münzenberg's request in August 1933, authorising Bridgeman to assume responsibility for the LAI International Secretariat in London. The organisation Bridgeman was handed was not comparable to that of its former glories. He concluded that 'it was necessary to reconstitute the work of the LAI from the beginning' (RGASPI 542/1/61, 1-43). Despite Bridgeman's socialist ethos, the LAI was still controlled by British communists (Harry Pollitt, Percy Glading, Shapurji Saklatvala) and drifted into an abyss of inactivity, managing to create a minor protest campaign on the Abyssinian crisis in 1935, and produce a pamphlet in defence of the Chinese nationalist struggle in 1936. From 1933-37, the LAI had London as its base; however, Bridgeman resolved to replace it with the Colonial Information Bureau (CIB) in 1937, a socialist association which publicly renounced the former communist ties of the anti-imperialist movement. Bridgeman nonetheless acknowledged the historic heritage left by the LAI:

Since its foundation in 1927 the League against Imperialism has done consistent work in connection with the different aspects of the colonial struggle; but it is essential that we should advance from the position of a small group of people interested in the colonial struggle, seriously restricted in their activities because of their association with a 'banned organization', and activate the working class organizations and peace societies. (Saville 1984)

A similar argument was given by the president of Indonesia, Achmed Sukarno, in his introductory speech at the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia (17-24 April 1955). He reminisced in nostalgic terms of how:

Only a few decades ago it was frequently necessary to travel to other countries and even other continents before the spokesmen of our peoples could confer. I recall in this connection the Conference of the 'League Against Imperialism and Colonialism' which was held in Brussels almost thirty

years ago. At that Conference, many distinguished delegates who are present here today met each other and found new strength in their fight for independence. [...] It was not assembled there by choice, but by necessity. (McTurnan Kahin 1956: 40)

The history of the LAI exposes how difficult the actors found it to create an anti-imperialist utopia, a dilemma which confirms the utopianism of communism; that is, the LAI was an expression of communism and belonged to the complex ideological and administrative system of international communism at that time. The LAI was unified by two factors: first, the ambition to create a public platform against the system of colonialism and imperialism; second, its inescapable part in a movement wanting to spread communism on a global scale. Stripped of its communist ties, the LAI resembled a business enterprise or a religious clique, unable to act due to a weak financial structure, and riven by contesting ambitions for power within its hierarchy. Its legacy was as a nostalgic reference for the decolonisation movements which emerged after the Second World War.

### LAI archives and collections

LAI documents are located in a number of archives. The primary resource is the Comintern Archive, part of the Russian State Archive for Social and Political History (RGASPI) in Moscow. The LAI has a special *fond* (collection) in the archive containing approximately 100 files (resolutions, reports, correspondence, drafts, budgets and calculations, lists of members and attendance at conferences, congresses, meetings). Since the Comintern was itself an organisation (with links to other mass and sympathising organisations of the communist movement, comprising numerous governing and institutional bodies), documents on the LAI are located in both vertical and horizontal horizons in the Comintern Archive. The Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (SAPMO BA-ZPA) in Lichterfelde, Berlin, contains a number of sources on the LAI, principally documents of the Kommunistische Partei Deutschland (KPD), reports of police surveillance on Berlin's communist habitat, press clippings, and memoirs. The National Archive

in Kew Gardens, London, illustrates how the British security service monitored the activities of the LAI in Great Britain and the British colonies. This involved an exchange of intelligence between national security services (Germany, the Netherlands, and France), as well as building up a vast quantity of personal dossiers on individuals tied to the LAI (Münzenberg, Gibarti, David Petrovsky, Chatto, to mention but a few). The Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (IISG) in Amsterdam has an LAI collection, consisting primarily of the LAI's publications and congress material, material which gives a good insight into LAI's public side. Some documents on the LAI are located in the Stockholm City Archive, material which adds depth to the organisation's political campaigns. The published documents (resolutions, congress manifesto, speeches, and greetings) from the Brussels Congress, gathered together as *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont. Offizielles Protokoll des Kongresses gegen koloniale Unterdrückung und Imperialismus Brüssel* and issued under Gibarti's editorship, and distributed by Münzenberg's publishing company Neuer Deutscher Verlag in June 1927, still stands out as an exceptional eyewitness account that captures the conviction and euphoria among the individuals attending the congress.

Fredrik Petersson

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## Hobson's Research on Imperialism and its Legacy

John Atkinson Hobson (1858–1940), who signed his name as J.A. Hobson, can be considered a major theorist of imperialism. His book *Imperialism: A Study* (1902) is arguably the single most-influential work for this study field. Although it claims to isolate the 'taproot of imperialism' and inspired mass struggle leaders, its significance lies also in its thematic heterogeneity and possible contradictory interpretations. Some exegeses are thus vital when presenting this text and Hobson's wider *oeuvre*, for he wove original ideas together with the essential strands of British Liberalism.

### On thrift, poverty, and monopoly capital

Hobson was born in Derby, England, to a regional newspaper proprietor, attending grammar school before attending Oxford University and then working as an extension course lecturer. *The Physiology of Industry* (1889), which he wrote with A.F. Mummery, a celebrity businessman, attacked the thrift ideal of economics, that saving increased wealth and spending decreased it. To be effective, the authors held that capital gains needed commensurate rises in consumption: 'real saving' helped to do so, unlike 'nominal

saving'. Employment and wages would be higher if the wealthy did not periodically withhold capital from industry and cause 'over-supply', where goods became unaffordable for many people. Competition informed over-production, since capital-holders saved, hopeful of larger future profits. It was not that saving never reduced aggregate consumption, varying who consumed: limits existed as to how much anyone could ever consume.

*The Physiology of Industry* related unemployment and bankruptcies after 1873, when the Long Depression began, to how the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71) informed heightened consumption and subsequently an abrupt return to normal conditions. Manufacturers initially enjoyed windfalls, but then, after the conflict, greater profits were made by retailers, whose fortunes declined as failed producers entered their field. Against views that recession was due to scarce gold, commerce informed monetary value, rather than *vice versa*.

Mummery and Hobson ruffled academic feathers: the latter never obtained a permanent lectureship. Extension work, however, informed his first single-author book, *Problems of Poverty* (1891), a response to public concerns about an 'outcast' class following the 1889 London dockworkers' strike. It argued that price changes meant that a 'labour aristocracy' purchased more goods with £1 than before, owing to new manufacturing techniques, yet the poorest were unable to afford even basic items. Residential and commercial rents appeared to be another salient issue, having risen by 150 per cent in five decades. Employers 'sweated' homeworkers to avoid labour laws and the costs of premises, with women who were isolated from trade unions, the most affected, still performing domestic chores and having below-subsistence wages. This was made possible since their needs were met partly by spousal or parental earnings, informing masculine discourses on the contradictory 'freedoms' of employability and 'protecting the fairer sex'.

*Problems of Poverty* also linked over-saving and under-consumption to competition and capital concentration, the issue of 'big survivors' producing without regard for current demand. If business 'combinations' proved infeasible when many firms were in existence, monopolistic conditions facilitated pacts to 'sheathe the price-cutting weapon': as a self-preservation policy, fights used 'blunted

lances'. The pioneering of 'trusts' – 'the highest reach of capitalistic evolution' – went further, where a trustee board governed nominally independent companies that pooled capital for dividends. Mimicking these trends, Hobson perceived 'labour combines' as forming, which regularised, and thereby diminished, the aggregate friction between labour and capital.

*The Evolution of Modern Capitalism* (1894) affirmed Hobson's motif of over-production and under-consumption, linking mechanisation and an enhanced division of labour to its heightened modern state. Credit made such developments possible, besides aiding consumption (an 'expansion of the time-market'). Nevertheless, the book's greater novelty was its relating of such issues to monopoly. Loose agreements to lessen competition culminated in formalised 'trusts' – entities that increased the might available for competition. If railways extorted isolated farmers and Standard Oil set prices for suppliers and consumers, like cases represented not 'unfair competition' but 'an application of those same forces always operating in the evolution of modern capital'.

'Trusts' did not *ipso facto* mean lower or higher prices: adjustments related to the degree of (perceived) competitive threats. With monopoly prices determined by different considerations from competitive ones, inferior plant that might yield marginal profits would be idle in a 'trust', since producing more or fewer items meant suboptimal profits. Investment was concentrated in ideal sites, raising efficiency, output, and start-up costs. Demand figured thus even less in business calculations. 'Trusts' also informed growing net unemployment, a proliferation of distributing classes (made possible owing to monopoly production profits), and political divisions between unionised workers in large industries and other labourers. With minimal competition, 'trusts' practically owned their employees.

*The Problem of the Unemployed* (1896) reiterated earlier themes, arguing that monopolies wasted labour power in ways analogous to unemployment *per se*, with 'clerks, advertisers, shop-assistants, etc.' doing 'excessive and useless' work as viewed from a 'social standpoint'. The 'central fact' of unemployment studies was over-capitalisation, a matter arising from 'unearned income', where an individual's revenues did not correspond

to their 'outgoing effort'. As some people saved far beyond any possible personal use, they lent via banks to expanding businesses; investor confidence hinged on whether goods were sold. If over-production occurred, lending ceased. The remedy was not abolishing what Karl Marx claimed to be 'unearned income', since Hobson deemed property vital for encouraging anyone to work at all. Instead of challenging the social organisation of production, consumption standards needed to be raised, if necessary by taxing 'unearned income'.

### On imperialism and war

As tensions between the British Empire and the Boers grew during 1899, *The Manchester Guardian* commissioned Hobson to visit the Transvaal. His article 'Capitalism and Imperialism in South Africa' (1900) argued that the eventual war (1899–1902) benefited only monopoly and financier interests. Mining giants, chiefly Cecil Rhodes, backed by investment banks, were cosmopolitan cohorts formerly against Crown rule and championing Boer independence because it did not risk plans for a chartered company. Such ilk turned into British 'patriots' after failing to get their way with Boer officials through 'stealthy means'. It was vital to overturn a state shunning policies aiding large capital.

Transvaal stakes grew as new gold fields were located in 1886, drawing an influx of British miners and petty traders. Hobson observed that these classes would never benefit from Rhodes and others running the territory: ending Boer rule meant losing out to cartels using 'compounds' (unfree native labour and company stores). An attempted coup in 1896 implicating Rhodes – the 'Jameson Raid' – did not inspire Transvaal Britishers. Although disenfranchised, they had few major grievances, since the under-developed mining sector paid handsomely. Monopolists and financiers subsequently changed tack, appealing to a wider audience. Although from diverse nations, they pressured the British state: its subjects faced 'repression'. 'Activists' demanded democracy (*sans* citizenship obligations) for white male temporary residents. Cape Colony newspapers, bought by large capital, sent libels around the empire, fuelling a 'race-lust frenzy'.

To Hobson's mind, though the financiers of monopolies appeared as 'the most-powerful guiding force in aggressive Imperialism', they succeeded only by 'cooperating with and moulding for their purpose weaker forces having purer and less definite aims'. Other major beneficiaries – the armed and civil services, weapons manufacturers, public contractors, and so on – seemed antithetical by nature to liberal values seldom supported elsewhere. *The War in South Africa* (1900) expanded on the causes and effects of hostilities unsought by Boers and Transvaal Britishers. The state's claim of the latter as its subjects had been 'treacherous': it claimed 'suzerainty', refused negotiating in good faith, censored conciliatory Boer statements, and precipitated conflict by marshalling border troops. Hobson foresaw disaster for all except monopolists and financiers, since massive 'compound' mining profits would result from a British Army victory. Ending certain Boer taxes was alone believed to raise dividends by £2.5 million p.a.

An aspect of the war appealing to people sceptical that Boers were striving for 'racial supremacy' over Britishers concerned black exploitation. While some Boers kept slaves, humanitarianism obscured the issue. In principle, the farmer with one or two slaves differed little from a 'compound'. Yet the quantitative difference implied great changes: 'put concisely, war is being waged to secure for the mines a cheap supply of labour'. Black workers appeared inexpensive as they were 'abundant' in number, with livelihood means other than wages – demanding suppression of tribal occupations, paying chiefs 'premiums' to remit men, and building low-fare railways, besides implementing 'hut' and 'labour' taxes, the latter payable annually by males lacking four months' waged employment.

Controlling Transvaal politics hence facilitated super-profits. However, the type of capital entering South Africa seemed unable to sustain any manufacturing or 'progressive agriculture' potentially informing an expanded white settler civilisation. Imperialism here looked different, with its lopsided form of development. One sector utilised capital and labour in disproportionate quantities compared with all others, injuring their growth. 'Serf-society' existed, deploying 'forcible methods' on behalf of a 'race-based aristocracy'.

*The Psychology of Jingoism* (1901) discussed British cultural conditions that 'inverted

patriotism' and made it 'the hatred of another nation', hiding class stakes behind policies. Multiple 'instruments of instruction' overtly or insidiously propagated an imperialistic mindset: music halls and churches represented 'screens' for strategic financier interests. 'Lie factories' (the press) spent fortunes prating about their impartiality, while police connived in assaulting peace campaigners. Other nations derived mirth from imperialists angry at foes never 'standing on the sideline waiting to be shot'. When jingoism faltered, another 'screen' rolled out: 'protecting savages'.

Every theme Hobson elaborated before 1902 can be discerned in *Imperialism*. Colonialism equated to a community's expansion, colonies becoming autonomous partners; after 1884 there were subordination and competing empires, causing extreme nationalism. Areas under this 'new Imperialism' were Crown Colonies (*sans* representative or responsible rule) with sparse white settlement. Although they were 'irrational from a national standpoint', their costs benefited some classes. Public funds repaid loans (plus interest) for military and expedition supplies (aiding certain manufacturers) and increased armed and civil service positions. Annexations fluctuated currencies (aiding speculators), secured foreign markets or investments, and gave engineers, missionaries, prospectors, ranchers, and others employment.

Hobson judged that one correlation best evinced his 'vested interests' thesis. For 18 years, although foreign trade with imperial rivals grew, its total value declined in relation to internal transactions. Simultaneously, investment incomes from abroad doubled, dwarfing external trade profits by 5:1. Fully 15 per cent of British wealth was invested overseas, half as foreign and colonial state borrowings and the rest held in railways, banks, telegraphs, municipal services, or 'industries directly-dependent on land values'. Foreign policy appeared to be 'primarily a struggle for profitable investment markets' as classes living on interest did so ever more from holdings abroad, with an incentive to extend their portfolios and safeguard existing revenues.

*Imperialism* distinguished two investor types. A 'rank and file' were cat's-paws, commercially and politically, for 'general dealers' who, rather than use stock to earn dividends, speculated with it in currency markets. Imperialist forays also benefited underwriting public debt

and company flotations; any policy affecting asset values needed their sanction. While 'imputing so much power to financiers seems a too narrowly economic view of history', Hobson wrote, 'finance is rather the Imperial engine governor' (1902: 66). This body ran on 'patriotic fuel', empowering 'adventurism, military enterprise, political ambition, and philanthropy'. Enthusiasm for expansion – 'strong and genuine, yet irregular and blind' – was regulated by lenders to states. They made the 'final determination' on the basis of their interests, with newspapers 'putting into minds beliefs influencing policy, thus affecting money markets' (66–67).

Hobson linked his finance judgements to how 'trusts' informed ever greater amassed capital sums. 'Automatic saving on an unprecedented scale' resulted because the hyper-rich did not consume adequately, with their profit-seeking investments creating a 'stricter economy of existing capital'. As lucrative opportunities in 'trusted' industries diminished, 'investment markets beyond the home area were forced' (1902: 80). Such territories often required annexation (it being implicit that an apt capital protector was necessary). Over-production and under-consumption thus linked to foreign policy. 'If the British raised their consumption and kept pace with rising productive powers, neither excess goods nor capital could clamour for Imperialism' (86). Since distribution did not directly relate to need (a matter governed by 'other conditions'), Hobson argued against imperialism as 'industrial progress demanding new markets and investment fields'. Modern capitalism's inequities informed *over-saving* – from rents, monopoly profits, and 'other unearned income' – which was the reason for recent world developments.

Hobson considered that taxes funding empire management never fell unduly on the classes constituting imperialism's 'taproot'. While Britain had millions living in poverty, steady indirect taxes paid debt financiers and landowners 'dole money'. Fluctuating direct taxes were 'paraded' to fool people that all paid their way. Many taxes appeared to be protectionism renamed, raising prices and portending Great Power tensions over key resources. Liberalism seemed dead, with debates inside the British state taking place only between rival imperialist camps.

Imperialism also assessed an expanding empire's corrupting effects in its heartland.

Southern England was packed with 'autocracy-trained' men returning from life overseas, running for office and, hostile to liberty, 'bringing despotism home'. They defended 'Western parasitism': elites drawing vast tribute from abroad, who supported 'tame masses of retainers' performing 'minor industrial' or personal services. Various discourses buttressed imperialism for such 'cultured' classes and *hoi polloi*. 'Social efficiency' appeals (also known as 'scientific racism') – wrapped in 'thin convenient theories' from biology and sociology – indoctrinated the former with 'moral grandeur'. For the latter, there was 'hero-worship, glory, and sporting spirit: history falsified in coarse flaring colours' (1902: 234).

Although few world regions were unclaimed by imperialists, Hobson contended that land rights meant little without labourers. Imperialism depended on 'forced labour' as different from 'unfree contracts' of the waged *partout*. Acquisition methods included seizing community resources, issuing travel passes (impeding mobility), promulgating militia levies to actually supply businesses with workers, and stoking unrest that justified martial law. Taxes were designed, as was 'forced labour', less for revenue than for compelling labourers to seek wages. Indenture particularly injured remitting communities, since the able-bodied vanished entirely from a locale.

### On internationalism

Hobson's works after *Imperialism* asserted that Liberal principles informed prosperity, peace, and equality. *International Trade* (1904) argued how tariffs spurned internationalism and were a sectarian policy. Protection helped some industries, reflecting their political weight, yet harmed commerce overall by skewing capital distribution and consumption. As in the case of imperialism, tariffs inflamed national antagonisms, with beneficial exchanges misrepresented as rivalry for limited markets, stymieing demands for wealth redistribution. Privileged classes increased rents and profits at the community's expense, consolidating capitalist structures to repress competition better. Cartels injured trade, since 'the real question' amid non-competing groups was monopoly's worth, and exchanges did not involve like production costs.

Measures to lessen inequality were proposed in *The Crisis of Liberalism* (1909): public



ownership of land, popular control over credit and insurance, plus free transport networks and industrial power. Any monopoly would be tackled. This 'practicable Socialism' disavowed 'abolishing the competitive system and socialising instruments of production, distribution, exchange', and so on, instead offering workers 'economic conditions requisite to the employment of their personal powers for private advantage and enjoyment' (172–173).

An *Economic Interpretation of Investment* (1911) revealed that only 10 per cent of British investment was in the country; foreign revenues had risen by 90 per cent over 20 years, mostly from state bonds, municipal stock, railway securities, or construction, manufacturing being incidental. No European country now figured in the top ten destinations: the Americas or colonies were preferred. Writing for a business press, Hobson claimed that imperialism was changing: 'nationalist aspects weakening and giving way to an economic internationalism exercised with little political control, the minimum affording asset security' (117). Finance seemed 'the aptest peace instrument'. Wars started because of 'reckless insults' – even weapons manufacturers 'lost out'.

Hobson rejected his recent conclusions in *Towards International Government* (1915). With a progressive publisher, he argued that the 1914 war served the interests of arms dealers, who bid states against one another, knowing their secrets. It complimented how politicians backed 'their' investors and traders, with quarrels arising over tariffs or markets where special interests were claimed. War was 'mainly a product of these antagonisms', specifically financier competition over concessions in undeveloped countries. Pace his 1911 work, 'political weapons' made all the difference: free capital movements were 'normally a pacific force', binding creditor and debtor by 'mutual advantages' (1915: 139).

*Democracy after the War* (1917) proposed that European upper classes deemed their interests and survival to involve hostilities, not peace. While investment struggles in the Balkans, Turkish Empire, and Morocco underpinned the ongoing war, other reasons existed. Capitalists earned vast profits from conflict financing and contracts, aiming also to 'settle industrial unrest threatening revolution' as 'impossible by constitutional methods' (41). German landlords urged war for

staving off property taxes and an ending of agrarian customs. Britain was similar, albeit with its aristocracy 'fused more completely with the industrial plutocracy' (42). Akin to what Imperialism noted abroad, conscripts now laboured in factories under military law.

*Taxation in the New State* (1919) observed how war-debt interest was a colossal £350 million p.a. for lenders, with conflict also massively expanding the capital of many manufacturers, farmers, brewers, and mine-owners. Public funds paid cash for destroyed assets and shortages helped profiteers. Banks earned from enlarged credits and deposits that doubled in five years. By writing down securities, which 'safely' recovered value later, businesses kept profits 'out of income'. Capital applied to plant enlargement, rather than dividends, escaped taxes, *gratis* bonus shares then being issued. Assets that the state bought at inflated prices were sold back to former owners below market rate. Elites netted 'several thousand million pounds' in such ways.

*The Morals of Economic Internationalism* (1920) proposed that the US must help reconstruct Europe. If some nations could not pay, those with surpluses had to provide credit too. It was not 'charity' but 'an intelligent sense of self-interest'. Allowing Central and Eastern Europe to starve risked dangerous reactions, with any protectionism threatening insular nationalisms. 'In Britain', Hobson wrote, the latter policy meant 'heaping fuel onto the class war fire'; America needed to 'learn lessons from Russia and Hungary' (54–55).

*Problems of a New World* (1921) reiterated how the Bolshevik revolution changed global affairs. A different imperialism appeared as a ruling class strategy for avoiding social unrest, one where self-preservation 'trusts' substantially replaced competition. Concerted action through the League of Nations (which needed to include Germany) might inform international and industrial peace by 'substituting a race cleavage for that of class'. Undeveloped countries with 'cheap labour' would export produce 'to well-paid, short-houred and contented Western workers, employees of combines, who transform it by scientific manufacture'. Capitalists aimed to 'make them partners in a sweating-system involving foreign exploitation', and 'favoured proletariats' becoming 'little shareholders'.

Hobson noted that the imports essential for satisfying home populations 'cannot be

bought by their full equivalent in exports'. Under free exchange, raw materials and food-stuffs would long 'remain on a higher level than manufactured exports', owing to different efficiencies. Syndicates were induced to organise production abroad 'cheaply': 'forced or sweated labour and using Governmental aids to obtain land or business opportunities at minimal cost' (1921: 185). Most overseas produce would thus 'arrive' as monopoly rents or super-profits on native labour, a portion of this surplus gain becoming available for supporting Western workers in relative comfort: higher real wages, low import prices, shorter hours, and so on. States taxing the wealth that imperialist exploitation made possible, or leasing 'Crown lands' for revenue, might then offer their citizens enhanced social security. The moral temptation was 'a limited international, under which an oligarchy of great nations shall live on the resources and subject peoples of undeveloped countries'.

### Legacy

Hobson lived long enough to observe, analyse, and predict several profound world developments. His ideas became known internationally through their adoption by major figures in 20th-century history. Two contrasting men are especially significant. On the one hand, John Maynard Keynes, who did more than any economist of the period to save capitalism, borrowed heavily from Hobson's work. On the other hand, Vladimir Ulyanov, also known as Lenin, cited *Imperialism* extensively and favourably in a pamphlet of the same title (1933). Hobson's relation to these personalities informs – indeed overshadows – many divergent readings of his bibliography.

Economists discussing Hobson and Keynes usually uphold the latter's views, with the former styled as a lesser (albeit inspiring) thinker. Keynes notably proposed that under-investment relative to profit rates appeared to be of greater significance in determining crises than boom-period under-consumption. This perspective focused attention on interest rates and the minted money supply. For Hobson, of course, these matters were palliatives: the issue was equalising property distribution, not temporarily ending abstention. Thus conservative critics of Keynes, highlighting his 'Hobsonian' debts (more than he did), attack the foundation of the production–

consumption disequilibrium, proposing that effective demand can rise. Omitted are Hobson's points about how the wealthiest literally fail to unproductively consume more (hence the larger productive investments, possibly informing capital exports, until confidence disappears), enduring class divisions, and imbalances that are potentially reproducible at ever grander scales.

The renown of a 'Hobson–Lenin thesis' rests on the former's ideas and the latter's deeds. Lenin added little to any imperialism 'theory' *per se*, self-admittedly clarifying mainly how Hobson's logic (and that of other monopoly capitalism students) necessitated civil war. No radically independent 'Leninist' view exists. The proletarian state leader's endorsement consequently informs more heat than light as to a Liberal's work, something compounded by the fact that both *Imperialism* texts are generally assessed in isolation from their political contexts and their authors' other concepts.

Supporters and detractors of 'Marxism' (or Lenin in particular) traverse two paths: they appeal to empirical data, that is, if it 'matches' what either *Imperialism* claimed, and they compare select propositions against universal principles, that is, whether an author proved 'consistent'. Notably, Lenin's favour drew attention only after Hobson's death. While Western historians during the 1920s and 1930s affirmed the latter's negative 'national' cost-benefit analysis for 'new Imperialism' colonies, they ignored his capital export theory and how prominent socialists, who also included Rudolf Hilferding, Rosa Luxemburg, and Nikolai Bukharin, utilised it. A decade on, many writers presumed to be 'Marxists' lacked any explanation for empire growth. After 1945, however, the translation of Soviet Union materials citing Lenin became commonplace, with Hobson's *Imperialism* a key text for partisans contending whether capitalism inevitably meant colonies and competing empires.

Notwithstanding that the Soviet Union exported capital much like its capitalist rivals, Hobson's insights and modern relevance were subsumed by Cold War polemics. Divorcing his text from debates about decolonisation or neo-colonisation, most Western academics claimed that nothing 'economic' informed *de jure* (not *de facto*) territorial control. Both *Imperialism* texts needed rejecting, commonly via an article by Joseph Schumpeter, 'The Sociology of Imperialisms' of 1919 (1951b). Although this

perceived 'new Imperialism' as greed-driven, it was deemed possible only in autocratic contexts, that is, 'unlike' many North Atlantic societies after 1918. Atavistic behaviour was not simply 'irrational' (the view of some Liberals against Hobson), but represented 'feudal' elements struggling for power; it diminished as industrial capitalism developed.

Scholars making claims about what kind of imperialism the British Empire epitomised overlaid 'economic vs. cultural' discussions after about 1960 with 19th-century case studies. Aiming to refute 'Marxism', historians proposed Hobson's *Imperialism* as reductionist, introducing a non-existent 'new imperialism' break, and with inadequate primary data. Alternative contributions included discussions of how Hobson/Lenin 'really' explained world war, not annexations, and arguments that 'informal' free trade zones or defence of sea routes defined 'new imperialism'. Analysts during the 1970 and 1980s stressed events abroad, neither 'economic' nor 'metropolitan', as informing empire growth. An important 1990s view, which alleged that Hobson failed to explain pre-Industrial Revolution imperialism and saw manufacturers as driving policy, nevertheless highlighted undemocratic financier ties.

International disputes concerning reformers or revolutionaries, and exchanges that *Imperialism* generated years after its publication, often mean that Hobson's long-term Liberal Party allegiance is overlooked. Historians of the period are divided between those observing a 'consistent' *laissez-faire* disciple or state-interventionist and others who perceive an 'inconsistent' mixer of these creeds. A more recent argument has been that Hobson purposefully transcended genres, seeking political propaganda effects from this technique, his only steady ideals being free trade and equality of subjects. It remains to be seen whether social movements against monopolies and socialism today, advocating small-scale property, will make anything else of Hobson's career.

### Afterword

Hobson once jested about his origins: 'the middle stratum of the middle class of a middle-sized industrial town' (1938: 15). Before the 1920s were out, this cohort's political vehicle, the Liberal Party, was broken,

with reactionary and socialist forces defining a new economic and ideological era. For Hobson, the agendas of such polarities endangered not just his class but property *in toto*. Over 40 years, he countered the discourses that rival theorists offered, developing their aspects that were compatible with liberal beliefs and contesting those that were inadmissible. Struggles in imperialist societies for 'the middle class' and its political weight, regularly observed by him, perhaps also help explain the possible class-contradictory readings of his works.

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## Indian Mutiny (1857): Popular Revolts against British Imperialism

Michel Foucault's journey in *Discipline and Punish* started with a vivid description of a

spectacular case of torture near the Church of Paris in 1757. Among so many legal changes in Europe and the US, Foucault noted 'the disappearance of torture as a public spectacle' by the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century (Foucault 1995: 3–8). However, British colonial rule in India signified a different trajectory of power. It enjoyed a 'monopoly of violence'. In fact, 'the infliction of pain as a mode of punishment was an insignia of power for the British in India'. In the context of the aforesaid modalities of British power in India, one eminent historian of the 1857 Mutiny, Rudrangshu Mukherjee, noted in his discourse multiple instances of unprecedented insurgent violence and counter-insurgency violence during and after the rebellion. The Mutiny witnessed looting, killing, and destruction by the insurgents. The targets included the British, their property, and government buildings. The punishment for the rebellion was 'exemplary' and 'spectacular' (see Mukherjee 2007: xvi, xx, 23, 36, 39). The revolt was ruthlessly suppressed as the British army moved into the rebel territories. Sepoys (native Indian soldiers) were blown off from canons, even on the mere suspicion of being involved in the Mutiny. The counter-insurgency measures included public execution of the rebels and indiscriminate burning of native villages (Bandyopadhyay, 2004: 169; Metcalf 1998: 43).

It is pertinent to prepare a broad chronological catalogue of the course and extent of the rebellion before analysing its character. As the sepoy of a regiment at Meerut refused to load the new Enfield rifle in the early summer of 1857, they were sentenced to imprisonment and sent off to jail in fetters. The sight of their compatriots' humiliation led the XI Native Cavalry, based in Meerut, to mutiny on the night of 10–11 May 1857. The mutineers then marched to Delhi where the reluctant and ageing Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, was installed as the symbolic head of the revolt. The revolt soon spread to the areas north and west of Delhi (Bose and Jalal 1998: 90–92). By the end of May, the rebellion had spread to Ferozepur, Muzaffarnagar, Aligarh, Naushera, Etawah, Mainpuri, Roorkee, Etah, Nasirabad, Mathura, Lucknow, Bareilly and Shahjahanpur. Between 1 and 13 June, Moradabad, Badaun, Azamgarh, Sitapur, Neemuch, Banaras, Kanpur, Jhansi, Dariabad,

Fatehpur, Nowgong, Gwalior, and Fatehgarh had witnessed uprisings. There were uprisings in Hathras and Indore on 1 July (P.C. Joshi, 1957: 379–80).

The spectacular subversive events connected with the 1857 Mutiny include: the rebels' taking possession of Kanpur under the leadership of Nana Saheb; capture of Jhansi Fort, restoring power to Rani Lakshmi Bai; the rebels' siege of the Lucknow Residency, the citadel of British power; Taty Tope dislodging the British from Kanpur and recapturing it; Kunwar Singh capturing Arrah and Azamgarh. The tragic events in the Mutiny include: Bahadur Shah Zafar's surrender to the British, the deaths of Kunwar Singh and Lakshmi Bai; and the hanging of Taty Tope (P.C. Joshi 1957: 379–382).

In the aftermath of the Mutiny, the British colonial rulers gave it specific meanings through their technologies of power such as photography, memorials, and history writing. The most authoritative 'prose of counter-insurgency' that appeared after the revolt was the massive three-volume *History of the Sepoy War in India* by Sir John William Kaye. 'Kaye's history was not so much about the Black Man's rising as about the White Man's suppression of that rising' (Amin 2007).

The Mutiny of 1857 had many dimensions. It started with the sepoy of the Bengal Army rising in revolt against the British Raj in northern India from 10 May 1857 onwards. Diverse social classes (landlords and peasants, princes and merchants) and religious communities (Hindus and Muslims) participated in the revolt, each for their own reasons. Large areas of the region remained out of British control for a year and more (Metcalf 1998: 43).

The land settlement policy introduced by the British in northern India immediately before the Mutiny adversely affected both the peasants and the landlords. British annexation of Awadh in 1856 had antagonised the sepoy of the Bengal Army, of whom several thousand recruits originated there. The revolt was preceded by around 1,400 petitions from the sepoy about the declining conditions of the peasantry and the hardships faced by them due to the summary settlements in 1856 which followed the annexation of Awadh. The landlords (*taluqdars*) also were adversely affected by the settlements, which led to the dispossession of a number of powerful *taluqdars* (Bandyopadhyay, 2004: 171–173).

The Mutiny had religious dimensions. Rumours were circulated in the summer of 1857 about the cartridges of the new Enfield rifle being coated with the fat of cows and pigs, about forced conversions to Christianity, and about British intentions to disarm the sepoys. These rumours spread from village to village, from bazaar to bazaar, and from one sepoy line to another (Mukherjee 2007: 46). This testifies to the deep-rooted suspicions that prevailed between the Hindu and Muslim communities about the intentions of the British. It should be mentioned in this connection that in the post-Mutiny period the British administrators felt the urgent need to understand the minds of their native subjects. This is evident in the statement of W.W. Hunter, an eminent member of the Indian Civil Service: 'The chronic peril which environs the British power in India is the gap between the Rulers and the Ruled' (Hunter 2002/1871: Dedication).

The discursive field of the 1857 Mutiny is highly contested. Karl Marx, on the basis of observations made by Disraeli, characterised the Mutiny as a 'national revolt' (Marx and Engels 1978: 142). The nationalist historians of India have tried to appropriate it as an organic part of India's nationalist movement. However, in the centenary year of the Mutiny, P.C. Joshi, the general secretary (1935–48) of the undivided Communist Party of India, noted large-scale peasant participation in the major sites of rebellion around Meerut and Delhi in northern India (P.C. Joshi 1957: 295). It may be mentioned in this connection that the posthumously published book of Eric Stokes, the eminent British historian of colonial India, was titled: *The Peasant Armed: The Indian Rebellion of 1857* (Stokes 1986).

The question of the Mutiny's leadership has been much debated by historians. Stokes coined the phrase 'peasants in uniform' to characterise the sepoys (Joshi, n.d.). He argued that coming from the small land-owning families of Awadh, the allegiance of the sepoys was to the land. Consequently, the distinction between the sepoys and the peasants got blurred. Stokes identified 'elites' or 'magnates' such as *taluqdars/zaminders* (landlords), who had been marginalised and squeezed by the British, as leaders of the rebellion. Rudrangshu Mukherjee did not accept this interpretation. Stokes's emphasis on magnates suggests that peasants were subordinate to or manipulated by the elites. On the contrary,

Mukherjee argued, 'peasants and clansmen could and often did act outside magnates' initiative' (for the debate, see Priti Joshi n.d.).

Nationalist leaders of diverse shades supported the 1857 rebellion. V.D. Savarkar, 'intellectual guide to Hindu chauvinistic politics', wrote the first full-length Indian version of the story of 1857 in his book *The Indian War of Independence of 1857*. He found to his 'great surprise the brilliance of a War of Independence shining' in the Mutiny (Savarkar 1909: vii). The great Indian revolutionary, Bhagat Singh and his comrades also regarded 1857 as a war for independence. The prominent leader of the nationalist movement and the first prime minister of independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru, wrote about the place of the rebellion in the history of British rule in India, while in Ahmednagar Fort jail (1944). He did not subscribe to the path taken by the Mutiny, but he did not deny that it 'assumed the character of a popular rebellion and a war of independence'. It may be mentioned in this connection that the government of India led by Nehru commissioned Dr Surendranath Sen to write a definitive history of the Mutiny on the occasion of its centenary (for diverse nationalist assessments of the rebellion, see Singh 2007: 44–66). All of this goes to show that the 1857 rebellion created an anti-imperialist spirit which touched the minds of the proponents of Hindu nationalism, liberal nationalism, as well as the revolutionary tradition of nationalism in British India.

On the occasion of the 1857 Mutiny's 150th anniversary, historians have opened up fresh dimensions by exploring further archival materials, asking new questions and doing ethnographic research. The special issue of the *Economic and Political Weekly* (EPW) bears testimony to this work. In his theoretical intervention, Dipesh Chakrabarty has enlightened us about two different kinds of recall of 1857: as incitement for popular politics, and as a festive time on the national calendar. In this context, he mentioned the fact that the Forum for Democratic Initiatives in Delhi held a conference at the Gandhi Peace Foundation on 20 March 2007 on '1857 and the Legacy of Peasant Resistance' with the subtitle, 'Tebhaga, Telangana, Naxalbari and Now, Singur'. Chakrabarty argued that this is an instance of looking on 1857 as the precursor of many other rebellions to come (Chakrabarty 2007: 1695).

Recent ethnographic research shows that the memory of the 1857 Mutiny has been carried in the oral folk-tale and folklore traditions of the Dalit (lower castes) in northern India. Other than establishing their own heroes and heroines, such narratives have contested the monopoly of the elite icons of the Mutiny such as Kunwar Singh, Tatyá Tope, and Nana Saheb. Rani (queen) of Jhansi is the dominant woman icon in the elite discourse of the Mutiny. Ethnographic research has located stories about brave women martyrs of 1857 in the Dalit narratives, such as Jhalkaribai, Avantibai, Udadevi, and Mahaviridevi. The martyrs of Dalit communities have often been deified and are found to be worshipped by the villagers in different regions of northern India. Moreover, many Dalit icons have been incorporated in contemporary Dalit political discourses to glorify their traditions (see Tiwari 2007: 1734–1738).

William Dalrymple, in his presentation in December 2006, argued that earlier generations 'have, perhaps, underplayed the power of faith and religion' as a motive force behind the 1857 Mutiny. He drew our attention to 'the huge weight of emphasis on this factor given in the rebels' own documents' (Dalrymple 2007: 37–38).

The historians of the Mutiny mostly concentrated their attentions on regions situated in the 'Gangetic heartland' of northern India. On the occasion of the Mutiny's 150th anniversary, some researchers (L.N. Rana, Sanjukta Das Gupta, and Shashank Sinha) have drawn our attention to the participation of Jharkhand tribal communities in eastern India (Bhattacharya 2007: 69–142).

Rather than viewing the Indian National Rebellion of 1857 as a momentary outburst, and so limiting its significance within a short historical time frame, one should locate the ways in which the rebellion was preceded by and influenced other anti-colonial protest movements. It is suggested that in order to have a 'holistic' reading of the Rebellion, one needs to explore the period from the 1830s to the 1870s, the period which witnessed imperialist expansion and also challenges posed to the British rule by a host of peasant and tribal movements (Pati 2010: 4).

The rebellion in 1857 created a crisis of authority in the British Empire. Within weeks of its outbreak, the government of India sent a dispatch to the Cape Colony requesting an urgent transfer of troops. In addition to

providing military support, the governor of the Cape Colony, Sir George Grey, assisted officials by providing financial assistance for those in India affected by the violence. In fact, the rebellion provided an opportunity for Britons throughout the world to show their loyalty to the Empire. In the wake of the uprising, colonial officials throughout the Empire expressed fears of native rebellion and justified the greater use of force to maintain British control and hegemony (Bender 2013: 1–23).

The 1857 Mutiny carried different meanings for different social classes and communities. In fact, it represented many mutinies, and any one homogeneous characterisation is grossly inadequate in capturing its multiple meanings (for diverse interpretations and the historiography, see Ray and Chaudhuri n.d.). It is expected that future historians will unearth other hidden meanings of the Mutiny by exploring new archival materials and asking different sets of questions.

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## League against Imperialism and for National Independence (LAI)

Demonstrations opposing colonialism have always gone hand in hand with colonialism itself (see Mishra 2013; Stuchey 2010; Young 2009), but during the years between the two World Wars there was an increase in the dynamics of anti-colonialism partly due to the fact that protests had now become globalised. At a time when European expansion

had achieved its 'universal historical maximum' (Osterhammel 2009: 42), the willingness of anti-colonialists to co-operate with one another was concomitantly on the rise. Disenchanted with the League of Nations, political leaders in Latin America, Africa, and Asia strove to link and co-ordinate their diverse anti-colonial movements while continuing their activities within the League's frame of reference and modelling their joint efforts on those of European colonial powers within the League. Their starting point was a shared but unspecified criticism levelled at colonial and imperialistic forms of government by both anti-colonialists and anti-imperialists, the policies of the League of Nations and the US for their failure to champion universal enforcement of the right to self-determination, and the desire to have their demands publicly recognised (see Bao 2008; Manela 2007; Prashad 2007).

It was no accident that numerous anti-colonial conferences took place during the 1920s. Based on his assumptions about cultural and geographical commonalities, W.E.B. Du Bois organised pan-African conventions in Brussels, Paris, London, Lisbon, and New York between 1919 and 1927, attended by between 50 and 200 participants respectively. These in turn were part of a larger pan-African movement that made use of diverse methods and goals to promote the emancipation of black peoples (see Esedebe 1994; Legum 1962). The two pan-Asian conferences that were held at Nagasaki (1926) and Shanghai (1927), with 39 and 11 participants respectively, served the same purpose. The intellectuals gathered there criticised the policies of the League of Nations, demanded the end of European colonial rule, and declared the creation of a united and independent Asia as their common goal. These conferences too formed part of a broader discourse about Asia and its position in the world (see Aydin 2007; Saaler and Koschmann 2007). Nevertheless, the geographical focus of activities critical of colonialism was still to be found in Europe, where anti-colonialists established numerous new organisations during the inter-bellum period (see Derrick 2008).

This anti-colonial movement in Europe also enjoyed the support of communist organisations. Agents sent by the Communist International (Comintern) moved into the vacuum left by the US's withdrawal from European politics and attempted to present



themselves as allies of the anti-colonial movement. On the one hand they thus hoped to improve their contacts with non-communist actors whom they desired to convert to their ideology; on the other, the Soviet government itself, which had by no means achieved stability at that time, was hoping to find allies among international political players. Within this context, the government in Moscow organised the Congress of Oriental Peoples at Baku in 1920, with about 2,000 participants. At the same time the Communist Party in England sought to organise an Oriental Congress in 1925, but without success (see Petersson 2013; Weiss 2013; Young 2009: 134–139).

In contrast, anti-colonialists were more fortunate in Germany, which had lost all its colonies after the First World War. On 10 February 1926, the *Liga gegen Kolonialgreuel und Unterdrückung* (League Against Colonial Atrocities and Oppression) was founded during the course of a rally championing anti-colonial movements in Morocco and Syria, which took place under the leadership of Fritz Danzinger. Here all the most important anti-colonial activists of the inter-war years came together: communists, socialists, committed German anti-colonialists, as well as representatives of similar movements in the colonies. In the spring of 1926, the League set up an organising committee for the purpose of planning a meeting of anti-colonial groups under the chairmanship of the communist Willi Münzenberg, the Indian nationalist Virendranath Chattopadhyaya (Chatto), and the Hungarian Comintern agent Luis Otto Gibarti (see Barooah 2004; McMeekin 2003). Unlike the pan-Asian and pan-African congresses, these organisers envisaged a global forum that would unite anti-colonial activists from all parts of the world and all ideological camps. After a good year of preparation, it took place at the Palais Egmont in Brussels from 10–15 February 1927.

Some 174 delegates from around the globe, representing 134 organisations and movements, attended the First Congress Against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism. In addition, numerous prominent personalities such as Albert Einstein, Henry Barbusse, and the wife of Sun Yat-Sen endorsed the gathering (see LAI 1927: 241). Finally, the organisers succeeded in persuading politicians, intellectuals, and members of the three most important anti-colonial movements of the inter-war

period to take part in the Brussels conference: the socialists/communists, the liberal humanitarians, and the representatives of colonial independence movements.

Communists such as Willi Münzenberg and members of the Comintern viewed these movements for colonial independence as an opportunity to gain potential allies in their struggle against capitalistic colonial powers, and attempted to win them over to their own objectives. Leftist social democrats like George Lansbury (vice-chairman of the British Labour Party), Edo Fimmen, and Fenner Brockway opposed colonial rule as well and vied with the communists for influence within the colonies. They did not want the notion that only communists were committed to its goals and interests to gain currency in the anti-colonial movement, and soon initiated attempts to influence members of this fast-growing faction by promoting social-democratic ideas. Intellectuals who, like the French Nobel Prize winner Romain Rolland, opposed colonial rule for liberal and humanitarian reasons supported the congress. Finally, numerous delegates from opposition movements within the colonies also attended. Among the relatively few representatives from South Africa, African National Congress (ANC) representative Josiah Tshangana Gumedé, the South African trade unionist Daniel Colrairie, the communist James La Guma and a few more made the journey. Others who came included: the Argentinian author Manuel Ugarte; Richard B. Moore as spokesperson of the Universal Negro Improvement Association; Messali Hadj-Ahmed, co-founder of the Algerian *Étoile Nord-Africaine*; and Lamine Senghor and Mohammed Hafiz Bey as delegates of the Egyptian National Party. Close to 30 Chinese exiles represented Chinese organisations. Jawaharlal Nehru was one of seven Indians and spoke for the Indian National Congress (INC) that was participating in a convention outside India for the first time. Mohammad Hatta, later vice-president and foreign minister of Indonesia, spoke in the name of the Indonesian nationalist movement *Perhimpunan Indonesia*. (LAI 1927: 228; 229–242).

They all wanted to make their political demands known to a larger public; they wanted to gain new allies for their political goals and to create a counter-weight to the League of Nations and the colonial powers

(see Dinkel 2012). Lacking real military, political, and economic strength, the participants in the Brussels congress put their hopes in co-ordinated public relations work as well as the creation and expansion of an anti-colonial network. As a short-term goal they agreed to collect, publicise and disseminate arguments condemning colonialism via publications, conferences, and exhibits; they planned to establish and maintain contacts among individual anti-colonial activists, and improve the organisational structure of the League Against Imperialism and Colonial Rule and For National Independence, which later was known only as the League Against Imperialism and for National Independence, or League Against Imperialism, LAI for short. In the longer term, the LAI was envisaged as becoming an effective organisation carrying greater political weight, in which anti-colonialists from all parts of the world and from all political camps would join together (LAI 1927: 228, 243–250).

Following the Brussels congress, the participants at first succeeded in making their political demands generally known. The international media were overwhelmingly positive in their reporting about the anti-colonial bent of the congress. Some sympathisers, such as Nehru, travelled through Europe and later returned to their homelands, where they promulgated the LAI's cause in lectures, rallies, and sympathetic newspapers. Furthermore, in 1927, the LAI had its conference proceedings published in book form by Münzenberg's communistic Neuer Deutscher Verlag (New German Press), and in July of 1928 issued the first edition of *The Anti-Imperialist Review*, a magazine expressly founded for the purpose of making their aims known. And indeed this soliciting of new members frequently proved successful. Thus, Carl Lindhagen, lord mayor of Stockholm, joined the LAI as early as 4 March 1927 and was chosen as honorary chairman of its second congress in 1929. Several ethnic minorities within Europe also appealed to the LAI for support in their struggles for independence and were eager to gain membership. However, their initial efforts were in vain, since the LAI was primarily focused on co-ordination and co-operation with its non-European members (see Dinkel 2012).

The LAI also succeeded in channelling the euphoria generated by the congress into consistent, well-organised co-operation among

its associates. On 29/30 March 1927, the heads of the LAI had an initial meeting in Amsterdam at which they confirmed the work of their international secretariat that was based in Berlin. Both institutions – the executive conference that, until 1929, met at least once annually at varying European venues, and the permanent international secretariat in Berlin, headed by Willi Münzenberg and Luis Gibarti – functioned as LAI co-ordination centres for the purpose of enabling and encouraging other anti-colonial groups to turn to them for support. This, according to several official reports, actually happened. Thus, by April of 1927, about 30 organisations from Latin America, the US, Africa and South-East Asia were associated with the LAI. The most prominent among them were: Algeria's *Étoile Nord-Africaine*, co-founded by Ahmed Ben Messali Hadj; the Indonesian *Perhimpunan Indonesia*; the African National Congress (ANC), represented in Brussels by J.T. Gumende; and from December 1927 the Indian National Congress (INC). In addition to encouraging their members to form alliances with organisations already in existence, the international secretariat urged them to establish their own local branches of the LAI. At the end of 1927, LAI affiliates existed in 22 individual countries and colonies (see *ibid.*).

Yet concurrently with the successes of the LAI came a change in the political environment. The colonial powers crushed uprisings in Morocco, Syria, and Indonesia, thus destroying the hopes of the Brussels congress, which had seen these revolts as harbingers of a new era. On top of that, the Netherlands and France promptly reacted to the Brussels meeting by arresting individual members of the LAI such as Mohammed Hatta and Lamine Senghore. At the same time they banned magazines sympathetic to the LAI and thus restricted its ability to disseminate information (see *ibid.*).

Despite this, most of the problems besetting the LAI after its founding were internal in nature, for the euphoria surrounding the convention had aroused hopes about the LAI's potential to influence events that it proved unable to fulfil. Technical and financial difficulties robbed both conferences and League of a good part of their effectiveness. The decisive factor leading to the dissolution of this much publicised anti-colonial solidarity group were power struggles among its three leading allies: the social democrats, the

communists and the representatives from the colonies. These had already been completely at loggerheads about the future course of the LAI by the end of 1927, and thus rendered the League almost totally incapable of acting. Their common opposition to the League of Nations and to a woolly concept of imperialism was no longer enough to bridge differences among the members, since each faction strove to exploit the League's network and its other members to further its own interests.

Two years later the National Socialists outlawed the League, and the international secretariat in Berlin was shut down. Equally ominous was the fact that Willi Münzenberg, the long-time organiser of the secretariat, resigned from the League in 1933. The remaining members fled to London via Paris, where they handed its leadership over to Reginald Bridgeman in the autumn of 1933. At the beginning of 1935, Bridgeman noted that no actions had been taken internationally since the secretariat had fled Berlin, and that the League was now leading little more than a pro forma existence on paper. His attempts at rebuilding the organisation were unsuccessful. With the exception of a few brochures that came to publication, little is known about the activities of this English branch that survived until its official dissolution on 11 May 1937, when it turned over whatever material it possessed to the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (see Jones 1996: 29, 32).

The LAI and its conferences exemplified an experimental field in which anti-colonialists were able to test various forms of organisation and co-operation with diverse anti-colonial actors from all over the world. When all is said and done, however, the conferences and activities organised by the League were ultimately mere moments in time when viewed from a historical perspective. The meetings and activities of the LAI had next to no influence on the policies of the colonial powers, nor is there any evidence that they triggered any broader debates about the legitimacy of colonial rule. Even so, the LAI conferences had enormous significance for the anti-colonial movement per se. They proved to its members that it was possible to hold such conventions in spite of manifold difficulties and regardless of the political and cultural differences that existed among participants; and for a brief time they had been able to make a broader public aware of their political demands. These meetings were products of

an era during which the importance of publicity for the policies of anti-colonial movements and post-colonial rule was on the rise, and at the same time they themselves served to accelerate these developments. They also offered delegates the opportunity to meet anti-colonialists from other regions, and this facilitated the establishment of personal contacts and networks that often endured beyond the timeframes of the conferences themselves.

As far as the history of ideas is concerned, these meetings left a hodgepodge of anti-colonial and anti-Western stereotypes in their wake as well as spawning vague political utopias such as visions of a united Asia and Africa and a world free of colonial rule, beliefs that persisted even after anti-colonialists' attempts at co-operation dwindled towards the end of the 1920s and despite the dreadful experiences of the Second World War. As ever more time elapsed, the anti-colonial conferences and organisations of the inter-war period, particularly the League Against Imperialism, appeared as moments during which all the anti-colonial actors manifested their solidarity without regard to national frontiers. Many governments of African and Asian states striving for independence saw the League as a model for a new solidarity group waiting to be organised and created within a completely altered international environment, although the conferences that were held between the two wars specified neither the time, the membership structure, nor even the organisational forms later congresses were to have. Instead of heeding this fact, various actors resorted to the congress 'legacy' of a diplomacy based on anti-colonialism. During the Second World War, Japan invoked anti-colonial and pan-Asian notions in its war against the Allied powers as a way of legitimising its own expansion; in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru partly justified the pan-Asiatic organisation Asian Relations Conference on the basis of his positive experiences at the Brussels conference of 1927; and the Indonesian president Sukarno opened the Asian-African Conference in Bandung in 1955 with a similar reference. By so doing, he first placed the Bandung Conference squarely within the anti-colonial tradition, thus stressing the common experience of the participants, and then he spelled out the political changes that had occurred since that time as well as the new challenges that arrived in their train:

'I recall in this connection the Conference of the "League Against Imperialism and Colonialism", which was held in Brussels almost thirty years ago. At that Conference many distinguished Delegates who are present here today met each other and found new strength in their fight for independence. But that was a meeting place thousands of miles away, amidst foreign people, in a foreign country, in a foreign continent. It was not assembled there by choice, but by necessity. Today the contrast is great. Our nations and countries are colonies no more. Now we are free, sovereign and independent. We are again masters in our own house. We do not need to go to other continents to confer. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Indonesia 1955: 19ff.)

The anti-colonial conferences and organisations that had been formed during the period between the two wars, particularly the LAI, were not forgotten in the wake of the Second World War. With the passing of time, they seemed like snapshots in which the boundless solidarity of all the opponents of colonialism was displayed, and for this reason the governments of many Asian and African countries striving towards independence took them as blueprints for the creation of a new regional or international organisation of post-colonial states within a completely transformed global environment.

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## Non-Aligned Movement (incorporating Yugoslavia)

The Non-Aligned Movement is an international association of states that was established to co-ordinate co-operation globally and across regions outside the Cold War blocs of the two Superpowers – the US and the USSR. Its inaugural conference was held from 1 to 6 September 1961 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The leading figures of the foundational meeting were the President of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz ‘Tito’, and the President of Egypt and the United Arab Republic, Gamal Abd al-Nasser. Twenty-five states took part in this initial conference including Afghanistan, Algeria, Burma, Cuba, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kampuchea, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen, and Zaire. The organisation grew rapidly to include 117 member states by 1971. Several countries including Cuba, Indonesia, and Ghana also played leading roles in setting the agenda of the association in the 1970s and 1980s. The Non-Aligned Movement formed a permanent committee and a co-ordinating bureau at the headquarters of the United Nations (UN) in New York and held frequent consultative meetings and ministerial conferences, as well as summit conferences approximately every four years (in Belgrade in 1961, Cairo 1964, Lusaka 1970, Algiers 1973, Colombo 1976, Havana 1979). The organisation continues to exist and function today in a modified form, even after the end of the Cold War.

As the formerly colonial states and otherwise recently self-determining states became independent after the Second World War, with the formation of the UN they searched for a ‘Third Way’ alternative to the East–West blocs. These states across the globe encountered difficulties in modernisation, but strove towards an independent course in foreign policy and development.

Third Way politics, in which the Non-Aligned Movement engaged, sought to represent small states and challenge bi-polar

divisions by forming a multi-state coalition outside the East–West blocs. Development in the Mediterranean region that was important for the birth of the movement was shaped by the radicalisation of politics in the Cold War in the aftermath of decolonisation and by Superpower interventions across the globe. Choosing a Third Way foreign policy among the recently independent states influenced the construction of sovereignty, nationhood, and the state. The Non-Aligned Movement came to represent this crucial dynamic of international history.

The themes which encompassed the Non-Aligned Movement were international: anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-militarism, communism, dictatorship, and anti-apartheid action. These subjects left no region untouched in the post-Second World War period. The goal of this association of states was never clearly defined, but it worked to promote solidarity among those nations that were less powerful in international relations. It also functioned materially to facilitate large development projects among different member states, such as river water regulation systems and the building of large-scale constructions such as military complexes. In addition it fostered student exchanges.

### The initial geo-political prerogative

The Non-Aligned Movement set the stage for alternative foreign policy strategies outside of the East–West blocs; it made use of transnational politics, an ideological alternative, and the cultural dynamics of the Cold War to advance not one, but several agendas. It is important, however, to understand that the association itself began as a geo-political prerogative. The balance-of-power status quo which emerged between the two Superpowers after the end of the Second World War was problematic for states such as Yugoslavia and Egypt. Yugoslavia had faced an initial split with the USSR in 1948 when it was expelled from the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) by the Soviet leader Josef Stalin. While Tito and Stalin had argued over numerous issues between 1945 and 1948, including the formation of a future Balkan federation, the basic underlying reason for the split was Tito’s objection to Stalin’s post-war foreign policy. The Yugoslav Communist leadership increasingly felt that Stalin was overly accommodating to the wartime

Western allies, ready to grant them their sphere of influence in Western Europe, and that the USSR was not prepared to recognise Yugoslavia's leading role among European Communist parties. Tito's leadership in Belgrade was not willing to compromise its independence from the Soviet Communist Party which it had acquired during the Second World War by fighting and winning a civil war and a war against the Axis across Yugoslavia. It now rejected Soviet foreign policy in the post-Second World War world.

The Nikita Khrushchev-led Soviet–Yugoslav rapprochement of 1955 led only to a second conflict in 1956 when the USSR invaded Hungary. Military action to prevent a revolution in Hungary made the geographical and ideological position of Yugoslavia more difficult; Yugoslavia was an independent one-party communist state in Europe outside the Warsaw Pact. The Yugoslav leadership surrounding Tito still did not desire a close connection between the Yugoslav and Soviet Communist parties, and Tito himself underlined a need for state sovereignty also in foreign policy.

The second Yugoslav–Soviet split led to a permanent disconnection in the years after 1956. In that same year Egypt experienced a challenge from Great Britain and France in the form of the Suez crises. When Egypt decided to nationalise the Suez Canal, Israeli troops with the support of Great Britain and France invaded the waterway in October. The incident ended when British and French troops were replaced by UN peacekeepers in November 1956 and Israeli troops were withdrawn in March 1957. Nasser in Egypt also came to seek a foreign policy alternative after the invasion of the Suez Canal by stepping away from British and French pressure.

The political leaders of Yugoslavia and Egypt then began, with renewed political will, to look for an association and a geographical centre of gravity by means of which they could enforce their foreign policy agendas and secure the independent futures of their states outside the politics of the USSR (in the case of Yugoslavia) and the Western Allies (in the case of Egypt). Tito and Nasser strove to gather together the elements for the so-called Third Way from among those states which did not officially belong to either the US or the Soviet bloc.

Following Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Soviet bloc, the Yugoslav Communist

Party leadership had sought refuge, successfully, in building wider international foreign policy connections. The party had increasingly granted to its foreign ministry the resources necessary to establish a broader and more important range of diplomatic relations than those of other Eastern European states. Yugoslavia quickly became a member of the UN, and achieved a term as a non-permanent member of the Security Council as early as January 1950. It notoriously accused the USSR at the UN General Assembly of having started the Korean conflict. The country's representatives to the UN became very skilled at launching and supporting resolutions and other initiatives within the organisation. Yugoslavia was prepared to support to Egypt at the General Assembly over the Suez crises, securing a special emergency session under the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution. It also gave early and vocal support for a UN Emergency Force to intervene days after the Israeli invasion, and this prepared the way for Egyptian collaboration in later years in helping to organise the inaugural conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in September 1961 (see for example UN General Assembly 1956).

For Tito and for Nasser the Non-Aligned Movement served as a foreign policy solution against geo-political dilemmas posed by the USSR and by Britain and France, and it sought legitimacy in foreign policy away from the USSR and the Western Allies. The movement was internationally recognised and became highly visible through the influence of news media, and also helped to justify the domestic policies of 'brotherhood and unity' in Yugoslavia and Arab nationalism in Egypt. Both Tito and Nasser utilised images of the movement politically to convey its international significance and its global weight. The leaders of the two states, and Tito in particular, dominated the political agenda of the movement in its early period. The first summit conferences of the organisation were held in Belgrade (1961) and Cairo (1964). Yugoslavia had not been engaged in the anti-colonial struggle before the birth of the Non-Aligned Movement. Despite the overwhelmingly global themes and anti-colonial context of the movement, Yugoslavia was not an anti-colonial state. Rather, it had established itself via the Non-Aligned Movement as firmly against the domination of its Communist Party and state by the USSR. The

roots of Third Way politics through the key influences of Yugoslavia and Egypt were intimately connected to the need to shelter foreign and domestic politics from Superpower influence and the desire and need to build sovereign state structures after the Second World War.

### The role of the Global South and Asia

Many scholars have described the 1955 Asian–African meeting in Bandung, Indonesia, as a significant stage in the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Bandung summit did bring together all 29 independent states of Asia and Africa except for Korea and Israel, and it raised many topics and debates of race and geo-politics which in the later decades of the 1970s and 1980s became crucially important to discussions within the Non-Aligned Movement as well (Lee 2010; Tan and Acharya 2008). These issues included, among others, anti-colonialism, the role of Soviet domination in Eastern Europe, and military pacts. The Bandung meeting was the first occasion on which a group of former colonial states gathered together without European powers, and it therefore played a significant role in the chronology of the post-colonial era. In 1960, the Indonesian leader Sukarno argued that the inaugural meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement at Belgrade should be planned as a follow-up to Bandung, or as a second Bandung. However, since such a theme would have limited the scope specifically to Afro-Asian states this did not come to pass. The organisers of the Belgrade meeting, Tito and Nasser, did not accept this approach during the final preparations at the Cairo preparatory meeting of 5–12 June 1961 (Willets 1978). In fact, there is no evidence of an absolute connection between the birth of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Bandung conference of Afro-Asian states, despite numerous scholarly references to specific links between the two.

African and Asian states were crucially important to the Non-Aligned Movement in the wider context of the Global Cold War, and gave also crucial impetus to the organisation of its inaugural meeting: in the year preceding it alone, 16 new African states became independent and joined the UN. In 1960 the Algerian guerrilla war of independence against France (1954–62) was still running its cruel course and was a constant

security concern across the Mediterranean. In the same year, in his speech to the General Assembly's 15th session, Khrushchev banged on the podium with a shoe that he had brought in his briefcase, in an attempt to inspire and persuade the Third World to support the USSR instead of the United States in the Cold War. In these circumstances of escalating geo-political unrest Tito, Nasser, the Indian leader Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah, and Sukarno met at Yugoslavia's permanent mission to the UN in September 1960 to discuss a way forward for a future initiative. In the following year the continuing Cold War tensions between the US and the USSR involved Berlin as well between June and November 1961, intensifying the bi-polar fight. The ideas for the formation of an association crystallised at the inaugural conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade, led by Tito and Nasser.

An important question regarding the birth of the movement concerns the role of India. India had become independent from the United Kingdom in 1947; its leader Nehru was an icon, and it bore legitimacy as an ideological forerunner of one of the large post-colonial states in Asia. India's foreign policy after independence has sometimes been interpreted as one of fundamental non-alignment. This is also because Nehru used this term early on. Egypt too had gained its independence from the United Kingdom. Despite early important involvement in dialogue over the Bandung conference and the preparations for the Non-Aligned meeting, Nehru's and India's role in the actual Non-Aligned Movement was less central than has sometimes been described or than it could have been expected to be. The initial goals of the Non-Aligned Movement came to be defined as ones closely tied to representing small states outside the Superpowers of the Cold War. India's regional role in Asia and its overall role in the Global Cold War were markedly different from those of small states; India was an important power that sought to assert itself after its independence as one of the important great powers. India and its leader Nehru engaged in much debate about what a moral foreign policy in the tradition of Gandhi would consist of, but Nehru related questions of its geo-political role to the great power China. In 1954 India formulated its five principles of peaceful co-existence in a treaty with China. These included mutual respect

for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful co-existence. India, from its important geo-political perspective, proposed from the beginning that the Non-Aligned Movement should consist of a large number of states, among which it could have played a significant and dominant role. However, Tito and Nasser insisted on a relatively small group of states and were able to achieve their goal initially as the initiators of the first conference.

### Outcomes

After the Second World War economic development remained fundamentally equated with industrialisation and the implementation of modern science within production and consumption processes. The US entered the markets of the post-colonial states in both competition and co-operation with European powers because of the enormous financial and technological capacities it possessed. The USSR entered the post-colonial markets often by default, as an alternative to Western capital and products, often especially providing armaments to post-colonial states. Both Superpowers tried to link economic co-operation to bloc alignment, but these attempts were frequently dismissed by elites of the states belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement, who believed that recent political independence fundamentally translated to the prerogative to shield the domestic decision-making process, and therefore technology, from foreign interventions. This was considered to be best accomplished by centralising and strengthening the institutions of the newly sovereign nation state. Thus pursuing a connection with the Non-Aligned Movement gave the nationalist elites the opportunity to select from both blocs the capital, technology, and educational institutional partnerships which they deemed most suitable for their priorities.

The resources which the Non-Aligned Movement amassed were important, for example, in Algeria, where American and Soviet concepts of modernisation had to compete with those of the Yugoslavia and later Cuba. On gaining independence in July 1962, Algeria became the arena of a multi-lateral contest between the modernisation programmes of France, the US, the USSR, and communist China. The Algerian leadership

itself attached great importance to developing the country's own autonomous revolution, and saw their newly independent country as the vanguard for the rest of Africa, if not the entire Third World (Byrne 2009). The Syrian Ba'athist elite in Damascus made similar considerations: although highly wary of the risks involved in the military presence of the two Superpowers in the Mediterranean, the Ba'athists exploited the partnership with the Soviet camp to break the primacy of Western powers in the Syrian economy and foreign policy (Trentin 2012).

Yugoslavia exploited the relationships that it formed through the Non-Aligned Movement to build extensive foreign relations and participate in development and construction projects globally, including the Kemer dam in Turkey in 1954, the water supply in Lebanon in 1957, the Garabuli area dams in Libya in 1974, and the naval academy in Tripoli in 1986. The Non-Alignment Movement legitimated the practice of differentiation of international relations and thus suited well the pluralism desired in the post-colonial states' economies and societies and by those states whose independence had otherwise been threatened in the post-war scenario.

### The relationship of the Non-Aligned Movement to neutralism

The terms 'neutralism' and 'non-alignment' are often used interchangeably, but they should not be confused even in the historical and political context of the Cold War. One definition of neutralism is as a political strategy appropriate to the circumstances of the Cold War. The foreign policy of neutralism, as for example in the case of Finland according to the formulation of its presidents Juho K. Paasikivi and Urho Kekkonen, meant that the state would establish bilateral relations with the USSR but would remain outside the Western North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as well as outside other defensive international alignments. The experiences of Finnish–Soviet relations during and after the Second World War led the Finnish post-war political leadership to conclude that in order to avoid invasion, Finland would have to demonstrate a commitment to minimising security risks to the USSR along its European political border and to not interfering in the Soviet domination of domestic politics elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Neutral foreign policy defined



by Paasikivi and Kekkonen demanded limiting relations with Euro-Atlantic institutions to economic agreements, refraining from security alliances, limiting co-operation with Western intelligence agencies, and allowing a domestic Communist Party to exist and be active. Finland shared an 800-mile-long border with the USSR, and the outcome of the post-war peace treaty threatened Finnish independence because parts of Finnish territory had been surrendered to the Soviet neighbour; Finland, like Yugoslavia and Egypt, dealt with security threats against its independence after 1945. However, Finland, like several other European states that engaged in neutralist foreign policy was not a post-colonial state.

States such as Finland and Sweden were invited to join the Non-Aligned Movement and asked to take part in its conferences. However, both of these states declined, identifying the movement as anti-colonial and also as leaning towards communist economic models. The attitudes in the 1960s were often ones of a shared interest in the declared goals of the Non-Aligned Movement, but hesitation to make the expected commitment to comment on questions relating to Superpower conflicts. Of the two states, Sweden was even more hesitant towards the movement than Finland on the USSR's border. Elements of geo-political strategy and the intention to reduce military tensions by the Non-Aligned Movement interested the European states that were engaged in a foreign policy of neutralism, but they were unwilling to criticise Western European institutions publicly. It is clear why this was an inescapable barrier for affiliation or cross-over if we consider that Finland, for example, had become an associate member of the European Free Trade Agreement EFTA in 1961, the year in which the Non-Aligned Movement was born. Neutralism foreign policy bears a closer connection to the Euro-Atlantic community through the economic ties of a few European states (Finland, Sweden, Ireland, Austria, Switzerland) to the West. In today's context it is also important to note that a country cannot be a member of both the Non-Aligned Movement and the European Union at once.

### **The lack of a coherent agenda**

The Non-Aligned Movement was never successful in formulating and putting forth a

clear and ultimately effective concept of a global order as an alternative to that proposed by the two Superpowers. The agenda of the association was never crystal-clear, and instead was formulated mostly in terms of summit conference agendas, but at times it produced a dynamic organisation which could promote several agendas and leaders at once. The organisational structure of this association was too loose, and its dynamics during various decades after its birth tended to favour one part of the world and agenda over another. It was not democratic among its member states, and did not inspire solidarity. For this reason it is very difficult to define the ideology of the movement, because that would require assessing the relative importance of the different leaders of the movement and the occasions on which they were able to put forth their agendas.

In the late 1960s Non-Aligned member states struggled to agree on whether to condemn the US over its actions in Vietnam. Many of them then had also shifting partial allegiances and relationships with the USSR. Simultaneously the Arab states underlined the importance of the question of the Palestinian occupation by Israel after the 1967 war. As détente began to emerge across the European continent, there was a fear among the Non-Aligned states that the Cold War proxy conflicts would shift increasingly away from Europe to an even great extent, perhaps to their territories. Within the movement there was a general move away from presenting the limited, more coherent set of geo-political concerns of states like Yugoslavia and Egypt and towards treating anti-colonialism as a more important major issue. From the 1970 Lusaka summit conference onwards, anti-colonialism was placed as a main item on the agenda, whereas it had previously been listed under matters of peace and security. At the Lusaka summit the US was also directly blamed for escalating the Vietnam War. Issues including racism, apartheid, and imperialism were also raised in the agenda and were defined as forces which worked against peace. In the 1970s the movement highlighted problems of apartheid in South Africa and Portuguese colonialism, and economic issues were given more weight. Nonetheless the Non-Aligned Movement remained relevant because it was able to engage in fundamental questions including economic development. The Palestinian Liberation Organization was

given observer status in the Non-Aligned Movement at the 1973 Algiers summit, but it did not agree to vote for the expulsion of Israel from the UN. After preoccupation with questions of race, post-colonialism, the Vietnam War, the Arab–Israeli conflict, and economic development in the 1970s, in the 1980s the focus of the association turned more towards Latin American concerns and priorities.

### Relevance today

As the Cold War came to an end the Non-Aligned Movement as a whole had difficulty in agreeing on a unified position on crucial events such as the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan. These issues emerged in debates, for example while setting the agenda for the Havana summit meeting in 1979. In many ways it is surprising that the movement has survived into the post-Cold War era. Its role and capacity have changed, but it continues to exist and claims to represent the interests of smaller states and a great variety of other states in international relations outside the Euro-Atlantic community.

The legacy and memory of the Non-Aligned Movement have also been utilised in current UN politics. In recent times, for example, two states emerging from Yugoslavia, Croatia and Serbia, have both sought out the structures and states of the Non-Aligned Movement to promote their foreign policy agendas. The support of Non-Aligned countries helped to vote Croatia in as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2008–09. Engagement with the legacy of the Non-Aligned Movement and the support of a significant number of African states also helped Serbia's foreign minister Vuk Jeremić to gain favour and to be voted in as the president of the UN General Assembly for 2012–13. Although many formerly communist states have sought to separate themselves from the legacies of their Cold War foreign policies, these formerly Yugoslav states have utilised their Non-Alignment past as an asset.

Bearing in mind the current interest in the Cold War period and important advances in the field of development studies, it is surprising how little we know of the Non-Aligned Movement. Studies are challenged by the lack of any single archive of documents for the association. In addition

scholars have had only limited access to comprehensive collections of primary sources in many of the countries which played leading roles in the organisation including Cuba, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, and the former Yugoslavia. Important research has been done on the relationships of individual countries with the Non-Alignment Movement, but more is required in order to further understand the history of this important player in the history of international relations. Once we begin to understand the strategies of the Non-Aligned Movement and the similarities as well as differences between the various member states, we will be better able to discern the historical significance of the association.

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## Resistance to Imperialism in the Caribbean, 1856–1983

When Christopher Columbus, a representative of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, landed on the shores of Guanahani (now Watling Islands in the Bahamas) in 1492, it marked the beginning of Western European domination of the Caribbean Basin, leading to the genocide of the indigenous inhabitants of the region and the oppression of Africans and other Third-World people. Initially, Spain enjoyed sole ownership of all the islands, which was made possible when Pope Alexander VI issued The Papal Bull ‘Inter Caetera’ in 1493. Subsequently, with the Spanish discoveries of gold and silver in Mexico and Peru, other European nations such as England, Holland, and France – which had been excluded from the Treaty of Tordesillas (1495) – laid claims to the Caribbean in the 16th century. The region, therefore, was divided into the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, the English-speaking Caribbean, the Dutch-speaking Caribbean and the French-speaking Caribbean. While each variant of colonialism was different, all the European powers viewed the Caribbean islands as spaces for exploitation of land, labour, and capital.

The Caribbean consists of many large and small islands and three countries in Central and South America. These entities include the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos, Cuba, Cayman Islands, Belize, Jamaica, Haiti, the

Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, Anguilla, St Maarten, St Barthelemy, Antigua and Barbuda, Saba, St Eustatius, St Kitts-Nevis, Montserrat, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Suriname. Historically, the region was divided into the English Caribbean, the Dutch Caribbean, the French Caribbean, the Spanish Caribbean, and the US Caribbean. From the 15th century until the enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine, European nations enjoyed hegemony in the region. While Great Britain enjoyed the ‘Lion’s Share’ in the region, its dominance waned at the end of the Second World War when the US became the dominant superpower of the capitalist system. However, for the purposes of this discourse on Caribbean resistance to imperialism, this essay focuses on the English-speaking islands of the Caribbean. It examines Caribbean resistance to imperialism from different time periods: post-emancipation to 1856–81, 1900–36, post-1936–1950s, 1960s–1970, and finally from 1970–83.

### The post-emancipation period, 1856–81

In 1833, the British Parliament passed an act that abolished slavery; however, this measure did not mean that the ex-slaves in the British colonies enjoyed complete freedom. In order to appease the powerful planter class, the authorities compensated them to the tune of millions of British pounds and imposed a kind of apprenticeship on the ex-slaves for a period of five years until the system was abolished in 1838. While some of the ex-slaves continued to work as wage-labourers on the plantations, thousands left and became independent peasants, and others moved into urban areas where they engaged in occupations. However, their material life did not change significantly in the years following emancipation.

In the post-emancipation period, the former slaves were subjected to the same political and economic conditions that had prevailed under slavery. Many ex-slaves were willing to remain on the plantations and work for wages; however, the planters were not keen on offering a living wage and proper working conditions. One of the earliest forms of resistance to British imperialism that occurred

during the post-emancipation period took place in Guyana in 1856. John Sayers Orr, a colourful preacher, used his sermons to address issues that affected the black and coloured population. Faced with discrimination and competition from the Portuguese immigrants who came to the colony as indentured servants, Orr and his followers rioted from 16–17 February 1856 in Georgetown when the authorities tried to suppress their meetings. The riot was not confined to Georgetown but also spread to Demerara and Essequibo.

Resistance also occurred in St Vincent in 1862. In their attempt to suppress wages, the British authorities initiated a policy of indentureship whereby they imported East Indians from India to work on plantations in St Vincent. The arrival of these immigrant workers created much anxiety among the African labour force. A slump in sugar prices further aggravated the situation and resulted in the slaves taking direct action to protect their interests. In St Vincent in 1862, when the price of sugar fell and the first ship arrived with Indian indentured workers and the planters took cost-cutting measures to suppress wages, the ex-slaves rioted. The ex-slaves not only protested but were willing to become independent producers.

In Jamaica, the ex-slaves wrote a petition to Queen Victoria requesting land to grow their own food. Rather than affirm their request, the Queen replied that the prosperity of the colony depended not on them becoming independent producers but rather wage earners, which would guarantee the prosperity of the British Empire. This response evoked anger among the black population and eventually led to the Morant Bay Uprising in 1865. Led by Paul Bogle, a small well-organised group of men and women raided the police station on 11 August and stole muskets and bayonets. This insurrection caused much rioting and looting and lasted for three days. The British authorities sent the warships *Wolverine* and *Onyx*, troops, and enlisted the maroons. Declaring martial law, the British imperialist and its representatives in Jamaica seized the upper hand and crushed the insurrection. Almost 430 men and women were either shot or executed and over 600 persons were flogged. Both Boyle and George William Gordon were tried by court martial and hanged. Even though the authorities crushed the opposition, it did not stop ex-slaves from rebelling against British imperial rule.

In Trinidad, in 1881, the 'Jamette', a group of lower-class black Trinidadians who formed street bands and participated in the Carnival celebrations, organised a planned resistance and rioted in the streets of Port of Spain for the right to stage their own celebrations which the British authorities deemed vulgar. Additionally, East Indian indentured labourers used the Islamic festival of Muharram to protest against what they saw as restrictions to their expression of cultural freedom. However, they also protested against their working conditions on the estates and the passing of new regulations regarding the festival. On 30 October 1884, undaunted by threats from the authorities, the East Indians took their celebrations to the streets of San Fernando. There they were met with violence when the British troops opened fire, killing some nine people and wounding 100 others. These acts of protest were not isolated events but can be linked to global struggles waged by the working classes in Europe and North America. These struggles laid the foundation for more organised resistance that occurred during the 20th century.

### Resistance, 1900–36

With the coming of the new century, the attitudes and policies of the British imperialist towards the British West Indies colonists did not change. However, the masses in the West Indies were not content to wait on the colonists to effect changes but took matters into their own hands. In 1905, fed up with the water situation in Trinidad, the people in Port of Spain rioted over a new Water Ordinance. This riot spread and resulted in some of the participants burning down the old Red House and destroying government papers and records. While not connected to the situation in Trinidad, sugar workers, stevedores, porters and other workers in British Guiana rioted during the period November–December 1905 to protest against low wages. The riots began on the Ruimveldt plantation but soon spread to other sugar estates on the East and West Banks of the Demerara. In Trinidad in 1915, a large contingent of cane farmers from the outlying towns of Princes Town, Chaguanas, Sangre Grande and surrounding areas staged a massive protest for higher cane prices. Furthermore, in March 1917, oil, dock, and asphalt workers in the southern part of the country took strike

action against United British Oilfields and the American-owned Trinidad Lake Asphalt Company. This strike laid the groundwork for the massive strikes and further resistance by Trinidadian workers that occurred in 1919.

At the end of the First World War in 1918, Trinidad and Tobago faced increasing tensions as both the African and East Indian working class faced worsening economic hardships as a result of high inflation triggered by the war. In addition to high food prices, East Indians pressed for higher wages and repatriation to India. These issues exacerbated the tensions between the workers and merchant class, and drew the attention of the British colonial authorities who saw these issues as potential grounds for more social unrest. By 1919, the socio-economic conditions had worsened as a result of repressive management practices, low pay, arduous work, terrible working conditions, and lack of bargaining rights. Under such conditions, the anti-colonial forces came to the fore to defend the interest of the working class. Consequently, during 1919, the dockworkers at the Port of Spain waterfront staged a strike for higher wages and better working conditions. This strike quickly attracted the attention of city council workers, female coal carriers, estate labourers, vendors, low-ranking civil servants, shop assistants and the Port of Spain mob comprising the black slum dwellers and city's unemployed, all of whom seized the opportunity to press for their own demands. In addition, workers from Cedros, San Fernando, Carapaichima, Couva, Chaguanas, Sangre Grande, Toco, and Tobago joined the strike. Because of a stand-off between the representatives of labour and capital, a group of white businessmen led by George F. Huggins requested that the colonial secretary suppress the *Argos* newspaper, arm the white population, and station British troops on the island. The colonial authorities responded to the demands of the business elite by dispatching HMS *Calcutta* to suppress the strike and restore law and order. Moreover, they used the courts to impose punitive charges on the leaders of the strike. Furthermore, the colonial government passed the Sedition Ordinance on February 1920 that gave it wide powers to arrest, fine, and jail alleged agitators and shut down the *Negro World* and *Argos*, two newspapers that it deemed were inciting rebellion. In the aftermath of the strike, the authorities deported

Brutus Ironman, Bruce McConney, J.S. de Bourg and E.S. Salmon to their respective countries. The workers' struggle of 1919 had great significance because it laid the foundation of the working-class struggles that occurred throughout the English-speaking Caribbean in the 1930s.

### Labour resistance in the 1930s

The Great Depression of 1929 had brought the capitalist world economy to a grinding halt. While inflation and high unemployment had gripped the Western industrial countries, workers and peasants in the colonies faced severe hardships as a result of depressed prices for tropical products. Faced with deteriorating socio-economic conditions, the working class in the Caribbean took direct action against colonial authorities for better wages, improved working conditions, employment and political reforms. Starting in 1933, the National Unemployment Movement (NUM) mobilised hundreds of unemployed people and organised several demonstrations in Trinidad. Two years later in British Guyana, sugar workers engaged in a series of strikes and disturbances. In Jamaica, port workers in Kingston and other areas and banana loaders engaged in strike action. These demonstrations, disturbances, and strikes were the beginning of militant protest and conflagration that spread throughout the entire British Caribbean. The small island of St Kitts figured prominently in this wave of militant protest. On 28 January 1935, sugar workers in Basseterre refused to reap the crop over and refused the payment offered by their employers. News of their action soon spread to other parts of the colony. This led to the authorities calling out the local military and reading the riot act. Several workers were killed and the next day the British government landed marines. In the ensuing days, workers were arrested and some were sentenced to prison terms lasting from two to five years. This militant action was very significant because it marked a serious political challenge to elite rule in St Kitts and demonstrated the organisational capability of the working class.

The struggle in St Kitts became a template for more militant action and soon spread to the island of St Vincent. Faced with rising food prices, workers rioted on 21 October 1935 in the capital of Kingston. They attacked government officials, invaded

government property, and destroyed and damaged buildings and cars. Despite the arrival of a British warship and the declaration of a state of emergency that lasted three weeks, workers in other parts of the country defied the authorities to press their demands for land, better wages, and living conditions. News of the workers' militancy in St Vincent soon spread to St Lucia where coal loaders took strike action. However, the authorities, learning from the riots in St Vincent, dispatched a warship and landed troops on the island to quell the protest. On August 1937, another strike occurred when agricultural workers abandoned their jobs to protest for higher wages. These events in St Kitts, St Vincent, and St Lucia garnered the attention of workers in Barbados.

Barbadian workers' resistance to British imperialism occurred as a result of the deportation of Clement Payne, a worker's organiser and member of the Trinidad Workingmen's Association. Payne returned to Barbados at the age of 33 and declared to the authorities that he was born in Barbados. On his arrival, he began to mobilise workers by organising a May Day rally on 1 May 1937. Payne used this occasion to educate the workers on the need to organise a trade union to protect their interests. In response to Payne's agitation, the governor arrested him for making a false declaration, fined him in the courts, and secretly deported him back to Trinidad. News of Payne's deportation reached the masses who took spontaneous action by taking to the streets and destroying public property. This conflagration affected workplaces where workers either went on strike or threatened strike action. In order to avert a national crisis, the authorities struck by using brute force to quell the disturbances. The security forces killed 14 workers and arrested some 500. News of Payne's arrest and the conflagration reached Trinidad where tensions ran high among the working class.

Unlike the smaller British colonies that were predominantly based on agriculture, the British had developed a very sophisticated oil industry in Trinidad. Oil had been discovered in 1857 and commercial production began in 1908. The industry attracted workers from Grenada, St Vincent, and other small islands. In addition to the oil industry, the sugar industry was very buoyant and used East Indian indentured labour. This mix of African and East Indian working-class people

created a dynamic for agitation, with groups like the Negro Welfare Cultural and Social Association (NWSA) and the British Empire Workers' and Citizens' Home Rule Party (BEW&CHRP) conducting political work among the workers. In both industries, and especially in the oil industry, workers faced meagre wages, inhumane working and living conditions, poor grievance procedures, oppressive management, racial discrimination, and lack of upward social mobility. These conditions created the conditions for a general strike in the oil industry that also spread to the sugar industry, agriculture, port services, and the general working population. From 19 June–2 July 1937, the working class engaged in revolutionary insurrection that had the effect of paralysing the economy. In their attempt to protect their economic interests, the British authorities dispatched HMS *Ajax* and the HMS *Exeter* to Trinidad and violently suppressed the insurrection.

All these violent strikes, protests, and demonstrations contributed to the development of trade unionism in the Caribbean. Prior to 1937, the British had declared trade union activity to be illegal in the Caribbean. The General strikes and insurrection empowered the working class, and a number of powerful trade unions, such as the Oilfield Workers' Trade Union (1937) and labour parties, such as the Trinidad Labour Party, the Barbados Labour Party, the Jamaica Labour Party, and the British Empire and Citizens' Home Rule Party emerged throughout the Caribbean. Additionally, the events marked the entrance of the working class into Caribbean politics, especially in the aftermath of the Second World War.

### **Caribbean resistance during the Cold War, 1945–1960s**

The 1936 general strike and insurrection had propelled the working class into the vanguard for independence movements in the Caribbean. Because of the radical nature of the insurrection, the British authorities were forced to make concessions by way of the Moyne Commission that visited the British colonies. Emboldened by their ability to wrench these concessions, labour organisers, like Nathaniel Crichtlow (1884–1958) from British Guiana, were instrumental in organising the Caribbean Labour Congress (CLC) in 1945. This group consisted of a broad

coalition of labour leaders who espoused socialist ideals that ranged from Fabian socialism to Marxism. This confederation championed working-class control, regional economic planning, broader democracy for the Caribbean working class and masses, independence, and a socialist Caribbean Federation. Formed, at the end of the Second World War, the CLC had to confront the harsh realities of Cold War politics as promoted by the US in the Caribbean. Being the leader of the free world in the post-Second World War period, the US pushed for markets and resources in the Caribbean. This meant that US multinational corporations like W.R. Grace, Texaco, and Reynolds among others became very visible in the economies of British Guiana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. This economic thrust meant that the US felt compelled to target groups such as the CLC that advanced socialist ideas. In the larger theatre of the Cold War contest between the US and the Soviet Union, the CLC became a victim of that conflict. Originally a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the CLS leadership began to fracture ideologically when Richard Hart and Grantley Adams fought over the political direction of the confederation. Hart insisted that the CLS should line up with the WFTU, whereas Adams felt that the body should affiliate with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). As a result of this conflict, the CLS was disbanded and replaced by the Caribbean Area Division of the Organización Regional Interamericana de Trabajadores (ORIT), a US-sponsored labour organisation that helped shape the American regional organisation of the ICFTU in 1952. This move paved the way for liberal politicians and parties to lead the push for constitutional independence from the 1950s onwards. While the nationalist rhetoric of these parties portended challenges to British and American imperialism, their programmes and policies ensured that neo-colonialism became entrenched in the Caribbean region until the 1970s when a younger generation embraced the ideology of Black Power.

### **Black Power Revolution, 1970**

By the late 1960s, a younger generation of Caribbeans began to question the meaning of independence in countries such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. For many

of them, independence did not put a stop to colonial exploitation, provide much needed jobs, or end the practice of racial discrimination. Largely influenced by the teachings of Marcus Garvey, Franz Fanon, Walter Rodney, Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, Ho Chi Ming, Amílcar Cabral, the Black Panther Party and other radical ideas, these young people became attracted to the ideology of Black Power. Following the lead of young African-Americans who had become impatient with the moderate ideas of the Civil Rights Movement, the young Caribbean youths also abandoned the teachings of Eric Williams and Alexander Bustamante, respectively. Additionally, inspired by the actions of Caribbean students at the Sir George William University in Canada, who were charged and expelled for destroying university property, these young people began to adhere to an ideology that fused anti-imperialism, black nationalism, and Marxism to address the socio-economic conditions that confronted them.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the country where Black Power found its widest expression, the young people organised themselves under the banner of the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC), a coalition of groups comprising trade unions, youth groups, students and community-based organisations. Between 26 February 1970 and 21 April 1970, thousands of young people, united under the banner of the NJAC, converged on the main streets of Port of Spain and Tobago to demonstrate against the People's National Movement (PNM) Government. Additionally, the protestors were joined by officers Raffique Shah, Rex LaSalle, Mike Bazie, and David Brizan who led a small fraction of the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment in their attempts to overthrow the government. These Black Power protests and demonstrations in Trinidad and Tobago were not isolated events but were part of growing anti-colonial, anti-imperialist movements that had emerged in the Third World. These massive protests and demonstrations, throughout Trinidad and Tobago, which continued for months and grew in their intensity, caught the attention of the media in the US, Britain, and Venezuela, and some commentators have suggested that the government sought military assistance from these three countries in its attempt to quell the rebellion. In order to limit and control the impact of the activities, the

PNM Government declared a state of emergency on 21 April 1970, arrested and jailed scores of activists, and passed repressive legislation including the Public Order Act that sought to limit and control demonstrations.

Despite the repression of the Black Power Movement, the new opposition forced the PNM Administration to re-examine its Third Five-Year Plan and institute far-reaching reforms that sought to reorient the economy to address the pressing needs of the majority of the population. Moreover, Black Power was not simply an imported slogan but a movement that forced the PNM Government to develop the public sector to remedy years of inequality. The movement demanded nationalisation of the oil industry, the sugar industry, the banking sector and all other industries that were important to the country's economic security. More importantly, in the aftermath of the 'Revolution', a number of Marxist groups emerged throughout the Caribbean that would educate the masses on the need to transform the Caribbean based on socialism. This idea was not lost on a younger generation of Grenadians who would directly confront US imperialism in 'their own backyard' in 1979.

### The Grenada Revolution, 1979

Early in the morning on 13 March 1979, the New Jewel Movement-led People's Revolutionary Army overthrew the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) led by Sir Eric Gairy. They launched an armed attack on the radio station, police barracks, and key government buildings and installations. Grenada, a very small island in the eastern Caribbean, was ruled by Eric Gairy from 1967 to 1979. A former trade union leader, Gairy and the GULP to which he belonged had led a general strike in 1951 that demanded better wages and working conditions for agricultural workers. This strike cemented his place in the country's politics, and his party dominated Grenadian society afterwards. Over time, the GULP came to represent the Grenada elite and abandoned the interests of the working class. Grenada obtained constitutional independence in 1974 and shortly thereafter the Government became very repressive, waging attacks on all forms of opposition, especially against the New Jewel Movement (NJM) which proposed an alternative Grenadian society. The NJM was

an amalgam of two organisations: the Jewel and the Movement of the Assemblies of the People (MAP). Alarmed by the NJM's popularity and organisational capability among the masses and workers, Gairy, in 1970, established a secret police force known as the 'Mongoose Gang'. Similar in nature to the Ton Ton Macoute that had been organised by Francois Duvalier to repress the Haitian people, the 'Mongoose Gang' inflicted violence on the NJM leaders and their followers. On 21 January 1974, in the run-up to independence, the NJM and other groups staged a massive protest. This protest was put down violently and resulted in the murder of Rupert Bishop, father of Maurice Bishop. This murder and other incidents marked a turning point in Grenada's history, when, for the first time, in the history of the English-speaking Caribbean, the people took up arms and successfully overthrew the Government.

Following the overthrow, Maurice Bishop took to the airwaves and called upon the working people, the youths, workers, farmers, fishermen, middle-class people, and women to join the armed revolutionary forces to protect the revolution. Subsequently, the NJM formed the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) and sought the support of other regimes in the region. Most in the wider Caribbean, with the exception of Cuba, denounced the revolution and called on the Reagan Administration to defend democracy here. The PRG also received support from various progressive organisations in the Caribbean, among them the powerful Oilfield Workers' Trade Union, which had developed a relationship with the NJM. Declaring that they would embark on building socialism on the island, the PRG Government began to reorganise the country and implement its programme. From 1979 until the revolution was aborted in 1983, the PRG, in its attempt to transform Grenada and broaden democracy declared that it would suspend the holding of general election and instead embark on promoting people's democracy. To achieve this objective, the PRG reorganised the country politically into community groups, zonal councils, parish councils, workers' parish councils, parish co-ordinating bodies, and community work brigades. These bodies were created to foster meaningful dialogue between the people and the PRG leaders and government officials. As part of its thrust to develop a socialist society, the PRG initiated



a number of reform programmes concerning matters such as literacy and education, school repair, land distribution, free milk, school meals, and national house repair. A major highlight of the projected socialist reform was education.

Based on the Cuban model of literacy, the Center for Popular Education (CPE) programme commenced in 1980 with the goal of reducing adult illiteracy on the island. Based on the principle ‘it was not too late to learn’, hundreds of volunteers streamed out all over Grenada, Carriacou, and Petit Martinique where they tutored the residents. Moreover, the PRG developed phase II of the program with a stated objective of primary education for adults. The curriculum included basic English, Mathematics, Geography and Natural Science, and History, with an emphasis on Grenadian history. Other popular programmes included the establishment of the National-In-Service Teacher Education Program and the Community Day School Program (CDSP). The stated objectives of the CDSP-supported community school councils were to:

- make the school the centre of the community, and so promote a sound relationship between the two;
- involve the school and community in building the nation through joint work;
- develop a work–study approach and so make students conscious of the relationship between theory and practice;
- help with the formation of a new curriculum by linking school and community, using experimental new ideas and experience, and showing the importance of the new approach to study;
- offer a different outlook on life and prepare students for more productive participation in the building of the nation;
- awaken hidden talents in the students and community;
- develop and encourage both quality and quantity towards greater production;
- promote a keen sense of patriotism.

Furthermore, the government created scholarship programmes for Grenadian students to study overseas. The PRG sent students to Cuba, the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. Additionally, the PRG funded several programmes such as the Ministry of

Education, Women’s Desk School, and a uniform programme to assist families needing to purchase books and uniforms. While these programmes were aimed at fostering growth and development, the revolution faced serious internal and external attacks.

Internally, not all Grenadians supported the PRG. Centuries of colonialism did not eradicate strong allegiances to Great Britain. Moreover, the GULP maintained strong support among the Grenadian peasantry, who saw Eric Gairy as a ‘Champion of the people’. The regime also faced opposition from the Committee of Freedom Fighters Against Tyranny in Grenada, which distributed a five-page document titled ‘More News about Bishop and his illegal Communist regime in Grenada’. Furthermore, groups such as the Chamber of Commerce called on the government to hold ‘free and fair elections.’ Externally, the regime faced hostility from other Caribbean governments including those of Dominica, Barbados, Jamaica (under Edward Seaga, a rabid anti-communist) and Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago. Furthermore, the Reagan Administration declared the revolution a threat to its national security in the region. Seen as a proxy of the USSR and Cuba, the US declared its intention to defeat the revolution and defeat socialism in the Americas. This policy was part of the US Cold War policy in the Americas to maintain its imperialist designs.

These internal and external attacks created tensions within the PRG which led to internal divisions and eventually implosion. Within the party and the Government, a split emerged between Maurice Bishop and Bernard Coard over the ideological direction. Coard and his faction accused Bishop of being a reformist and not adhering to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. These internal ideological struggles led to deep fractions and eventually split the Government into two camps. Evidently, this struggle led to the staging of a military coup by Coard supporters on 16 October 1983. Bishop and his some of his cabinet members were placed under house arrest, and the army loyal to Coard instituted a state of emergency. This did not deter the Grenadian people from taking to the streets to defend the revolution and freeing Bishop and those arrested. In response, on the morning of 19 October 1983 the army unleashed a reign of terror on the masses, killing hundreds of people. Maurice Bishop and others

loyal to him were captured and brutally executed. This attack was strongly condemned by Fidel Castro who, in a speech to the Cuban people, called Coard and his supporters 'The Butchers of St George's'. This internal political crisis led to the US invasion of Grenada in 1983.

On 25 October 1983, President Ronald Reagan issued the command for the invasion of Grenada, codenamed 'Operation Urgent Fury'. Almost 10,000 soldiers landed on the island and began to dismantle the 'Socialist project'. However, the Americans met stiff resistance from Cubans and Grenadians who took up arms to defend the revolution. After a week of fighting, the US military subdued the opposition and took control of Grenada. Shortly thereafter, a new regime was installed that pledged its allegiance to the US. The military invasion dashed the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of many people in the Caribbean, who saw the revolution as a beacon of hope for the working class. Although it lasted only four years, the Grenada revolution became a watershed in Caribbean history by demonstrating that its people had the potential to create a new type of society that challenged the imperialist paradigm which oppressed workers and peasants.

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## Rome and Imperialism

### Rome in the history of imperialism

Rome has long occupied a central place in the theorisation of empire. One reason is that imperial symbols and language – eagles, fasces, laurel wreaths, and the Latin titlature of empire – have been repeatedly appropriated in the Western tradition by expanding powers and states. The Frankish King Charlemagne had himself crowned emperor by the Pope in Rome in 800. The title *Kaisar* (Caesar) was used by the rulers of successive German emperors in the Middle Ages, and Czar by various Eastern European powers up to and including the rulers of Russia. Medieval appropriations related as much to the contemporary presence of the emperors of Byzantium (who continued to be Caesars and to rule a Roman Empire into the 15th century) as to any close connection with earlier periods. But the increased interest in the classical past across Europe from the early modern period meant that Rome was repeatedly a mode. After the French Revolution and Napoleon's abolition of the Holy Roman (German) Empire, Roman titlature was adopted by French, Austrian, and British rulers. Many titles and symbols of Roman origin remained current until the middle of the 20th century.

That reception history has been a mixed blessing for the study of ancient Rome (Harrison 2008). While it has meant that

Rome has received much closer attention than many other early empires – such as Achaemenid Persia, the Hellenistic kingdoms of the Abbasid Caliphate – the repeated comparisons have introduced many anachronisms. Among these have been debates over the economic motors and costs of Roman imperialism, and over its civilising or brutalising effects. To some extent this remains the case in contemporary comparisons between Rome and America and even with post-colonial interpretations of ancient Rome, which sometimes seem tinged with post-colonial guilt. The best comparisons have in fact repeatedly drawn out contrasts between ancient Roman and modern European imperialism, and exposed the ideological component of claims to the contrary (Brunt 1965; Malamud 2009). It has even been suggested that we should not employ the term ‘imperialism’ to describe Roman expansion, so as to avoid importing connotations of competing hegemonies led by modernising nation states (Veyne 1975): those who follow Lenin’s notion of imperialism as a distinct stage of capitalism (1934) would also have to reject the label as it applied to Rome.

In practice it is not feasible to dispense with the labels ‘empire’ and ‘imperialism’, as similar problems face any alternative terminology. The most thoughtful recent approaches treat Rome as one of number of similar political entities often termed early empires. Depending on the focus of the analysis these are often qualified as tributary empires (in relation to their political economy) or pre-capitalist or pre-industrial if their economic life or technology seems more important. Broadly similar to Rome would be the sequence of Chinese empires that began in 221 BCE with the creation of the Qin dynasty, a series of empires based on the Iranian plateau including those of the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanian dynasties, probably the Neo-Assyrian Empire that controlled Mesopotamia and surrounding states in the first half of the last millennium BCE, a series of empires based on the Indo-Gangetic plain beginning with the Maurya dynasty of 322–185 BCE, the larger Macedonian-ruled kingdoms that divided the territory of the former Achaemenid Empire in roughly the same period, and a series of much later New World empires including those of the Aztec and the Inka. Each of these represented a system of political domination created by one

people through the conquest and intimidation of a number of other peoples and often by the absorption of a number of earlier states. Typically they were sustained by exactions of labour (military and other), of agricultural produce, and of metals, and typically much of this was spent on rewarding various privileged populations or classes and supporting military forces. Most of these entities invested in infrastructure – roads, canals, fortifications, storehouses, and ports – and in ceremonial and monuments. Almost all were ruled by autocrats. Most (with the exception of the New World examples) had iron metallurgy; most used writing and had imperial systems of weights and measures. None had any source of energy beyond human and animal labour, and none had any system of communications faster than a sailing vessel or a relay of riders or runners could provide.

There is disagreement on the most appropriate boundaries of this analytical category. Some scholars would include some of the earlier and generally smaller expansionist states of the Bronze Age Near East, including New Kingdom Egypt, and analogous states in Central and South America like that of Wari, and some would include the short-lived hegemonies exercised by powerful city states over their neighbours in city state civilisations (see Hansen 2000, 2002). Whether medieval and early modern empires were essentially similar is also debated. A number of recent synoptic studies deal with these questions (Alcock et al. 2001; Bang and Bayly 2003, 2011; Morris and Scheidel 2009). Some of these draw on historical sociologies of empire (Doyle 1986; Eisenstadt 1963; Hardt and Negri 2000; Kautsky 1982). Despite these disagreements over the proper limits of comparison, consideration of at least some other early empires provides a useful perspective on Roman imperialism. In particular, comparative analysis often reveals what was unique or unusual in the solutions Romans adopted to problems that were widely faced by early imperial powers, such as peripheral revolts, the integration of minorities, or the formidable limitations on long-distance communications before the industrial revolution.

### The phases of Roman expansion

The full story of the growth, stabilisation, and collapse of Roman political

domination can only be sketched out here (see Champion 2004; Nicolet 1977; Woolf 2012). Roman tradition dated the foundation of the city to the middle of the eighth century BCE, and archaeological research suggests that the site of Rome was at least occupied by that point. The institutions of a city state emerged around the seventh and sixth centuries BCE, probably a little later than in Etruria (Tuscany) just to the north or in the areas to the south where Greek cities were created. During the first half of the last millennium BCE, urban settlements and archaic states were created all around the Mediterranean and Black Seas. By the fifth century BCE some larger states – Athens, Sparta, Syracuse, and Carthage are the most famous – were coming to dominate their neighbours. Rome was not in quite the same league as these powers, but was probably already expanding at the expense of its immediate neighbours. During the fourth century BCE Rome first defeated the largest of the cities of southern Etruria, Veii, and then extended its control over its Latin-speaking neighbours and the hill tribes of central Italy. Wars fought almost every year, supported by contingents from its defeated ‘allies’, extended a hegemony over most of Italy south of the Apennines, although this was not expressed in regular extraction of tribute, and most of the cities and people of the peninsula remained autonomous even if they had lost effective control of their foreign relations. A demonstration of the resilience of Roman control came in 280–275 BCE when Tarentum, one of the largest Greek cities of southern Italy, persuaded Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, to cross the Adriatic and challenge Rome. Although successful in several battles, Pyrrhus was unable to establish a power base, and his retreat in effect solidified Roman control of Italy. This was also the period in which Greek writers noticed the rise of Rome, and from this point on a more precise and accurate kind of history can be written.

The Mediterranean world in the third and second centuries BCE was dominated by a small number of political hegemonies. In the east the Achaemenid Empire conquered by Alexander the Great had been divided between three large kingdoms – Seleukid Syria, Ptolemaic Egypt, and Antigonid Macedon – and a number of smaller states that aspired to the same status, among them the kingdoms of Bithynia, Pontus, and Pergamum in Asia Minor and that of Epirus in

the Balkans. Between and around them were cities, leagues of cities, and tribal peoples like the Thracians, variously allies, suppliers of mercenaries, and victims of the wars between the Great Powers. Some cities, like Cyrene, Corinth, Athens, and Rhodes, were larger players than others. West of the Adriatic Rome had only one serious rival, the city of Carthage close to modern Tunis, which exercised a loose control over other Phoenician foundations in north Africa, western Sicily and southern Spain. Sardinia and Corsica, the remainder of Mediterranean Spain, and most of southern France outside the small area controlled by the Greek city of Marseilles and her colonies were settled by tribal peoples with little resembling cities or states. By the middle of the second century BCE Rome had established effective hegemony over the entirety of these regions.

A series of wars with Carthage (the Punic Wars) in 264–241 BCE, 218–201 BCE, and 149–146 BCE gave Rome control of the western Mediterranean. The first Punic war was fought largely over Sicily and resulted in Rome becoming a naval power, as well as the creation of the first overseas provinces in Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. The second Punic war saw Hannibal cross the Alps but then be driven out of Italy, and Rome assert control over the entirety of Mediterranean Spain. Carthage was destroyed in 146 BCE and Rome established a foothold in north Africa; the Macedonian kingdom was defeated in 197 BCE and the Syrian kingdom in 188 BCE. Rome did not immediately annex any territory east of the Adriatic, and to begin with seemed content to extract plunder, disrupt local hegemonies, and leave the region in the control of its allies. This proved unsustainable or at least unstable. Macedon was again defeated in 168 BCE and the kingdom was abolished, to be replaced with four city states. Rome soon fell out with most of its east Mediterranean allies. The last king of Pergamum left his kingdom to Rome in his will, and so by the end of the second century Rome had provinces in the Balkans and western Asia Minor, had obliterated the ancient city of Corinth as an example of what happened to defiant allies, and seemed to contemporary observers like the Greek historian Polybius to be the undisputed ruler of the civilised world. Rome had not, however, developed very efficient institutions of control and relied on public contractors

to extract revenue, basing no troops and very few officials in the east, and expecting both conquered territories and other powers (like Egypt) to accept orders from Roman envoys. When Mithradates, King of Pontus, invaded first the Roman province of Asia and then southern Greece he was able to exploit Rome's unpopularity, and Rome briefly lost control of all her possessions east of the Adriatic. That crisis coincided with a major rebellion by most of Rome's Italian allies. The first half of the last century BCE was largely spent re-establishing Roman control (Morstein Kallet-Marx 1995).

The instruments through which the Roman Republic took its empire in hand included armies serving for long periods overseas, the beginnings of a tributary structure, and the concentration of power into the hands of a small number of generals. Some of these were successful in using that power to extend Roman control well beyond the Mediterranean littoral. Between 67 and 62 BCE Pompey first co-ordinated a Mediterranean-wide elimination of piracy and then campaigned throughout the Near East: his armies reached the Caspian and in Mesopotamia the boundaries of the Parthian (Persian) Empire. Between 58 and 52 BCE Julius Caesar took control of all non-Mediterranean France, campaigning up to and beyond the English Channel and the Rhine. Civil wars, drawing on the same resources as conquest, interrupted campaigns but also fuelled the competition for glory and booty and led to the acquisition of new territory, most notably Egypt in 30 BCE. Caesar's great-nephew Augustus, the first emperor of Rome, masterminded campaigns that between 15 BCE and 9 CE extended Roman control to the Rhine and Danube. Other campaigns took place in Armenia, Spain, Africa, and Arabia. On Augustus's death in 14 CE the entire Mediterranean basin and much of its hinterlands were controlled either by provinces or through client kings. Some of those kingdoms were converted into provinces in the course of the first century CE. Wars of conquest in Britain began in 43 CE, continuing sporadically but never taking permanent control of more than the lowlands of Scotland. The German frontier was advanced from the Rhine to the Neckar at the end of the first century AD, and most of modern Romania (Roman Dacia) was conquered soon after.

The early second century CE marked the high-water mark of Roman power. A series of attempts to conquer Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) were made, and there were successful campaigns on several occasions through to the end of the fourth century, but a permanent presence was never established. From the last second century CE the empire came under more pressure. A 50-year period of chaos in the third century was marked by invasions, rebellions, a short-lived fragmentation, and an exceptionally rapid turnover of empires. The empire survived but lost the most recently conquered territories on the northern frontier. At the end of the fourth century large numbers of Goths crossed the Danube, and they were followed in the next two generations by more tribes, some coming across the Rhine. Control over first Britain and then northern Gaul was lost during the fifth century, and Spain and Africa followed. By the sixth century all territories west of the Adriatic were controlled by Germanic kingdoms, some making use of Roman institutions and bureaucrats. An attempt by the eastern emperor, now based in Constantinople, to reconquer parts of the west later in the century met with limited success. Meanwhile Roman frontiers in the east were under intermittent pressure from the Persians. Around the middle of the sixth century, while eastern Roman armies were campaigning in Italy, the Persians sacked Antioch in Syria. Fresh invasions of Italy and the Balkans from the north followed, and in the early seventh century Rome lost Jerusalem and Egypt to Persia. The Persians did not enjoy their control of the Near East for long. In 636 Arab armies defeated the Romans at the battle of Yarmuk, but by 651 they had destroyed the Persian Empire and by 711 they had conquered all of north Africa and invaded Visigothic Spain. Byzantium survived as a micro-empire surrounding the Aegean Sea.

The key stages of Roman expansion may be summarised as follows:

1. c.500–275 BCE: Slow incremental extension of power within Italian peninsula.
2. 275–73 BCE: Progressive elimination of rival hegemonies within the Mediterranean basin.
3. 73 BCE–9 CE: Period of accelerating expansion including conquest of half of temperate Europe, Egypt, and most of the Near East.

4. 9–132 CE: Period of general consolidation with limited conquests and the absorption of client states into provinces.
5. 132–378 CE: Period of pressure largely survived with only some territorial losses.
6. 378–717 CE: Period of accelerating contraction.

The first part of this pattern closely resembles a trajectory followed by some other empires. The rise of Qin during the Warring States period was slow until the last generation, when it accelerated rapidly and then stopped in a moment of institutional consolidation that laid the foundations for Han China. The creation of the Achaemenid Empire too began with a slow rise to power of the Medes and Persians followed by the rapid conquest of Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian, and Lydian kingdoms and a period of institutionalisation under Darius. The Inka created their empire in less than a century, again by absorbing a series of well-established polities and connecting them up with a new infrastructure. Historical sociologists sometimes describe this as a shift from ‘conquest state’ to ‘tributary empire’: that is, a set of institutions based on and supporting expansion came to be replaced – often after a crisis – with a new set of institutions invested in sustainable dominion. The current scholarly focus is on the expansion-bearing structures of the Republican period, and for the Principate on the means by which consent was secured from the empire’s subjects. These emphases have largely replaced approaches that sought to understand the reasons for Roman expansion in the Republic and for Roman ‘stagnation’ under the emperors, in terms of the motivations of leading political actors, and/or else in terms of institutional or cultural exceptionalism. Those earlier approaches reflected ancient understandings of the rise of Rome.

### Ancient understandings

Ancient explanations of the rise of Rome tended to invoke the virtue and piety of the Romans, the excellence of their civic institutions, and the favour of the gods (Ferrary 1988; North 1993). So Ennius, the great epic poet of the second century BCE, wrote in *Annals* (a fragment cited in Cicero, *Republic* 5.1), ‘*Moribus antiquis res stat Romana virisque*’ (‘The Roman state depends on

ancient customs and on its men’ – or ‘... on its manhood’, since virtue and manliness are denoted by the same word in Latin). This tended to be understood in terms of the cumulative virtue of individual Romans, especially of members of the propertied classes who supplied civil magistrates, priests, and generals. The first emperor, Augustus, represented this tradition when he filled the forum built around the temple of Mars Ultor (Mars the Avenger) with more than 100 images of *summi viri*, great Romans of the past who had extended the power (*imperium*) of the Roman people. Each statue was accompanied by a label that listed the individual’s magistracies and priesthoods and the victories he had achieved. Alongside these were statues of the founders of Rome, Romulus and Aeneas, of the divine ancestors of the Romans and of Augustus’ family, and of Augustus himself (Geiger 2008). A separate monument in the forum Romanum bore lists (*fasti*) that named all the Romans who had held the supreme magistracy – the consulship – and separately all those who had ever celebrated a triumph. Public monuments of this kind picked up a much older tradition. The family tomb of the Scipiones on the via Appia includes a series of sarcophagi with labels that for each prominent member of the family list their greatest (generally military) achievements. The announcements that Augustus made at the inauguration of his forum and the temple of Mars Ultor proclaimed that the deeds of the greatest Romans of the past would be a model for him and his successors to follow: young male members of the aristocracy underwent many of their rites of passage against the backdrop of these monuments.

The relationship between the Romans and their gods was thought of more collectively. Prodigies and omens were reported to the senate; colleges of senatorial priests were charged with devising and carrying out rituals to ensure the gods remained supportive; wars had to be declared according to particular rituals; generals consulted the heavens before going to war, made battlefield vows for success, and on their return set up temples to the gods concerned to acknowledge their help. The ever-evolving ceremony of the triumph brought the entire city together in a collective restoration of the peaceful order and a display of honour shared by the aristocratic general, the citizen army, and the gods themselves (Beard 2007; Östenberg 2009).

Yet even in these collective ceremonies, individuals asserted themselves. Successful generals added the names of defeated peoples or places to their own, both in ordinary usage and on monuments (so Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus after the Allobroges he defeated in the middle Rhône valley, and Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus for his victories in the Punic Wars). The streets of Republican Rome came to be lined with victory temples, often fulfilling vows made on the battlefield by generals who paid for them from their share of the booty, and were eventually decorated with art works that commemorated the triumphs of the Roman people (Holliday 2002). Temples of this kind were often maintained by the aristocratic descendants of the dedicator, and at noble funerals distinguished ancestors were animated by actors who wore effigies of the dead and robes appropriate to their status, while the military exploits of the deceased were rehearsed in speeches.

More generally, warfare was a central location for building fame. Wars lay at the centre of the epic poetry of Ennius and his predecessors, and then of Latin historiography. When Ennius's patron Fulvius Nobilior returned in triumph from campaigns in the Balkans, he created a great temple and precinct where plundered statuary was displayed, and sponsored a play about his victories. Individual achievements and the interests of the Roman people were repeatedly elided. Conversely when things went wrong it was often the result of inadequate ritual preparation on the part of the generals, or occasionally of other members of the senatorial order: a Vestal Virgin who broke her vow of chastity was sometime identified and punished with death. During the civil wars of the late Republic some orators and historians began to blame military and civil disasters on a general falling away of moral standards, the corrupting effects of luxury, contamination by alien values, and the like (Lintott 1972).

Institutional explanations for the rise of Rome were produced in parallel to these internal moralising debates. The Greek historian Polybius, who spent much of his adult life in Rome as an honoured hostage, attributed Roman success to what we would term the comparative advantage of its institutions. The Roman political system was a judicious blend of monarchical, aristocratic, and democratic elements, and its military and religious institutions were superior to those of

its rivals. The concepts Polybius employed were derived ultimately from the political philosophy of Aristotle and Plato, but they were not felt to be in conflict with native Roman ideas about the importance of virtue. Greek thinkers did not see political institutions in the way Hobbes did as a remedy for the brutalities of the state of nature, but rather as means of establishing ways of life in which humans naturally reached their full potential. Although often ascribed to Aristotle, this idea was traditional: Xenophon had ascribed Spartan success to the perfection of its institutions and the habits they inculcated, and so it was natural for Polybius to move from the Roman constitution to Roman conduct. At least some of his Roman contemporaries would have agreed, even if others might have stressed the particular favour the gods showed to peoples of particular piety. Roman leaders were, on the whole, careful to establish that their wars were justified, both to ensure divine favour and to win the support of the popular assemblies that voted on war and peace. But these justifications, achieved by rhetoric and ritual, were focused on individual conflicts. Only in the last generation of the Republic did the notion emerge that Romans had a general mandate to conquer the world and rule it well (Brunt 1978; Ferrary 1988).

Ancient writers spent much less time trying to explain why Romans fought so many wars. One reason is that most ancient states were both warlike and engaged in sporadic disputes with their neighbours. City states generally fielded citizen armies, and military training was often a key part of the process by which young men became full citizens. Tribal communities seem also to have embraced a warrior ethos, to judge from grave goods and art works like Situla-Art of the Alps or the Gundestrup cauldron from Denmark. The question was not so much why cities and peoples came to blows, but rather why some did so more successfully than others. Thucydides had dramatised a debate on this theme between the Athenians and the Melians in the second book of his *Peloponnesian War*: the Athenians refuse to spare the Melians, on the ground that the strong always do what they can and the weak suffer what they must. A Roman legend told how when the Gauls were extracting indemnities from the Romans they were caught using false measures to weigh out gold. When challenged a

Galic chief pressed down the scale with his sword exclaiming, 'Vae victis!' ('Woe to the vanquished!'; Livy, *History of Rome* 5.48.9). War was a normal state of affairs, and what was special about the Romans was not that they fought wars, but that they were so successful at doing so.

### Explaining expansion

The modern debate over the origins of Republican imperialism has taken a more tortuous route than that followed by ancient explanations. On the basis of the Roman notion that only just wars received divine support and on Roman accounts of the origins of several conflicts, it was for a while argued that Rome expanded accidentally, along the lines of Sir John Robert Seeley's quip that the British 'conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind' (1914: 10). Romans, according to some, practised 'defensive imperialism', responding only to external threats and finding themselves rather surprisingly in command of the world as a result. Support for this view was found in the supposed slowness of Romans to convert victories in the east into territorial provinces or to assume the imperial responsibilities to which their military success seemed to entitle them.

That view was comprehensively demolished by the demonstration that Romans consistently displayed attitudes that supported warfare, celebrated victory, and rewarded successful generals (Harris 1979, 1984). Among the institutions that cohered well with expansion were the practice of requiring defeated peoples to supply troops for further campaigns (Gabba 1976); the ritual of the triumph that marked the end of a successful war (Beard 2007); and a series of devices for expanding the citizen body, and so the citizen army (Raaflaub 1996). Warfare was not an absolute constant: there were periods of greater and less mobilisation. If Roman warfare was not primarily defensive there were certainly some wars that Rome did not choose, as when the King of Pontus invaded Rome's eastern provinces in the early last century BCE or when migrations penetrated the Mediterranean world from temperate Europe (Rich 1993). But in general it is fair to characterise the Roman Republic as a society geared for war, and in some respects dependent on warfare to satisfy the demands of its aristocracy and people for glory and booty.

That gearing naturally encompassed economic activity of various kinds. Rome had no independent mercantile class that might lobby for annexation. Indeed annexation reduced some opportunities for profiteering, as in the case of the slave trade (enslavement was in principle illegal within the empire), and because provincials had from the middle of the second century BCE some recourse to Roman justice that those outside the empire did not. There were no ancient equivalents of the chartered joint-stock companies that played such prominent parts in British, Dutch, and other European imperialisms from the 17th century on. Corporations had very little place in Roman law, the closest equivalent being short-lived *societates* – partnerships – which tendered for public contracts. The economic basis of pre-capitalist and capitalist imperialism was naturally very different.

All the same most sectors of Roman society benefited from expansion, directly or indirectly. Successful generals brought back great amounts of booty, and their personal share of it was not limited to what was spent on the gods or on triumphal feasts and games. Citizen soldiers and allies alike also received shares of the booty. The proceeds of conquest were spread more widely. The defeat of Macedon in 168 BCE was followed by the abandonment of direct taxation of Roman citizens in Italy. The sacks of Carthage and Corinth in 146 BCE were followed by a great aqueduct-building project, and monuments were set up in Italian allied cities as well as in Rome. Public building did not only benefit citizens by creating a more splendid built environment and sponsoring festivals within it. Army supply, the extraction of revenue, and its expenditure in building projects all came to rely on public contracts, generally issued by the censors in Rome. These contracts included the construction of public basilicas, paved forums, and roads, in Roman colonies as well as in the city itself. Only citizens could take public contracts, and in principle senators were forbidden to be principals. But great amounts of property were needed to guarantee larger contracts, and it is clear that behind the main contractors (*publicani*), who were often members of Rome's junior aristocracy, the equestrian order, there were senatorial backers. Polybius claimed in his *Histories* (6.17) that as early as the first half of the second century BCE 'everyone' in Rome was



involved. For a brief period in the last century BCE, when some contracts were very large, especially that for gathering the taxes of Asia, these bids and their five-yearly renewals did have political ramifications. But in general the propertied classes all benefited from empire.

Provincial populations bore the brunt. During the last century BCE in particular Roman power was exercised at the expense of provincial populations in many ways. Through plunder and purchase, the wealthy extracted cultural products from the Greek world – books and educated slaves as well as bronze and marble statuary and craftsmen. Caesar's campaigns in Gaul removed so much bullion from the region that silver and gold coinages were effectively extinguished north of the Alps. Large sums of money were occasionally lent to provincials at extortionate rates of interest, in the knowledge that the governors would allow the creditors to use Roman soldiers to recover what they were owed if borrowers defaulted. All this paid for grand villas and town houses, and also the bribery of electors and jurors. Verres, prosecuted by Cicero for corruption while governor of Sicily, was quoted as saying that he needed to extract three fortunes from his province, one to repay those who had elected him, another to bribe those who would try him on his return, and a third for himself (Cicero, *Against Verres* 1.1.40). Cicero's speeches allude to many other corruption trials, and a series of laws were passed from 149 BCE onwards aimed at recovering money embezzled by governors. Stories of violence and torture also circulated, and the cruelty and greed of Roman officials and tax-farmers form a regular part of the explanations offered in this period for revolts and anti-Roman movements. At the beginning of his *Annales*, Tacitus wrote that the provinces were unperturbed by the fall of the Republic because they had suffered so much from the feuding generals and corrupt officials and had no faith in legal redress in Rome (Levick 1994).

One other group which seems to have lost out in the process was the free peasantry of Italy, some at least of whom found their small holdings swallowed up by large estates, worked in part by slaves. The absence of peasants on long campaigns and the enrichment of the generals that led them have been seen to be contributory factors, but the scale and timing of these changes are disputed (Hopkins 1978; Rosenstein 2004). Slaves

never completely replaced free peasants, who still played a part in the agricultural regimes of Italy during the principate, and few subscribe to the thesis that imperial expansion was driven by the demands of a 'Slave Mode of Production' (Rathbone 1983).

It is unsurprising, of course, that Rome in its expansionist phases had the institutions and ideologies that cohered with expansion (North 1981). But it is less obvious that those institutions and ideologies actually explain expansion as Polybius argued. A full explanation in terms of comparative advantage would have to look at Rome's rivals – Veii, Carthage, Macedon, and so on – and assess differences in institutions and how they fitted with differences in success or policy objectives. Multi-state analysis of this kind, making use of political theory, has only just begun (Eckstein 2006, 2007). Besides, Roman institutions and ideas were in constant flux. Most importantly, innovations often seem to have been reactions to expansion, not preparations for it. Broadening access to citizenship came in practice as response to a series of crises in Rome's relations with her allies. The balance of power between magistrates and civil institutions that Polybius praised had in fact to shift over time as generals served further and further away from Rome and for longer periods. Perhaps the best illustration is provided by recent studies of the language of Roman imperialism (Richardson 2008). Romans developed territorial senses of *provincia* and *imperium* only in the last century BCE, long after they had *de facto* acquired first foreign possessions and then an identifiable sphere under permanent control. The same time lag is evident in the development of provincial taxation, in the elaboration of the role of governor from simply a military commander to a judicial official and plenipotentiary representative of Rome in the provinces, and in the gradual shift from annual citizen levies to what were in effect professional armies that might serve for years on end and needed to be re-integrated into society when they were disbanded. In each case these changes responded to expansion rather than being designed to facilitate it.

The period of fastest expansion was partly driven by the failure of annual campaigns around the Mediterranean basin to stabilise Roman hegemony. The victories of the second century were followed by the return and disbanding of Roman armies. No garrisons

and no administrations were left behind. A system of military commands that emanated from a competitive political system meant that even when there were a number of armies and generals in the field at the same time there was no guarantee that they would co-operate. Rome depended for information on embassies sent by her allies, who were often rivals. Much of the history of the second century BCE seems to have been driven by competition in the periphery, and when that became engaged with factionalism in the centre the effects could be very disruptive. Finally, there were some intrinsic difficulties facing any power that wished to control the Mediterranean world. One was a high incidence of piracy and banditry, which thrived in periods of political fragmentation: Hellenistic kingdoms had struggled to maintain some order and their defeat by Rome made the situation worse. A second problem was ecological in origin: strong economic and demographic ties existed between the societies of the Mediterranean littoral and those of its mountainous hinterlands. This meant that it was in practice impossible to control what is now Aegean Turkey without exercising influence over the Anatolian plateau; that Provence and could be governed if only the populations of the middle and upper Rhône were subjects or allies; and so on. From the late second century BCE onwards Roman armies were repeatedly drawn into the hinterlands of the Mediterranean World, and this required larger armies and greater co-ordination. Once these were supplied the results were at first impressive. During the last century BCE a series of generals, beginning with Marius and Sulla, showed what one general could achieve given very large forces for a substantial period of time and more or less freedom of action to make war and peace on whom he saw fit. 'Peripheral imperialism' enabled Pompey to conquer and settle much of Anatolia, the southern Black Sea coast, and the Near East, and allowed Caesar to make similar conquests in the north-west (Richardson 1986). Yet neither these large armies nor their generals could easily be contained with the institutions of the city of Rome. The logic of these developments was the shift from Republic to monarchy. One of the first acts of the first emperor was to create a professional army bound to himself and his family, and paid for from hypothecated tax income and a military treasury. In that sense

the Roman Empire was a product of Roman imperialism.

None of this helps to explain, however, Rome's initial success. If it did not depend on extraordinary institutions or the virtue of generations of Roman aristocrats how are we to explain it? One answer is to set it in the context of wider histories of political growth in the Mediterranean world (Garnsey and Whittaker 1978). The size of political systems was increasing and their number decreasing over the last millennium BCE, presumably as a result of competition within an open system, economic growth and some advances in communications. The question then becomes why was Rome one of the eventual winners? Geopolitics might help. Rome benefited from a central position first within Italy, and later within the Mediterranean basin. Perhaps too Rome's position on the margin of politically plural systems helped: it was on the edge of the Etruscan city state civilisation, and later on the edge of the Hellenistic kingdoms, and that position (also enjoyed by Qin in the Warring States period, or Macedon in the fourth century BCE) seems to sometimes confer an advantage. Complexes of peer-polities often advance together, but sometimes tend to limit the rise of any one polity, through alliances of the others (Ma 2003; Renfrew and Cherry 1986). Change, or contingency, played a part too. Roman schoolchildren liked to debate what would have happened had Hannibal marched on Rome after Cannae, and Greek writers occasionally wondered what would have happened had Alexander marched west. We might also wonder how close Rome came to defeat in the Mithradatic Wars, or much later in the third-century crisis.

### The tributary empire

If a conquest state is a polity dependent on constant expansion, a tributary empire is similarly invested in more sustainable and stable institutions (Bang and Bayly 2011; Crone 1989). Its political economy is based on regular exactions which are largely redistributed to the military, to officials, and to those who occupy privileged positions in the hierarchy of power. The rulers of tributary empires typically seek to reduce their transaction costs – imposing the running costs of empire on local elites, tax farmers, and the like – and they have few ambitions beyond retaining

and passing on their power. Empires of this kind have been among the most stable political in world history, often enduring for centuries (Arnason and Raaflaub 2011). Typically they are characterised by universalising ideologies, and their rulers actively suppress signs of change and information about opposition (Bang and Kolodziejczyk 2012; Yuge and Doi 1988).

Rome extracted no revenue from its military supremacy until after it dominated the whole of the Italian peninsula. Campaigns paid for themselves, and the defeated contributed levies to future campaigns. Hellenistic kingdoms, by contrast, most of which were in effect successor states to the Achaemenid Persian Empire, had complex taxation systems. Once Rome began to extend its power overseas it encountered and incorporated some of these systems, and also began to need (or desire) greater revenues. One of the first fiscal systems taken over by Rome was a tithe levied on the cities of the kingdom of Syracuse by the third-century king Hiero II. After the second Punic war this system (the *Lex Hieronica*) was extended to the whole island province, and its revenues redirected to Rome. The same war brought Rome control of much of Mediterranean Spain, including silver mines near Cartagena. That conquest, and a need to provision Roman armies based for long periods in Spain, led in the second century to a regular levy on subject communities, the first provincial tax system devised by Rome (Richardson 1976). When the kingdom of Pergamum was acquired in 133 BCE the royal tax system was incorporated in the same way as the Syracusan one had been (Cottier et al. 2008). The administration of Roman Egypt owed much to Ptolemaic precedents, which in turn drew on a deep sedimentation of Persian and Pharaonic systems. Probably there were other examples of this that are simply less well documented.

The transition from conquest state to tributary empire was not a sudden one. Roman armies of conquest never stopped extracting booty from conquered peoples. The Romans' initial response to the defeats of Carthage and Macedon was to impose indemnities to be paid in annual instalments over long but not indefinite periods. Only when those states were abolished was more regular taxation substituted. The tributary empire grew up within the body of a conquest state. The crucial period of change was the reign of

Augustus, the first emperor, when provincial censuses were conducted across the empire with the aim of fixing permanent tax obligations. Ordering the empire was by no means a dry, bureaucratic process but was intimately linked to the creation of new universalising ideology of power, expressed in poetry and public monuments (Galinsky 1996; Gros 1976; Nicolet 1988; Zanker 1987). By the time of Augustus's death in 14 CE most of the empire was subject to taxation, only Italy and a few privileged cities enjoying exemptions from the land tax. Local civic elites collected most of the land tax, overseen by imperial ex-slaves and junior aristocrats named procurators, who also managed the emperors' own extensive provincial possessions and helped supply the army. Soldiers assisted the procurators where necessary, for example in escorting tax grain or bullion. There were also indirect taxes, for example on freeing slaves and on sales, many of them still managed by tax farmers (Brunt 1990). There were internal tariffs on trade between groups of provinces (France 2001). Over time tax-farmers seem to have been replaced by officials but it was a slow and patchy process, more a sign of a shift in imperial attitudes to government than of any global reorganisation. Bizarrely as it seems to us – but quite normally for a patrimonial empire – the whole was co-ordinated not by some central agency, but within the emperor's own household (Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 101).

If the main lines of a tributary empire had emerged during the penultimate decade of the last millennium BCE with the first great provincial censuses, Rome continued to behave in some ways as a conquest state for some time longer. Augustus himself followed up this reorganisation with a long series of campaigns in temperate Europe that consolidated Roman control of Caesar's conquests and the Balkans and advanced armies up to and temporarily beyond the Rhine and the Danube. A series of defeats, culminating in a major disaster in 9 CE, slowed expansion. But there were further wars in Germany under his successor Tiberius and on the English Channel under Gaius, and under Claudius Britain was invaded. Later in the first century CE there were campaigns in south-west Germany as well as in Britain, before Trajan's spectacular wars in metal-rich Dacia in the early second century on the basis of which he created the greatest of the imperial forums in

Rome, equipped with libraries, monumental statues, and the column that bears his name. One reason for these occasional expeditions – often undertaken by emperors who needed to demonstrate their ability – was that even if Rome's political economy was no longer geared to war, Roman public ideology could not dispense with the connection between virtue and warfare. All emperors were represented on statues, on coinage, and on monuments in military dress, all tried to maintain a close relation with the troops, and serious instability occurred only (in the third century) when emperors seemed no longer able to be effective war leaders. Another reason was that in many areas there was no obvious natural frontier: several expeditions in Britain and Germany do seem to have been designed to find limits that might be more cheaply and efficiently controlled. Yet the fact that the empire barely expanded beyond its Augustan limits indicates that on some level emperors understood that they had more to lose than gain by reckless and expensive campaigning. Tiberius understood the bottom line when he told one governor that he wanted his sheep shorn, not flayed.

Much remains unclear about early imperial tax systems. Taxes might be levied in cash or kind, and although kind presumably mostly meant agricultural produce examples are known of levies of other materials such as hides. But it is difficult to estimate the scale of monetised taxation. There was certainly wide variation in taxes and in mechanisms for their extraction: wherever we can see local arrangements in detail they are peculiar to that province or region. Everywhere the burden fell disproportionately on the poor and on those who were not Roman citizens. Evidently the emperors had no interest in creating empire-wide systems, standards, or even tax rates. To the end of the third century CE, the tax system was really an agglomeration of local systems designed in different periods according to different principles, subsequently emended and supplemented, and run in a range of traditional ways (Brunt 1981). A number of inscriptions which stated exactly which taxes were current show that the system confused contemporaries as much as it does us.

If the emperors were not interested in rationalising systems there were nevertheless some consistencies in the kind of order they created through this mixture of violence and institutional bricolage. Most obviously they

enlisted the help in all parts of their empire of the local ruling classes (Brunt 1976). Tribal chiefs in Gaul and Palestine, the priests of Egyptian temples, the wealthier members of Greek cities, kings in the Alps, the Atlas, and Anatolia, all were brought into a great coalition of interest, and tied through marriage, ceremony, and honours to the rulers of Rome. The pattern is familiar from other imperial systems (Cannadine 2001; Galtung 1971). This was a key difference from the Republican empire, which first in Italy and then around the Mediterranean had failed to include local rulers among the beneficiaries of empire.

### Control and its limits

The Roman Empire at its peak contained around 60 million people, perhaps 20 per cent of the global population. Its army never exceeded 500,000 men and was usually much smaller. It is evident that control could not depend on coercion alone.

It is widely agreed that a fundamental factor stabilising the empire was the fact that it served the propertied classes of the societies within it. Not only were they partners in extracting revenue. Many enjoyed the status of citizens, and by the second century the 'better sort of people' (termed *honestiores*) enjoyed privileged legal status too, being treated better than others in investigations and, if found guilty, in terms of penalty (Garnsey 1970). Many found it easy to participate in the governance of the empire, becoming auxiliary commanders, members of the equestrian order, and even members of the senate. A few enjoyed the friendship and patronage of prominent Romans and even the emperor (Saller 1982). Interest was converted, at least among some of them, into a sense of membership and adherence to the imperial order. When dynasties collapsed new ones were put into place by alliances of courtiers, senators, and soldiers, all of whom had vested interests in the status quo. Beyond the wealthy it is difficult to gauge allegiances or opinion. Ceremony, ideology, monumentality, and governmentality together formed willing subjects in many places (Ando 2000). We know most about urban populations, especially those of Italy, but in those locations at least there are no real signs of disaffection. Urban populations, and not just their rulers, participated with enthusiasm in ruler cults of all sorts (Cancik and Hitzl 2003; Price 1984; Small 1996). More generally it is

evident that a set of empire-wide cultural practices, styles, and habits became routine (Woolf 1998). How often participation in this was experienced consciously as political adherence is very difficult to say.

The alternative is to concentrate on episodes of unrest (Bowersock 1987; Momigliano 1987; Shaw 2000; Woolf 2011). Relatively few are well documented, and although this probably partly reflects deliberate under-reporting, those that are mentioned occurred in broadly similar circumstances. A number of conflicts took place in the generation immediately after conquest, and seem to have been fuelled in part by the social convulsions and transformations that affected many societies (Dyson 1971, 1975). Areas close to the edge of the empire – whether the northern frontier or the Romano-Parthian borderlands – were more likely to experience revolts than other regions. Revolts were more common in time of Roman civil war. Mountainous areas were more difficult to control than plains or coasts. None of this is surprising. Attempts to link these outbreaks of opposition to cultural differences (e.g. Bénabou 1976) have not convinced many. A number of local disturbances seem to have had mainly local roots (Goodman 1987): perhaps this would be true of most if we had better information. Few were serious: the main threats to the authority of emperors came either from their intimate circle (from which assassinations emerged) or from armies led by their rivals. There were surprisingly few military revolts of that kind before the early third century CE (Shaw 1983; Woolf 1993). In all these respects Roman imperialism seems very like that of other early empires.

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## Taiping Rebellion

### Background

Chinese history can be characterised by the dynastic cycle. A dynasty would be established by foreign conquest or a native peasant uprising. It would initially be strong, protect China from foreign invaders or raiders, and preside over a degree of economic prosperity. Over time, however, centrifugal forces would assert themselves and provincial power groups would contest rule from the imperial capital. This process would often go hand in hand with decadence in the centre as a series of weak or incompetent emperors replaced the strong founders. A period of chaos would ensue as the ruling dynasty became increasingly unable to maintain order. In the eyes of the Confucian ruling class the dynasty would lose its legitimacy or the 'mandate of heaven' and would be ripe for replacement. The cycle would continue.

The Ming dynasty (1368–1644) was the last dynasty to be ruled by ethnic Chinese. It derived from a peasant revolt against the collapsing and chaotic Mongol Yuan dynasty (1271–1368). Under the Ming the central government established greater control over the population by way of a large standing army, a secret police network, a village control system hampering peasant mobility, and an inspectorate system. Despite this the Ming appear to have achieved a degree of popularity. There was an extended commercial boom, and in the early years the dynasty supported a series of exploratory missions, with the fleet of Zheng He reaching the coast of Africa.

The Ming began to decline with a financial drain resulting from wars with Korea and Japan, which escalated into a crisis with a severe shortage of silver, then used as a medium of exchange, owing to Japanese and European trade policies. This was compounded by shorter growing seasons connected with the global 'Little Ice Age' of the 17th century, which led to a series of famines. Contributing to the crisis was a period

of instability created by the influence in the bureaucracy of powerful court eunuchs.

The Ming dynasty was replaced by the Qing dynasty, the last imperial dynasty of China. The Qing (1644–1912) was led by the Manchu, a Sinicised northern people derived from clans of the Jurchen tribe. Early Qing emperors were strong, and during the reign of the Emperor Kangxi the Chinese state consolidated control over border regions, assimilated Taiwan, and repelled Mongol invaders. The Qing, in spite of their foreign origin, saw themselves as guardians of traditional Chinese culture and enforced a deadening conservatism in terms of literature, the role of women, technological innovation, foreign trade, and other areas.

Although gifted with a number of strong emperors, the Qing dynasty was often faced with crises of legitimacy. Corruption was rampant; there was resentment against a perceived foreign dynasty, and nostalgia for the defeated Ming and support for remnants of the dynasty remained strong in south China. After the suicide of the last Ming emperor, Ching Zhen, in 1644, regimes collectively known as the Southern Ming resisted the Qing for another 49 years. The Ming loyalist Zheng Cheng Gong, known as Koxinga, seized Taiwan after defeating the Dutch occupiers, and he and his son used the island as a base for attacking the Qing throughout the mid- and late 17th century. The Qing emperor Kangxi (1654–1722) temporarily evacuated coastal areas in order to deny anti-Qing forces a basis of support. Large numbers of anti-Qing Chinese fled to Burma, Vietnam, and Japan, and many anti-Qing secret societies emerged in the south, some becoming religious or mystical while others moved in a revolutionary direction.

The founder of the sect that became known as the Taiping, and its initial core membership, derived from the Hakka minority, a group living in areas of south China. The Hakka are widely believed to be at least partly descended from Han Chinese from the north, who migrated south during times of political turmoil during the 12th and 13th centuries. After the Qing evacuation of southern coastal areas under Kangxi these areas were repopulated with outsiders descended from such northerners. Families moving to these coastal areas were termed 'guest families', or Hakka. Tensions developed in these regions between Cantonese-speaking people of local origin



and the now self-described Hakka. Many Chinese revolutionary leaders have had Hakka ancestry.

From the 17th century to the 19th century China experienced a rapid growth in its population, which quadrupled from 100 million to 420 million by 1850 (Marks 2002). This reduced the productivity of the land and created changes in the traditional relationship between the Confucian aristocracy and the peasantry. The 19th century also saw increased corruption resulting from the opium trade and an increase in banditry and peasant rebellions due to high taxation, high rents, and poor harvests. There were periodic mass famines caused by severe droughts.

During the 19th century the Qing suffered a series of defeats at the hands of Western imperialism. Most important of these were the Opium Wars (1839–60), in which the Qing were defeated by the British and were forced to allow the import of opium, to turn over Hong Kong to the British, and to open up ports to foreign trade. The Opium Wars also led to further humiliating defeats and encroachments on Chinese territory.

### Hong Xiuquan

Hong Xiuquan (1814–64), originally named Hong Renkun, was born in Fuyuanhui village in Guangdong, in what are now the far northern suburbs of Guangzhou. He was the third son of a Hakka peasant family. From an early age he attempted to work his way up through the brutally competitive Confucian examination system for entering the civil service. By the age of five he could recite the Confucian classics, and by the age of seven he began to study at a preparatory school. When Hong reached the age of 15 his parents could no longer afford his school tuition and he began working as a tutor in his village while also studying independently. After coming first in the local preliminary examination in 1836, at the age of 22 Hong took the provincial examination in Guangzhou. However, he did not pass the higher imperial examination; he retook this four times but failed because of the extremely stiff competition and his inability to bribe the notoriously corrupt Qing officials.

While on his way to take the imperial examination in 1836 Hong encountered Christian missionaries for the first time, receiving tracts on the Bible and Christianity. He suffered a nervous breakdown after his first failure to pass the imperial examination, and during

his recovery in 1837 he had a number of terrifying dreams which he interpreted as mystical visions. In these dreams he would be visited by two figures, an old paternal figure and a middle-aged elder brother figure, both archetypes in Chinese culture: in one dream the older figure complained to Hong about men worshipping demons rather than himself, and in another Hong saw Confucius being punished for faithlessness. Later Hong dreamt of angels carrying him to heaven, where the elder brother figure, wearing a dragon robe and a long beard, gave him a sword and a magic seal and commissioned him to rid China of demons. At this time Hong did not act on his visions.

After failing the imperial examination for the fourth time in 1837 Hong gave up studying and began to work as a teacher at several schools near his home town. In 1843 he became convinced that the religious tracts he had read years earlier were the key to understanding his dreams. He identified the older father figure with both the biblical Jehovah and the mythological 'Yellow Emperor' Shangdi, regarded in Chinese folk religion as the Celestial Emperor or King of Heaven. Hong identified the elder brother figure with Jesus and so now regarded himself as Jesus's younger brother, changing his given name to 'Xiuquan' or 'Younger Brother'. He believed that his 'Elder Brother's' command to rid China of demons meant eliminating both the corrupt Qing rulers and the teachings of Confucius.

Hong began preaching his new religion to fellow Hakka in his village. His two earliest converts were relatives who had also failed their examinations, Feng Yunshan and Hong Rengan. Hong, his two relatives, and their followers then began a campaign to destroy sacred statues in the local villages. Their iconoclasm angered townspeople and local officials, and Hong and his two relatives were forced to leave their jobs as village tutors. In 1844 Hong and Feng Yunshan walked 300 miles to a rugged region of east Guangxi province called Thistle Mountain, where a large Hakka population was more sympathetic to Hong's new religion.

### Thistle Mountain

Hong began to preach on Mount Zijing in the village of Jintian (present-day Guiping) to an impoverished, primarily Hakka population.

The religious rituals of the movement, at that stage known as the Society of God Worshipers, combined Christianity with Chinese folk religion. Society was to be radically egalitarian, with all wealth shared and class distinctions eliminated. All men and women were equal as 'brothers and sisters'; many posts in what became the Taiping state were assigned to women, although the sect practised strict segregation of the sexes. All wealth was to be shared. In contrast with the shaved forehead and queue (ponytail) required by the Qing rulers, the sect's men wore their hair long.

By 1844 Hong had developed a following of 100. A young illiterate firewood merchant named Yang Xiuqing, who practised faith healing, emerged as a leader in the movement. Another important early convert was Shi Dakai, a member of a wealthy landlord family who was able to persuade most of his family to join the sect and contribute much money to Hong's treasury. Wei Changwei, whose clan controlled Jintian, became an important leader. Local miners skilled in tunnelling and in the use of explosives, important in the rugged terrain of east Guangxi, were also prominent converts. While the class composition of the movement was mixed, the movement attracted poor peasants, small layers of wealthy anti-Qing scholar gentry, and members of minority groups including the Hakka, Yao, and Miao peoples, and river pirates.

From 1845 to 1847 Hong stayed in the village of Shiling, where he wrote books and pamphlets expounding his interpretation of the Bible and his social theories. In 1847 he responded to an invitation from the American missionary Issacher Roberts to study Christianity in Guangzhou and remained there for two months. Hong is believed to have gained most of his knowledge of Christianity during this time. Roberts, suspicious of people converting to Christianity for financial gain, turned down a request for aid to his sect and refused to baptise him.

Guangxi province at this time was unstable and bandit-ridden. The Qing authorities apparently initially chose to leave Hong and his followers alone. However, the God Worshipers were largely Hakka, and there were growing tensions between the sect and local villages, clans, and other groups. Hong's followers also ran into conflicts with pirates and river bandits in the highly mountainous and riverine province.

## The Jintian Uprising and the Heavenly Kingdom

By 1850 the new religion numbered between 10,000 and 30,000 followers. Provincial authorities began to be alarmed at the growth of the sect and ordered it to be dispersed. A local force was sent to subdue it, but the sect defeated the Qing in December 1850. The sect organised a 10,000-strong army which routed a full-scale attack by Qing forces against the sect's base in Jintian; the Manchu commander of the imperial army was beheaded. This victory became known as the Jintian Uprising. The movement was now a force to be reckoned with in south central China.

On 11 January 1851 Hong declared the founding of a new kingdom, the Taiping, or 'Heavenly Kingdom', and gave himself the title of 'Heavenly King'. The political structure of the kingdom was somewhat vague and fluid. In 1848, while in a state of trance, Hong had accepted Yang Xiuqing's claim to be able to act as the 'voice of God' and his right to direct the political wing of the movement. With the founding of the Taiping he named Yang the 'East King' and, despite Yang's lack of military experience, made him supreme commander. Yang was to have supremacy over four other 'kings', the identities of whom varied.

The Taiping was to be a unified theocratic state in which the Heavenly King had absolute power, and a single organisation directed all religious, administrative, and military tasks. China would achieve peace and prosperity when all people worshipped the true God. The Taiping's egalitarianism and strong anti-Qing nationalism provided a powerful attraction to peasants and other oppressed layers.

After the initial victory at Jintian the Taiping remained outnumbered by the local Green Standard army, a Qing provincial army made up of ethnic Han, which together with local river pirates kept the Taiping confined to Jintian. After preparing for a month, the rebels managed to break through the blockade and fought their way to the town of Yongan, which they captured on 25 September 1851.

Hong and his troops remained in Yongan for three months. They were supported there by the local elite, who were hostile to the Qing. The imperial army then regrouped and launched another attack on the Taiping. Hong's army ran out of gunpowder, and the rebels fought their way out of Yongan

by sword and made their way to Guilin. Guilin, however, had strong defences, and after a 33-day siege the Taiping gave up and went northwards towards Hunan. There the Taiping came up against an elite military force created by Zeng Guofan, a Qing general who was later to be important in the defeat of the Taiping. Zeng's 130,000-man Hunan army defeated the Taiping in June 1852, largely pushing it out of the province. Some 20 per cent of the rebel army were killed, and the Taiping were forced to retreat.

### Nanjing

By a stroke of luck, in December 1852 the Taiping army entered the wealthy town of Yuezhou almost unopposed. Here they seized 5000 boats, weapons, and gunpowder. The cities of Hangzhou and Wuzhong surrounding Nanjing fell in December 1852 and January 1853 respectively, providing the Taiping with a large fleet of boats and money from the provincial treasury. In March 1853 Nanjing, lightly defended by Manchu troops, was conquered by the Taiping. This city, historically China's 'South Capital', was made the Taiping capital and was renamed Tianjing, or 'Heavenly Capital'. After an initial period of pillage and slaughter, Yang Xiuqing disciplined troops by threatening to execute any officer who entered a private home.

The Taiping ruled their state from Nanjing from 1853 to 1864. By this time Hong had withdrawn from active direct control of the movement, preferring to rule indirectly though cryptic proclamations. He appointed Yang Xiuqing prime minister. Opium was outlawed, and an extreme asceticism was practised, with alcohol and dancing prohibited and the sexes strictly segregated. The calendar was reformed, and rules were introduced to promote the equality of the sexes. Property was socialised, with money held in a common treasury, and most trade was suppressed. An examination system was revived, based on the Bible and the Taiping's interpretation of Christianity. This was equally open to men and women. A system of land reform was carried out with a system of family-based military collectivised farms. Polygamy was outlawed except for Hong and other leaders; Hong at one time had a harem of 88 women, and other leaders had similar numbers of consorts.

### The Northern Expedition

After it took Nanjing the Taiping army was divided into three parts. One division was to remain in Nanjing to defend the city, another was to hold the cities of the Yangtze valley, and a Northern Expedition was to march north to Beijing. The Northern Expedition, consisting of 70,000 Guangxi veterans and newer recruits, left in May 1853. The march to Beijing proved far more difficult than the earlier march to Nanjing, with many towns putting up a strong resistance. By October 1853 the expedition had reached the outskirts of Tianjin, near the Grand Canal, about 100 miles from Beijing. There it was cut off from its supply train. As southerners, the troops coped poorly with the cold northern winter, and there was a high casualty rate. In May 1854 the Qing army surrounded the exhausted Taiping forces with earthworks and then diverted the Grand Canal, flooding the Taiping camp and destroying the army. The Taiping commander was captured and executed. Meanwhile the Yangtze valley army, commanded by Shi Dakai with the aid of triad forces from Guangdong, conquered most of Jiangxi province. Jiangxi became a major food source for the Taiping.

### Tianjing incident

After receiving recognition of his ability to speak in the name of God, Yang Xiuqing increasingly came to upstage Hong, who was nominally still the supreme leader. Yang proved to be a brilliant military commander and won victories at Yongan, Yuezhou, and Wuzhong. After he defeated an encirclement of Nanjing in 1856 by diverting the Qing to attack relief forces sent to other cities, then sending his own troops against the divided enemy, he became increasingly arrogant and power-hungry, creating tensions in the Taiping leadership. On several occasions he had leaders flogged for disobedience, and in what appeared to be a ploy to seize power he sent the generals Wei Changhui and Shi Dakai out of Nanjing to reinforce the western frontier. After being alerted to suspicions of a coup attempt by Yang, Hong ordered his commanders to move against him. On 1 September 1856 thousands of loyal troops met at the gates of Nanjing; they killed Yang and his 54 wives and concubines, and in the following weeks Wei Changhui waged a campaign to kill all who were believed to be

Yang's followers, killing over 27,000 people in all.

In late September tension developed between Shi Dakai and Wei Changhui over the extent of the massacres and suspicions over Wei's own power-seeking. After severely condemning Wei for excesses, Shi fled to Tianjin. Wei had his family and followers killed. Shi attempted to rally the army in a rebellion against Wei. Realising that Shi had the army on his side, Wei attempted a coup and launched an attack on Hong's palace in Nanjing, but this failed and Wei was executed by Hong's elite bodyguard. Hong ordered Shi Dakai to return to Nanjing and assume leadership, and Shi now helped to restore order and began to rebuild the Taiping's morale. However, Hong grew suspicious of him and sought to undermine his power. In 1857 Shi left Nanjing with an unknown number of followers.

For six years Shi Dakai and his followers fought a separate war against the Qing, although Shi continued to claim loyalty to the Taiping; his army was in Sichuan province for most of this period. In June 1862 Shi surrendered to the Qing on the condition that his men would be spared. He was executed by the 'death of a thousand cuts', and 2000 of his men were killed, with 4000 released. The Tianjing incident weakened the Taiping. Many of its most able leaders were killed, and the loss of Shi Dakai's army was a blow to the movement.

### **Hong Rengan and victory over the Qing**

In 1859 a cousin of Hong Xiuquan, Hong Rengan, joined the Taiping at Nanjing. Hong Rengan was an early follower of Hong Xiuquan who had become separated from the movement. He had spent a period in Hong Kong and had been influenced by Swedish Lutheran missionaries; upon rejoining the movement he sought to introduce elements of Protestant worship into Taiping ritual. Because of his education Hong Xiuquan made him prime minister in place of the defeated Yang Xiuqing. Hong Rengan centralised the Taiping administration and advocated building railways and establishing a banking system. He also attempted to gain the support of the Western powers.

Shanghai was an international port with a large foreign settlement and one of China's

most important cities. It had been occupied by the Taiping from 1851 to 1853 and later was briefly occupied in 1860. Since 1858 the Qing Jiangnan army of 200,000 had laid siege to Nanjing, which was then defended by only 20,000 Taiping. Hong Rengan devised a plan to retake Shanghai by first drawing off Qing forces besieging Nanjing and taking the surrounding cities of Hangzhou and Suzhou. He gave Li Xiucheng, who by this time had emerged as the most important Taiping military commander, the duty of capturing Shanghai. Li was to attack Hangzhou, drawing off Qing troops from Nanjing, and then march back, smash the remaining Qing troops at Nanjing, and take Suzhou. After that he was to take Shanghai. The Taiping expected to be welcomed by the foreign Christians in the city.

Hong Rengan's plan initially worked well. In May 1860 the armies of Li Xiucheng and Shi Dakai attacked and routed the Qing from the rear. The Taiping captured 20,000 horses, making this one of the few times the rebels were able to use cavalry. In a major defeat the Qing lost an estimated 60,000 men and many leading Manchu commanders. Li Xiucheng then encircled the region of Jiangnan, the geographical area to the south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze river, including Shanghai. He took the cities of Suzhou and Hangzhou in 1860; Suzhou was taken without a single shot being fired, and the capture of Hangzhou led to that city's mayor committing suicide. A Taiping army of 20,000 occupied Shanghai for five months.

The Qing general Zhang Youliang, commanding a force of 36,000, was ordered to attack Li Xiucheng. The result was a crushing defeat for the Qing in what became known as the 'Second Rout of the Jiangnan Daying', so called because it was the second major defeat of the Jiangnan army.

The defeat of the Jiangnan army and the capture of Hangzhou alarmed the Qing ruling class. By the early 1860s China was under the de facto rule of the Manchu Cixi, the daughter of a Manchu bannerman, who had been chosen to be a concubine to the Emperor Xianfeng. Thanks to her ability to speak and read Mandarin and her diplomatic skills, by 1861 Cixi had worked her way to absolute power, although technically she was still a regent. In the early 1850s General Zeng Guofan, who was a prolific Han scholar and a reform-minded military commander, had

built an effective regional army in Hunan by bypassing the Qing bannerman system and stressing Confucian values and the officer–soldier relationship. After Zeng’s army pushed the Taiping forces out of most of Hunan province he came to the notice of Cixi, who appointed him viceroy of Liangjiang (Jiangxi, Anhui, and Jiangsu provinces) and made him supreme military commander. Zeng helped to transform the imperial military system and was important in the eventual defeat of the Taiping.

### The Battle of Shanghai

By 1860 the initially sympathetic Western view of the Taiping had changed. Westerners were repelled by what they saw as the eccentricities of the Taiping’s Christianity, and they regarded the Taiping as a threat to the lucrative opium trade. The *North China Herald* reported on its atrocities, alarming the large foreign community about the Taiping advance. Issacher Roberts, Hong Xiuquan’s former missionary teacher, visited Nanjing and reported that Hong was insane.

In early 1861, the Taiping general Li Xiucheng’s army of 600,000 controlled much of the Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces bordering the Yangtze. At his request Great Britain and France, with their commercial interests in Shanghai, promised to stay neutral. The Taiping began the battle for Shanghai by invading the nearby Pudong area with 20,000 troops.

The Europeans and the Chinese business elite of Shanghai became alarmed at the approach of the Taiping and feared fighting in the city, but the Europeans were reluctant to commit their troops. In 1860 a group of Chinese businessmen hired the American mercenary Frederick Townsend Ward to organise a small Shanghai Foreign Arms Corps (FAC) of 100, initially made up of Western drifters and ship deserters recruited from the wharfs of Shanghai. Later Filipino and other mercenaries were added to the force. In 1861 Ward’s group blocked the Taiping’s approach to Shanghai at Chingpu, but at huge cost. The ‘low-life’ nature of Ward’s outfit angered Western businessmen in Shanghai, who feared that the Taiping would cut off their trade. The Taiping were initially surprised to be fired on by Europeans.

After a 15-day Christmas cease-fire the Qing sent an army of 20,000 to Jiangnan. In early April 1862 the Qing general Li Hongzhang was made governor of Jiangsu province and took overall military command. A unit of the Green Standard army was sent to attack the city of Taicang, occupied by the Taiping, some 40 miles from Shanghai. Li Xiucheng sent 100,000 men to relieve the city and, after its commander disobeyed orders to withdraw, the entire Qing unit was destroyed. By late April the Taiping occupied Jiading, a town outside Shanghai, which they planned to use as a base to attack Songjiang, today a district of Shanghai, and the city itself. Li Hongzhang ordered a counter-attack. By mid-May the Taiping were pushed out of east and south Shanghai.

The Qing were aided by a greatly enlarged foreign led army. In the summer of 1861 Ward reorganised his force. Financed by wealthy Shanghai merchants, hundreds of Western mercenaries were recruited, and by September 1862 the FAC had over 5000 Chinese troops. Recruitment was aided by increasing peasant resentment of Taiping harassment. Troops were trained in Western drill and military techniques very different from those of traditional Chinese warfare. Ward’s force became known as the ‘Ever Victorious Army’ (EVA).

In January 1862 the Taiping re-entered Jiangnan with 120,000 troops. In September they mounted a second attack on Shanghai with an army of 80,000. Li Xiucheng’s 20,000-man army was beaten back by Ward’s smaller force of 1500 in Soonjiang, and all 20 Taiping camps were destroyed; Li’s army was forced to retreat after suffering heavy losses. Unfamiliar with Westerners and Western military technique, the Taiping often fled. Another Taiping force of 70,000 counter-attacked from bases in Taicang and Kunshun and got to within a few miles of the city, managing to surround 20,000 imperial troops, but in a seven-hour battle the imperial troops were relieved and the Taiping’s retreat was cut off, with 30,000 troops lost. The Taiping launched four more attacks on Qing forces defending Shanghai before Hong Xiuquan ordered the offensive to be ended.

Until its disbandment in 1864 the EVA continued to win victories against the Taiping. Ward was killed at the battle of Cixi, near Ningbo, in September 1862. Henry Burgevine, another American freebooter, initially took

command of the EVA, but his personality and his alcohol and drug use made him unpopular; he was demoted and subsequently changed sides. In March 1863 the British officer and imperialist Charles George Gordon took charge of the EVA. He relieved Chansu, a town 40 miles from Shanghai, and then took Suzhou with heavy losses. He also took Suzhou in November but left the city after a disagreement with Li Hongzhang over the execution of enemy officers. Later Gordon rejoined Li Hongzhang and captured Changzhong, the Taiping headquarters in Jiangnan. The EVA was disbanded by Li and did not play a role in the final siege of Nanjing.

The advance of Qing forces between June and November 1863 cleared the Taiping from the Yangtze valley and cut off Nanjing. Zeng Guofan directed the siege of the Taiping capital. Hong Xiuquan died on 1 June 1864, possibly from poisoning after eating weeds growing near his palace. His son Tianguai Fu took his role. On 19 July a gunpowder blast blew a hole in Nanjing's east wall, allowing the Qing to enter. The city was sacked, and according to some accounts most of its 100,000 inhabitants were killed. Tianqiu Fu and Hong Rengan escaped; Li Xiucheng was captured and executed; Hong Rengan and Tianguai Fu were captured in October, and were both executed in November. Between 20 and 30 million people died in this conflict.

The surviving Taiping, under Lai Wenkwok, attempted to link with the concomitant Nien Rebellion, but Lai was captured and executed in 1868. The last remaining Taiping army was defeated in 1871.

The Taiping army was fanatically disciplined, but its ideology and command structure inhibited serious strategic thinking and consolidation of objectives. Leaders gained their authority from God, providing little room for disagreement. Although at their height the Taiping came close to threatening Qing rule, they were ultimately unable to support a sustained drive to control China, and their failure to link up with other anti-Qing rebellions of the time contributed to their eventual failure.

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# **Trinidad & Tobago: George Weekes and the Oilfields Workers Resistance to Imperialism, 1962–1987**

Trinidad and Tobago has one of the oldest oil industries in the Western Hemisphere, dating back to 1857. From 1908, oil was produced in commercial quantities and, as a result, multinational oil corporations such as BP, Shell, Texaco, Tesoro, and AMOCO became major investors in the industry. Additionally, Trinidad and Tobago attracted other multinational corporations such as Nestle, Haliburton, Dunlop, W.R. Grace, Alcoa, Cable and Wireless, and BATA. These entities took advantage of the generous investment incentives and concessions offered by the People's National Movement (PNM) Government's 'Industrialisation by Invitation' policy that was implemented in the late 1950s. However, in their quest to exploit the natural and human resources of the nation, these multinational corporations met massive resistance from progressive trade unions, especially the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (OWTU). Under the leadership of George Hilton Weekes, the union took the leadership role in the working-class struggles against the multinational corporations.

## **Emergence of George Weekes (27 April 1921–2 February 1995)**

On 25 June 1962, George Hilton Weekes emerged as the third president general of the OWTU (1962–87). In trade union and political circles, he was called George 'PG' Weekes. A former senator and government minister, Weekes was awarded the Trinity Cross and the OWTU Labour Star. His ascendancy into the leadership position dramatically changed how the OWTU viewed the relationship between trade unionism and politics. Moreover, because of his political influence, Weekes was able to galvanise a new social movement that challenged the Eric Williams regime and the multinational corporations that operated in Trinidad and Tobago.

Weekes's entrance into the OWTU's leadership and his emergence into Trinidad and Tobago's politics were not isolated events

but were directly related to the emergence of other radical elements within the worldwide trade union movement. The shift in the OWTU's approach from Rojas's style to Weekes's more agitative stance must be viewed in the context of the struggles various nationalist groups waged against British and French colonial rule in Africa and Asia. These struggles (which included peaceful protest, mass insurrection, and military action) caught Weekes's attention, and they helped to shape his growing political consciousness to seek justice for workers. In relation to Africa, Weekes held a deep affinity for the political and economic aspirations of the continent, and he became a member of the African Nationalist Movement (ANM) that was formed in 1947 and later renamed the Pan African League in 1948. Moreover, he was actively involved in the Port of Spain-based Universal African Nationalist Movement (UANM), an organisation that was influenced by the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). By identifying with the struggles for freedom and independence, Weekes, in his early years, expressed solidarity with the oppressed peoples of the continent and other nations.

Second, the ascension of Weekes and his more confrontational approach must also be viewed in the context of the presence of the US multinational corporations in the country that had supplanted the influence of British commercial interests in the post-Second World War period. In the Latin American and Caribbean regions, US imperialism through the multinational corporations had invested heavily in the region by expanding into various sectors such as the agricultural, bauxite, oil and manufacturing industries. For example, in the 1960s, US foreign direct investment (FDI) stood at \$9.8 billion. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, Weekes saw the arrival of Texaco, W.R. Grace (Federation Chemicals) and Alcoa. Working at Texaco Point-a-Pierre, Weekes had first-hand experience of the industrial relations practices of the company and its effects on the oil workers.

Third, the rise to power of the 'Rebels' must also be viewed in the context of the rise of radical nationalism and anti-imperialism that occurred in Cuba as a result of the Fidel Castro-led Cuban revolution in 1959. This revolution offered hope to the Caribbean peoples and pointed to other alternative means of attaining independence and reorganising

a country's economy. By 1960, the Castro regime had nationalised all foreign and most large Cuban enterprises; this measure coincided with the OWTU's first strike against Texaco. Khafra Kambon noted that the Cuban experience inspired George Weekes and other militants who had been agitating for the PNM Government to adopt similar policies.

Fourth, the Rebels' rise to power must also be analysed in the context of the influence of revolutionary ideologies such as Marxism, socialism and Trotskyism. George Weekes fought in the Second World War and returned to Trinidad in 1943 a changed young man, imbued with a high level of political consciousness. Marxism and socialism fascinated him, and he developed an intellectual passion for these two political philosophies. Moreover, the Negro Welfare Cultural and Social Association (NWCSA), which was founded in 1934 by Elma Francois, Jim Barrette, and Christina King, also played a key role in the advancement of socialist ideas among the working class by engaging in political education throughout the trade union movement and in various communities in Trinidad and Tobago. With regard to dissemination of socialist ideology, activists like Bernard Primus, Lennox Pierre, John La Rose, Kack Kelshall and George Bowrin were instrumental in the process within the OWTU. These individuals played a very influential role in Weekes's socialist ideological development and also in shaping the OWTU into a powerful anti-governmental organisation. As for Trotskyism and its influence on the Rebel movement, one has to look at C.L.R. James and the critical role he played in developing this ideology on his return to Trinidad to assist the Peoples National Movement. James adhered to the Trotskyist perspective as opposed to the views of the Communist Party led by Stalin. He was highly instrumental in organising the Workers and Farmers Party, of which George Weekes was a very active member.

Finally, from a local standpoint, the Rebels' quest to transform the OWTU and provide new leadership to the members must also be viewed in the light of the problems that confronted the working class of Trinidad and Tobago. In 1958, the labour force totalled 297,000 workers. However, of this active figure, some 28,000 were unemployed and by 1962 unemployment would surpass the 1958 figure by 100 per cent. In addition, the scale

of wages in various industries was very low. The 1958 Budget figures revealed that workers with paid jobs in 1956 earned less than \$50.00 a month. In addition, it painted a grim reality that 'seven out of ten paid workers with jobs in Trinidad and Tobago in 1956 did not earn enough to bring them within the income tax net. Furthermore, the average wage earning of the lowest-paid unskilled workers in large non-agricultural firms employing ten persons or more in 1958 was \$632 per year in services and commerce; \$641 per year in manufacturing (clothing), and in many other areas it did not go above \$725 per year. In oil, transport, communications, and ports, it stood slightly above \$1,200. Even though oil workers received higher comparable wages, Weekes and the Rebel team were not only concerned about the welfare of the oil workers but viewed themselves as part of a new grass-roots movement that rose up in defence of the working class to challenge the PNM's political and socioeconomic independence paradigm.

### **OWTU and resistance to imperialism (1963–69)**

Shortly after Weekes and the Rebels took control of the leadership, British Petroleum, a British multinational corporation, served notice to the OWTU of its intention to re-trench hundreds of workers at the Point Fortin refinery. Understanding the lessons of the 1962 struggle against BP, the new OWTU leadership mobilised the workers at the refinery under the slogan 'Not A Man Must Go'. On 17 February 1963, 2,600 BP workers took strike action which lasted for 57 days and forced the company to rescind its plans. This strike was significant because it occurred six months after Trinidad and Tobago had obtained constitutional independence from Great Britain. Moreover, in the same year, the OWTU, through the collective bargaining process with Texaco, negotiated the first pension plan in Trinidad and Tobago for workers. Prior to this, only expatriate managers and supervisors at Texaco received pensions. This concession, extracted from a giant multinational corporation, was a victory for the working class and became a model for other unions in their collective bargaining agreements with private companies. Furthermore, in 1965, George Weekes



and other progressive trade unionists vigorously opposed the passage of the Industrial Stabilisation Act.

This piece of repressive legislation was aimed at taking away the unions' right to take strike action. The progressive trade unions opposed it because it favoured the rights of the multinational corporations over the workers. Additionally, in 1967, almost five years into his leadership of the OWTU, George Weekes faced a crisis when British Petroleum announced its intention to reduce the number of oil workers at its plants. By 1967, British Petroleum was locked in a struggle with the OWTU over the attempts of the company to reduce manpower. However, at the same time, the company was witnessing its oil fortunes increase dramatically with large discoveries of oil in the Prudhoe Bay and Forties in the North Sea that boosted the company's reserves outside of the Middle East. As a result of these large deposits of oil being found, the company's board of directors unanimously agreed to rid BP of unprofitable operations and steer its exploration funds to these two new areas. Meanwhile, BP's Trinidad and Tobago operations witnessed a dramatic decline from 40,913 million barrels in 1967 to 29,716 million barrels in 1969. The company claimed that this drastic fall affected its profit margins and, as a result, ceased its exploration activities, embarked on a redundancy programme, and invited Shell and Texaco to purchase its assets. However, both companies declined BP's offer.

This action created political problems for the government. Although the oil workers were members of the militant OWTU, the vast majority were also PNM party supporters who were in danger of losing their jobs with dire socioeconomic consequences for their families. On 30 March 1967, the union held a mass membership meeting at Palo Seco and called on the PNM Government to acquire the assets of BP and establish a National Petroleum Company. The union's leadership felt that nationalisation of the foreign-owned oil company had the capacity to generate jobs and boost the national economy. Furthermore, the union requested that the government block Texaco from purchasing BP's assets. Following the public meeting, the OWTU, on 4 April 1967, presented to the PNM Government a memorandum entitled 'Oil in Turmoil and OWTU Memorandum on the Formation of a National Oil Company'.

In response, George Weekes wrote acknowledging receipt of the Memorandum and also the Resolution. OWTU's memorandum was divided into two parts: 'Oil in Turmoil' and the 'OWTU Memorandum'. The former examined the state of the industry, its importance to Trinidad and Tobago's economy, the global control of the industry, competition, prices and markets, production costs, the true state of oil production, the establishment of a National Oil Company, internal competence, and funding.

In its conclusion, the OWTU pledged to commit monetary and human resources towards the purchase of BP's assets. In the latter part of the document, the union presented a 15-point memorandum that detailed all aspects of BP's local and international operations that included holdings in Trinidad Northern Areas, Trinmar Ltd, BP Caribbean Ltd, Kern Trinidad Oilfields Ltd, Apex (Trinidad) Oilfields Ltd, Trinidad Petroleum Development Ltd, and BP (Trinidad) Ltd, the holding company. In addition, the OWTU offered a number of practical solutions to the PNM Government on purchase of and payments for BP's assets. For example, the union proposed a series of methods that included amortised payments over a 15–20-year period, National Bonds bearing 2.5 per cent interest rates redeemed over 15–20 years, and government takeover whereby the state purchase 4 per cent of the shares and the remaining 96 per cent were offered to the public. Although the government rejected many of the proposals contained in the OWTU's memorandum, it purchased BP's assets in 1969 and formed a joint-venture company with Tesero, an American oil company. While the government did not follow the detailed demands of the OWTU, the union's action clearly influenced its approach in dealing with the oil industry. The anti-imperialist struggles waged in the 1970s cemented George Weekes's leadership in the trade union movement and pushed the OWTU to play a vanguard role in the 1970s

### **OWTU and resistance to imperialism (1970–79)**

By 1970, the militant mood of the working class had intensified with their support of the Black Power Revolution that called for the nationalisation of oil and sugar industries that were controlled by multinational

corporations. This wave of militancy against the proliferation of multinational corporations and economic dependency was not limited only to Trinidad and Tobago but was part of the growing radical social movements all over the Third World, whether it was expressed as Black Power, socialism, Pan Africanism, Black Nationalism or Radical Nationalism. It was in this context that OWTU members waged struggles against multinational corporations. In 1965, the OWTU won recognition to represent workers at Federation Chemicals, a subsidiary of W.R. Grace, N.A. Late in 1970, the OWTU and the company entered into negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement over wages and other workers' related benefits, compensation, and working conditions. Due to the slow pace of the negotiations coupled with the firing of six workers, the entire workforce went on strike. In support of the strike, the OWTU, in July 1971, mobilised other branches from oil, electricity, and agriculture to support the striking workers at Federation Chemicals. Moreover, in October 1970, workers at Halliburton, an American oil contracting company, downed their tools and took protest action over the dismissal of their co-workers and racist management practices. Additionally, in the same year, oil workers at Texaco Guayaguayare went on strike over the hiring of scab labour. These two strikes were significant because workers did not consult the union leadership. Moreover, in 1971, workers at Dunlop went on strike over management's policy of hiring white South African managers. Furthermore, from 27 March 1975–28 April 1975, workers at Texaco went on strike to protest against Texaco's failure to negotiate wage increases. After several meetings, union called off the prolonged strike because workers were losing wages. However, the union secured recognition for the monthly paid staff, and it became a bargaining unit within the OWTU.

In 1978, Texaco celebrated 22 years of operations in Trinidad and Tobago; however, this celebration did not prevent the company from launching an attack on the OWTU by dismissing safety officer Victor Singh and suspending branch officer Glen Walcott, the entire pump department and 13 waterfront workers. Therefore, it was against this background that the OWTU went into the negotiations to bargain on behalf of the Texaco workers. Using a strategy that involved comprehensive

research into Texaco's local and global operations that was prepared by Trevor Farrell, a lecturer in Economics at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, and a specialist in Petroleum Economics, the OWTU entered the negotiations seeking 120 per cent but was willing, in the interest of time, to settle for a compromise increase of 100 per cent in wages. The claim was based on a number of factors including: the contribution of oil workers to the country's economy and the wealth of the company; the impact of inflation on the workers' real wages; the impact of projected inflation; the increase in workers' productivity; the modern industrial relations practice as it related to employee welfare; and the beneficial impact of a settlement on the country's welfare. In terms of the oil workers' contribution to the economy, the union, utilising official government statistical figures, pointed out that between 1973 and 1977, oil workers had contributed some \$2.676 billion to government's recurrent revenue. Percentage wise, this meant that oil workers' contribution to the economy grew by 62 per cent between 1974 and 1976, and government's revenue increased by 81 per cent between 1974 and 1977. Moreover, on the issue of inflation and its relation to real wages, the OWTU argued that Texaco should increase the oil workers' wages because the cost of living index had increased from 241.2 points in February 1975 to 326.6 points by December 1977, an increase of 85.4 points or 35.4 per cent. Additionally, the union argued that the old Cost of Living Allowance (COLA), based on the 1975–78 collective bargaining agreement, needed to be adjusted because on average wages had been eroded by 22 per cent over the three-year period. Therefore, on the basis of the negotiating team's calculations, the union requested an increase of 14.7 per cent to restore the workers' real wages. Moreover, the OWTU, in its attempt to protect the workers from any anticipated rise in the rate of inflation, proposed an increase of 17.59 per cent as a hedge against future inflation as it related to COLA.

All these positions were made to counter the claims of Texaco's negotiating team that 'the company lost money; that it had an onerous tax burden; that its cost of production was relatively high; that its competitive position was weak and that further increased cost would erode its competitive position in the world market'. For example,

on the company's claim that it made losses, the union's negotiating team exposed the company's position by providing figures that showed among other things that Texaco had gross income sales of \$64.63 billion in 1975; net income profit of \$2,087.28 million in 1976; profits totalling \$1,747.92 million, an increase of 14 per cent over the first nine months of 1976. Based on the above data, Texaco was certainly in a position to pay a living wage to the oil workers because (following OPEC's decision) oil prices at that time had skyrocketed and all the oil companies, including Texaco, reaped profit 'windfalls'. This certainly caught OWTU's attention as it prepared its position to defend the oil workers' interests.

Clearly understanding what was at stake, the OWTU leadership printed thousands of copies of the booklet titled, *In Defense of Our Members and the People of Trinago against Global Texaco-Exploiter of Labour and Natural Resources: Negotiations 1978* to educate the oil workers in particular and public in general on the international oil industry, Texaco's operations in Trinidad and the relationship between the oil companies and the country's economy and the union's justification of its wage claims. This tactic was a key weapon in the union's mass mobilisation drive to ensure that the workers knew the issues at hand, what was at stake, and how their participation by way of discussions at the workplace, at union branch meetings, and mass meetings were important to the process. The leadership positioned the 1978 negotiations as a class war between the workers and the capitalists in which the future of their children, their grandchildren, and the workers' freedom, dignity and self-respect were at stake.

Moreover on 1–2 July 1978, the OWTU held a special conference of delegates at Paramount Building, the union headquarters, to discuss 'International Policy and the OWTU'. The conference was called to educate the rank and file of the importance of supporting the union's position against Texaco. In this case, a group of workers violated the directive of the General Council that placed an embargo on Antigua. The OWTU took this action because the Vere Bird regime that governed Antigua allowed its country to be used as a trans-shipment point for arms to the South African government that used a policy of apartheid to oppress and marginalise the majority black South African population.

Additionally, the conference educated the members on the need to adopt new strategies to survive the dominance of the multinational corporations. Moreover, it called for international trade union solidarity to combat the destruction of trade unions in a world dominated by global capitalism.

These struggles of the 1970s clearly showed that the OWTU was up against formidable adversaries that had enormous financial resources and political connections that made it difficult for the union to wring maximum benefits for its workers. On the other hand, the OWTU showed great resolve in defending the interests of the workers and the country against exploitation of its resources. However, these struggles would intensify during the 1980s as the union continued to protect the interests of its members and fight for further nationalisation of the oil industry.

### **OWTU and resistance to imperialism (1980–87)**

From 1981–86, Trinidad and Tobago's economy experienced severe economic crisis as a result of the worldwide recession. During this crisis, the capitalist class launched many attacks on the working class by way of plant shutdowns, massive retrenchment, and privatisation. During this period, many workers took strike action. Once again, the OWTU, under George Weekes's leadership, waged serious struggles against the multinational corporations such as Dunlop and Federation Chemicals. Additionally, the union spent considerable time in pressing for the nationalisation of Texaco and AMOCO (American Oil Company).

Not satisfied with it the outcome of the 1972 collective bargaining agreement, Dunlop's management made another concerted attempt in 1984 to defeat the union. One of the objectives of any multinational corporation is to make profits both in the short run and the long run. In terms of Dunlop, this view was expressed clearly by one of its former managing directors John Crittenden, who outlandishly proclaimed: 'Not because I carry a grey beard, you would take me for a Santa Claus; I have no money bag on my back .... Dunlop is here to make money!!' One of the methods that companies utilise to cut cost is retrenchment or layoffs. In October 1983, Dunlop's management put

its strategy into operation by stockpiling tyres to justify its position of retrenching both permanent and casual workers. Unaware of the company's grand scheme, the workers continued their productivity drive to meet Dunlop's required productivity quota for the given period. This strategy had a twofold aim of cutting costs and making profits in the short run with a reduced staff. However, Dunlop workers were not to be fooled by this age-old capitalist trick. United in their efforts to save their jobs, on 6 October 1983, both hourly and monthly workers took a unanimous decision to vigorously oppose the company's retrenchment programme.

However, despite the workers' show of unity, Dunlop's management retrenched over 75 casual workers. In any given retrenchment situation, casual workers are always the first in line to be fired and this was no exception at Dunlop. Therefore, sensing that permanent workers were next in line for possible retrenchment, Dunlop workers took strike action against the company on 10 May 1984. Following a meeting between the union's executive, the Ministry of Labour, and the company, the workers returned to their jobs 'to demonstrate good faith and on the perception that the Company would have seen the wisdom in withdrawing the warning notices at that meeting'. However, Dunlop's management was in no mood for reconciliation, and on 17 May 1984, they increased security, padlocked the gates and issued over 250 suspension notices to all the workers from the two shifts.

Undaunted by Dunlop management's actions, the workers erected a strike camp and dug in because they knew that not only were their jobs at stake but also the Point Fortin community would be affected. Under the militant leadership of branch president Martin Woods and secretary Winston James, the workers began a mobilisation drive to sensitise the Point Fortin Community concerning the strike and the effects it would have on the workers, their families, and the entire community. The workers received support from wives and girlfriends who supplied the striking workers with food throughout the strike's duration. Moreover, the workers kept the unity among them by organising rap sessions and other activities that kept a constant flow of workers to the camp. Furthermore, they printed bulletins and held a public meeting in the 'heart' of Point Fortin where Martin

Woods connected the workers' struggle with the wider struggle against retrenchment, wage-cuts, and roll-backs that employers unleashed on the workforce. In addition, the Dunlop workers received the support of various branch leaders, area labour relations officers and executives. Because of this show of solidarity and the workers' resolve, the union and company met at the Ministry of Labour on 23 May 1985 and hammered out a settlement. The parties agreed to: the withdrawal of all warning notices; withdrawal of letters of suspension plus compensation pay for workers; no victimisation of workers; and that both parties would co-operate towards restoring a good industrial relations climate. Faced with this militant action of the Dunlop workers, the government intervened to contain the spate of industrial unrest that had engulfed many parts of the country. However, if the government felt that the industrial relations climate at Dunlop had improved, the workers felt otherwise and resorted to further strike actions in April 1985.

One year after the 1984 strike, the workers at Caribbean Tire Company (formerly Dunlop) reverted to strike action in their attempt to force the company to make 54 casual workers permanent. When the permanent workers took strike action in 1984, the casual workers gave them their unwavering support. In their support for the casual workers, the permanent workers made the permanent job security of the casual workers a priority by placing it at the top of the list of grievances. The permanent workers had just cause because it formed part of the 1984 Collective Bargaining Agreement. The specific clause stated that as long as casual workers held down permanent jobs, they would be classified as permanent workers effective from 16 December 1984. In April 1985 when the permanent workers decided to strike, they included the casual workers and other negotiated issues that the company had failed to honour as justification for the strike. Faced with warning notices and the threat of suspensions and dismissals, the workers downed their tools on 1 April 1985 and walked off the job. Just as they had held their ground during the 1984 strike, the workers stood firm and resolute for their demands this time. The company maintained a hard-line position on the issues until a meeting was convened with Errol McLeod (OWTU's first-vice president) and the branch officers

at the San Fernando office of the Ministry of Labour on 5 April 1983. At that meeting, the parties arrived at a resolution that the company's management would begin the process of classifying the 54 casual workers as permanent workers. However, this industrial peace at the plant was short-lived; the economic climate of the country favoured the Employers Consultative Association and the Manufacturers Association which had wanted to break the unions, especially the OWTU. The management of Caribbean Tire joined the chorus and took action once more against the workforce.

In September 1985, Dunlop management locked out the workers, dismissed the great majority of them, and resorted to police attacks and court injunctions against the workers. Both parties took the industrial dispute to the Industrial Court and the judges found Dunlop guilty of engaging in an illegal lockout and fined it \$25,000. Instead of heeding the Court's directive, the company resorted to delaying tactics hoping that workers would drop their demands and return to work. However, the situation worsened and the company appealed the judgment. As 1985 drew to a close and this case headed for the Industrial Court, the OWTU executives and its members would be faced with more challenges in 1986 as the capitalist class took the fight to the workers and their trade unions.

By 1986, the political mood of the electorate had swung against the PNM Government in favour of the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), a three-party coalition composed of the Organisation for National Reconstruction, the Tapia House Movement and the Democratic Action Congress, and the United Labour Front. While these two parties battled for political supremacy to determine which section of the capitalist class would rule the country, the working class did not let up with its struggles against the onslaught of the ECA. By late January/early February 1986, Federation Chemical's management locked out its monthly paid workers, whom the OWTU had recently organised into a bargaining unit. After three weeks of holding out, the workers eventually signed individual contracts. Sensing that the monthly paid workers had caved in, management decided to target its hourly paid workers into signing individual contracts; however, the daily

paid workers did not fall for the bait. Rightly so, they understood that if they signed the contracts in effect they would have lost their Cost of Living Allowances (COLA). Failing to convince the daily paid workers to sign the agreement, management resorted to locking out all hourly paid workers in August 1986.

Compared to the previous strikes, the workers adopted new tactics. Rather than just set up a strike camp and protest, they developed a massive public-relations and education campaign whereby they went into all the major population centres throughout the country and interfaced with the citizens about the company's action. The workers understood that the issue of COLA had major implications for all workers in Trinidad and Tobago, and they wanted to educate the nation on the issue. As 1986 was also an election year, the workers reminded politicians concerning the attacks on the working class. They signed petitions and picketed the offices of George Chambers and Errol Mahabir (two senior cabinet members of the People's National Movement Government), along with Parliament, and organised vigils at the Queen's Park Savannah and Woodford Square. In addition, they took their campaign to the NAR Government that had defeated the PNM at the December polls; they waged a campaign to get it to invoke Section 65 of the Industrial Relations Act to end the lock-out in the national interest. When this failed, the workers resumed picketing the Parliament and the Ministry of Labour. Even though the NAR had swept the polls, the working class did not give them any holiday but pressured them to take action on issues affecting the working class. Eventually, in January 1987, the OWTU and the workers succeeded in convincing the NAR Government to pass the amendment that sent the workers back to work. This decision came at a time when the OWTU was in a period of transition. On 5 September 1987, George Weekes, who had led the organisation since 1962, passed the leadership mantle on to Errol McLeod, the union's first-vice-president. In his address, McLeod noted that this transition had commenced in 1984 and the process was a smooth one. Whether or not the leadership transition went smoothly, McLeod promised to continue Weekes's legacy. While the OWTU fought to save the jobs of workers, it renewed its struggle for full nationalisation of the petroleum industry.

The call for the nationalisation of the petroleum industry did not begin with George Weekes and the Rebels but can be dated to as early as 6 October 1936 when Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' Butler, in his capacity as leader of the British Empire Workers and Citizens Home Rule Party, wrote a letter to Governor Murchison Fletcher expressing the oil workers' desire for state control of the local petroleum industry. In the aftermath of the OWTU receiving official recognition as a trade union in July 1937, its new leader Adrian Cola Rienzi appeared before the Arbitration Tribunal in December 1937 to deal with a dispute with the Petroleum Association which fell under the Trade Disputes Ordinance of 1938. At the hearing of the dispute, Rienzi called for nationalisation of the oil industry, arguing that nationalisation had the effect of saving costs, reducing competition and wild-cattling, and would increase overall productivity in the industry. However, when Rienzi made this statement, the oil companies regarded him as a 'dangerous communist'. During the aftermath of the 1937 labour uprising in the British West Indies, the British government stepped up its campaign to stop the spread of socialist ideas in the trade union movement, and progressive leaders who identified with socialism became the primary victims of attacks. It took another 19 years for the OWTU to make another push for nationalisation of the oil industry.

During 1956 under John Rojas's leadership, the union together with the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and the Caribbean National Labour Party (CNLP) passed a joint resolution that attempted to block Texaco's entrance into Trinidad and Tobago's oil industry. The resolution stated that, 'If the ownership of the Trinidad Oil Company is transferred to the British Government as Trustees for the Trinidad Government or the new proposed Federal Union, after the purchase price for the same will have been liquidated, it would assist tremendously in enabling the country to achieve national economic stability....' While the resolution was unsuccessful, it did not prevent the OWTU's leadership from agitating for local ownership of the industry. This agitation intensified under the leadership of George Weekes, especially in the 1980s.

By 1982, the government found itself in a precarious position when Patrick Manning, minister of Energy and Natural Resources, reported to cabinet that Texaco had slashed

its production. This had implications for the government's D-plan for the industry which involved multimillion-dollar investment in expansion and upgrading of the Trintoc refinery. Troubled by this new development, Manning submitted a cabinet note dated 24 March 1982 in which he stated, among other things, that government should seriously consider a policy of rationalisation of existing refinery capacity in Trinidad and Tobago as representing the best possible solution to increase the profitability of both the Texaco and the TRINTOC refineries.

On 20 September 1982, the union presented a memorandum on the oil industry entitled *Our Fight for People's Ownership and Control of the Oil Industry* to the government of Trinidad and Tobago. Consisting of 80 pages, the memorandum laid out the state of the international oil industry, Texaco's position on the industry in Trinidad and Tobago, the government's position on the industry, the OWTU's position, the petroleum industry and the national interest, and a proposal for change. Essentially, the OWTU called on the government to acquire Tesoro, Texaco, and Amoco, and offered its services to the government to bring the acquisitions to fruition. Citing the Mexican case study of the nationalisation of its oil industry in 1938, the union proclaimed that ownership of the industry would enable Trinidad and Tobago to obtain significant economic independence. Moreover, it called on the government to adopt a new approach to decision making in its position on the oil industry by involving the citizens of the country and in particular the OWTU and the oil workers. However, instead of accepting the union's recommendations, the PNM Government made further adjustments to the tax structure.

In 1983, in order to meet the demands of oil companies, especially those of Texaco, the government amended the Petroleum Taxes Act of 1974; it reduced the Supplemental Tax Rate for land production tax from 35 per cent to 15 per cent. From Texaco's standpoint, it appeared that the reduction in the tax was insufficient to offset the cost of operating the Point-a-Pierre refinery. Rather than adjust its expectations, Texaco reacted by: closing down non-essential operations; adjusting retirement ages and provisions; reducing the workforce; and cutting expenditure. Texaco took these measures even while negotiating with the government for a possible take-over of

the company. After nearly two years of intense negotiations, the government and Texaco's negotiating teams met in March 1985 to negotiate on the purchase of Texaco's operations in Trinidad and Tobago, which included the Point-a-Pierre refinery, the harbour facilities, the landing producing assets, Brighton offshore, the company's interest in SECC (South East Coast Consortium) and in Block I, and the Belpetco blocks in the Gulf of Paria plus certain other assets.

At the signing ceremony, Elton G. Yates, chairman of Textrin's board of directors, represented Texaco and George Chambers, prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, represented the government. The parties agreed that Textrin retain its one-third interest in Trinmar and in the offshore East Coast Production-sharing Contract in Block 6 with Tenneco (i.e. Dolphin Gas). The purchase consideration was US\$189.2 million (TT\$454 million) and on signing, the government agreed to pay Textrin US\$98 million (TT\$235.2 million) of which the government agreed to provide TT\$174.7 million and TRINTOC (Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company) to provide TT\$60.5 million. In terms of the balance that amounted to US\$91.2 million, the government agreed to pay Textrin over a ten-month period in the form of petroleum products at the rate of approximately 9,800 bpd.

By agreeing to pay Texaco this price for a refinery that had lost its technological edge, the government demonstrated its inability to effectively deal with the oil multinationals. The refinery no longer served Texaco's global strategic needs and this meant that the government had to import crude to keep the refinery running. Moreover, the payments were made in the post-oil boom period when the economy went into a deep recession. Even though the purchase of Texaco was a step in the right direction, the industry remained firmly entrenched under the control of the multinational oil companies, and this helped to explain government's failure to successfully own and control the entire petroleum industry. This inability to achieve its original objectives in dealing with the Texaco oil company strengthened the OWTU's argument for the nationalisation of the nation's petroleum industry.

In 1987, with the NAR Government in control of the state, the OWTU presented the new government with a memorandum that covered: the economy, the oil industry; divestment/privatisation; industrial relations; health

and safety legislation; the media; and the democratic process in Trinidad and Tobago. In terms of ownership and control of the industry, the OWTU proposed that the government: purchase Texaco's one-third share; initiate a six-month time frame to merge all existing state oil companies; reconsider its new Draft Energy Policy; upgrade Trintoc's refinery to make it more efficient; revamp the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources and make it the energy sector's central policy-making body; explore all the alternatives to take control of AMOCO; oppose the private sector's proposal on the oil industry; and create a research and development unit that would cater for the needs of the oil industry. Unlike the previous administration that had at least committed to some aspects of control of the oil industry, the NAR Government pursued a programme of divestment and privatisation of the oil industry.

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## United States Imperialism in the Western Hemisphere

The modern world-system emerged as a consequence of the Spanish and Portuguese

conquest of America, where forced labour was imposed on the indigenous populations in order to obtain gold and silver. The precious metals were used to purchase products from north-western Europe, thus stimulating the modernisation of agriculture and the expansion of industry. Thus emerged a world economy, in which north-western Europe functioned as a manufacturing centre, and Latin America and eastern Europe became peripheral zones, supplying raw materials to the centre, on a foundation of forced labour (Wallerstein 1974–2011: vol. 1; Wallerstein 1979).

During the period from 1815 to 1917, Great Britain, France, and other European nations conquered and colonised vast regions of Africa and Asia, incorporating them into peripheral zones, which acted as suppliers of raw materials to the core on a base of forced labour. During this period, most of the nations of Latin America became independent republics, but the core–peripheral relation was maintained, so that the republics were functioning as semi-colonies (Arboleya 2008; Frank 1979; Regalado 2007; Wallerstein 1974–2011: vol. 3).

The structures of the world-system establish limited possibilities for ascent, and the most spectacular case of ascent has been that of the US. The British colonies in North America entered the world economy with a semi-peripheral role, purchasing manufactured goods from Great Britain and supplying a diversity of food and animal products for the slave plantations of the Caribbean. This lucrative West Indian trade facilitated the accumulation of capital in New England and the mid-Atlantic colonies. During the 19th-century expansion of the world-system, the US South was converted into a peripheral region, producing cotton and other raw materials on a base of African slave labour. The north-eastern US utilised capital accumulated from the West Indian trade to develop industries that supplied manufactured goods to the South, thus establishing a North–South core–peripheral relation, which further fuelled the ascent of the north-eastern region. By the end of the 19th century, the US had become one of the core nations of the world-system, with high levels of manufacturing and capital and a high standard of living (Frank 1979: 64–68; Galeano 2004: 87; Genovese 1967).

By the end of the 19th century, the capitalist world economy entered a stage of monopoly



capital, characterised by concentrated industry and banking (Lenin 1996). With the colonial domination of the world nearing completion, and with anti-colonial movements among the colonised beginning to emerge, the stage was set for the evolution of new forms of core penetration into peripheral and semi-peripheral zones, including control of financial institutions and indirect political control with the support of a national bourgeoisie. This new imperialist stage would preserve the core–periphery relation, and it would maintain earlier mechanisms of core domination, such as direct political control and military force. Thus the imperialist stage is characterised by a diversity of military, political, and ideological strategies designed to ensure access to raw materials and control of markets by core corporations.

### The origin of US imperialist policies

With the concentration of industry and the emergence of a few large companies that controlled the market in several key industries, productive capacity in the US reached a level that over-extended the capacity of its domestic market. This could give rise to a surplus of goods and a fall in prices. Periodic crises of over-production had been a pattern of capitalism, but the problem was deepened by the arrival of the system to this new phase of large-scale and concentrated production. Therefore, in order to maintain or increase levels of profit, US companies would have to find new markets for their products beyond the frontiers of the US.

In the 1890s, there was consciousness among US producers of the need for new markets as a result of the economic crisis of 1892–93, which was widely interpreted as having been caused by over-production. This situation gave rise to the formulation of a new expansionist foreign policy by the US Government. The new foreign policy was called ‘imperialism’ by its promoters. The basic goal was to find new markets outside the US for US manufactured and agricultural products. Strategies were proposed by the platform of the Republican Party in 1896. They included the expansion of the army and the establishment of military bases abroad; control of Hawaii and the purchase of the Danish Virgin Islands; support of Cubans in

their war of liberation from Spanish colonial rule; and the construction of a canal across Nicaragua to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Control of the Caribbean and the Far East was considered central, and thus the Philippines, Hawaii, and Cuba were viewed as having high strategic value as locations for US military bases. The election of William McKinley in 1896 was a political victory for the promoters of the new imperialist policy (Arboleya 2008: 35–37).

The first practical implementation of the new expansionist policy was US intervention in Cuba in 1898, launching what US historians have called the Spanish–American War, Cubans call the Cuban–Hispanic–American War, and Lenin considered the first imperialist war. The war resulted in Spain ceding to the US the Caribbean islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico and the Pacific islands of the Philippines and Guam (Arboleya 2008: 37, 40).

With the acquisition of these territories, the US was becoming a colonial power like those of Western Europe. However, in justifying the expansionist policy to the people of the US, the government obscured its colonial character and sought to present the policy as fulfilling a civilising mission consistent with the values of democracy, liberty, and justice. The discourse of the political elite was effective in convincing the people that the expansionist policies were defending freedom and were the fulfilment of a ‘new manifest destiny’, in contrast to the decadent European empires (Arboleya 2008: 41–42).

### US imperialism from 1903 to 1932

The development of US imperialist policy took a significant step forward during the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt (1901–09). Although the US had intervened in Cuba in 1898 in response to the challenge to its economic interests and imperialist intentions posed by the Cuban revolutionary war of independence, non-intervention continued to be the norm that guided US foreign policy. But ‘Roosevelt broke with this tradition and promoted interventionism without reserve’ (Arboleya 2008: 73). As the Cuban scholar Roberto Regalado has written:

During Roosevelt’s term in office, Washington sponsored the forcible secession of Panama (1903), enabling it to refuse to recognize the Columbian Congress’s

rejection of the proposal to construct the Panama Canal; intervened militarily in the Dominican Republic (1904), which led to control over that country's customs policy (1905–12); occupied Cuba for the second time (1906–09); sent in the marines in order to obtain political dividends in the wars that broke out between Guatemala and El Salvador (1906) and between Honduras and Nicaragua (1907); and applied interventionist policies that led to the resignation of President Santos Zelaya in Nicaragua (1909). (Regalado 2007: 116–117)

The imperialist policies of Theodore Roosevelt continued under his successor, William Howard Taft (1909–13). Taft adopted different rhetoric, replacing Roosevelt's 'big stick' with 'dollar diplomacy', thus promoting a policy of facilitating US economic and financial penetration through the buying of politicians in the neo-colony (Arboleya 2008: 74–75). But the military interventions and aggressive policy continued, with military interventions in Honduras and Nicaragua and threats designed to hinder the Mexican Revolution (Regalado 2007: 117).

The foreign policy of Woodrow Wilson 'was equally expansionist in relation to the Caribbean and Central America, and he developed a policy as interventionist as his predecessors' (Arboleya 2008: 82). Although he was critical of 'dollar diplomacy' because of its ethical implications, he expressed a similar view when he affirmed that dollars 'ought to be reserved for the ministers of the state, even if the sovereignty of the reluctant nation is mistreated in the process' (quoted in *ibid.*). In addition, military interventions continued in a way consistent with the policies of Roosevelt and Taft. Between 1913 and 1921, under the pretext of 'promoting democracy' and 'stopping German intervention', the US Government interfered in Mexican international affairs, occupied Haiti (1915–34) and the Dominican Republic (1916–24), intervened in Panama (1918), and supported *coups d'état* and dictatorships in Central and South America (Regalado 2007: 117).

Wilson, however, developed a more advanced ideological formulation of imperialism. Roosevelt and Taft had proclaimed imperialist policies to be consistent with the values of democracy and freedom, but in the implementation of the policy, the emphasis

was on the application of military force (the 'big stick') and economic pressure ('dollar diplomacy'). But Wilson sought to establish a new international order on a foundation of US political values, thus facilitating greater global acceptance of US intervention and economic penetration and reducing the need for the application of force and pressure. As Arboleya has written, Wilson believed that US national interests would be served best by 'the establishment of an international order that would universalize North American political values. A mixture of divine mission, democratic crusade, and expansionist will constituted the ingredients of this international project, which in reality was no more than a modernized version of "manifest destiny"' (2008: 82).

However, national and international conditions had not yet arrived at a point that would make possible the implementation of the Wilsonian vision. Following the First World War, Wilson encountered opposition from Britain and France, who objected to those components of Wilson's policy that would involve a reduction of their spheres of influence. The US was not yet able to impose international rules of conduct on the nations of Western Europe. At the same time, Wilson's goals for the post-war era also encountered opposition in the US. US capitalism and political culture had not yet developed sufficiently, and important sectors of the capitalist class were not convinced that the 'new world order' proposed by Wilson would provide sufficient guarantees for the protection of their capital. The US Government therefore did not enter the League of Nations that had been promoted by Wilson (Arboleya 2008: 82–86). The presidential administrations of Warren Harding (1921–23), Calvin Coolidge (1923–29), and Herbert Hoover (1929–33) continued US imperialist policies towards Latin America, supporting military dictatorships in order to constrain popular struggles in opposition to the neo-colonial system and initiating new interventions in Panama, Honduras, and Nicaragua (Regalado 2007: 118).

### Imperialism and the New Deal

During the administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933–45), domestic political factors worked against the continuation of the military interventions in Latin America that had been central to US policy since 1903.

Keynesian economic policies made necessary a more democratic discourse, placing ideological constraints on the capacity of the government to act aggressively in other lands. Moreover, there had emerged a renewal of isolationist tendencies and a rejection of armed interventions, expressed in new laws on neutrality that limited the possible participation of the US in future armed conflicts; armed interventions in Latin America came to be viewed as unconstitutional. At the same time, there had emerged in Latin America during the 1920s an anti-imperialist popular movement, which had been able to develop popular nationalist consciousness in opposition to US interventions, requiring even elite sectors in alliance with the US to adopt a nationalist rhetoric. Such opposition to interventionism both nationally and internationally required the US to adopt a non-interventionist foreign policy (Arboleya 2008: 104).

So the US turned to a 'Good Neighbor' policy of non-intervention, seeking to pursue its imperialist goals through means other than direct military intervention. The strategy was to strengthen the military in the Latin American nation, in order that it could play a more active role in maintaining social control. In some cases, this involved supporting military dictatorships that had been established through previous interventions during the period 1898–1926. In other cases, it involved establishing military dictatorships through diplomatic manoeuvring and economic pressure. In still other cases, the system worked with constitutional and even progressive governments in power.

In addition, it was necessary to give more economic space to what the Cuban scholar and former diplomat Jesús Arboleya (2008: 8) has called the figurehead bourgeoisie, which he defines as a national bourgeoisie that conforms to the interests of international capital. In providing the figurehead bourgeoisie with more possibilities to pursue its particular interests, albeit in a context limited by the neo-colonial system, this class would have a stronger commitment to the world-system and a greater capacity to develop mechanisms of social control.

These new policies represented the pursuit of an imperialist agenda through alternative means, and as such they signified a more advanced and sophisticated form of neo-colonialism, under which US corporations continued to control the labour, the raw

materials, the financial and productive structures, and the markets of the neo-colony. The 'Good Neighbor' policy of the New Deal does not represent the abandonment of imperialist goals, but the adaptation of imperialist policies to new economic, ideological, and political conditions (Arboleya 2008: 105–107; Regalado 2007: 118).

### Imperialism and the Cold War

Following the Second World War, the war industry expanded. The justification for expansion of military expenses in peacetime was provided by the ideological construction of the Cold War, which maintained that the expansion of the US military was necessary in order to contain the expansionism of the Soviet Union. In reality, Soviet foreign policy was not expansionist. It sought to construct a cordon of security around its territory and to peacefully co-exist with the capitalist powers, a policy that created tensions in Soviet relations with the anti-colonial and anti-neo-colonial revolutions in the Third World during the period 1945–89. However, the Cold War ideology served the interests of the arms industries and functioned to justify and legitimate an arms race (Arboleya 2008: 133–134).

Thus militarism came to dominate the US political system. 'In a kind of militarist application of Keynesian theory, defense expenses replaced public spending as the principal driving force of the economy and the scientific development of the country' (Arboleya 2008: 133). Arms production became integrated with other branches of the economy and made possible the expansion of the large corporations, prompting President Eisenhower to warn of a 'military-industrial complex' (Arboleya 2008: 134).

The militarism of US society shaped the cultural and ideological formation of the people. 'Communism was presented as a phantasmagoric force that intended the domination of the world', thus fabricating a climate of fear and insecurity (Arboleya 2008: 134). Anti-communism was an enormously powerful ideological tool, enabling the US to present a distorted image of Third-World anti-colonial and anti-neo-colonial movements as manifestations of the spreading menace of communism, thus justifying imperialist interventions throughout the world. Interventions in defence of neo-colonial

interests were presented as the defence of democracy, and this Orwellian inversion was widely accepted by the people. A liberal-conservative consensus emerged. There was wide agreement on the militarist application of Keynesian economic principles, facilitating the growth of the economy and the capacity for military intervention anywhere in the world (Arboleya 2008: 133).

Utilising the Cold War ideological construction, the US presidents Harry Truman (1945–53) and Dwight Eisenhower (1953–60) provided economic and military support to Latin American governments that utilised repressive tactics against communist and socialist parties as well as progressive organisations. Eisenhower's 'Good Partner' policy included Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) support for a counter-revolutionary force in Guatemala in 1954 in opposition to the government of Jacobo Árbenz, a democratically elected president who had nationalised some of the properties of the United Fruit Co. In addition, US policies led to the fall of governments in Brazil (1954), Argentina (1955), and Paraguay (1956), and they undermined the revolutionary governments in Bolivia of 1952–60. The dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier in Haiti also emerged during this period (Regalado 2007: 122).

### The Alliance for Progress

The foreign policy of the administration of John F. Kennedy (1961–63) gave greater emphasis to the Third World as the arena of the Cold War conflict between the superpowers, developing a perspective that viewed the national liberation movements and newly independent nationalist governments as expressions of communism and Soviet influence and downplaying their nationalist, anti-colonial, and anti-imperialist character. The US strategy included the development of a US capacity for counter-insurgency, involving armed confrontation with the revolutionary movements of the Third World. The Special Forces ('Green Berets') were developed in order to give the armed forces the capacity for a flexible response in any place or circumstance in the world. In addition, the CIA became involved in training military and para-military groups in the neo-colonies of the Third World, developing techniques that included torture, disappearances, assassination, and terrorising the people. Believing

that the US and its allies in the neo-colonies were confronted with a supposed 'international communist conspiracy', and assuming that the insurgent revolutionaries were uncivilised and lacking in ethical norms of conduct, the Kennedy Administration excused any excess on the part of the counter-insurgents, including the most brutal forms of behaviour (Arboleya 2008: 151–155).

In Latin America, alongside the development of counter-insurgency as a primary strategy, a secondary strategy of the Kennedy Administration was economic reform of the neo-colonial system.

The fall of Pérez Jiménez in Venezuela and Fulgencio Batista in Cuba – precisely two of the nations where the US neocolonial model had been most advanced – called into question the capacity of the Latin American oligarchy to continue to guarantee control of the region. Its nearly feudal mechanisms of exploitation tended to reduce the expansion of the market, and the extraordinary reactionary character of its ideology as well as its inclination to the most brutal and generalized repression, were destabilizing factors of the system and a problem for the foreign policy that Kennedy intended to project. (Arboleya 2008: 156)

Kennedy therefore called for social changes, including structural reforms in land tenancy and reforms in the distribution of wealth. His policy involved an abandonment of the traditional landowning oligarchy that up to then had been considered as sustainer and protector of the neo-colonial system. Proclaiming a 'revolution of the middle class', the Kennedy strategy was to support the reformist sector of the national bourgeoisie, which up to that point had confronted the powerful obstacle of the traditional oligarchy. The Alliance for Progress committed \$20 billion over a decade for concrete projects for the development of this reformist sector, which also would have the consequence of establishing new possibilities for US investment (Arboleya 2008: 156–157).

The proposed reforms in Latin America did not represent fundamental structural changes that would involve a transition from a neo-colonial system to an alternative more just and democratic world-system. They were proposed reforms of the neo-colonial system.

The modernization that Kennedy proposed for Latin America was not based on the development of an independent national bourgeoisie as an alternative to the traditional oligarchy. Rather, it was based on producing a 'new class' that ... would form a part of the US transnational corporations and would share their interests. In short, it aspired to consolidate US neocolonialism in the region, through the articulation of a new relation of dependency, which would require a national class organically tied to foreign capital. (Arbolea 2008: 157)

The proposed economic reforms of the neocolonial system did not succeed, and it was not possible for them to succeed. The Kennedy plan encountered political opposition from those sectors of US capital that were historically tied to the traditional oligarchy in Latin America. In addition, the national bourgeoisie did not have sufficient economic and political strength to play the role assigned to it by the plan. There was in this regard a fundamental contradiction: the national bourgeoisie, according to the plan, would transform itself into a class economically dependent on foreign capital, discarding any thought of leading the nation in a project of independent economic development. At the same time, since the plan involved challenging the control of the oligarchy, it would be necessary to mobilise popular support, which could be most effectively attained through the promise of autonomous economic and cultural development. Thus the plan placed the national bourgeoisie in a position of promising to the people what it could not deliver. The national bourgeoisie would become increasingly discredited by nationalist popular sectors, which would search for more revolutionary approaches and more independent approaches to national development (Arbolea 2008: 157).

### US imperialism from 1963 to 1980

US policy towards Latin America under presidents Lyndon Johnson (1963–68), Richard Nixon (1969–74), and Gerald Ford (1974–76) abandoned efforts at economic reform of the neo-colonial system. They returned to interventionism, alliance with the Latin American estate bourgeoisie, and support of military dictatorships, in reaction to the intensity of anti-imperialist popular movements that

pervaded the region during the 1960s and 1970s.

During the Johnson Administration, the US intervened militarily in Panama in 1964 and in the Dominican Republic in 1965. It supported *coups d'état* in Brazil (1964), Bolivia (1964), and Argentina (1966). It provided economic and military assistance to governments that were participating in the US counter-insurgency strategy in Venezuela, Peru, Colombia, El Salvador, and Uruguay (Regalado 2007: 143).

The Latin American dictatorships of the period followed an approach first adopted in Cuba during the 1930s with Batista. They were based on the development of the military as an institution and the strengthening of its capacity to control the population through repression. They were different from 'strong-arm or *caudillista* dictatorships' (Regalado 2007: 143) that had been the norm before the 1960s, which were characterised by personal rather than institutional control. The new type of institutional military dictatorship was more able to carry out repression, and violations of human rights became systematic and widespread (Regalado 2007: 144).

Like the Johnson Administration, the Nixon Administration supported the institutional military dictatorships and, when necessary, intervened to establish them. 'In response to the rise in nationalist and revolutionary currents in Latin America, the policy of the Nixon administration was to destabilize and overthrow governments that it considered a threat to the 'national interest' of the United States, and to install new dictatorships' (Regalado 2007: 147). This occurred in Bolivia in 1971 and in Uruguay in 1973. And on 11 September 1973, the socialist government of Salvador Allende, democratically elected by the people in accordance with widely recognised norms of representative democracy, was overthrown (*ibid.*).

Jimmy Carter, US president from 1977 to 1981, believed that the US ought to respect human rights in the conduct of its foreign policy. His administration took two important steps that symbolised respect for the autonomy of Latin American governments: negotiating control of the Panama Canal by the government of Panama; and the establishment of limited diplomatic relations with Cuba, through the agreement for a Cuban Interest Section in Washington and a US Interest Section in Havana.

But Carter's moral evaluation of US policy was limited in scope. It did not question the fundamental structures of the neo-colonial world-system that promote underdevelopment and poverty in vast regions of the world. Carter wanted to respect human rights, but he did not discern that the violation of human rights was a necessary component of the core-peripheral relation between the US and the Third World. The functionality of repression in the preservation of the neo-colonial world-system placed practical constraints on the implementation of Carter's human rights policy.

Like Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter envisioned a softer and more humane form of imperialism. He accepted as given that the US policy would continue to promote the economic and financial penetration of US corporations and financial institutions, and that the neo-colonial world-system should be preserved. He was seeking moral conduct in the context of immoral social structures.

### The nation turns to the right

The administration of Ronald Reagan (1981–89) disdained international organisations, and accordingly it ignored the Organization of American States (OAS), established in 1948 with the intention of institutionalising the co-operation of Latin American and Caribbean states with the structures of neo-colonial domination (Regalado 2007: 123–127). The Reagan Administration violated an important principle of neo-colonial domination, namely, the satisfaction of the interests of the figure-head bourgeoisie.

The unilateralism of US foreign policy after 1980 is illustrated by the US response to the triumph of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in 1979. The measures adopted by the Sandinista government were not radical: it confined nationalisation to those properties of owners who had fled the country after 1979; it did not join the socialist bloc, but merely diversified its economic and diplomatic relations to include the West, the socialist bloc, and the Third World; and its 1984 constitution established structures of representative democracy, and not structures of popular democracy, as had been developed in Cuba. Nevertheless, the US in the 1980s embarked on a campaign to destabilise the Sandinista Government. In 1981, it ended

economic relations with the government of Nicaragua and began to provide economic and military assistance to a counter-revolutionary guerrilla army, most of which were stationed in Honduras along the Nicaraguan border (Booth and Walker 1993: 140–146).

In El Salvador, the Reagan Administration gave \$6 billion in economic and military assistance to the government. The Salvadoran Government represented the interests of the coffee oligarchy, and it was seeking to maintain itself before the onslaught of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN, or Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front). Established in 1980, the FMLN was formed by five groups that had taken to armed struggle in the aftermath of government repression of popular protest, and it was allied with a federation of progressive and leftist political and social organisations, the Frente Democrático Revolucionario (FDR, or Revolutionary Democratic Front). During the 1980s, the FMLN constituted the de facto government in many rural communities in the eastern region of the country, and it operated clandestinely in the cities (Harnecker 1998: 32–33, 42–43; Prieto Rozos 2009: 36–43; Regalado 2008: 143–144, 156–157).

The Reagan Administration also initiated neoliberalism, with the rejection of Keynesian policies, cutbacks in domestic programmes, and the first steps towards international financial deregulation. More systematic application of neoliberal policies on a global level was adopted by the administration of George H.W. Bush (1989–93), which sought to restructure the inter-American system of domination on a foundation of three pillars. The first of these pillars is support for representative and parliamentary democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, replacing the military dictatorships of national security. This so-called 'transition to democracy' was necessary, given the popular struggles against the military dictatorships and their total lack of legitimacy, and was possible, given the increasing concentration of capital, greater dependency of the Latin American elite, the declining autonomy of Latin American governments as a result of the external debt, and the limited organisational capacity of the popular movements as a result of repression by military dictatorships. The second pillar is the economic one, characterised by the imposition of neoliberal policies, efforts to impose a

Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and the signing of free trade agreements with various nations. The third is the military pillar, in which the US seeks to establish a greater military presence in the region, using the 'war against drugs' and the 'war against terrorism' as pretexts (Regalado 2010).

The administration of Bill Clinton (1993–2001) continued to develop the three pillars of the restructured inter-American system of domination that had been established by the Bush Administration. However, the Clinton Administration encountered opposition. On the domestic front, labour organisations were opposed to the free trade agreements because they were concerned with their implications for the job security of US workers. At the same time, there emerged in Latin America during the period 1994–98 popular mass demonstrations in opposition to the free trade agreements and the neoliberal project. This stage of the Latin American popular struggle was inaugurated with the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico in 1994, launched on the day the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect. After 1998, beginning with the election of Hugo Chávez as president of Venezuela, the popular struggle would pass to a more advanced stage, transforming the political reality of Latin America (Regalado 2010).

The neoliberal project of the 1980s and 1990s was developed on the basis of the economic theory proposed by Milton Friedman and others at the school of economics of the University of Chicago. Its premises are: (1) the state should not distort the natural and spontaneous economic order; (2) governmental policy should be based on the principle of the unlimited supremacy of the market; (3) states should not interfere with the free play of supply and demand; and (4) governmental interference in the economy ought to be eliminated. Specific neoliberal policies include the elimination of government protection of national currency and the trading of currency at a free market rate; privatisation of government-owned enterprises; reduction of protection for national industry, reducing or eliminating tariffs and taxes on imported goods; facilitation of the free flow of capital into and out of the country; and the elimination of union restrictions on the free play of supply and demand (Prieto Rozos 2009: 108–111).

Oswaldo Martínez Martínez, director of the Center for the Study of the World Economy

in Cuba, sees neoliberalism as a strategy of imperialist domination. He maintains that 'free trade' is a rhetorical phrase that is an integral part of a coherent package expressing the interests of the transnational corporations and the governments that represent them. He argues that neoliberalism is full of contradictions, inconsistencies, and myths, and that as a result it is in crisis (1999, 2005, 2006).

### The 'neocons' take control

During the 1990s, a number of conservative think tanks financed by international corporations reformulated the conservatism of Reaganism, seeking to adapt to changes occurring at the end of the century, including the end of the Cold War. The neoconservatives, or 'neocons', sought to reverse the decline of US hegemony. They envisioned the establishment through any means necessary, including military force, of the American concept of democracy and American civilisation as the universal world standard. Accordingly, they favoured expansion of military expenditures and the maintenance of US military dominance. In reaction to what they saw as the decadence of Western civilisation, they sought to restore discipline, order, and hierarchy. They were opposed to egalitarianism, feminism, environmentalism, sexual tolerance, and the absence of prayer and the teaching of the theory of evolution in schools. They gave priority to security over civil liberties. They viewed the neoconservative movement as a permanent counter-revolution that would consolidate neoconservative values in the long term. They sought to convert popular insecurity resulting from the structural crisis of the world-system and from the US hegemonic decline into a social fear that would generate support for neoconservative policies. They envisioned strategies of creating enemies and threats in order to establish pretexts for extreme policies. A number of prominent neoconservatives supported the candidacy of George W. Bush, some of them becoming prominent members of his cabinet when he assumed the presidency (Castro 2010: 11–12; Schmitt 2003).

The attacks of 11 September 2001 provoked an opportunity for the neoconservatives to pursue their vision more aggressively. The George W. Bush Administration launched wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and expanded the US's global military presence. US naval ships engaged in manoeuvres near Iran and

North Korea, two nations not under US neo-colonial control, with the pretext of the nuclear programmes of these nations. The US's military presence in South America increased, under the pretext of the control of illegal drug trafficking.

The Bush Administration's policy towards Latin America sought to take advantage of the events of 11 September 2001 to overcome the stagnation that had beset the implementation of the new system of inter-American domination. However, from 2003 to 2009, there was increasing Latin American resistance to the implementation of the restructured system of domination that first had been formulated by George H. W. Bush and had been continued by Clinton. Major developments included the defeat suffered by the FTAA at the Ministerial Meeting on Finances and the Economy of the Americas in 2003; the inability of the US to successfully promote its favourite candidates for the position of secretary general of the OAS in 2005; the failure of the US effort to reform the Inter-American Democratic Charter, in order that it could be used against the government of Hugo Chávez, in 2005; the defeat suffered by Bush in the effort to revive the FTAA in the Summit of the America in Mar del Plata in 2005; the entrance of Cuba into the Río Group in 2008; and the repeal of the 1961 decision to expel Cuba from the OAS in 2009 (Regalado 2010).

### Obama: more continuity than change

Barack Obama won the presidential elections of 2008 with a promise of 'change'. There was indeed a change from the administration of George W. Bush, which had followed a policy of aggressive pursuit of US interests through unilateral military action. In the view of the Obama Administration, this strategy had backfired, because it alienated US allies and thus weakened US influence. So the Obama Administration adopted a new strategy of 'smart power'. However, the new approach was a change more of tone than of policy. Claudia Cinatti writes that the Obama strategy

is nothing more than the old recipe of combining the use of military and economic power with diplomacy and negotiation in order to attain the support of allies, semi-allies, and partners of convenience in the attaining of the national interests of the US. Concretely, it implies an ordered

withdrawal of the US from 'extravagant' objectives – like installing 'democracy' in failed states or dedicating itself to 'nation building' in Iraq or Afghanistan – in order to concentrate on intervening where imperialist interests are truly at stake. (2010: 74–75)

Accordingly, when Obama took office, the aggressive and arrogant tone of Bush was abandoned, and Obama adopted a different rhetoric. But the imperialist policies of the Bush Administration in essence continued, as can be seen in Latin America. As of June 2015, the blockade against Cuba has continued; in December 2014, the US announced its intention to end this universally criticised policy, indicating that it will pursue through other strategies its goal of changing Cuba in accordance with its interests. The US ultimately legitimated the 2009 *coup d'état* in Honduras, and there possibly was US involvement in the failed *coup d'état* in Ecuador in 2010. The US signed an agreement in 2009 with the government of Colombia for the installation of seven new military bases, and subsequent agreements for military bases were made with Panama and Costa Rica. Moreover, the US continues to interfere in the political affairs of Venezuela and Bolivia, seeking to strengthen the opposition. In general, the US under Obama continues to oppose the process of reform and revolution that is under way in Latin America (Ceceña 2010; Cinatti 2010: 76; Regalado 2010).

### Conclusion

The period from 1898 to 1932 saw the consolidation of imperialism as a basic principle of US policy. Imperialism sought the attainment of new markets for surplus US production through military interventions and 'dollar diplomacy'. In establishing itself, imperialism had to overcome a strong tendency towards isolationism in US political culture. In the period from 1933 to 1945, imperialism adopted a softer strategy, seeking to appear as a 'Good Neighbor'. The quest for new markets, for control of existing markets, and for access to cheap raw materials continued, but the forms of intervention in Latin America were more indirect. In the period 1945–79, the US emerged as the hegemonic core power of the neo-colonial world-system, and US imperialist interventions became more global



in scope. The Cold War provided a justification for more active intervention than was characteristic of the 'Good Neighbor' era. But important components of the previous period were preserved, such as depending primarily on military repression by the neo-colonial state, with direct US military intervention applied only when necessary. Conservatives promoted an aggressive Cold War approach, but liberals shared the basic premises of the Cold War and imperialist policy, forming a liberal-conservative consensus. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress was a short-lived and unsuccessful reformist approach, but even during the Kennedy Administration the Cold War assumptions that justified indirect and sometimes barbaric interventions in the Third World prevailed.

In the context of the structural crisis of the world-system and the US hegemonic decline, the nation has turned to the right since 1980. The neoliberal project was imposed, taking advantage of external debt, through free trade agreements and international finance agencies. Military intervention in pursuit of US interests has been constant. These policies have been justified on the grounds that they defend democracy, understood in the limited liberal sense of political rights and economic liberty. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc, US national political leaders struggled to find an enemy that could be portrayed as a threat to democratic values. But the attacks of 11 September 2001 made possible the establishment of the 'war on terrorism' as the prevailing ideological frame for the justification of imperialist interventions. Imperialist policies have continued under Obama, in spite of a vague campaign promise of 'change'.

Thus we can see that imperialism has been a policy actively pursued with continuity by US governments from 1898 to the present. Although generally presented with a democratic face, imperialist policies, in essence, have involved the pursuit of markets, raw materials, and sources of profits, without regard for the consequences for the sovereign rights of formally independent nations or for the social and economic rights of their citizens.

Imperialist policies have practical objectives, and they have provided concrete material benefits to the people of the US. They have been a significant factor in providing the US with additional markets, new sources

of investment and profit, and access to cheap raw materials, and they therefore were central to the ascent of the US from 1898 to 1968.

However, the imperialist policies of the global powers are no longer practical. When the world-system reached the geographical limits of the earth around the middle of the 20th century, a new situation was created. In the present historic moment, the aggressive quest for control of the raw materials, labour, and markets of the planet by the global powers creates political instability in the world-system, generating endless conflicts and wars, and it threatens the ecological balance of the earth. The continued pursuit of imperialist objectives by the global powers increases the probability of greater political instability on a global scale, establishing the possibility of the disintegration of the world-system and a global decline into chaos, in which the extinction of the human species as a consequence of environmental factors could occur.

Furthermore, imperialism is no longer in the interests of the people of the US. The expansion of military expenditures, necessary for the implementation of imperialist policies, diverts limited resources away from investments in new and sustainable forms of economic production that would provide concrete benefits to the people. In addition, financing military expenditures through government debt financed with foreign sources of capital undermines the sovereignty of the nation.

The failure of the Alliance for Progress suggests the impossibility of reforming the neo-colonial system in a form that promotes US interests with the intention of establishing political stability. As long as the core-peripheral structures that promote US economic and financial penetration remain, the neo-colonised nation will not be able to develop, and the needs of the people will not be met. Thus there will remain the conditions for popular mobilisation in opposition to the system, in other words, for political instability. The establishment of political stability requires the economic and cultural development of neo-colonised nations, which is impossible under the structures of the core-peripheral relation. Global political stability requires autonomous national projects for economic and cultural development, which emerge when popular movements in neo-colonies take control of the government and seek to govern in a form that represents the interest of the various popular sectors. Cuba,

Chile, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador have seen the realisation of this possibility. It is in the interests of the people of the US to co-operate with such autonomous national projects, seeking to participate in the development of a more just, democratic, and sustainable world-system. This is the way to overcome the structural crisis of the world-system and to respond to the challenges that humanity today confronts.

Charles McKelvey

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## United States Imperialism, 19th Century

During the 19th century the US was transformed from a nation mostly hugging the Atlantic coast to an empire stretching across a continent with possessions in the Caribbean and Pacific. Despite the scale of US expansion, at no point was it an inevitable Manifest Destiny. Almost every imperial venture was

met with resistance, both from those on the periphery being annexed and from people in the metropole who were opposed to a particular takeover. Some scholars see strong continuity throughout the century, arguing that the motivations and strategies used to suppress Filipino insurgents were in accord with those used to conquer Mexican territory and subdue Indian tribes. Other scholars emphasise the distinctiveness of different phases of American imperialism, arguing that specific political and economic contingencies determined whether the US was able to assert control over a territory such as Texas in 1846 or Hawaii in 1898. This essay will deal with the continuities and ruptures at play in American imperial expansion, with the 19th century broken up into three periods: 1800–36, 1836–65, and 1865–98.

### Jefferson's 'empire of liberty' (1800–36)

In 1800 the US was one empire among many in North America. To the north, the British controlled Canada. In the west, the US faced two imperial competitors, as Spain ruled Mexico (including much of what would become part of the US in the 1846–48 Mexican War), and France had managed to regain Louisiana Territory. To the south, European powers had carved up the Caribbean, and throughout the century American leaders anxiously watched for an opportunity to grab some of these island possessions for themselves. France was eliminated as a major competitor in North America when it sold its territory to the US in the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. For a little over \$11 million, the American empire gained over 800,000 square miles. President Thomas Jefferson recognised this as a major windfall for what he sometimes called an 'empire of liberty', but the purchase also highlighted anxieties over imperial consolidation that would continue throughout the century (Onuf 2000: 3–9). Although most Americans lived in the eastern states, the population of the western territories grew quickly; how to exert influence over such a vast territory was a constant concern among national leaders. The US had been created out of a colonial periphery resentful of an imperial metropole, and many of the former revolutionaries worried that westerners would develop the same

of rebellious attitude towards the east (Onuf 2005: 43–45).

### The territorial system

American empire building was a mix of public and private initiative, with governmental authority promoting the spread of settlers. Key to this project was how new territories were politically organised. In the territorial system, the federal government shaped local institutions and had ultimate authority over the populace. Local power cliques of landowners, merchants, and lawyers developed within the territories, but those cliques derived power from their connections with federal officials. The western territories relied on federal law to substantiate their property claims, and on federal troops to protect them from other empires or Native Americans. In the control that it exerted by appointing governors and providing protection, the federal government was following a tradition inherited from the relationship of Britain to its colonies.

The difference between the two relationships was that the territorial system ended in statehood. When the population of an organised territory reached 60,000, the territorial legislature could apply for statehood. The governments and constitutions of these new states tended to be modelled on those of states that had already been admitted, in part because congressional approval was required before a territory could be granted statehood. Once admitted into the Union as a state, a former territory would legally have the same privileges and sovereignty as any other state. In reality, the western states often resented the amount of political and economic strength that the eastern states held over them, but this resentment was rarely large enough to break ties built in the territorial stage (Eblen 1968: 18–23).

This imperial expansion was especially striking given the tiny size of American military forces for most of the century. Fear of standing armies had deep resonance within American culture, with most Americans afraid that a large army would subvert republican institutions. During a conflict such as the American Civil War the military would expand, but it would swiftly contract once the specific war was over. Often imperial missions, such as expeditions against native tribes, were not undertaken by the regular army, but by citizen militias within

a given state or territory. Full political citizenship was tied to the potential to serve in the militia, and the exclusion of particular groups, such as women and blacks, from militia service was often used as an argument to exclude them from the ballot box as well.

### **Imperial fits and starts: the War of 1812, Spanish Florida, and the Monroe Doctrine**

Many Americans looked to the north as an obvious place to expand the American empire. Resentment towards Great Britain remained strong after the War for Independence, and many hoped to push England off the continent for good. Part of the Continental Army had invaded Canada during the War for Independence, and after war was declared on England in 1812, Americans tried invading again, with no more success than their armies had had in 1775; Canadians had little desire to join the US. Even French Canadians, who often resented the imperial authorities of London, saw the US as a cultural empire deeply hostile to Catholicism (Taylor 2010: 15–30). America's first 19th-century attempt at conquering the territory of another empire failed, and the Treaty of Ghent in 1815 restored the antebellum borders between the two empires. Despite this, many Americans throughout the 19th century, particularly northerners, hoped that annexation of Canada would be only a matter of time. Surrounding Canada was one intention of Secretary of State William Seward's 1867 treaty to purchase Alaska from Russia; Seward and others believed that the economic ties between the US and Canada made annexation inevitable.

The War of 1812 failed to remove an imperial competitor from the continent, but American leaders continued to try to find opportunities to pick off new territory, often with the aim of securing their borders. In 1817–18, General Andrew Jackson seized much of Florida from Spain during his campaign against the Seminole Indians. Jackson and others argued that the decaying Spanish Empire had failed to police Florida, which had become a haven for criminals, hostile Indian tribes, and runaway slaves. Members of the federal government debated how to respond to Jackson's extra-legal venture. Pressured by the US, Spain sold the territory through the Adams–Onís Treaty negotiated in 1819 (Eblen 1968: 5).

The US not only tried to expand at the expense of other empires, but also acted to dismantle those empires in the hemisphere.

With the Monroe Doctrine, set out in 1823, the US proclaimed that it would prevent any European attempt to reassert control over the former Spanish and Portuguese territory that had won independence. Despite such an ambitious warning to European powers, the US lacked the economic and military might to enforce such a policy of non-interference. There were also limits to what types of revolution in the Western Hemisphere the US would embrace. When the slaves of Haiti achieved independence from France in the first decade of the century, the US failed to recognise the nation until the American Civil War. Although it claimed to be an empire of liberty, much of the empire had reason to fear the encouraging of a slave revolt (White 2010).

### **Native American resistance and adaptation in the early republic**

Although the 1815 Treaty of Ghent restored a territorial balance between two North American empires ruled by whites, it undercut the power of Indian tribes in the north-west and south-west to negotiate their way through imperial squabbles. Since long before American independence, Indian groups such as the Iroquois Confederacy had retained their position through playing European empires off each other. For example, neither France nor Britain was able to gain hegemony in the Great Lakes region during the 17th century, and therefore both were forced to co-operate with a variety of Indian tribes (White 1991: 50). This worked as long as one imperial power was unable to assert a monopoly of power over an area without being checked by another.

In the north-west this balance was already breaking down in the years preceding American independence, as Britain had pushed France out of Canada in 1763 and more and more settlers penetrated the west. Most Indian tribes who involved themselves in the struggle between England and her colonists fought for the British, realising that an American empire would promote settlement expansion at the cost of Indian land. After the War for Independence, many north-west Indian tribes continued to resist American expansion, winning victories against the regular US army in Harmor's Campaign in 1790 and St Clair's Defeat in 1791. Still, by the 1800s the north-west tribes were outgunned and vastly outnumbered by American settlers. Some Indian leaders such as Tecumseh

of the Shawnee hoped to re-establish the old balance-of-power system, this time with the US and Britain taking the roles that France and Britain had previously filled. In the War of 1812, most of the north-west tribes again fought for Great Britain, and again they found themselves let down by how little their imperial allies were willing to support them. Tecumseh died fighting American troops at the Battle of the Thames in 1813, and soon after this many of the Indians in his alliance surrendered. After the war, the capacity of the north-west Indians to slow down American expansion was greatly reduced (Taylor 2010: 203–235).

Native reaction to American expansion was not monolithic, and military resistance was only one method by which Indian tribes negotiated their position within the American empire. Americans' positions on the status of Indian tribes within the empire were equally diverse. Western politicians usually took the harshest line, advocating that Indian tribes were an alien influence that should be pushed as far west as possible and that the land that Indians occupied rightfully belonged to settlers. Others argued that Indians did not need to be destroyed, but should be 'civilised' to the point at which they took on the ways of American farmers. President Jefferson himself embodied this ambivalence towards Indians, in that he lauded the possibility of their mixing and becoming blended into white society, while at the same time holding that Indians who resisted such assimilation would have to be destroyed (Wallace 1999).

Some tribes tried to strike a balance between accommodation and tribal integrity, including the so-called Five Civilized Tribes who resided in the south-west: the Cherokee, the Chickasaw, Choctaw, the Seminoles, and the Creek. The Cherokee, who lived primarily in what is now north-west Georgia, adopted many of the cultural badges of southern white society, including a written language, Christianity, republican government, settled agriculture, and slave-owning.

This accommodation did not stop Georgian settlers from demanding their land. One by one the civilised tribes were forced to move west into Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). By the 1830s squatters found support from both the Georgia legislature and the administration of President Andrew Jackson. For years Cherokee leaders such as Chief John Ross tried to maintain their awkward position within the empire not through military

resistance, but through court appeals. In the 1832 Worcester v. Georgia decision, the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Marshall ruled that the sovereignty of the Cherokee deserved federal protection. President Jackson ignored the ruling and supported the Treaty of New Echota, which agreed to the selling of Cherokee land, even though the document was signed by only a small number of tribal members unelected to political office. In the resulting Cherokee diaspora, also known as the 'Trail of Tears', several thousand Cherokee died on their way to Indian Territory (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 268).

Historians favouring Jackson have held that although the Trail of Tears was tragic, there was little a small federal government could have done in the wake of waves of private US citizens moving into Cherokee lands (Remini 2001: 279–281). However, the mix of private initiative and public support was indicative of US imperialism during the 19th century. Like any imperial venture or consolidation of the time, American society was divided on whether or not to support it. Other than in the Supreme Court, the Cherokee found allies among many northerners, including clergymen who hated the idea that a Christian tribe could be targeted for removal. Even some westerners protested against the seizure of Cherokee land, including Congressman David Crockett, who broke with his former ally Andrew Jackson over the issue. The removal treaty itself was passed in the Senate in May 1836 by only a single vote. Just as there was a continual impulse of imperial venture throughout the century, so was there a continual anti-imperialist tradition.

### Slavery's imperial reach (1836–65)

For much of the 19th century, sectional divisions between North and South shaped imperial expansion. At the start of the century, most Americans believed that slavery was a dying institution. The cotton boom changed that. New technological developments like the cotton gin allowed new types of cotton to be grown far away from the coastline. At the same time, demand in Northern and European textile industries increased the profit in producing cotton. Slavery went from being viewed by Southerners as a necessary but dying evil to being seen as a system responsible for the US's most valuable commodity. Although most Northerners and Southerners in the early

part of the century agreed that slavery was to be handled on a state level, the federal territorial system meant that slavery's fate was at stake each time Congress supervised the construction of a new area's institutions. With the change of each new territory into a state, the sectional balance between free and slave changed. The Missouri Crisis in 1820 brought sectional politics to the fore, and the compromise reached provided a line to divide the empire between free and slave territory. From then on, any new imperial acquisition would bring with it the potential of undermining the sectional compromise.

### **Settler imperialism: Texas and the US–Mexican War**

Many Southern settlers brought their slaves with them when they moved into the Mexican territory of Texas. At first the Mexican authorities encouraged Americans to settlers the sparsely populated north, but they soon realised that the numerous white immigrants were a threat to their control of the region. In 1836 Texas declared independence, with most of the revolutionaries hoping for annexation by the US. Texas won its war, although Mexico refused to recognise the new government. For a decade Texas was an independent country, and during this time annexation was frequently debated in Congress.

In 1844, the Democrat James Polk ran for president on a platform urging the need to both annex Texas and put the majority of the Oregon territory (also claimed by the British) under the American flag. Soon after his election, Texas was officially annexed by the US. US troops under General Zachary Taylor were sent to secure the new border, which Polk had decided was at the Rio Grande. The resulting US–Mexican War (1846–48) ended in US victory as federal armies occupied north and central Mexico, including Mexico City. Although the US won nearly all the conventional battles against the Mexican army, the invading armies faced resistance from Mexican guerrillas and Indian tribes as the war continued.

Although the war had started as a means to annex Texas, the territorial ambitions of President Polk increased further as the US troops moved further into Mexico. In cabinet meetings there was even talk of annexing all of Mexico. Unfortunately for Polk, the emissary whom he had sent to Mexico City to dictate a peace, Nicolas Trist, became more and

more disgusted with the war and more sympathetic towards the Mexican people (Greenberg 2012). From the cables that Trist sent back to Washington, Polk realised that Trist was no longer his man. He recalled him, but Trist refused to leave Mexico before he had finished negotiating the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty specified that for \$15 million, the US would gain Texas, California, and most of the territory that would eventually become Colorado, Arizona, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, and Nevada, but would not annex most of the Mexican territory that the US army now occupied. Polk thought of rejecting the treaty, but growing opposition to the war forced him to recognise that there was little political profit in continuing the war with Mexico.

Even before the war had concluded, Americans were deeply divided about what to do with the newly conquered territory. In August of 1846, Congressman David Wilmot, a member of Polk's party and not in principle opposed to the war, added a proviso to a war bill declaring that slavery would not be permitted to spread to territories conquered from Mexico. Controversy exploded over the bill: Southerners attacked it as undermining the property rights vital to an empire of liberty, while Northerners jumped on Southern opposition to the proviso as evidence that the war had been started only as a way to further the power of slaveholders.

### **Filibusters in the Caribbean and Central America**

After the Mexican War, Manifest Destiny took on a sectional character. Slaveholders worried that they were becoming demographically outnumbered by the population of the free states. The only way to maintain influence over the federal government was to take new territory and reintroduce slavery to those places. Throughout the 1850s groups of individuals known as filibusters raised private military expeditions in attempts to conquer new areas in Latin America, including northern Mexico. Even on the eve of the Civil War, the Texan governor, Sam Houston, seriously considered leading an army into northern Mexico in order to project US power (May 1973).

Filibusters usually hoped that the American flag would follow their new private conquests. Texas served as a model, and Central America and the Caribbean were often the targets of these pro-slavery ventures. In 1856, the American adventurer William Walker invaded

and became dictator of Nicaragua for a short time, before an alliance of neighbouring powers along with Nicaraguan opposition overthrew him. Not to be dissuaded, the would-be king returned to the US to raise money and armies. Walker tried on two other occasions to retake Nicaragua, eventually being captured and shot by his supposed subjects. Throughout the South, slaveholders and politicians praised filibusters like Walker.

Cuba was another target for possible expansion of US slavery. By the 1850s, it was one of the few places in the Western hemisphere (along with the US and Brazil) where slavery was still permitted. Many Southerners hoped to annex the island before the Spanish Empire was pressured by the British to abolish slavery. The 1854 Ostend Manifesto, written by US diplomats including the future president James Buchanan, argued that the US should make every effort to buy Cuba from Spain. The diplomats went further. If Spain was unwilling to sell Cuba to the US, then the US should not exclude military takeover of the island (May 2002: 54). The failure of these filibuster movements in the 1850s is a testament less to delusional fantasy than to the determined resistance from the peoples in places such as Nicaragua, combined with a growing coalition of anti-slavery political forces in the North. In the past, private venture had been combined with governmental support for annexation. As the 1850s progressed, North and South could no longer agree on what type of empire the government should promote; the resulting Civil War of 1861–65 can be seen as an imperial crisis.

### **Consolidation of the west and Pacific expansion (1865–98)**

After the Civil War the relative positions of the main political parties towards imperial expansion switched. Southern Democrats, the same faction that had been ardently expansionist before the Civil War, tended to be suspicious of proposed new conquests in the Gilded Age. Some of this may have come from partisan rivalry, since Republicans held the presidency for most of the time in the decades following the Civil War. The Republican Party included most supporters of imperial expansion, such as Theodore Roosevelt. Many within the party, however, were highly suspicious of empire. Former anti-slavery advocates such as Carl Schurz felt that a republic that had shed

hundreds of thousands of lives in the name of demolishing slavery had no business to subjugate new peoples (Beisner 1968: 18–34).

### **Imperial consolidation and eyeing the Caribbean and Pacific**

Latin America continued to be an area of interest for American policymakers after the Civil War. Americans continually worried that another empire would take over Mexico if they exerted control over their neighbours. During the Civil War these fears were realised when France set up a puppet regime under Emperor Maximilian. After the Union won the war, an army was sent to the Mexican border in order to both arm rebels fighting against Maximilian and threaten US intervention if France did not withdraw its troops, which it did. As usual, the US's interference in Latin American politics was motivated partially by a wish to prevent other empires from becoming further involved in the New World (Grandin 2007). In 1869, President Ulysses Grant submitted a treaty to the Senate for the annexation of the Dominican Republic, but this time annexation failed to find sufficient congressional support. The failure of the treaty showed that the anti-slavery forces of the antebellum era were divided about whether the US should expand now that the federal government was no longer in the hands of slaveholders.

Advocates of annexation also looked to Asia as a possible direction for the growth of the empire. American involvement in the Pacific predated military annexation: by the early 1800s, American traders and whalers roamed the Pacific, establishing economic ties with the places where they landed, and missionaries from New England saw Pacific islands as places to spread their culture. In 1854, Commodore Perry had used his naval force to pressure the insular Japanese government to open up markets to Westerners. Places such as the kingdom of Hawaii were accustomed to an active US presence (Cumings 2009: 88).

Americans had looked to Hawaii as a possible conquest since the 1850s, but sectional divisions and British interference had prevented the US from annexing the island chain. In 1893, a group of American citizens, many of them sugar planters, organised a coup against the Hawaiian monarchy. Within a month of the 1893 revolution (or coup), President Harrison submitted a treaty of annexation to the Senate. Harrison

put forward the treaty within the last few days of his administration, and for several months his successor, the Democrat Grover Cleveland, was unsure whether he would support it. Upon receiving reports about the heavy US involvement in the 1893 coup from fact-finders sent to the islands, Cleveland withdrew the treaty. His successor, William McKinley, pushed for the annexation of Hawaii, although it took him until the summer of 1898 to persuade enough senators and congressmen to agree to a resolution making the islands a US territory (Osborne 1981).

The US declared war on the Spain in the same year. The immediate cause was the supposed Spanish sinking of the USS *Maine*, which had exploded while in Havana harbour. Despite flimsy evidence that the cause of the explosion was Spanish action, newspapers throughout America demanded that President McKinley avenge the lost American lives. Other reasons had also attracted US attention to the island. For decades groups of Cubans had fought for independence from Spain; many Americans felt sympathy for these rebels. The US was also heavily invested in Cuban infrastructure and agriculture. Some of the investors worried that continued revolutionary bloodshed would put their business at risk, and saw US intervention as the fastest way to stabilise the region. Once war was declared, the US quickly won after seizing Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. Many pro-war Americans downplayed the aid that their armies had received from Filipino and Cuban rebels. Within a short time, the US army found itself in a guerrilla war with Filipino rebels that would continue into the 20th century.

### Debating the impetus of 1890s expansion

Expansion was a much-debated issue within 1890s American society, and there was no clear indication of who would back Hawaiian annexation or intervention within Cuba and who would not. Anti-imperialists came from a variety of backgrounds. Labour leaders such as Samuel Gompers thought that cheap colonial labour would demean the value of the American working man and undermine the nascent union movement (Appel 1954). On the other side of the economic spectrum, the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie joined the Anti-Imperialist League and advocated Filipino independence. Racism was one reason for anti-imperialism, as many feared the effects of mingling with the peoples of

Asia and the Caribbean. While nativism was always present in American society, in the Gilded Age federal legislation targeted people coming to America from the Pacific Rim, starting with the Page Act of 1875 and culminating with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Lee 2003: 30). If such laws were meant to protect American society from alien influences, anti-imperialists asked, what would be the possible benefit in annexing a territory like Hawaii, with tens of thousands of Asian labourers? As in the arguments against expanding the slave empire in the 1850s, anti-expansionist ideologies in the 1890s blended racism and humanitarianism.

Historians remain divided on why it was that in the 1890s, despite the musings of leaders and newspaper editors for decades, the US expanded into the Pacific and Caribbean. One strand of scholarship, exemplified in the work of William Appleman Williams, Walter LaFeber, and Thomas L. McCormick, points to domestic economic anxiety as a cause. The second half of the 19th century was full of economic booms and busts, and many people at the time believed that busts happened whenever production of agricultural goods or manufactured goods outstripped domestic demand (LaFeber 1963: 78). Capitalists hoped to solve the imbalance of production of demand through expansion into foreign markets. The difficulty was finding a large untapped market. By the 1890s, American production already heavily penetrated Latin American markets, and any further expansion into Europe would come with fierce competition. Americans looked increasingly to Asia, and particular China, as a place for crops and manufactures to go. In order to exercise American influence into Asia, colonies would be useful as both trading ports and coaling stations for American ships. Key to reaching these Asian markets would be a canal across the isthmus of Central America (built with American capital), which would connect east coast ports to new areas of the globe. Controlling the canal would require securing the Caribbean, which meant taking Cuba and Puerto Rico. The goal would not be to annex permanently places like the Philippines permanently, but to establish an informal empire of economic and military control, exercised through friendly pro-US governments (McCormick 1967). The scholars who articulated this interpretation were part of the New Left and saw precedents for the Cold



War politics of the US in the choices made by Americans in the 1890s.

While the New Left's diplomatic history has had a large degree of influence, criticism of an economic explanation for 1890s imperialism has come from several directions. Some scholars, including Robert Zevin, have emphasised geo-strategic reasons for American expansion. Americans of the time such as Theodore Roosevelt or Henry Cabot Lodge saw the US as a young power capable of exerting just as much influence on the world stage as European empires. Such men were influenced by the work of Admiral Alfred Mahan, who argued that throughout history naval power had been what conferred power on the world stage; to compete against other empires, Mahan and his acolytes stated, the US should expand its navy and find outposts like Hawaii and the Philippines to serve as naval bases. Historians focusing on strategic reasons for imperial expansion argue that while Mahan and others occasionally made economic arguments, these were to shield their real motive of building up a strong military (this debate is covered well in Fry 1996).

Other historians such as Kristin Hoganson argue that cultural factors for imperialism must not be discounted in the face of economic or political ones. Hoganson (1998) points to rhetoric of the 1890s that lamented the closing of the western frontier and how this meant that American men no longer had a way to challenge their manliness. This crisis over masculinity translated into jingoistic language. Politicians who were against imperial expansion were open to accusations of effeminacy, which were deadly in a time where manhood was considered essential to having a political voice. Even the president was open to such a criticism; during the Cuban crisis McKinley's perceived hesitance to intervene in Cuba was attacked as indicative that the Civil War veteran had as much manly courage as an old woman. Anti-imperialists also made use of gendered language, arguing that wars in places such as the Philippines would sap the virtue of American males.

While scholarly debates over the particular contingencies of American imperialism continue, our understandings of what motivated imperialists and anti-expansionist have become more complex, and undermine any idea of necessity or Manifest Destiny. Each step of 19th-century imperialism was a

contest, eschewing any simple explanation of American empire.

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## United States, Hawaiian Annexation

The US annexed the Hawaiian Islands by congressional resolution in the summer of 1898, the same summer in which it gained control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines by defeating Spain. Although debates about the merits of Hawaii had gained momentum in the 1890s, US involvement with the islands had begun over a century before. Throughout the 19th century, the Kingdom of Hawaii became tied politically, culturally, and economically to the US. This by no means meant that annexation was a smooth or inevitable process. Native Hawaiians negotiated and resisted each step, and studying the relationship between the US and the islands helps to show the contingency and complexity of the path towards annexation.

### Contact and initial ties

Prior to contact with Europe, the Hawaiian Islands were divided among a series of competing kingdoms. Land within a given kingdom was in possession of the monarchy, with commoners earning the right to use it in exchange for labour and agricultural products. Historians disagree about the size of the pre-contact population, but one moderate estimate is that at least 300,000 Hawaiians lived on the islands. An English ship under the command of Captain James Cook discovered the islands in 1778, and soon they became a stopping point for Western ships. Diseases such as measles also travelled with the Westerners, and within a century of contact the native population of Hawaii had dropped below 40,000 (Basson 2005: 582).

The Kingdom of Hawaii was born out of this contact with European empires. In the decades following Captain Cook's voyage, a chieftain named Kamehameha unified the islands through a series of bloody campaigns and negotiations. Western technology such as muskets and cannon, along with advice from European consultants, was instrumental to his victories. Kamehameha I sought good relations with the various European powers whose ships came to Hawaii, especially Great Britain. On the basis of a treaty draft negotiated with a British naval officer in 1794, Kamehameha I actually thought that his monarchy was a protectorate of the British Empire, although the British Government denied that this was the case (Coffman 2009: 29). The US was one of the many empires that Kamehameha I encouraged to trade on the islands. Americans started visiting the islands soon after achieving independence from Great Britain in 1783, and Hawaii soon became a vital way station for American ships, particularly whalers.

Despite his willingness to adopt Western technology and ideas in order to unify the islands, Kamehameha I refused to convert to Christianity, arguing that he had no wish to overturn a set of cultural norms that had propped up his regime. Missionaries from the US arrived in 1820 and focused their efforts on reaching out to the royal family. They published the Bible in native Hawaiian and opened schools in order to better spread their message (Okiihiro 2008: 187). These missionaries saw themselves as on a civilising mission, and many supported US

annexation. Some of their children would take up important posts within the Hawaiian government, for instance as emissaries to other nations. Other descendants of missionaries acquired plantations on the islands, becoming the richest citizens in Hawaii and the leaders of the attempts to force US annexation.

Both missionaries and sailors helped tie Hawaii to the US, but they often found themselves at cross purposes about what Hawaii should become. Several times crews and officers rebelled against the missionaries' projects such as shutting down possible sources of prostitutes. Each faction had a different vision of what the imperial relationship with the US should look like.

Throughout the 19th century, the US jockeyed with the British Empire for influence over the islands. Despite the deepening economic ties between Hawaii and the US, it took until 1842 for the US Government to try to assert political authority. Until then it had failed to officially recognise the Kingdom of Hawaii, and it was the kingdom's signing of commercial treaties in that year that made the federal government realise that there was a risk of being marginalised by other imperial powers. President Tyler issued a statement proclaiming that the US had a special relationship with Hawaii and would protest against any other power annexing the islands (Baker 1964: 300).

### **Adaptation within a global economy**

By the 1840s, many of the elite of Hawaii suspected that annexation by the US was imminent. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, the monarchy tried to handle the situation so that Hawaiian elites would not be dispossessed in the event of annexation. During the 1850s, Kamehameha III let it be known to the US Government that he would be open to annexation as long as certain conditions were met, one of which was that the royal family would be taken care of financially. Another condition was that Hawaii would skip the stage of being a territory, which would mean handing most powers to the federal government, and would be admitted directly as a state. Statehood would help secure the position of local elites. Although the treaty negotiations eventually collapsed on both sides, the demand of immediate statehood ensured that

the treaty would have had little chance in a US Senate sceptical of admitting a population of non-whites as citizens (Tate 1962: 2).

Another attempt to mediate the dangers of annexation came in the form of reshaping the property regime that had governed Hawaiian life for centuries. The 'Great Mahele' between 1845 and 1855 involved the transformation of the publicly held lands of the islands into individually owned plots; previously property rights had been non-transferable. The historian Stuart Banner has pointed out that Western powers remade traditional indigenous labour regimes in the simple-deed model of Western nations throughout the Pacific Rim in the 19th and 20th centuries. Only in Hawaii was such a transformation undertaken by the native authorities themselves and without direct imperial coercion. Some historians have posited that this was done in an attempt to raise tax revenues during a time of depopulation, but Banner (2005) argues that it was intended to safeguard elite-owned lands in case of annexation, in the hope that imperial authorities would be less likely to seize land held by individual deed than land that was considered communal. It turned out that US annexation was further off than expected, and in the decades between the Mahele and annexation in 1898, the whites were able to consolidate the majority of the most valuable land through individual purchase.

The Hawaiian nobility were not the only ones who tried to negotiate their place in a changing imperial and economic world. Hawaiian emigrants became a labour force throughout the Pacific Rim, working in the gold camps of California alongside Chinese, whites, Hispanics, and everyone else attracted by the Gold Rush (Smith 2013: 10), and working on other Pacific islands during the Guano boom of the mid-19th century. Given their maritime experience, many joined whaling ships and ended up as far away as Nantucket and New Bedford (Okiihiro 2008: 130–135).

Although the American Civil War (1861–65) distracted the American Government from the issue of Hawaiian annexation, the conflict tied the islands closer to the American economy. Most domestic sugar in the US was produced in the Southern states, and Hawaiian plantations expanded rapidly to meet the hole in the Northern supply created by secession. As the price of sugar skyrocketed, Hawaii's economy centred more and more on production for US markets. When the war ended

and Northerners regained access to Southern sugar, the Hawaiian market crashed, but the economic infrastructure of the islands remained pointed towards finding a way into US markets (Rigby 1988: 222).

The Civil War also touched Hawaiians in more direct ways. The majority of Hawaiians were pro-Union; the Kingdom of Hawaii was firmly anti-slavery, with its 1840 constitution banning the institution. In the 1850s, British emissaries made use of this anti-slavery sentiment when trying to persuade the Hawaiian monarchy to reject US annexation. They pointed out that Hawaii was at a latitude south of the line specified by the Missouri Compromise, and that if admitted as a state it would be forced to be a slave state (Tate 1962: 5). During the Civil War a great number of Hawaiian migrants fought and died for the Union in coloured regiments, and in the latter part of the war a Confederate commerce raider destroyed a huge number of whaling ships in the Central Pacific, including at least one under the flag of the Kingdom of Hawaii. Although it was not officially within the control of the US, Hawaii was close enough to be caught up a war dividing the American empire.

### **Pulling towards and pushing against annexation**

After the war the bonds of the sugar trade continued to grow with the 1875 Reciprocity Treaty, which ensured that the vast majority of the sugar produced in Hawaii would be shipped to the US. By 1890, well over 95 per cent of Hawaiian exports went to the US (Osborne 1981a: xii). Hawaii needed the markets of the US in order to survive, while the US had less need of Hawaiian sugar, and domestic sugar producers within the US, especially in Louisiana, were continually seeking to cut out competition from international sources such as Hawaii. This economic pressure translated into diplomatic leverage for the US, as Hawaiians knew that despite the treaty their sugar had precariously little protection.

In exchange for granting Hawaiian sugar a favoured place within the market, the US receiving leasing rights to Pearl Harbor. This harbour had attracted the attention of the US military for years, especially after a visit from General John Schofield in 1872 when he reported that it was the key to controlling the

central Pacific (Rigby 1988: 224). The treaty itself did not give the US exclusive rights to the use of the harbour, at least until a revision of the treaty a few years later, but it did ensure that the US military would have a continual presence on the islands. In times of crisis for the Hawaiian monarchy, marines and sailors were in place to either undermine or support whoever was on the throne.

Whites in Hawaii, most of whom were American or descended from Americans, increasingly found themselves in conflict with the Hawaiian monarchy. In 1887 they forced the King of Hawaii to sign a new political constitution, also known as the Bayonet Constitution, which removed most executive power from the throne (Silva 2004: 122). Realising that most native Hawaiians resented the influence they had on the islands, the white leaders insisted that property qualifications for suffrage be introduced in order to disenfranchise the majority of commoners. Historians disagree about the state of the Hawaiian monarchy by the 1890s. Some point to the rapidly declining numbers of native Hawaiians and the support that the king often needed from outsiders in order to prop up his rule as evidence of a leadership vacuum on the islands. Others argue that although her predecessors were weak, Queen Lili'uokalani was deposed not because of the inherent instability of the Hawaiian monarchy, but rather through US intervention.

Upon ascending the throne, Lili'uokalani tried to renounce the 1887 constitution and reclaim the authority of the monarchy. On 17 January 1893, a group of prominent whites engineered a coup against the monarchy. The American consul, John L. Stevens, encouraged them, promising that the government that they established would be recognised by the US Government. Stevens also deployed American sailors and marines stationed on ships docked at Pearl Harbor. These soldiers were supposedly employed to protect American lives and property, but their functional use was to serve as a buffer between rebels and retaliation from forces loyal to the monarchy. They also secured key government buildings. Realising that the Hawaiian forces would not be able to resist direct US intervention, the queen surrendered power to the organisers.

Within a few weeks of the coup, a treaty for annexation was negotiated, and President Benjamin Harrison submitted it to the US

Senate. It came at the end of Harrison's presidential term, and it was his successor, Grover Cleveland, who had to decide whether or not he would back the treaty. Harrison was a Republican, the party that after the Civil War was more likely to support an imperialist venture, while Cleveland was a Democrat. Cleveland sent a fact-finder, James Blount, to Hawaii in order to investigate the 1893 revolution. Blount concluded that the queen had been overthrown without the support of the majority of Hawaiians, and also judged that Stevens had overstepped his authority in providing military aid to the rebels. Cleveland vacillated over what to do next; in one speech he floated the notion that the only honourable path for the US was to support the restoration of the monarchy. The backlash he received came mainly from Republicans, who attacked the idea of the US restoring a monarchy as hostile to the mission of empire of liberty (McWilliams 1988: 39).

Seeing that annexation was not going to happen quickly, the coup leaders organised a new republic, the Republic of Hawaii, which represented the interests of only a small minority of the islanders. Suffrage was determined by landownership, and by the 1890s the majority of the land was in the hands of those descended from Americans. Whites occupied nearly all the senior posts within the government, and the mission of the men in these posts, including President Sanford Dole, was to seek annexation as quickly as possible. Native resistance took several forms, from attempted armed uprisings to a petition campaign that helped to defeat an attempt to pass the annexation treaty in 1897 (Loomis 1976: 3).

Hawaiian annexation had its opponents within the US as well, including many within organised labour. Samuel Gompers, leader of the American Federation of Labor, thought imperial expansion would undermine unions by providing capitalists with ready access to cheap labour sources. The vast majority of labourers on the Hawaiian sugar plantations were contract labourers who served for fixed terms, often of five years, rather than working for a free wage. This indentured servitude was a sticking point in the debates over annexation, with congressmen often making references to slavery as a way of criticising the plan to take over the islands. At one point, McKinley suggested that after annexation the institutions of the islands would have to be preserved,

since to upset the contract system would be to undermine the entire sugar industry of the islands (Appel 1954: 12). The idea of promoting an unfree labour system horrified critics of empire. Labour unions in the 19th century also tended to be extremely hostile towards Chinese immigration, and admitting Hawaii would also mean admitting tens of thousands of Chinese labourers into the Union.

In view of the failure to win annexation in 1897, historians have been divided about why the pro-expansionists won in 1898. The war with Spain provides one explanation. After Admiral Dewey took the Philippines in the spring of 1898, securing a chain of supply by grabbing Hawaii had an air of necessity. On the other hand, historians such as Thomas McCormick and Thomas Osborne (1981b) have argued that Hawaii and the Philippines were appreciated less as possessions in themselves than for the access that they could provide to markets in Asia, particularly China.

A sticking point for annexation was the question of what to do with the people on the islands once they had been annexed. American-born people made up only a small percentage of the populace, and even native Hawaiians composed a minority by the 1890s. The sugar boom, combined with a declining population, had meant that plantation owners had had to import contract labour from other places, particularly China and Japan. Portuguese labourers from the Azores and the Madeira had also been imported, since the people of those island chains had experience of growing sugar.

Would Hawaiians of all types be treated as imperial subjects or granted the benefits of American citizenship, including suffrage? Congress debated the merits of limiting suffrage on the islands by various schemes. Although the states had long since removed their property requirements for male suffrage, some congressmen hoped that the restrictive voting requirements of the Republic of Hawaii could continue when Hawaii became an organised territory. Most congressmen felt that the native Hawaiians themselves should be given the full rights of citizens, but there were sharp divisions over whether the contract labourers should be given such benefits (Basson 2005). Although the immediate debates surrounding who would get the benefits of citizenship within the empire subsided after the 1900s, reservations about the diverse

mix of Hawaiians would continue. Hawaii spent over half a century as an organised territory, far longer than most the states which had been territories in previous decades.

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## US Imperialism and Nazi Germany

This essay challenges the predominant notion that the US was an enemy of Hitler's Third Reich. In reality, the relationship between the US and Germany from 1933-45, more specifically between the US and the German imperialist systems, was complex and ambiguous. It admittedly involved eager competition, sometimes bitter rivalry, and ultimately war, but also intimate and mutually beneficial collaboration, especially at the level of private enterprise. This collaboration was also furthered by a shared antagonism toward the Soviet Union, the incarnation of anti-capitalist revolution and anti-imperialism which, under Hitler's auspices, German imperialism was expected to annihilate. Nevertheless, the US and German imperialist systems did eventually stumble into war against each other, with nothing less than supremacy within the restricted circle of the Great Powers at stake. Ironically, it was the huge sacrifices made by the Soviet Union that ensured US victory in the showdown at imperialism's OK Corral. When the war ended, German imperialism, defeated and therefore down but certainly not out, and henceforth under 'democratic' rather than Nazi management, was reduced to the role of a junior partner of US imperialism, willing and able to help the US establish its supremacy in Europe and to fight and eventually vanquish the Soviet Union in a new, 'cold' war.

Like other imperialist powers, the US is always looking out for ways to serve the interests of its big corporations and banks. In order to keep their profits at an acceptably - perhaps better? - at a desirably high level, important raw materials such as oil must be obtained as cheaply as possible, foreign markets must be opened up, and opportunities must be created everywhere for the profitable investment of excess capital. Access to cheap labour is also crucial, and labour must be kept cheap by combating unions and

working-class political parties. The interests of US imperialism in the face of competition in the imperialist 'rat race' must be defended by all means, ranging from forging formal or informal alliances with other imperialist powers to conflict and war. Last but certainly not least, the system of which imperialism is a manifestation, capitalism, must be defended against any kind of unwanted change, above all revolutionary change, throughout the world.

The US, itself a former colony, has traditionally avoided seeking to accomplish all this by establishing direct political control over other countries (in other words, by acquiring colonies), as its European rivals used to do. Its favourite approach has been economic penetration, combined with the greatest possible amount of indirect political control. This strategy has typically required the collaboration of local comprador elites ruling via democratic or, if necessary, dictatorial regimes. Much of Latin America has been penetrated in this manner by US imperialism. Like colonial control, economic penetration has usually been associated with 'developing' countries, especially when it involves crude forms of indirect political control via regimes that could be defined as 'neo-colonial' or 'semi-colonial', such as the Pinochet regime in Chile or the Suharto regime in Indonesia. Economic penetration can also target fully developed countries, however, including other imperialist powers. And this kind of penetration is of course likely to have a great influence on formal and informal relations, not only at government level, with the affected power. Let us examine the case of the relationship between the imperialisms of the US and Nazi Germany from 1933–45; that is, the dozen years during which, under Hitler's stewardship, German imperialism first flourished, then nearly collapsed, but – with US help – would manage to survive.

The First World War had been an imperialist war, fought by imperialist powers with imperialist objectives in mind: a reality that was semantically obscured by claims that it was a 'war to end all wars', a 'war for democracy', and similar hypocritical nonsense. At the end of that war, Germany's imperialist ambitions received a major setback. On the international stage, however, Germany remained a major player with a considerable imperialist appetite, which was to become obvious for all to see when Hitler

came to power in 1933. To the US, this development posed a challenge but also created opportunities. In the context of the ongoing competition among imperialist powers, the US and Germany were competitors engaged in a rivalry that had the potential to explode into war, but they also stood to gain from a close collaboration; if not between their respective governments, then at least between their leading corporations and banks. During the First World War, a huge amount of capital had built up in the vaults and accounts of 'corporate America', which therefore looked out for investment opportunities abroad. For this kind of activity, Germany, which needed to disgorge hefty reparation payments to France and Belgium, proved to be a promised land. The result was that a wave of US direct investment flooded into Germany. In 1929, General Motors (GM) thus took over Germany's largest car manufacturer, Adam Opel AG, based in the town of Rüsselsheim. In the same year, Ford built a huge new factory in Cologne, soon to be known as the Ford-Werke. The result: a large share of the German auto industry was henceforth under US control. Other US corporations formed strategic partnerships with German firms. This arrangement involved joint ventures and understandings concerning access to raw materials, agreements concerning prices, etc. A spectacular example is provided by the case of Standard Oil of New Jersey (later known as Esso, then Exxon), which went to bed with the German petrochemical trust IG Farben. By the early 1930s, an elite group of about 20 large US companies had some sort of German connection. A number of large US banks were also involved in this German investment offensive, for example J.P. Morgan & Co, which had made a fortune during the Great War. All these banks had their own German partners, such as the Deutsche Bank. US law firms were also involved in investments in Germany. The great specialist in these kinds of legal affairs was Sullivan & Cromwell, a prestigious Wall Street law firm run by the brothers John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles, whose German-connected clients included the Rockefellers, owners of Standard Oil.

In the early 1930s, things did not go well for US investments in Germany. The reason for this was the Great Depression, whose main characteristic was the disharmony between supply, high because of increased

productivity, and slumping demand. This crisis affected all capitalist countries, but it hit Germany particularly hard. At the German branches of US corporations, production and profits dwindled. To make things worse, the political scene became extremely unstable, with Nazis and communists battling each other in the streets of Berlin and other big cities. German industrialists and bankers – and US ‘captains of industry’ with investments in Germany – feared that the country was ripe for a ‘red revolution’ like the one which had put the Bolsheviks in power in Russia in 1917. But then a miracle happened: thanks to the generous political and financial support of German industrialists and financiers, including many with partners in the US, Hitler came to power in January 1933, and soon the situation changed politically as well as socially and economically. The German subsidiaries of Ford, GM and others quickly returned to profitability. The reason was that Hitler did what those who had brought him to power, Germany’s leading capitalists, expected of him: he eliminated the threat of revolutionary change, embodied by Germany’s communists, throwing many of them into concentration camps; and he dissolved other working-class parties and all labour unions, thus transforming the hitherto militant German working class into a flock of impotent sheep, forced to work ‘harder and faster’ for the benefit of their employers, including the German subsidiaries of foreign corporations. At Ford-Werke, for example, labour expenses declined from 15 per cent of the business volume in 1933, when Hitler came to power, to 11 per cent in 1938. Whenever workers displayed the slightest inclination to protest or strike, the Gestapo intervened with an iron hand in favour of the employer. General Motors’ Opel factory at Rüsselsheim benefited from such an intervention in June 1936. The owners and managers of US corporations and banks with investments in Germany were in seventh heaven and publicly sang the praises of Hitler. Among them were William Knudsen, the chairman of the board of General Motors, Sosthenes Behn, the head of ITT, and lawyer John Foster Dulles. (The story of US investments in Nazi Germany is told in detail in Pauwels 2002; 2013.)

Hitler also found a way to lead Germany out of the doldrums of the Great Depression. His remedy was essentially Keynesian or

‘demand-side’; that is, he stimulated demand by means of government orders. But Hitler’s Keynesianism was of a military nature: at his behest the German state ordered tanks, guns, submarines, trucks, and planes in huge numbers. This was part of his great ambition, shared by Germany’s industrialists and bankers, to rearm Germany so that, via a new war, it could finally achieve the grandiose imperialist ambitions for which the Reich had already gone to war in 1914 against its imperialist rivals. (Fritz Fischer first demonstrated this continuity in his famous book *Germany’s Aims in the First World War*, published in English in 1967.) War was expected to bring wonderful results in terms of opening up sources of raw materials and markets in the form of overseas colonies, of course, but also of territories in Eastern Europe. It would obviously take quite a few years before Germany would be ready to wage war successfully. In the meantime, Hitler’s rearmament revealed itself as a bonanza of profits for Germany’s corporations and banks, as has been stressed in studies of the economic history of the Third Reich, such as Adam Tooze’s *The Wages of Destruction* (2006). The German subsidiaries of US corporations shared fully in the ‘profit explosion’ made possible by the armament boom. The Ford-Werke, for example, which had suffered heavy losses in the early 1930s, benefited from massive state orders for trucks. And so the annual profit of Ford’s German subsidiary climbed spectacularly between 1935 and 1939. General Motors’ Opel factory, which had also suffered losses in the early 1930s, did even better thanks to orders from the Nazi regime. Other big US corporations that made a lot of money in Germany in the 1930s were: IBM, whose German branch, called Dehomag, supplied the Nazis with perforated card machines, the predecessors of the computer, which facilitated the automation of industrial production; and ITT, whose German subsidiaries, including Lorenz AG, produced all kinds of communications equipment for the Nazis, especially for the Luftwaffe. (IBM’s happy adventures in the Nazi Wonderland have been described in great detail in a notorious book by Edwin Black [2001].)

Hitler’s Germany was not only a low-wage Shangri-La for US investment capital, but also became a significant market for the finished products of US industry. Ford, for example, also exported truck parts from the



US to Germany. Other US corporations, for example, Pratt & Whitney, Boeing, and Sperry Gyroscope (now known as Unisys), provided the Third Reich with 'significant quantities of all sorts of material related to aviation' such as 'automatic pilots ... and artillery devices used in anti-aircraft defence' (Etzold 1975: 78–79). The US also exported raw materials of great strategic importance to Germany, including copper and rubber, for which, in view of its preparations for a 'motorised' war, Hitler's Germany had a great need. In preparation for the kind of motorised war that would be known as blitzkrieg ('lightning war'), involving countless gas-guzzling trucks, tanks, and planes, Germany also stockpiled enormous oil reserves, and much of that oil was supplied by US trusts. The percentage of petroleum products imported by Germany from the US quadrupled between 1933 and 1939. A corporation that earned huge profits from this business was the Texas Oil Company, renamed Texaco in 1959. The German navy obtained the oil it needed from a Texas oil magnate, William Rhodes Davis. And Standard Oil assisted IG Farben in the production of synthetic fuel.

The profits made by US branches were for the most part reinvested in the 'land of unlimited possibilities' that Hitler's Germany appeared to be at the time, certainly in comparison to the US itself, which remained stuck in the mud of the Great Depression. The 'earnings' were reinvested in the modernisation of existing infrastructure, the building of new plants, and the purchase of government bonds. In 1935, for example, GM built a new Opel plant in Brandenburg, near Berlin; it was the most modern truck factory in the world. The value of US investments in Germany thus grew considerably. The Ford-Werke and IBM's Dehomag virtually doubled in value between 1933 and 1939. As for Opel, by 1939 its worth was estimated at \$86.7 million, that is, 2.6 times the value of General Motors' original investment in Germany, which had been \$33.3 million. Under Hitler's auspices, the total value of US investments in Germany, involving a total of 553 companies, rose to \$450 million at the formal declaration of war against the US in December 1941. In the 1930s, then, US imperialism was profiting handsomely from close collaboration with German imperialism, then under Nazi management.

The fact that Hitler was a racist and a virulent anti-Semite did not trouble the owners

and managers of US corporations active in Germany, many of whom were 'white supremacists' and anti-Semites themselves. Henry Ford, for example, had personally written an anti-Semitic tract in 1920 entitled *The International Jew*, which actually had a great influence on Hitler. Both men, like most contemporary anti-Semites on both sides of the Atlantic, subscribed to the theory of 'Judeo-Bolshevism', explained in detail in Damien Amblard's book *Le 'fascisme' américain et le fordisme* (2007). They considered Marxist international socialism to be an invention of 'international Jewry', a strategy developed by that supposedly inferior people to subvert the natural (or God-given) rule of the superior 'Nordic' or 'Aryan' race. The Russian Revolution in particular was seen as the evil work of Jews, and the Soviet Union, the first socialist state and a bastion of anti-imperialism, was despised as 'Russia ruled by Jews'. And it was believed that the Jews would not rest until they had subverted the entire world with their labour-union agitation, their socialism, or, worse, their communism. Ford and many other US industrialists and bankers admired Hitler because he had exorcised this 'red peril' from Germany. And they fervently hoped that he would soon proceed to fulfil his life's big ambition as outlined in *Mein Kampf*: namely, the total destruction of the Soviet Union, source of inspiration and guidance for 'Reds' worldwide, also stateside, where the political left was troublesome enough for the 1930s to be labelled the 'red thirties' by some historians.

And so it happened that US businessmen were unperturbed by Hitler's anti-Semitism and racism in general and happily helped him to prepare for war, a war whose victim was supposed to be the Soviet Union. Indeed, as late as the spring of 1939, Hitler was determined to wage war against the Soviets, as Rolf-Dieter Müller has convincingly demonstrated in his 2011 book *Der Feind steht im Osten*. Hitler was convinced that 'the West' – a codename for the imperialist powers – would not object to such a war and would therefore remain neutral as a *tertius gaudens*. This was not an unreasonable expectation, because the destruction of the Soviet Union was fervently desired by all imperialist powers. After all, that state was perceived as the incarnation of social revolution, a 'counter-system' to the international capitalist order of things, and the wellspring of anti-imperialist agitation

worldwide. Moreover, via their infamous appeasement-policy, London and Paris had actually encouraged Hitler's great ambition and facilitated its implementation, providing him with a Czechoslovak 'springboard' pointing east.

The US and German industrialists and bankers who backed Hitler had another reason for looking forward to the war he would unleash. Hitler had to borrow vast sums of money to finance his armament programme. Germany's national debt was mushrooming, and it was clear that only the loot resulting from a ruthless war of rapine would enable him to pay back the creditors; that is, the banks and other investors and purchasers of German government bonds, including US corporations and banks. Last but not least, it was hoped that the destruction of the Soviet Union would facilitate the recovery of the investments made by US corporations like Singer in the Empire of the Tsar, lost on account of the 1917 Russian Revolution.

Even though he was the dictator of a rival imperialist power, US capitalists were as happy with Hitler as they would have been with any comprador dictator they might have put in charge of some 'banana republic' in South America. Hitler, so the saying went, was 'someone you could do business with'. And great things were expected from him in the future, above all the destruction of the Soviet Union. US and German imperialism were on the same wavelength: they supported each other, they were forming a partnership, admittedly not a formal political partnership, but certainly an informal economic partnership; not a partnership at government level but a partnership at corporate level. The US government kept a decent distance from the regime in Berlin, which was despised by many ordinary Americans. But Washington certainly saw no reason to go to war against a country where US investment was flourishing. In fact, in the 1930s, the US had plans in the drawer for war against Mexico, Japan, and even Great Britain and Canada, but no plans at all for war against Nazi Germany (Rudmin 2006: 4–6).

The owners and managers of US businesses with branches in Germany were undoubtedly frustrated by the fact that, for reasons which cannot be elucidated here, the war unleashed by Hitler in 1939 turned out to be a war against Poland and the 'Western' powers Great Britain and France, instead of a

war against the Soviet Union. But this was not very important. What was important was that this war opened up even more fabulous opportunities for making money. When war broke out on 1 September 1939, the New York Stock Exchange reacted enthusiastically and showed its biggest gains in more than two years. Indeed, in order to wage 'lightning war' (Blitzkrieg) and thus achieve 'lightning victories' (Blitzsieg) in 1939 and 1940, Hitler relied to a large extent on equipment and fuel provided by US corporations, which made a lot of money supplying these goods. For the benefit of all branches of the German armed forces, Ford-Werke and Opel cranked out not only trucks, but also planes, including the JU-88 bomber; ITT's subsidiaries manufactured radios and radar equipment as well as high-quality fighter aircraft such as the FW-190; IBM's German subsidiary, Dehomag, provided technology that allowed the Nazi war machine to operate 'on a large scale, quickly and efficiently,' as Edwin Black puts it; and the subsidiary of Singer, famous for its sewing machines, mass-produced machine guns. In 1939 and 1940, Texaco and Standard Oil continued to ship oil to Germany, much of it via neutral Spanish ports. Texas oil baron William Rhodes Davis supplied Mexican oil, refining it in his own German subsidiary located in Hamburg.

The military success of the Nazis was also the commercial success of US corporations and banks; the triumphs of Germany's Nazi imperialism were also triumphs of US imperialism. Major players of both sides celebrated the Wehrmacht's recent victories in New York on 26 June 1940, during a dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. It was organised by Gerhard Westrick, a German lawyer who represented Ford, GM, General Electric, ITT, Standard Oil, and other US corporations with a German connection. Many high-ranking executives of US corporations and banks attended. Five days later the German victories were fêted again, this time during a party organised by Rieber, the boss of Texaco, and attended by more big guns of US industry such as Edsel Ford, Henry Ford's son.

The de facto alliance of US and German imperialisms, not at government level but certainly at the level of 'private enterprise', was also reflected in the happy and optimistic comments of US executives such as Rieber, Thomas Watson, the big boss of IBM, and oil baron William Rhodes Davis. They praised

Hitler, his Nazi regime, and fascism in general, and expressed the hope that their great and profitable relationship might continue to yield fruit, for example in the shape of business to be done in the countries occupied by Germany. Conversely, Hitler honoured US industrialists such as Ford and Watson with prestigious decorations.

The fact that Hitler was a dictator and that many of his victims were democracies did not bother these captains of industry. Typical of this attitude was a comment by Alfred P. Sloan, chairman of GM, in June 1940, expressing satisfaction that the era of the democracies with 'their unintelligent, even stupid and limited leaders' was finished, and that the future belonged to Nazism and other forms of fascism, 'an alternative system ... with leaders who are strong, intelligent, aggressive, [and] who make people work longer and harder'. Corporate America's spectacular demonstration of enthusiasm and support for fascism in 1940 is one of many historical facts that contradict the 'free-markets-and-democracy' notion; that is, the idea that the natural political partner of the social-economic system of capitalism, often euphemised as the 'free market' system, is democracy.

The war unleashed by Hitler was good for US imperialism, especially for the corporations and banks with German branches. But the war also revealed itself to be good for other corporations, namely all those, usually also 'big boys', that became involved in the stateside production of planes, tanks, and other war equipment. The US itself had been modernising its military for some time – the strategic bombers and aircraft carriers did not wait until the 1940s to be designed and built – and from Washington came increasing orders for trucks, tanks, planes, ships, etc. This increase in military spending by the state bolstered economic demand enough to finally put an end to the Great Depression. Furthermore, thanks to President Roosevelt's famous 'Lend-Lease' programme, US industry was also producing all kinds of military equipment for Great Britain, thereby allowing the latter to continue the war against Hitler after the defeat of France. Contrary to popular myth, Lend-Lease 'aid' did not amount to a free gift, but was a complex system of loans and credits, generating gargantuan profits for the US corporations and banks that were involved.

But Lend-Lease also promised long-term benefits for corporate America. The scheme required London to dismantle the protectionist system of 'imperial preference' tariffs, which had not prevented but certainly limited US exports to Great Britain and its dependencies; it served as a weapon for US products to conquer the British market, in other words, to economically penetrate – and thus weaken – an imperialist rival. Conversely, Lend-Lease drastically reduced the British share of the pie of the US market, in that it forced the British to divest themselves of virtually all their considerable stateside investments. Finally, on account of Lend-Lease, Great Britain found itself saddled with a colossal debt, which would not be completely paid off until 29 December 2006. The war unleashed by German imperialism, informally but intimately associated at the time with US imperialism, thus allowed the latter to clip the wings of its British rival in the imperialist rat race. During the Second World War, British imperialism, once so powerful but considerably weakened by the First World War, was reduced to the status of 'junior partner' of US imperialism.

From the perspective of US imperialism, Hitler had been good for business, but his war was nothing less than wonderful for business and strengthened the international position of US imperialism. There was no need for the US to get involved in the war in Europe, and the leaders of corporate America had no desire to see that war end soon. To the contrary, they wanted the war to last as long as possible, as Henry Ford openly admitted on one occasion. About the war in Europe, US industrialists regretted only one thing: namely, that the Soviet Union, the incarnation of anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism and therefore the arch-enemy of all imperialist powers, had not been the victim of the *furor teutonicus*. On 22 June 1941, however, the *Wehrmacht* finally crossed the Soviet border with tanks and trucks made by Ford or GM and with gas tanks brimming with fuel provided by Texaco and other US oil trusts. If Hitler had attacked the Soviet Union ten, five, or even just one year earlier, the leaders of corporate America would have applauded unanimously. But in 1941, their feelings were mixed. The sales to Great Britain had been the source of unlimited profit for many corporations, and it was obvious that their British customer's chances of survival improved

considerably when the Nazis went for the throat of another enemy, especially when that enemy did not collapse after a few weeks, as the experts in Washington, London, and obviously Berlin had expected.

The Nazi regime's economic policy also played an important role in the decline of US enthusiasm for Hitler. US imperialism, like any other imperialism, wanted 'open doors' all over the world for its exports and its investment capital. But, starting in the late 1930s and increasingly in the early 1940s, the Nazis – in other words, the contemporary managers of German imperialism – moved to restrict access to the markets of Germany and the European countries it conquered to all but the most indispensable foreign products and raw materials such as oil. Most of Europe was thus converted into something US businessmen detested, namely a 'closed economic system', difficult if not impossible to penetrate economically. To US corporations with branches in Germany itself, this development did not present a considerable problem, but US corporate leaders who were not so privileged – and the many politicians convinced that US prosperity depended on foreign trade – were very perturbed. Even more irritating was the success of Berlin's aggressive international trade policy in Latin America, considered by US imperialism to be its exclusive commercial bailiwick. During the 1930s, the German share of the import volume of countries such as Brazil and Mexico was growing rapidly at the expense of the hitherto unthreatened US competition. Nazi Germany was rapidly becoming the 'most irksome competitor' of the US in that part of the world, as the German ambassador to Mexico put it in 1938 in a report to Berlin. Corporate America thus lost a lot of the sympathy it had previously had for the Nazi regime. The friendship between the US and German imperialist systems was cooling off rapidly. (Reference is made to Uwe Lübken 2004; the quotation of the ambassador is from Hallgarten and Radkau 1981: 337–338.)

When Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union, many US industrialists wished that neither side would win; they hoped that the conflict on the Eastern Front would last very long, until the antagonists were both exhausted. More and more members of the US power elite started to sympathise with the Soviets, if only because they worried that, in case of a Nazi triumph in the East, Hitler

'might be unstoppable' (Smelser and Davies, 2008: 9–11); in other words, that such a triumph might crown German imperialism as the suprema of international imperialism – and a major threat to the US. Still, a hard core of US businessmen remained resolutely pro-fascist and anti-Soviet and hoped that Hitler would destroy the cradle of communism. In all likelihood, this was also what the great majority of owners and managers of US corporations with German subsidiaries were looking for, because they produced the war materiel that enabled the Nazi legions to head for Moscow in that hot summer of 1941. To their great regret, the Nazi host was never to march triumphantly onto Moscow's Red Square.

Success in this *Blitzkrieg* was not just a military but also an economic precondition for a German victory in the Second World War. To win the war, Germany had to win fast, lightning-fast. After the campaigns of 1939 and 1940, there was enough fuel left only to wage war for about three or four months. But Berlin was confident that the Red Army could be defeated in six to eight weeks. A lightning-fast victory would make the abundant resources of the defeated Soviet Union available, particularly the oil of the Caucasus, and that would turn Germany into an invincible world power. In other words, victory over the Soviet Union would make German imperialism 'number one', not only in Europe, but in the entire world. But on 5 December 1941, when the Red Army launched a counter-offensive in front of the gates of Moscow, as devastating as it was unexpected, Hitler himself and the generals of the German High Command realised that the 'lightning war' in the East would not produce a 'lightning victory', and that Germany was therefore doomed to lose the war. That day, 5 December 1941, was the real turning point of the Second World War, but other than Hitler and his generals, hardly anyone was aware of it. (Two 'outsiders' who were in fact aware of it were the Swiss secret services and the Vatican.)

America's 'captains of industry' did not have the vaguest idea what the failure of the *Blitzkrieg* in the Soviet Union really implied, but it was henceforth obvious that the Germans were going to have their hands full on the Eastern Front for quite some time. This would allow the British to stay in the war, which meant that the profitable Lend-Lease trade could continue for the foreseeable

future. In other words, the success of the Red Army was good for business. In the autumn of 1941, the New York Stock Exchange recorded higher and higher stock prices as it became increasingly evident that the Nazi crusade in the East was not going to result in the great triumph that had been expected. The situation became even more advantageous when it appeared possible to do business with the Soviets as well. In fact, in November 1941, when it became obvious that the Soviet Union was not going to collapse anytime soon, Washington revealed itself willing to extend credit to the Soviets, and a lend-Lease agreement was signed. Thanks to that wonderful war in Europe, yet another foreign market opened up, at least partially and temporarily, for the benefit of US imperialism. Moreover, via 'reverse Lend-Lease', the Soviet Union also started to supply the US with important raw materials, including chrome and manganese ore as well as platinum; on account of this, the US even became a net beneficiary of wartime trade with the Soviets, at least according to the Soviet historian Pavel Zhilin (1985: 55–56).

Incidentally, it is a myth that the totally unexpected success of the Soviets against Nazi Germany was only possible because of massive US aid. First, US aid never represented more than 4 or 5 per cent of the total Soviet production of war equipment. Second, US supplies to the Soviets only began to make a difference long after the turning point of December 1941. According to Adam Tooze, 'the Soviet miracle owed nothing to western assistance [and] the effects of Lend-Lease had no influence on the balance of forces on the Eastern Front before 1943' (2006: 589). Third, the Soviets themselves manufactured virtually all of their high-quality weapons, including the excellent T-34 tank. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Lend-Lease aid to the Soviet Union was at least neutralised by the unofficial, discreet, but nonetheless substantial, assistance provided to the Germans by US corporations. Without these resources, the Nazis would never have been able to attack the Soviet Union.

Viewed from the perspective of US imperialism, the war yielded all sorts of benefits and opportunities but also some problems, challenges, and dilemmas. The defeat of France and the Netherlands in 1940, for example, raised the question of what would happen to their colonies in the Far East,

namely Indochina and Indonesia, rich in rubber and petroleum, respectively. With the 'mother countries' occupied by the Germans, these colonies looked like ripe fruits ready to be picked by one of the remaining competitors in the imperialist competition. But by which one? Perhaps the Germans, if they were to win the war and impose a harsh, Versailles-style settlement on the losers. But the prospects of a German triumph were fading fast as the Panzers had to shift into reverse gear in front of Moscow. A more likely candidate was Japan, an imperialist power with great ambitions in the Far East, and a keen appetite for rubber and oil. But the US was also a candidate. With Japan, the USs had had strained relations since the early 20th century when, following their conquest of the Philippines, the US had become geopolitically interested in the Far East. Both powers had great and conflicting ambitions with respect to China, a huge but powerless country that seemed ripe to be economically penetrated and politically dominated by an imperialist power. To America's displeasure, Japan had already grabbed a sizeable piece of China in the 1930s, namely Manchuria. And now Indochina and Indonesia were up for grabs. The tension was mounting in Tokyo and Washington; who would make the first move?

In Washington, plans for war against the Japanese, underestimated as an inferior yellow race, had been ready for quite some time. They involved the use of aircraft carriers and strategic bombers, providing Uncle Sam with a military arm long enough to reach across the Pacific, where the Philippines, strategically situated close to Japan as well as China, Indochina, and Indonesia, could serve as a useful base of operations. (Hawaii, annexed by the US in 1898, was of course an equally convenient  *pied-à-terre*  halfway across the Pacific.) In Washington, the President and his advisors felt it was imperative to act before Tokyo had a chance to beat them to it and create a fait accompli that might be impossible to undo. During the last few decades, more and more evidence has built up indicating that, via measures such as an oil embargo, the US leaders deliberately provoked Japan into bombing Pearl Harbor and knew that a Japanese strike force was on its way to attack the US base there (see Robert B. Stinnett's book *Day of Deceit* [2000].)

It was extremely important to make the Japanese attack the US, rather than vice versa.

Indeed, only a defensive war was acceptable to Congress and to the US public. Moreover, an US attack on Japan would also have required Nazi Germany to come to the aid of Japan under the terms of their alliance, while a Japanese attack on the US would not. Tokyo was tricked into attacking Pearl Harbor just days after the strategic aircraft carriers had conveniently sailed away from there, and so President Roosevelt could easily 'sell' the war he wanted against Japan to Congress and to the US public. There would be no need to account for Germany, which had not been involved in Japan's so-called 'surprise' attack, was under no obligation whatsoever to come to the aid of its Japanese ally, and was known to be grimly focused on its war against the Soviet Union.

But on 11 December 1941, a few days after the attack on Pearl Harbor and much to Washington's surprise, Hitler himself declared war on the US. Very likely, he hoped that Tokyo would return the favour by declaring war on the Soviet Union, which would have revived Berlin's moribund hope for a victory on the Eastern Front. However, the Japanese did not declare war on the Soviet Union, undoubtedly figuring that they would have their hands full with their US enemy. Predictably, their armies swarmed out to the south, to resource-rich Indochina and Indonesia and to the Philippines, the major US bridgehead in the Far East.

US imperialism was now an enemy of German imperialism, a partner and even friend not so long before, at least of corporate America. It was also an enemy of Japanese imperialism, a long-time rival in imperialism's Far Eastern hunting grounds. On its side was British imperialism, in the process of becoming the 'junior partner' it has remained ever since. And also on its side, rather surprisingly (if not shockingly), was Soviet communism, in principle an arch-enemy of all forms of imperialism, but formally at war only against German imperialism. The Soviet Union was a friend of the US and Great Britain, but only 'for the duration'; that is, on account of the principle that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'. That friendship was doomed to end as soon as the common enemy was defeated.

The US and its British partner restricted their active participation in the war against Germany to a minimum, finding excuses for not opening a second front in Western

Europe which would have provided considerable relief to the Red Army. While the 'Anglo-Saxons' thus sat on the fence, the Soviets functioned as cannon fodder, fighting titanic battles against the Germans at Stalingrad and elsewhere, inflicting huge losses on the Wehrmacht. On the Eastern Front, Germany would end up with no fewer than 10 million of its total 13.5 million men killed, wounded, or taken prisoner during the entire war; and the Red Army would end up with the credit for 90 per cent of all casualties in the German army. That was obviously to the advantage of the US and Britain, which did not care that the Soviets themselves also suffered grievous losses. In fact, it was hoped that the war in the east would end with both sides being totally exhausted, so that the US, together with Britain, could decisively intervene in the end, like a *deus ex machina*. (In similar fashion, the US had entered the First World War at a very late stage, suffered minimal losses compared to Britain and France, and emerged from the war in a much stronger position vis-à-vis allies who also happened to be imperialist rivals.)

The Soviets would make the biggest contribution by far to the Allied victory over Nazi Germany, but would indeed be bled white in the process. For each American who gave his life, in the Second World War, no fewer than 53 Soviet soldiers gave theirs. And while a total of approximately 300,000 Americans – and also approximately 300,000 British – were killed on all fronts, including the war against Japan, more than 13 million Soviet soldiers were killed, virtually all of them while fighting the Germans on the Eastern Front.

The informal partnership of US imperialism with German imperialism, and the discreet but intimate collaboration between the two, had never existed at the government level, but always at the corporate level, at the level of 'private enterprise'. (Which is why it has been virtually invisible to historians, who conventionally focus on the role of the state, in other words, on events of a political and military nature.) When, in December 1941, their governments suddenly and unexpectedly found themselves at war with each other, this mutually beneficial corporate collaboration did not come to an end; far from it. Business trumped patriotism, and making money proved more important than winning the war. As far as US corporations and their German branches were concerned, it was business as usual: 'profits über Alles!'

The German branches of the big US corporations were not confiscated by the Nazis after Pearl Harbor, as has often been suggested. Nazi intervention in their management remained minimal, and the headquarters in the US maintained at least a measure of control via trusted German managers and in some cases via branches in neutral countries such as Switzerland. They continued to crank out the military commodities desperately needed by Hitler to continue his murderous war long after he had abandoned all hope of victory. The US branch plants were specialists in mass production of this kind of material, and the Nazi leaders understood only too well that interference in the management of Opel and others could jeopardise that production. US branch plants continued to supply Nazi Germany not only with a huge quantity but also a high quality of military equipment. This included trucks equipped with all-wheel drive, radar systems, engines for the ME-262, the very first jet fighter, and turbines for the infamous V2 rockets. A US subsidiary also supplied sophisticated equipment that assisted the Nazis in perpetrating their unprecedented crimes. We refer to the Hollerith calculators, produced by IBM's Dehomag, useful for 'establish[ing] lists of Jews and other victims with a view to deporting them'. Finally, at least some US corporations continued to provide the Third Reich with fuel, without which much of this equipment would have been useless. Via ports in the Caribbean and Spain, Standard Oil shipped not only petroleum products to Germany, but also other raw materials essential for waging war, such as tungsten and cotton.

It is true that, as apologists argue, the US branches in Germany had no choice but to produce for the Nazis. But this defence obviously does not apply to corporations that found ways to export oil and other commodities to Germany. And it is also true that the managers of the branch plants and their stateside bosses did not have to be forced; in fact, they proved very keen to produce for the Nazis. The reason was that producing for the Nazis in Germany remained highly profitable until the very end of the war. (Incidentally, the Nazi authorities paid the bills with money stolen from their Jewish victims, with gold looted from the national banks of occupied countries like Belgium, and with other riches yielded by their conquests

and crimes; Swiss and international banks based in Switzerland were happy to make the arrangements.) The earnings of the Ford-Werke, for example, almost doubled between 1939 and 1943. Noteworthy determinants of high profit rates were the regressive employment policy of the Nazi regime and the massive use of forced labour. The Nazis froze the wages of German workers and introduced considerably longer working hours. At Opel and Singer, workers protested in vain as they had to labour 60 hours per week while their wages were reduced. Labour costs were also lowered, and profits thus increased, by the use of forced labour in the form of foreign workers, many of them deported involuntarily to Germany, as well as prisoners of war and concentration camp inmates. This amounted to a form of slavery, of which the branch plants of US corporations were also able to take advantage. Subsidiaries known to have benefited from such slave labour included Coca-Cola, Kodak, Opel, which favoured POWs, and the Ford-Werke, which on one occasion even employed inmates of the Buchenwald concentration camp (Billstein et al. 2000).

The profits made by US branch plants continued to be reinvested mostly in Germany, for example in the expansion of facilities and the acquisition of more modern machinery, which increased the value of the enterprise. The value of the Ford-Werke thus rose officially from *Rm*60.8 million in 1938 to *Rm*68.8 million in 1945, but in reality it likely more than doubled during the war. It also seems that profits were repatriated via banks in Switzerland, such as the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) in Basel. This financial institution – dominated and run by US and German bankers, even during the war – is known to have assisted the oil magnate William Rhodes Davis in repatriating some of the profits made by his German subsidiary. Before and after Pearl Harbor, the BIS collaborated with representatives of both German and US corporations. On the US side they included Allen Dulles, the representative in Berne of the US secret service (OSS, forerunner of the CIA). According to a German historian, Jürgen Bruhn, the OSS was 'from a social point of view, an association of executives of big companies, stock brokers and Wall Street lawyers [etc.]'. And indeed, before the war, Dulles, together with his brother, John Foster, had been a partner in Sullivan & Cromwell, a Wall Street law firm specialising in US

investments in Germany and German investments in the US. Dulles's boss, the head of the OSS, was William Joseph Donovan, also a former Wall Street lawyer and a good friend of Gerhard Westrick, Ford's and Standard Oil's German lawyer, the man who had hosted the June 1940 celebration of the German victories in New York. During the war, Westrick was the administrator of the German branches of ITT and Kodak. Throughout the war, the BIS functioned as a kind of private club in which German and US businessmen, their eminent lawyers, and their favourite bankers could meet and do business. As the French writer Paul Valéry put it at the end of the First World War, in war 'people who do not know each other massacre each other for the benefit of people who know each other but do not massacre each other'.

In the US, the public was not aware that branch plants of prestigious US corporations were producing all sorts of weapons and other equipment for the Nazi enemy. The US government, on the other hand, knew very well what was going on, but chose to ignore this kind of 'trading with the enemy'. This tolerant attitude had a great deal to do with the fact that 'big business' has always had an enormous influence in the halls of power in Washington and even managed to increase that influence considerably during the war. A host of representatives of big business, including high-profile executives, descended on Washington and took over important positions in the state bureaucracy. They included William S. Knudsen, president of General Motors from 1938 to 1940, an admirer of Hitler, Edward Stettinius Jr., another former senior officer of General Motors, and Charles E. Wilson, president of General Electric, another firm with major investments in Germany. The overwhelming majority of these volunteers proceeded to advance the interests of their corporations, obtaining lucrative state contracts, and, unsurprisingly, safeguarding the interests of their subsidiaries in Germany. Thus, we can understand why the US government chose to piously ignore the fact that the country's big corporations were amassing fortunes in the land of the enemy. There were, however, exceptions to this general rule. Legal action was taken against a small number of corporations whose Nazi connections happened to be a public secret, particularly Standard Oil and IBM, but that led to nothing more

than a gentle slap on the wrist. The fact that big business enjoyed unprecedented control over the US government also explains why the German branch plants of US corporations, including the huge Ford-Werke just outside frequently bombed Cologne, were only lightly bombed by the Allies (if at all), despite the fact that they were of vital importance to the Nazi war effort.

The failure of Hitler's *Blitzkrieg* in the Soviet Union in December 1941 had been the real turning point of the war, but until the end of 1942 everything still seemed possible. After the Battles of Stalingrad and Kursk in 1943, however, the whole world knew that the German army had received blows from which recovery was impossible. The Red Army was henceforth on the march to Berlin; slowly, perhaps, but surely. In Washington and London, this caused alarm bells to ring. If nothing were done to prevent it, the Soviets might singlehandedly defeat the Nazis, occupy Germany, and liberate all of Europe. That would mean not only the end of German imperialism, but also a catastrophe to imperialism in general, because the Soviet Union embodied the anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist revolution. Such an outcome would be particularly traumatic to US imperialism, which had invested heavily in German imperialism. US imperialism not only intended to maintain its profitable German connection in the coming post-Nazi era, but also looked forward to using it as a bridgehead for the economic penetration, combined with indirect political control, of the rest of Europe. In other words, US imperialism had a stake in the survival of German imperialism, albeit in a new, non-Nazi reincarnation.

Defeating German imperialism and not destroying it as the Soviets purported to do, but subordinating it to the status of a junior partner, combined with the hoped-for elimination of that pesky competitor in the Far East, Japan, was generally expected to bring about what the publisher of *Life*, Henry Luce, had already predicted in 1941: namely, that the 20th century would be 'the American century' – one during which, as US writer Lewis Lapham predicted, the US would 'inherit the earth'. On the other hand, it was feared that US imperialism could get into deep trouble if Germany and Europe could not be brought into its orbit. The demand stimulated by war had pulled the US economy out of the slump of the Great Depression and even created a



boom, but the war would soon end, so economists, journalists, and politicians expressed fear that the country might slide back into a depression, bringing unemployment and other social problems, and possibly demand for radical change. It was believed that this daunting scenario could be prevented if US industry could find ways to market its products all over the world. Some spokesmen of the US power elite even declared dramatically that the preservation of the capitalist system in America depended on a considerable expansion of overseas trade and investment. It is in this context that the US sought to achieve a worldwide system of free trade via the Bretton Woods agreements of 1944 and the creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, supposedly international organisations that have in fact been dominated from the start by the US. All countries were henceforth supposed to provide an 'open door' to US exports and investment capital, and henceforth Washington actively supported governments that were favourable to such an arrangement and fought – openly or covertly – those that were not. In countries which the US itself liberated, for example Italy and France, the left-leaning resistance, planning all sorts of radical reforms of an anti-capitalist nature, was thus excluded from power in favour of elements embracing economically liberal and politically conservative ideas, often including former fascists such as Italy's Marshal Badoglio. The US hoped, moreover, that in the other countries of Europe, namely not-yet-defeated Germany and the East European states in the process of being liberated by the Red Army, governments would come to power after the war that favoured the kind of liberal economic policies from which the US expected such high dividends.

After the summer of 1943, the Red Army was on the move to Berlin, but it was still fighting deep in Russia itself and continued to face 'the overwhelming bulk' of the German army (Ponting 1995: 130). In order to be able to compete with the Soviets in an unspoken 'race to Berlin' the US and Britain now hastily made plans to land troops in France. This project would be implemented in June 1944 with the landings in Normandy, destined to be wrongly glorified in the West as the great turning point of the Second World War. Later that same summer, Operation Market Garden was launched with the aim of crossing the

Rhine, taking Berlin before the Soviets could do so, and defeating and occupying most of Germany before the end of that year. In Germany, a *fait accompli* favourable to the US (and British) cause was thus supposed to be created, an arrangement which the exhausted Soviets would be unable to challenge. Similar situations, favourable to the Western powers and unfavourable to the Soviets, local communists, and other anti-fascist and anti-imperialist forces with plans for radical if not revolutionary reforms, had already been created in Italy in 1943 and were created again in France and Belgium in the summer of 1944. But Market Garden was a fiasco, and the Allied advance from Normandy petered out near Germany's western border. In December 1944, the US was even temporarily forced onto the defensive by a German counter-offensive in the Belgian Ardennes, and it was only with difficulty that the ensuing Battle of the Bulge was eventually won. In early 1945, the Western Allies were still stuck more than 500km from Berlin, while the Red Army resumed its offensive and advanced to Frankfurt (Oder), located a mere stone's throw from the German capital.

The hope of occupying most of Germany before the arrival of the Soviets had to be abandoned. Washington and London were therefore extremely gratified that at the Yalta Conference of 4–11 February 1945, Stalin agreed to a (presumably temporary) post-war division of Germany into occupation zones. This agreement assigned only the smaller and economically less important eastern third of the country, and only the smaller eastern third of Berlin, to the Soviets; however, when, during the last months of the war, the German resistance on the Western Front melted like snow under the sun, allowing US troops to advance across the agreed-upon demarcation lines into the zone assigned to the Soviets, the Yalta agreements were suddenly no longer advantageous to the West, thus generating the myth that at Yalta too many concessions had been made to Stalin.

In any event, it looked as if Washington would have to allow the Soviet Union to reap its fair share of the fruits of a common victory, a victory to which the Soviets had made the greatest contribution and for which they had made the greatest sacrifices. These fruits would include hefty reparation payments from Germany as well as the installation of governments in Eastern European countries

like Poland that would not be hostile to the Soviet Union. From the perspective of US imperialism, this was not a pleasant prospect. Indeed, it meant that the Soviet embodiment of anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism would be able to recuperate from the trauma of Nazi aggression and resume, possibly successfully, its construction of a socialist 'counter system' to capitalism. German reparations to the Soviet Union also meant that, in future, the profits made by the German branch plants of US corporations would flow to the Soviets instead of into the pocketbooks of US shareholders.

And so Washington considered a number ways to prevent this scenario. Serious consideration was given to the 'Junker Option'. This scheme called for the replacement of the Hitler regime in Berlin by a junta of supposedly respectable *Wehrmacht* generals, mostly conservative Prussian aristocrats known as Junkers, who would then make the remainder of the German armed forces available for a joint operation against the Soviets. General Patton enthusiastically advocated such a common 'crusade' and offered to spearhead a drive to Moscow. With an eye on their possible utilisation against the Soviets, hundreds of thousands of German troops who had rushed into US and British captivity were allowed to keep their arms and uniforms and remain under the command of their officers. For the same purpose, countless Nazi spies and other 'experts' on warfare against Russia, many of them war criminals, as well as Ukrainian and other Eastern European Nazi collaborators, were 'debriefed' and then provided with false documents that allowed them to escape to a new life in South (and even North) America. Patton's proposed push to Moscow did not materialise, however, mainly because US soldiers and civilians made it abundantly clear via demonstrations and even strikes that they would not put up with such a cynical *renversement des alliances*.

When the war in Europe ended in early May 1945, US imperialism found itself on top of the world. It had achieved a triumph over German imperialism, originally an informal partner but then formally an enemy, which would have been a formidable rival had it not been defeated – ironically enough by the Soviets, with only minimal help from allies such as the US. It was indeed thanks to the Soviets that US imperialism could eliminate German imperialism as a contender for

imperialist supremacy, place it under new and presumably democratic management, turn it into another junior partner, and with its help, economically penetrate and attain indirect political control over all of Western Europe. During the years following the end of the war, this US control would be solidly anchored in international organisations firmly controlled by Washington, such as the IMF and that reliable warhorse NATO, and also the emerging European Union (EU). The emergence of the EU as a US scheme to control Europe indirectly but securely, via a reliable German partner, has been described in detail in a recent book by the French historian Annie Lacroix-Riz (2014). Lacroix-Riz also explains how French imperialism, still a major player before the war but subordinated to German imperialism from 1940 to 1944, was happy to switch allegiance and become a junior partner of US imperialism upon the liberation of the country; it did so to prevent implementation of the plans for radical social-economic change formulated by the predominantly left-wing resistance movement. It was likewise in the context of the contemporary widespread popular support, throughout Europe, for anti-fascist and mostly anti-capitalist political and socio-economic changes, that German imperialism itself – personified by industrialists, bankers, and clerical and conservative elements in general – was happy to settle for the role of junior partner to US imperialism. Indeed, only US imperialism appeared able to rescue German imperialism from obliteration at the hands of Germany's resurgent (and radical) anti-fascist forces and the anti-imperialist Soviets.

In any event, by the spring of 1945, German imperialism had been eliminated as a challenger to the US. Great Britain had already been reduced irrevocably to the role of junior partner, and French imperialism had just reported for duty as yet another subservient paladin. Moreover, it was clearly only a matter of time before Japanese imperialism would be vanquished and turned into another moon circling the US Jupiter. The US had become the suprema of international imperialism, the uncontested leading power of international capitalism. The struggle for hegemony within the imperialist camp, which in many ways had begun in earnest in 1914, was settled.

Nevertheless, imperialism still faced a challenge: the Soviet Union. That irritant state enjoyed influence over an admittedly small

part of Germany and over most of Eastern Europe, denying the US an 'open door' for its exports and investment capital as well as any form of political control there. Having emerged from the terrible ordeal of war as the world's second most powerful country, the Soviet Union also enjoyed enormous prestige, even in the 'Western' world. More particularly, it served too as a source of inspiration, guidance, and support for anti-imperialist movements everywhere. Inspired by its example, social and national liberation movements in China and Vietnam would even prevent the US from enjoying an unchallenged hegemony in the Far East, which had been the unspoken US war aim in the conflict against Japan.

The war against Japan ended with mushroom clouds rising over the ruins of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but it did not have to be that way. Japan would have capitulated without the use of the atom bomb, mainly because on 8 August 1945, a declaration of war by the Soviet Union had robbed Tokyo of its last hope of attaching some minor conditions to its inevitable surrender. The atom bomb was really used to terrorise the Soviet Union into withdrawing from East Germany and Eastern Europe. (The bombing of Dresden in February 1945 had served a similar purpose.) But this 'atomic diplomacy', chronicled in great detail by the US historian Gar Alperovitz (1994), was unsuccessful, because the Soviet leaders responded by entrenching the Red Army in Europe as far west and as close to the US and British troops as possible, and by installing pro-Moscow regimes all over Eastern Europe.

And so, in the heat of the infernos of Dresden, and then Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Cold War was born. From the perspective of US imperialism, the Second World War had been a war against 'the wrong enemy', Nazi Germany and fascism in general, imperialist rivals but also fellow imperialists and fellow anti-Soviets; and alongside 'the wrong ally', the anti-imperialist Soviet Union. The Cold War would be the 'right' war in the sense that it would be fought against 'the right enemy' of US imperialism, and of imperialism in general: the anti-fascist, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist Soviet Union. In that war, the US would arrange to have, as 'the right ally', a supposedly 'new' and 'democratic' state established in the western part of Germany, ruled by an assemblage of deeply conservative men, including many former Nazis, who

shared a pro-capitalist and anti-Soviet ideology. We cannot go into the details of the history of the Cold War, but that conflict would end in the early 1990s, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the triumph of US imperialism. The US, since 1945 the undisputed leader of the imperialist camp, was henceforth the only superpower in a 'unipolar' world. But even that triumph would be far from complete, as US imperialism found itself confronted by new challenges such as the greatly increased might of China, a new great rival in the form of Putin's Russia, anti-imperialist movements in Venezuela and elsewhere in Latin America, and huge social, economic, and financial problems in the imperialist metropolises, including those of the US itself.

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## Zionism's Imperial Roots

### Imperialism

As commonly understood, imperialism is the domination of one people over another as a consequence of territorial expansion. At the root of this imperial process is physical conquest. What happens after conquest may vary. On the one hand, there might follow the most brutal form of imperialist aggression involving segregation and impoverishment of the indigenous population or even an attempt at their extermination. These extreme actions are usually taken to make way for the resettlement of the conquered land by elements of the conqueror's own population. Along with this would come a racist rationale explaining the primitiveness and inferiority of the conquered people, supporting the assertion that they must be removed to make way for the advance of civilisation. On the other hand, what might follow conquest is somewhat less murderous political control

and economic exploitation of the indigenous population. In this case there is no attempt at extermination (except of those who resist) and no large-scale displacement of population. There remains a rationale that pictures the 'natives' as primitive and inferior, but in this version of imperialism it is accompanied by a claim that conquest and economic exploitation will civilise and improve that population.

Just about all modern states outside of Europe have been shaped or influenced by past imperial conquest. This is particularly true of those states that are the product of the European expansion that took place from, roughly, the 16th through 20th centuries. Interestingly, those that now appear most Western (the US, Canada, Australia and, as we will see, Israel) followed the first and most brutal path of imperial policy. Many of the states subjected to the second, allegedly more benign path, now languish in poverty and dependency. However, either path that was taken led to a modern political and economic picture built on the dead bodies of native peoples who were killed during a process of conquest, worked to death in its aftermath, or condemned to generations of second-class citizenship.

It is no surprise that most Western history textbooks do not dwell on the realities of this process, resulting in a situation where many otherwise educated Western citizens are barely aware of these facts. However, in other states, among the surviving native generations of peoples shaped by imperial victimhood, the memory of that process persists and still leads to tense and sometimes violent episodes between the Western and non-Western worlds. Indeed, in at least one case, that of Israel-Palestine, the process of imperial conquest goes on apace, and does so in that initial, more brutal way, described above.

### Zionism

Modern Zionism is a movement seeking the establishment of a Jewish state. The idea took its present form in the work of the Austrian Jewish journalist Theodor Herzl who, reporting on the Dreyfus Affair in France (1894) and its accompanying anti-Semitism for his paper, came to the conclusion that the Jews would never be able to successfully integrate into European society (Wikipedia, Dreyfus Affair). Therefore, in an era when nation states were the predominant form of political

organisation, what the Jews needed was their own nation state. Herzl laid out his vision for a Jewish state in his book *Der Judenstaat* first published in 1896.

Important to the theme of imperialism is the fact that the motive for Zionism was the long trials and tribulations of Ashkenazi or European Jews. Herzl proceeded to found the World Zionist Organization (1897) but its members were almost exclusively Ashkenazi. An important question was where such a Jewish state could be located. Europe was out of the question, but Herzl was flexible when it came to the question of location. Over the years various territories in Africa and South America would be discussed. However, as the organisation grew it focused on the land of Palestine within the Ottoman Empire.

Herzl and his successors knew that wherever the Jewish state was realised it was going to be an imperialist undertaking, and particularly so if the target territory was Palestine. After all, the entire project, focused as it was on European Jewry, meant transferring large numbers of Europeans to a non-European land. Herzl and his fellow Zionists at the time did not think there was anything wrong with this because the 19th century was a time of European imperial expansion and thus constituted the foreign policy norm of the era. This being the case, the Zionist leaders who took over after Herzl's untimely death in 1904 (Chiam Weizmann and David Ben Gurion, etc.) concentrated their efforts on finding a Great Power ally that could facilitate the Zionist goal in the process of its own imperial expansion.

They eventually found this ally in the British Empire. It can be argued that the British were the most aggressive and successful imperialists of the age. By 1914 they were engaged in the First World War, which saw them also in need of allies. Thus, their alliance with the Zionists became possible against the backdrop of this war. We know why the Zionists sought this alliance, but why did the British react to the Zionist overtures favourably?

As late as 1917, the outcome of the First World War was in doubt. Indeed, the British and French were stymied on the Western Front and in the East they were in the process of losing their Russian ally because of the growing Bolshevik revolution. Under the circumstances, the British were casting about for assistance from just about anywhere they could find it. Because of the imagined worldwide influence of the Jews, men like

the prime minister David Lloyd George and the foreign secretary Arthur James Balfour convinced themselves that the Zionists could help encourage the US to enter the war as an ally and discourage the Russians from leaving it despite growing communist power. After all, there was Wilson's friend, Supreme Court justice William Brandeis, head of the American Zionists, in a position of influence in Washington; and Leon Trotsky, who was Jewish, among the Bolshevik power circle in Russia. Trotsky was, of course, an opponent of Zionism, but the British leaders overlooked this fact. Many of the British leaders also were what we would today call Christian fundamentalists and so believed that the modern Jews were actually descendants of ancient Hebrews and therefore had a biblical destiny to return to Palestine. Finally, as the British considered their possible conquest of the Ottoman Empire (now a wartime ally of Germany), they envisioned securing the eastern flank of the Suez Canal by taking possession of Palestine and implanting there a co-operative 'client population'. Thus, the basis for a deal between Zionists and the British imperialist existed (see Davidson 2001). How then was the partnership formalised?

### The Balfour Declaration

The partnership between the British government and the Zionists was made through the document known as the Balfour Declaration. It was issued on 2 November 1917 by Sir Arthur James Balfour, the British foreign secretary. He did so in the name of the wartime Cabinet of prime minister David Lloyd George. The Declaration read as follows:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

In a 1923 memorandum to the British Cabinet, colonial secretary Lord Cavendish described the Balfour Declaration as a 'war measure' carried out at 'a time of extreme

peril to the cause of the Allies'. Yet the whole episode reflected the imperialist mindset of the time. A European government (Great Britain) had undertaken to promise a private Western body (the World Zionist Organisation) open access to the territory of a non-European government (the Ottoman Empire). It was never actually demonstrated that the Zionists came through with their side of the Balfour Declaration bargain, and we can compare this to the pragmatic deal struck by the British around the same time with the Sherif of Mecca to support an independent Arab state throughout most of the Arab lands east of Suez in exchange for military assistance against the Turks. The Arabs certainly did keep their side of the bargain by launching repeated attacks on Ottoman forces throughout the war. Yet in the end the British abandoned the Arabs and restricted Arab independence to Arabia while converting the rest of the Arab lands into appendages of the British and French empires. On the other hand, the British never hesitated to fulfil their promise to the Zionists to facilitate their subsequent colonisation of Palestine. To do so allegedly facilitated their imperial goals.

Upon the Allied victory, the British and the French, following US president Woodrow Wilson's lead, established the League of Nations. Also, because of President Wilson's anti-imperialism articulated in his 14 points (which had promised self-determination the peoples of the German, Austrian, and Ottoman Empires), they masked the enlargement of empires with the mandate system. This was a system through which the Europeans would supposedly 'tutor' the non-Europeans in the art of self-government. The notion of Europeans, who had just initiated the most destructive war in world history, teaching non-Europeans how to act in politically responsible ways, must have struck the Arab leaders as absurd.

At the conference held at San Remo, Italy, on 24–25 April 1920, the British and French divided up the post-war mandates among the Allied powers as a form of spoils of war. The British gave themselves the mandate for Palestine. Later, the League of Nations, essentially following the dictates of the French and British, would confirm these 'awards'. The British then arranged for the Balfour Declaration to be incorporated into the preamble of the Palestine Mandate. It was in this fashion that the Balfour Declaration,

which was in truth a payment for wartime services allegedly rendered by the World Zionist Organisation, metamorphosed into what Colonel Ronald Storrs, Britain's governor in Jerusalem from 1917–26, called 'a high and noble task placed on our shoulders by the voice of nations' (Davidson 2001: 41).

From the British point of view at the time, this sort of talk translated into high-minded rationalisations for carrying forward their plan to implant the Jews as a client people in a conquered Arab territory. However, in the hands of the Zionist lawyers it would soon become the principal legal justification for the founding of the state of Israel. Thus, the Balfour Declaration is now often described as 'the official creation of the country [Jewish Palestine] .... The moment of birth of Jewish legal rights and title of sovereignty' and a 'binding act of international law ...' (Grief 2004).

It is to be noted that the Balfour Declaration promised a Jewish national home (which Zionists claim was but a euphemism for a Jewish state) in Palestine. Many Zionists insist that this meant all of Palestine, including Transjordan. This assertion places the UN resolution of 29 November 1947, partitioning Palestine, at odds with the Balfour Declaration. For those who assert the Declaration as the basis of Jewish sovereignty in Palestine, the UN partition resolution is 'an illegal abrogation of the Jewish legal rights and title of sovereignty to the whole of Palestine' (ibid.). It is on this basis that these same Zionists insist on Israel's 'legal right to keep all the lands it liberated in the Six Day War', (Grief 2005), and take violent exception to any 'compromises' with the Arabs. Some Zionists are even willing to assassinate Israeli heads of state (prime minister Yitzhak Rabin was killed in 1995) based on suspicion of such compromises.

The Balfour Declaration has obviously taken on a life of its own. The real intent of its authors, while still argued over, now stands second to the military power and political influence of those who would give the document a maximalist interpretation. The history of the document is testimony to the ability of those with power to shape the meaning of history as well as current events.

### Other Zionist arguments

It comes as no surprise that today's Zionists insist that Israel is not a product

of imperialist power and expansion. They have come to reinterpret their own origins in part because of changing times and attitudes. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, imperialism, at least from a Western perspective, was a legitimate pursuit. Indeed, Great Powers were 'great' in part because they were expansionist in this fashion. Therefore, the movement of European Jewish colonists into a non-Western land such as Palestine carried no stigma. However, by the end of the Second World War and the decolonisation process that followed, imperialism had acquired a quite negative image, and if the Zionists were going to claim legitimacy for their settlement project they would have to distance themselves from their imperialist roots and put in its place other claims to the territory they now occupied. Two arguments arose from the Zionists in their effort to escape their imperialist past.

### **Biblical origins**

To a certain extent the notion of Jewish biblical origins in Palestine had always been in the background of the Zionist movement. That is why, despite the fact that the great majority of early modern Zionists were secular and socialist, they nonetheless became fixated on Palestine as the optimal site for colonisation. The ensuing argument claimed that Palestine was originally a Jewish place because of the existence of the short-lived ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judea. The inevitable differences between ancient Hebrews and modern Jews (so great that they might not recognise each other as 'Jewish' if they met) were ignored. Around this claim were laid all the religious trappings of Bible lore and storytelling despite the lack of evidence that any of these stories were real. Much of Israeli archaeology has been directly or indirectly devoted to establishing the legitimacy of these biblical claims with little in-depth success.

While the claim of Israeli legitimacy due to the prior existence of an ancient Hebrew presence has laid a mythic foundation for modern Israel, taking it seriously sets a very dangerous precedent. The assertion that past ancient residence is a legitimate basis upon which to claim present sovereignty is a formula for chaos. If the alleged successors of 2,000-year-old ancestors now laid claim to all ancestral land, the political stability of many countries would soon be turned upside down. There would be war in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, etc. as there is now in Israel-Palestine.

### **Zionism as a national liberation movement**

As mentioned above, the post-Second World War era was one of decolonisation. That meant that it was correspondingly a period of national liberation with the creation of a large number of new nation states in the place of the collapsing empires of Britain, France and other Western countries. The Zionists attempted (and still attempt) to transform their imperialist roots into the actions of a national liberation movement.

The Zionists would point out that it is they who forced the British out of Palestine. In this they ignore the Arab revolt. But this claim is of little importance. It is how the Zionists got to Palestine that matters and objective history tells us that, prior to the Second World War, the vast majority of them arrived as clients of the British Empire. That, once there, they eventually turned against their original ally does not negate the fact of the original alliance. Nor does the fact that a small number of Jews resided in Palestine throughout the Ottoman period. These Jews, mostly religious devotees, never espoused any nationalist ambitions and, in fact, originally opposed Zionist claims to the land.

The Zionist claim to the status of a national liberation movement would be the equivalent of the apartheid white South Africans, or the white settlers of Algeria or Kenya, making the same claim. It certainly distorts the usual meaning of the term and can be regarded as basically a piece of self-justifying propaganda. Nor does the claim justify the State of Israel's essentially brutal imperialist style of behaviour once it was established.

### **The Zionist leadership's imperial plans**

The attitude of the early Zionist leadership toward the indigenous Arab population of Palestine was typical of European settlers. Here is how the founder of modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl, put it in a diary entry on 12 June 1895: 'We must expropriate gently, the private property .... We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries whilst denying it any employment in our own country' (Herzl 1960: 88). Herzl knew that expropriation was a generic behaviour for colonists during the era of European imperial dominance and he expected any Jewish colonial entity to follow

suit and ethnically cleanse much of its territory of non-Jews. And, of course, to the extent that culture is rooted in geography, in one's traditional and ancestral place, such ethnic cleansing constitutes cultural genocide. Herzl was not a violent man and imagined that this ethnic cleansing could be engineered solely through the manipulation of the economy, but those who came after him would not be so delicate.

The European Jews who entered Palestine in the baggage train of the British army, which now served as a vehicle for the expansion of empire, did not seriously factor the native people into their plans. They went about creating an exclusively Jewish economy which, when it employed Arabs at all, did so as cheap labour. The Zionists also required the eviction of all Palestinians from the land they purchased. This means that the Zionists never believed (and still do not) that the local population had any legitimate claims to Palestine. We happen to know what the Palestinian position was because it was documented by the ill-fated US King-Crane Commission. In 1919 that commission determined that the peoples of Greater Syria, of which Palestine was a part, wanted self-determination within an independent greater Arab state promised by the British to Sharif Hussein of Mecca in exchange for his willingness to rebel against the Ottoman Empire. That promise was never fulfilled.

Not surprisingly the British and the Zionists encountered evolving resistance to their imperial and colonial occupation. There were anti-colonial demonstrations as early as 1922, and in 1929 a large rebellion took place during which hundreds of lives were lost. What indigenous natural resistance to imperialism meant to the Zionist leaders such as Chaim Weizmann and David Ben Gurion was that the Palestinians could now be envisioned as enemies and anti-Semites, and their expulsion could therefore be rationalised as self-defence. This is a position adopted even today by the State of Israel. A number of forceful population transfer proposals followed. Indeed, from the late 1920s onward, 'transfer' became the polite term for proposed ethnic cleansing and cultural genocide.

There was at this time a recent precedent for the application of the concept of transfer. In 1923, Greece and Turkey signed the 'Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations' (Wikipedia,

Convention). Eventually, some 2 million people were impacted by this agreement. It allowed for compulsory denial of citizenship of ethnic Greeks in Turkey and ethnic Turks in Greece, and the subsequent deportation of those who did not leave voluntarily.

Another immediate impetus to the notion of transfer was the British decision to sever Transjordan from Palestine proper. This was done in 1922 so as to provide a territory for Abdallah, the older son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca. (Sharif Hussein was the leader who, during the First World War, had been promised an expansive Arab state in exchange for rebellion against the Ottoman Empire.) If the Arabs were not to get their large and independent Arab state, the British were willing to give Hussein's sons positions as rulers of small British client states. Thus, Hussein's son Feisal would become king of Iraq and Abdallah, the emir of Jordan. Dividing Transjordan from Palestine irked the Zionists (who were not allowed to settle there), some of whom, even today, feel that Jordan was 'stolen' from them. However, Weizmann seized on the separation to propose that the Palestinians living to the west of the Jordan river be transferred to Transjordan. 'Surely, if we cannot cross the Jordan the Arabs could', he wrote to the British colonial secretary Lord Passfield in 1930. At later moments, when the Zionists renewed their hope that Transjordan would become part of the future Jewish state, the concept of transfer of Palestinians was directed toward Iraq and Syria.

The Zionists subsequently applied pressure to the British government to consider a transfer plan, linking it to the success of the partition plan put forth by the 1937 Peel Commission. There is some evidence that the British were willing to go along with this idea and indeed at a meeting between Weizmann, Ben Gurion, and colonial secretary Ormsby-Gore on 28 June 1937 the latter agreed that 'the Arabs in the Jewish part [of Palestine] would have to be transferred' (Simons 2003: 42). As the probable outbreak of the Second World War became clearer to British leaders retreated from their advocacy of partition in order to keep the good will of the Arabs. But Weizmann never ceased to promote the possibility of transfer.

Weizmann was by no means alone in pressing for the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. His fellow Zionist leader, and sometime rival, David Ben Gurion also promoted the transfer of Arabs. In a meeting on 9 July 1936 with



Sir Arthur Wauchope, the British high commissioner in Palestine, Ben Gurion argued for the deportation of landless Palestinian peasants to Transjordan. He used almost the same words as would Weizmann. He told Wauchope that if Transjordan is closed to the Jews, 'it surely cannot be closed to the Arabs'. A year later, in 1937, Ben Gurion was still pushing for transfer, now adding Syria to Transjordan as a possible area of relocation (25).

As Ben Gurion pursued this idea, it expanded in his mind. In July 1937 he wrote in his diary, 'it would be of tremendous advantage to us. ... for every transferred Arab, one could settle four Jews on the land'. Also, he was soon ready to see transfer forcefully imposed upon the Palestinian Arabs. In a 1941 memorandum he noted that 'complete transfer without compulsion – and ruthless compulsion at that – is hardly imaginable' (33). For Ben Gurion, compulsory transfer of as many Arabs as possible was now a necessary step toward achieving 'a truly Jewish state'. He doubted if the British had the 'courage' to take up such a project. However, he was determined that the Zionists would do so the moment they got the chance. 'Any wavering on our part as to the necessity of this transfer, any doubt on our part as to the possibility of its achievement, any hesitation on our part as to the justice of it, are likely to lose us a historic opportunity which will not reoccur' (29). Ben Gurion's hoped for moment would come late in 1947 and throughout 1948.

Both Weizmann and Ben Gurion, as well as most of the Zionist leadership in Palestine, were fixated on the needs of their group. That group was the Ashkenazic Jews of Europe, and those needs, the Zionists believed, could only be fulfilled in the Arab land of Palestine. That meant changing the very demographic nature of this non-European place. This was an imperialist formula if ever there was one.

### **Israel's 'War of Independence' – the concept of transfer in practice**

In February 1947, the British government decided to give up its mandate and leave Palestine. The date for departure was set as 15 May 1948. Ben Gurion, sensing as early as 1946 that the British could not hold on for long, had been working on contingency plans

for taking over Palestine once the British were gone. These efforts culminated in two plans known as Plan Gimel or Plan C and Plan Dalet or Plan D. Gimel was a pre-planned series of responses to Palestinian resistance to the Zionist presence in Palestine, and included the murder of the Palestinian political and military leadership, financial supporters, and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Dalet was designed to realise the 'systematic and total expulsion' of Palestinians 'from their homeland' as a consequence of the upcoming military struggle with the Arabs (Pappe 2007: 28).

This was, of course, not the public position of the Zionist leadership. That position emphasised mass immigration of Jews into Palestine. But Ben Gurion, Weizmann, and the other Zionist leaders in Palestine knew that would not be enough to give the Jews a majority in the country. After all, in 1947 there were a million Palestinians in the territory the Zionists hoped to conquer. Against that number there were 600,000 Jews. For Ben Gurion, an acceptable, positive 'demographic balance' required at least an 80 per cent Jewish majority (48). For that to be achieved, Jewish immigration had to be complemented by Arab emigration.

The steps taken in this process of ethnic cleansing have been laid out in detail by the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé. Putting his account together with other information, we get the following narrative: David Ben Gurion and the Zionist leadership saw the disintegration of British rule, together with the UN partition plan, as the 'unique historical opportunity' they had been hoping for since the 1930s. This was their moment to create an 'exclusively Jewish state' and, as Ben Gurion had written back in 1941, there must be no wavering or hesitation in doing what was necessary to rid the country of as many Arabs as possible. At this point 'the country' meant, for the Zionist leadership, all of Palestine west of the Jordan river. They gave up the ambition of conquering Transjordan because they were negotiating a deal with Emir Abdullah (whose army was the most formidable Arab military force in the region) that would ensure his staying out of the forthcoming war. So, even before the end of the mandate, the Zionists had decided to destroy the UN promised Palestinian state.

In December of 1947, Palestinian Arabs protested against the United Nations plan to partition their country with a three-day

general strike and demonstrations. The demonstrations spilled over into assaults on some Jewish shops and markets. Even though these actions were short-lived and there was soon a clear indication of a return to 'normalcy,' Ben Gurion used the incidents as an excuse to trigger Plan Gimel. Subsequent attacks on Palestinian villages and neighbourhoods were severe enough to cause some 75,000 Arab residents to run for their lives (40).

When in early January 1948 the first units of an all-volunteer Arab irregular force entered Palestine, the Zionist leadership initiated Plan Dalet (officially inaugurated in March but really acted upon earlier) and forced transfer or ethnic cleansing became a primary military objective. Ben Gurion told his followers that the Arabs were now a 'fifth column' and therefore they had to be arrested en masse or expelled. He concluded that 'it is better to expel them' (49). And how was one to expel them? Urban areas as well as villages were targeted for violent assaults, and massacres were apparently committed purposefully so as to spread panic among the Arabs of Palestine. Ben Gurion describes the tactics in a diary entry of 1 January 1948. Actions must be 'strong and brutal'. They must be carried out 'without mercy, women and children included'. And, finally, 'there is no need to distinguish between guilty and not guilty' (69). As part of this goal, the Zionist leadership was particularly anxious to destroy a longstanding tradition of Jewish and Arab worker co-operation in Haifa, and the unwritten truce between the Jewish city of Tel Aviv and the Arab town of Jaffa, or anywhere else where Jewish-Arab amity existed (58, 65). By the end of April, some 250,000 Arabs had fled. It is to be noted that this was before the entrance of regular Arab military forces into Palestine.

This was, of course, only the beginning. The Zionist 'war of independence' went on into early 1949 and a part of it continued to be waged against the unarmed civilian Arab population of Palestine. The Israeli historian Benny Morris has described the results: 'The principal cause of the mass flight [of Palestinians] ... was Jewish military attack. Almost every instance – the exodus – was the direct and immediate result of an attack on and conquest of Arab neighborhoods and towns' (Morris 1999: 255). Some 419 Arab villages and towns were eventually destroyed and their populations killed or evicted. When

it was all over Ben Gurion had achieved his 'positive demographic balance' and the vast majority of Palestine's Arabs were refugees. Only about 150,000 Arabs remained in what was now Israel. This is what the Arabs call the *Nakbah*, or 'Disaster'.

### Post-independence imperialism – cultural genocide

Having won 'independence', the Israelis embarked upon an ongoing process to 'Hebraise' the land they now called their own. Making the land 'Hebrew' automatically meant making it no longer Arab. As much as possible of the heritage of Arab culture, like the Arabs themselves, had to be evicted. This too can be seen as an imperialist process.

It began with a process of renaming things. It turned out that the Zionists had created a 'naming committee' back in the 1920s which had the job of 'Hebraising' the small areas of Palestine purchased by the Jewish National Fund (JNF). In 1949 this committee became a subdivision of the JNF and, with the help of archaeologists, geographers, and biblical scholars, began to systematically erase Palestine's Arab history and heritage from Israel's own official records, maps, histories, etc. This is a process that continues to this day. For instance, in July 2009, Israel's Transport Ministry announced that road signs (which now appear in Hebrew, Arabic, and English) would be replaced with signs in Hebrew only. This will happen despite the fact that 20 per cent of the country are Arabic speakers and Arabic is supposedly one of Israel's 'official languages'. The transport minister, Yisrael Katz, asserted that he would not allow pre-1948 names on road signs. Doing so would threaten to turn 'Jewish Jerusalem into Palestinian Al-Quds' (BBC 2009).

Also in 1949, an Israeli meta-narrative was spun to the effect that when the Zionists arrived Palestine had comprised a small number of hostile, backward, and nomadic residents but was otherwise largely empty. Thus, according to the history officially taught to all Israelis, and all Jewish children enrolled in Hebrew schools the world over, the only cultural heritage to exist in Israel, past and present, is the Jewish one. To make this alternative history plausible, the Israelis set about destroying many Palestinian archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient mosques, historic houses, and the like, to the extent that

UNESCO's World Heritage office describes their actions as 'crimes against the cultural heritage of mankind' (Chamberlain 2014; see also Kletter 2005).

Through the 1950s, the Israeli government allowed both Christian and Muslim holy sites, museums, and archives to be looted by their own soldiers and then proceeded to destroy them. Those few Israeli archaeologists who objected were lied to about what was happening (they were told that the Arabs were doing the looting) and then, if they persisted in their opposition, forced to resign. David Ben Gurion, Moshe Dyan, and Golda Meir were all directly involved in this process of cultural destruction (Rapoport 2008). The process of preventing any public re-emergence of Palestinian culture goes on to the present day. For instance, in 2009 UNESCO chose East Jerusalem as the 2009 Arab Capital of Culture. The Israeli government immediately declared that no celebrations or demonstrations to this effect would be allowed. They banned all of the UNESCO-sponsored events not only in Jerusalem but also elsewhere such as in the city of Nazareth. Parallel Palestinian sports events, a literary festival, and a women's festival were also banned. Presently, Palestinians on the West Bank are under some 1,500 military regulations, many of which attack their ability to culturally and politically express themselves.

It should come as no surprise that Israeli textbooks mention none of this, but rather, according to Professor Daniel Bar-Tal of Tel Aviv University, 'present the view that Jews are involved in a justified, and even humanitarian, war against an Arab enemy that refuses to accept and acknowledge the existence and rights of Jews in Israel'. He found that from the beginning of the state of Israel up to the present time, Israeli school books have defamed Arabs by labelling them as 'killers' and 'robbers.' Israeli Jews, on the other hand are consistently pictured as 'improving the country in ways they believe the Arabs are incapable of' (Meehan, 1999: 19–20).

Jamal Atamneh, coordinator of the Arab Education Committee in Support of Local Councils, a Haifa based NGO, notes that while the textbooks used by the Arab Israeli population are written in Arabic, they are not prepared by Palestinians who also have no advisory role in their preparation. 'For the past 15 years, not one new Palestinian academic has been placed in a high position in the [Education] Ministry. There are no

Palestinians involved in preparing the Arabic-language curriculum [and] obviously, there is no such thing as affirmative action in Israel' (20). As As'ad Ghanem of Haifa University notes, Israeli Arab education budgets are considerably below those of the Israeli Jewish sector and this is a consequence of 'continuing discrimination in practically every sphere of life' (Ghanem 2001: 159). One consequence of these cumulative efforts has been to make 'Nakbah denial' easier for Israeli Jews and Zionists generally. As far as Palestinians are concerned, Nakbah denial is the Israeli version of Holocaust denial.

After 1948, some of the destroyed Arab villages were transformed into Israeli towns. In a rare moment of public truthfulness, the Israeli general and politician Moshe Dyan stated, 'Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You do not even know the names of these Arab villages, and I do not blame you because geography books [giving their names] no longer exist. ... There is not one single place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population' (Lis and Houry 1969). As for Dyan's reference to missing Geography books, in January of 2010 the Al Jazeera news network reported on an interview conducted with an Israeli citizen doing a doctoral thesis at Ben Gurion University. The student's research shows that Israeli forces 'plundered and destroyed tens of thousands of Palestine books in the years after the State's establishment'. According to the researcher, this was done 'in the framework of its plan to Judaize the country and cut off its Arab residents from their nation and culture'. It was a 'cultural massacre' concludes this researcher (Aletho News 2010). Over the intervening years there have been periodic attacks on Palestinian libraries and archives, not only in Israel and the Occupied Territories, but also in other countries such as Lebanon. These actions have not go unnoticed. In the summer of 2002 the American Library Association issued a resolution stating that the organisation (which has 450,000 members) 'deplores the destruction of library and cultural resources anywhere in the world, and therefore the destruction of these Palestinian library and cultural resources'. The resolution was considerably watered down under pressure. Its original version directly named the Israeli government as the perpetrator of the destruction (Heuer 1999).

Where the destroyed villages were not transformed into Israeli places, their ruins were bulldozed away and forests were planted in their place. Ilan Pappé tells us that this was part of what Israel calls 'making the desert bloom.' Referring to the web page of the Jewish National Fund, Pappé notes that many of the largest and most popular forest areas promoted by the site were not, as the JNF claims, built upon 'arid and desert-like areas' but on top of the ruins of once thriving Palestinian towns. Pappé refers to this as the 'deliberate airbrushing of history' (2007: 229–34).

To these efforts one can add the destruction and desecration of Palestinian cemeteries, the purposeful uprooting or burning of the crops (particularly olive trees) of Palestinian farmers, the targeting of cultural centres, including the destruction of the Palestinian Ministry of Culture in 2002, and the special attention the Israeli government gave to undermining the Arabs of East Jerusalem following the 1967 war. For instance, the foundations of Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque, one of the most sacred shrines of Islam and the religious and cultural symbol of Palestine, have been physically weakened by 25 adjacent Israeli archaeological excavations. The mosque itself has been the target of repeated acts of terrorism by Israelis including arson and vandalism. A fanatical sect within Zionism seeks the mosque's total destruction so as to pave the way for the rebuilding of Solomon's temple. This effort is financially funded by fanatical Christian fundamentalists, most of whom are Americans (Chehata 2010).

### **Post-independence imperialism – treatment of remaining 'Israeli-Arabs'**

After 1948, in those areas where there were no more Arabs, it was relatively easy to perform cultural genocide. However, as mentioned, there was a small remnant of approximately 150,000 Arabs still left in what was now Israel. The Israelis often referred to them as 'present absentees' because, even though they had remained in Israel, they often ended up dispossessed of their land and homes. The historian Mark Tessler calls these people 'internal refugees'. Tessler tells us that the result was that they were 'divorced from their traditional social and economic institutional connections,' and 'cut off from

their families and countrymen who resided in states with which Israel remained at war' (1994: 281). Both their physical and cultural presence in the Jewish state was seen as a threat by the Zionist leadership who, following Ben Gurion's lead, continued to perceive this group as a 'fifth column'. And so, in October 1948, they were all placed under a system of martial law that lasted until 1966.

What martial law meant for the remaining Palestinians was a regime of restricted travel, curfews, administrative detentions, expulsions, confinement to certain geographical areas, limitation on the freedoms of expression and the press, assembly, and due process. The only legal right left to the Israeli-Arabs was the right to vote (they were given Israeli citizenship). Why give a feared and hated minority such a right? There are two possible reasons. First, it would be 'evidence' that Israel was the political democracy it claimed to be. Second, the Palestinians left in Israel were so small in number, so isolated and so controlled that voting was a meaningless act in terms of changing their condition, much less the essentially imperialist system that controlled Israel.

The military regime under which these people were placed facilitated their dispossession. A systematic transfer of the landed property from the remaining Arabs to Jewish control now took place. This was done by the office of the Custodian of Absentee Property. According to the Custodian, any non-Jew who was 'absent' from his usual place of residence on or after 29 November 1947 could have his property confiscated. This was so even if you returned home on 30 November! It was deemed that the bulk of Israel's remaining Arabs were so absent.

The consequences of this process were economically devastating. For instance, the Palestinian Muslim societal structure, with its traditional hierarchy, its public and private endowments, social and economic support systems etc. all disappeared. The Palestine Christian community fared little better. Pauperised and isolated, the Palestinians of Israel quickly had the highest unemployment in the country. Mostly rural folk, many were forced to move to urban areas allotted to the Arab community where they became a classical cheap labour force. The Jewish state proceeded to deny them any personal benefits given to Israeli Jews, they were denied access to over 70 per cent of the economy (through

the ploy of not having served in the Israeli army), their education budgets were kept to a minimum, and any expression of Palestinian national feelings was made criminal (Pappe 2004: 160).

Ultimately, Zionist plans for the Palestinians under their control resembled the apartheid system then in place in South Africa. On a visit to Italy, ex-Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon explained to then Italian prime minister Massimo D'Alema that South Africa's 'bantustan model was the most appropriate solution to [Israel's] conflict [with the Palestinians in its territory]' (Eldar 2009).

### **Continuing imperialism – the Occupied Territories**

When Israel won the Six Day War in 1967, it found itself in control of territories that had traditionally been considered part of Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel) by the Zionist Movement. As early as 1918, when Chiam Weizmann presented the case for Zionist control of Palestine to the Paris Peace Conference, he presented a map that included the territories taken in 1967. After the Six Day War, this expansionist point of view was not just held by the conservative Likud Party. Leaders of the Labour Party also were of this conviction. Thus the idea that the conquered territories of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem (as well as Syria's Golan Heights) were to be used as bargaining chips in negotiations that would trade land for peace has always been doubtful, and historically it is a tactic that has never been used.

Almost immediately after the end of the 1967 war, Israel's Labour Government began to establish colonies along the Jordan River. These were referred to as defensive military establishments but they soon had all of the characteristics of small civilian agricultural settlements. This made them illegal under international law. Within a year of the war's end, some 14 colonies had been set up throughout the conquered lands. In the early years of the colonisation programme, Israel's Labour Government tried to manipulate the process. This was done not to limit the numbers of settlers but rather to direct them to strategic points that would facilitate long-term control of the territories. With the election of more conservative Likud Party Governments in 1977 and afterwards,

restraints on settlement loosened considerably. Both parties used special tax breaks and subsidised housing to attract colonists.

Two types of Israelis have been attracted to the colonies of the Occupied Territories. One group, making up about 60 per cent of the current settler population, comprises citizens whose motivations are mainly economic. These people have been attracted by the government's tax breaks, cheap rents, and subsidised mortgages. Having grown up in a strictly segregated society that taught them to view the Palestinians as latter-day Nazis, they have no compunction about living on land confiscated from the local population. The other group, constituting of some 40 per cent of the settler population, are religious fanatics who see the West Bank (an area they called Judea and Samaria) as well as Gaza as part of the God-given religious patrimony of the Jewish people. They believe that they have a divine mission to colonise the Occupied Territories. Their behaviour indicates that they are not only determined to settle the occupied lands, but that they hope to eventually drive out the non-Jewish population. They have also been willing to go to great lengths to sabotage any international effort that might result in a trade of land for peace.

A good example of this latter group is Gush Enumin (the Bloc of the Faithful). The group was established in 1968, significantly, in a hotel in occupied Hebron. By 1974, under the leadership of Rabbi Moïse Levinger, Gush Enumin was the most aggressive settlement organisation in Israel. This aggressiveness included booby-trapping the cars of several West Bank mayors, plotting to blow up Arab buses, and even planning an attack on the Muslim holy site of the Harem al-Sharif (Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock mosque). With the election of Menachim Begin and the Likud Party in 1977, Gush Enumin got a green light to settle anywhere in the territories. They did so as armed squatters with the co-operation and assistance of the Israeli government, particularly the man who was then agricultural minister, Ariel Sharon.

Once an alliance was solidified between fanatical religious colonists such as Gush Enumin and the right-wing Likud Governments of Israel, the position of the Palestinian population deteriorated rapidly. About 40 per cent of the land on the West Bank was quickly taken and more is confiscated every year. Some 88 per cent of the water drawn

in the territories is diverted for the use of the colonists. Palestinian freedom of movement has been severely limited as the land they do live on is cut up into isolated cantons by checkpoints, Jewish-only roads, and 'security' walls. Violence by settlers towards Palestinians has become endemic. It must be understood that the status of the more fanatical and violent colonists is not that of rebels. It is that of a vigilante arm of the Israeli government. Taking the colonising movement as a whole, it represents an ongoing process of ethnic cleansing and cultural genocide against the indigenous Palestinian population.

Things have not always gone well for Israel's settlers. For instance, the incessant resistance put up by the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip helped convince the Likud Government of Ariel Sharon, in August of 2005, to cut its losses and withdraw the settlements located in that area. There were only 8,000 settlers in the Gaza region living next to nearly 1.5 million hostile Palestinians. Such a move also made easier a subsequent near-total blockade of Gaza which would rapidly impoverish its population. Nonetheless, the removal of the Gaza settlers so upset the Zionist religious settlement movement that they threatened civil war if they were called upon to leave the West Bank. There is no indication of present or future Israeli plans to do this. Indeed, settlement of the West Bank and East Jerusalem continue apace and Israel has now transferred over a 500,000 of its citizens into these areas.

All of Israel's settlements are illegal under international law. The law referred to here is the Fourth Geneva Convention to which Israel is a signatory. That convention forbids the forceful or voluntary transfer of a conquering country's civilian population into the conquered areas. The illegal status of the Israeli settlements has been confirmed by the International Court of Justice at the Hague, various international human rights organisations, various United Nations Resolutions, and even by the legal council for the Israeli Foreign Ministry. Legal Council Theodor Meron stated officially in 1967 that 'my conclusion is that civilian settlement in the administered territories [the Occupied Territories] contravenes the explicit provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention' (Wikipedia, United Nations). Sometimes Israel will deny the illegality of the

settlements using rather contorted misinterpretations of the law, but most of the time the government just ignores the issue. It has been allowed to do so because the governments of the US and Europe have seen fit to ignore Israeli behaviour and policies. Thus, while Israel is in violation of international law, there are no police to move against that nation and its settler agents.

The settlements are at the heart of post-1967 Israeli imperialism but they are also, almost necessarily, accompanied by the accoutrements of imperial force: the arrest or execution of all who resist, characterisation of resisting groups as 'terrorists', checkpoints, internal passports and the control of population movement, control of the indigenous economy for the benefit of the imperial conqueror, and in the case of Palestine, we can add water theft and home demolitions.

## Conclusion

In the case of Israeli imperialism the present truly flows from the past. The fact that the Zionist movement has its roots in the imperial orientation of the European powers at the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century explains its subsequent behaviour and policies. The style of Israeli imperialism is the brutal kind explained at the beginning of this essay. It is the type of imperialism that is designed to eliminate the indigenous population and replace it with the population of the imperial conqueror.

The relentless pursuit of their imperial aim explains the consistent policy of rejectionism when it comes to the so-called peace process. The peace process, as described by William Quandt (2005) has been going on since the 1970s. Here are some examples of the process: the Rogers Plan (1970-72) sought a resolution to the 1967 War issues based on UN Resolution 242. The Israelis rejected this. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter arranged for the Camp David I Summit between Menachem Begin of Israel and Anwar Sadat of Egypt. This meeting was to create a 'framework for Peace' that included, among other things, autonomy for the Palestinians. As it is turned out, according to Carter, Begin lied about his intentions to grant that autonomy and so, in terms of the Palestinians, that part of the Camp David process failed (Carter 2008). In 1991-93 there was the Madrid Conference which sought resolution of the Arab-Israeli

conflict as well as Palestinian-Israeli issues. This failed in good part due to Israeli intransigence. In 1993 came the Oslo Accords which saw the return to Palestine from exile in Tunisia of Yasser Arafat and the PLO. Israel allowed this under the assumption that Arafat would keep order among the Palestinians while the Israelis continued illegal expansion into the Occupied Territories. When the PLO refused to perform this role, the Oslo Accords began to break down. In 2000, the Camp David II Summit took place under the auspices of the Clinton Administration. At this meeting Israel allegedly offered Yasser Arafat most of the West Bank but configured in such a way that it hardly came to more than a series of Bantustans. Arafat rejected the offer as not amounting to a functional state. In 2002, the Arab League offered up a plan for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that promised Israel full recognition from the Arab states and open trade in exchange for Israeli agreement to the 1967 line as the border of a Palestinian state. Israel refused. Finally, George W. Bush initiated the 'Road Map' for peace. Under this same rubric, and pressured by the Obama Administration, direct talks between Israelis and Palestinians took place in 2010 and again in 2014. President Obama aimed at a viable two-state solution. But these talks soon bogged down as well, largely due to Israel's reluctance to compromise on issues that they felt they could simply resolve by main force and the introduction of a relatively new demand: the insistence that the Palestinian side explicitly accept not only Israel's right to exist (which the PLO had done as early as 1988) but that it accept Israel as an eternal 'Jewish state'. As the Palestinian Papers (leaked to the public in January 2011) detailing the 2010 negotiations made clear, the Palestinians agreed to the vast majority of Israeli demands (Swisher 2011). And yet the Israelis turned up their noses and walked away. Thanks to US support, they could have all they want by virtue of their military superiority. And what they want is the West Bank (Judea and Samaria): all of it.

There can be no doubt that Israel is an imperialist state, both in its origins and its continuing practice. That is why there has been no solution to its conflict with the Palestinians. The end of the era of European imperialism came when the cost of maintaining the imperial system was economically greater than the citizens of the imperial states

were willing to bear. That is probably what, in the end, will bring down Israel as an imperialist state: when its outside allies cease to subsidise its imperialist policies and much of the world will no longer have economic intercourse with it, the Israeli Jewish citizens will have to bear the cost of their government's imperialist efforts by themselves. If history is any guide, that is when the Israelis will begin to rethink their imperialist character.

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# **MOVEMENTS AND IDEOLOGIES**

# Anti-Colonialism and Imperialism (1960s–1970s)

## Introduction

In 1971, Ariel Hoffman and Armand Matterlard published *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic in Chile* during the short period of Salvador Allende's presidency. Soon after Pinochet's coup d'état, the book was banned and the remaining copies were destroyed. In just a decade, this title had been published in 15 different countries and translated into 16 different languages. This example is emblematic of the depth of the struggle between the imperialist camp and the (former) colonies and dependent countries that went beyond politics and economics to include the cultural field. In basic Marxist terms, it can be argued that during the 1960s and 1970s, imperialism was heavily criticised not only at the level of the economic base, but also at the level of the superstructure.

This essay aims at addressing the different aspects of anti-colonialism in the 1960s and 1970s, both in the way it was expressed in the former colonies and in relation to the impact it had within imperialist countries. This impact was visible in the formation of anti-war and anti-imperialist movements, as well as movements inspired by anti-colonial struggles (e.g. The Black Panther Party for Self-Defence in the US, or ETA in Spain). Before proceeding to the analysis, we will need to outline the evolution that the Second World War brought about in the world capitalist system with respect to the end of colonialism in its original form and its transformation into neo-colonialism. An enlightening periodisation of decolonisation is provided in Betts (2004) and Rothermund (2006), both of whom provide glossaries of terms or historical events that can help the reader conceptualise the issues dealt with in this essay.

The post-Second World War period was undoubtedly marked by national liberation movements in the former colonies of Western imperialist countries. Decolonisation was initiated in the 1940s with the formation of six independent states, followed by ten more in the 1950s. But it was the decade of the 1960s that was crucially marked by anti-colonialism, since the states that gained their independence during that decade were twice as numerous as those of the previous two decades

combined (Betts 2004: 112–113). The need to study imperialism and anti-colonialism when investigating the aforementioned period has been stressed by historians and other social scientists who have studied this era. As Frederic Jameson emphasises in his milestone article on the 1960s:

It does not seem particularly controversial to mark the beginnings what would come to be called the 60s in the third world with the great movement of decolonization in British and French Africa. It can be argued that the most characteristic expressions of a properly first world 60s are all later than this, whether they are understood in countercultural terms – drugs and rock – or in the political terms of a student new left and a mass antiwar movement. Indeed, politically, a first world 60s owed much to third-worldism in terms of politicocultural models, as in a symbolic Maoism, and, moreover, found its mission in resistance to wars aimed precisely at stemming the new revolutionary forces in the third world. ... The one significant exception to all this is in many ways the most important first world political movement of all – the new black politics and the civil rights movement, which must be dated, not from the Supreme Court decision of 1954, but rather from the first sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina, in February of 1960. Yet it might be argued that this was also a movement of decolonization, and in any case the constant exchange and mutual influences between the American black movements and the various African and Caribbean ones are continuous and incalculable throughout this period. (1984: 180)

In this context, adopting the notion of the 'Long Sixties' – as elaborated by Arthur Marwick (2012) – can help conceptualise the period, whose beginnings may be said to coincide with the emergence of decolonisation struggles of the mid-1950s, as in Algeria or the Second Indochina War (Vietnam War), and their influence on the youth and radical movements in the rest of the world.

## Post-Second World War imperialism and colonialism

The Second World War brought about momentous changes in the global balance

of forces, with the US now being the leading imperialist country, the Axis-related imperialisms not only having been defeated, but also subjugated to (mainly US) imperialism. The East, from the Balkans to China a few years later, was now largely red. And the former colonies had initiated a process of decolonisation through a variety of means, from pleas to the United Nations to armed struggle. The impact of these changes on imperialist countries was felt on three levels:

- The first level concerned the changes that decolonisation brought to each imperialist country's position on the geopolitical chessboard, since the loss of former colonies entailed not only economic losses but also loss of the political and military control of geographical regions.
- The second level concerned changes to the equilibrium between the West and the East, understood in terms of the two mutually exclusive worlds of capitalism and that of socialism.
- The third level reflected the contradictions within imperialist countries that were intensified by the emergence of anti-war and anti-colonial/anti-imperialist movements, and, in some cases, movements of various minorities with demands ranging from equality to separatism or autonomy. These movements were to a great extent inspired by the anti-colonial struggles in the so-called 'Third World' (on the lack of concrete conceptualisation of this term, see Tomlinson 2003: 307–321). The most distinctive case was that of the Vietnam War and the impact it had on a global scale on the rise of the anti-war movement and the radicalisation of youth movements.

Each imperialist country had to face the new reality and develop its own strategy and tactics towards this decolonisation process. There were a variety of different approaches on the part of each imperialist country towards each former colony's demand for independence. There were cases in which independence was granted without the necessity for armed struggle. Nevertheless, in every case, the former colonial forces focused on safeguarding their interests, either by denying independence or by imposing – or attempting to impose – their successors, drawn from the local ruling classes. The end of formal empires did not bring the end of colonialism

*ex facto* (Hobsbawm 1995: 199–222). What it actually did was to transform the 19th and early 20th-century imperial-colonial nexus into the post-Second World War imperialism-neo-colonialism nexus. In this latter nexus, independence would be nominally granted to the former colonies while, in reality, imperialism aimed at retaining control and perpetuating its regime of domination and exploitation (on the transition from colonialism to neo-colonialism, see Rothermund 2006: 258–274). The global geopolitical realignment was also determined by the fact that, apart from the US in the West and the Soviet Union in the East, all the other major players on the international chessboard had been either defeated or weakened during the Second World War.

### **Workers and oppressed peoples and nations of the world, unite!**

The above exhortation was used by the Communist Party of China in its document 'A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement' <<http://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sino-soviet-split/cpc/proposal.htm>> (03 June 2013). This document, published in 1963, captures the momentum of the anti-imperialist, anti-colonial struggles of the period I am dealing with. Important anti-colonial struggles exploded in formerly French colonies such as Algeria and Indochina, and Dutch colonies such as Indonesia. Despite these significant anti-colonial and national liberation struggles that took place in the vast majority of the so-called 'Third World', the milestone of the era was the struggle in Vietnam. As a consequence of this view of Truth, Gandhi was always ready to amend his ideas and change his mind about actions already undertaken and underway. This has been criticised by many, even in his own times, as being inconsistent or opportunistic. This is not only due to the fact that the Vietnamese anti-colonial struggle lasted for almost three decades – having been initially formed in order to fight against French rule in the 1940s and 1950s, later struggling against US imperialism until the defeat of the latter in the mid-1970s – but mainly because this defeat was inflicted upon the main force within the Western camp, the US. The Vietnam War led to a global solidarity movement, and had an impact on the formation or radicalisation of many social

movements – especially youth movements – as well as on the emergence of anti-US, anti-imperialist sentiment throughout the world.

Anti-colonialism cannot be viewed or treated *en bloc*. Different political and social forces led anti-colonial struggles and the overall decolonisation process in each country. On the one hand, there were conservative or progressive bourgeoisies that sought an independent state – i.e. political independence – through which they could gain a bigger share of the wealth and power than was possible during the colonial period. On the other hand, there existed radical and revolutionary forces whose aims were not limited to merely gaining political independence, but included transforming their societies as well. Questions regarding what was to be done the day after independence were not restricted to the geographical framework of the former colony, and led to the development of ideologies such as Pan-Africanism, Pan-Arabism or the use of the term ‘Third World’ as a global framework within which individual anti-colonial struggles were part. The ideologies of Pan-Africanism and Pan-Arabism were developed, echoing voices in the anti-colonial camp that articulated how national liberation and social emancipation of the formerly colonial world could only be achieved through a project of unifying the newly liberated areas, rather than through upholding singular paths for each one taken separately. One of the most distinctive representatives of this approach, Kwame Nkrumah, a leader of the anti-colonial struggle in Africa and the first president of Ghana, wrote:

Three alternatives are open to African states; first, to unite and to save our continent; secondly, to continue in disunity and to disintegrate; or thirdly, to sell out and capitulate before the forces of imperialism and neo-colonialism. As each year passes, our failure to unite strengthens our enemies and delays the fulfillment of the aspirations of our people. (Nkrumah 1973: 125)

It emblematic of this trend that Nkrumah, who found himself in exile in the mid-1960s after his rule had been overthrown in a coup (Birmingham 1995: 22), created a publishing house named ‘Panaf Books’, specialising in Pan-Africanism and other related issues. (See <<http://www.panafbooks.com/History.html>>, (04 June 2013).

The anti-colonial struggle not only involved the imperialists and the anti-colonial forces. The situation was often complicated by the position of the two main forces in the communist camp, China and the Soviet Union. The communist camp faced a split in the early 1960s that affected the struggles in the former colonies. The communist forces that played a significant role in the anti-colonial struggle aligned themselves either with China or the Soviet Union. There have been cases, especially in the 1970s, where the anti-colonial camp within a country splintered into two or more different sides, often leading to civil war (e.g. Angola; see Rothermund 2006: 231–238).

In order to analyse the anti-colonial struggles of the period, either in a single case or in general terms, the following factors ought to be taken into consideration:

- the sociopolitical and economic forces that formed and led the anti-colonial struggle
- the colonial forces and their potential for forging alliances and for transformation according to shifting circumstances (e.g. the transition from the French to the US in Vietnam)
- the position of the Soviet Union and China towards the anti-colonial struggle as a local focus of a wider ideological and political conflict, which must be assessed both in terms of diplomacy (statements, speeches in international fora and organisations) and in terms of material support (supplying arms and ammunition, military training).

### **In the belly of the beast: Struggles within imperialist countries**

‘[T]he revolutionary movement has never been so powerful in the world, now that the Third World movements for liberation and economic independence have been joined to the anti-capitalist struggle in the imperialist centres.’ This quotation, by Etienne Balibar (1977: 194) addresses the significance of the relation between, on the one hand, the anti-colonial struggles and, on the other hand, struggles within the imperialist countries. The interpenetration of the two struggles cannot be stressed enough. The interaction of the two struggles – of those in the ‘Third World’ and those in imperialist and capitalist countries – should not be perceived as equal.

The struggles in the ‘Third World’ were, as we will see later, inspirational – mainly for the youth and the oppressed minorities – in the so-called ‘First’ and ‘Second’ Worlds; but there is no evidence, or at least evidence of an equal impact, of inspiration also flowing in the opposite direction.

The impact of anti-colonial movements on the imperialist and other capitalist countries, or on non-colonial countries, is visible in two different categories that have historically interacted with each other. The first was the development of anti-war and anti-imperialist movements in imperialist countries. These emerged as a direct result of expressions of solidarity with anti-colonial struggles. The second was the development of both theoretical positions and movements that were either inspired, guided, or otherwise affected by anti-colonial struggles.

As far as the former category is concerned, Vietnam should be considered the anti-colonial struggle that played the most significant role in creating a global anti-war movement. Vietnam was the womb from which emerged what we now refer to as the ‘Long Sixties’. Although the seeds had already been there since the period of the Algerian War and the Cuban Revolution, among others (Kalter 2013: 24). As Christoph Kalter states:

[T]his war was perceived by contemporary 68ers as being part of a larger Third World problematic shaped by the confrontation of ‘imperialism’ and ‘anti-imperialism’. (2013: 24)

Kalter underlines the fact that the notion of ‘Third World’ was also crucial for many of the protesters of the 1960s since:

[t]he concept allowed for a radical critique of existing systems of power and representations while permitting them at the same time to elaborate equally radical alternatives. The Third World stimulated the transnational mobilization of protest movements. It had profound effects on worldviews and self-images of intellectuals and activists. (ibid.)

Regardless of the national particularities and dimensions of each movement, activists of the 1960s and the 1970s regarded themselves as part of a global movement with the anti-colonial struggles at the vanguard. ‘The storm

of the people’s revolution in Asia, Africa and Latin America requires every political force in the world to take a stand. This mighty revolutionary storm makes the imperialists and colonialists tremble and the revolutionary people of the world rejoice’ (Communist Party of China 1963). It is no coincidence that this was a high tide for separatist movements in imperialist countries, including movements of the Basques in Spain, then Corsicans in France, and Francophones in Quebec. Anti-colonial struggles also constituted the ideological and political basis for groups like the German ‘Red Army Faction’ (Moncourt and Smith 2009). Furthermore, the fact that race issues were placed at the top of the agenda in countries like the US, culminating in the formation of political organisations focusing on people of specific race/ethnicity such as the Black Panther Party for Self-Defence (see Seale 1991) or the Young Lords (Enck-Wanzer 2010) cannot be fully comprehended outside of the context of anti-colonialism. An incident that highlights this relationship is featured in the documentary *Eldridge Cleaver: Black Panther* (1970), directed by William Klein. The documentary was filmed in Algiers where, in addition to Cuba and France, Eldridge Cleaver had found refuge while in exile. William Klein met Cleaver at the Pan-African Cultural Festival in 1969, where Cleaver had been officially invited by the Algerian government to participate along with his African-American Information Centre.

One should not forget the impact of revolutionary figures like Ho Chi Minh and Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara ‘on the youth all over the world. Their names became slogans chanted during demonstrations and their figures were printed in posters hung on the walls in university dormitories and political hangouts. Che’s quote urging the creation of ‘two, three, many Vietnams’ (Guevara 1998/1967) became an inspiration and a motivation for activists in both the West and the East.

### Fighting with cameras and typewriters

The anti-colonial struggle not only had an influence in terms of revolutionary practice, but also in terms of political and ideological theory per se and in terms of art and literature. In this connection, we must note the effect of anti-colonialism on the ‘most valuable means of mass agitation’, namely cinema (J.V. Stalin,

‘Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P. (B.)’, <http://www.marx2mao.com/Stalin/TPC24.html> [5 June 2013]). More broadly, we must discuss the impact of anti-colonial struggles on Western intellectuals.

The aforementioned William Klein (IMDb n.d.) is just one example of many artists who aligned themselves with the anti-colonial forces through their work. Klein’s films, such as *Far from Vietnam* (1967; co-directed with Chris Marker, Agnès Varda, and Jean-Luc Godard), *Mr. Freedom* (1969) and *Festival Panafricain d’Alger* (1969), are directly related to the anti-colonial struggles of the 1960s. Another example is the Dutch filmmaker Joris Ivens (Europese Stichting, n.d.), who had been influenced by anti-colonial struggles as early as the 1940s, when he filmed *Indonesia Calling!* (1946). He also made films about Cuba, China, Laos, and Vietnam during the ‘Long Sixties’: *Six Hundred Million with You* (1958), *Pueblo Armado* (1961), *Carnet de Viaje* (1961), *Far from Vietnam* (1967), *The 17th Parallel* (1968), *The People and their Guns* (1970), *Meeting with President Ho Chi Minh* (1970), *How Yukong Moved Mountains* (1976). And of course, one must mention one of the most influential films of this period, Gillo Pontecorvo’s *The Battle of Algiers* (1966), a film that ‘painted one of the most vivid pictures of Western colonialism and Third World resistance ever put on film’ (Elbaum 2006: 23). The trend of political films during the 1960s and 1970s focusing on the anti-colonial struggles of the Third World (Wayne 2001) was so strong and pervasive that it acquired the term ‘Third Cinema’:

The original ideas of Third Cinema, as with all such political and aesthetic movements, were a product of both the social and historical conditions of the time, particularly those prevailing in the ‘Third World.’ Poverty, government corruption, fraud ‘democracies,’ economic and cultural neo-imperialisms, and brutal oppression affected many Third World countries. These conditions required an appropriate response, and radical revolutionary movements rapidly sprang up to contest reactionary politics and to champion those whom Frantz Fanon called ‘the wretched of the earth.’ Third Cinema was in many ways an effort to extend the radical politics of the time into the realm of artistic and cultural production. (Gabriel n.d.)

In addition to the arts, like cinema, which were at once inspired by, and provided inspiration to, the struggles and activists worldwide, we must note a sharp transformation in academic thought in its relationship to anti-colonialism. For example, the formation of academic disciplines such as Colonial/Post-colonial Studies and Black Studies in American Universities (now usually known as African-American Studies) has been a direct result of anti-colonial struggles. One impact these struggles and movements had on the student mobilisations, especially in the US, was that the student movement took on as one of its central tasks dissemination of the history of the oppressed. In addition, students connected the anti-colonial struggle to the struggle for their own future – that is, to their demands for an education better suited to their needs. This led to the emergence of intellectuals from the heart of these movements, like Amiri Baraka, or the rise in popularity of intellectuals like C.L.R. James or Edward W. Said who, despite having been born in the colonies, had been active mainly in imperialist centres.

Another direct impact was the orientation that Economic Development studies took during that era, especially in the growing popularity of the dependency theory, some of the best-known proponents of which have been Samir Amin, Arghiri Emmanuel, Andre Gunder Frank, Paul Baran, and Paul Sweezy. One of the most popular periodicals of this school of thought has been *Monthly Review*, first published in 1949. Dependency theory first appeared before the 1960s but reached its peak during the 1960s and 1970s, precisely due to the high tide of anti-colonialism.

However, anti-colonialism not only influenced fields of studies and research as a whole, but also impacted intellectuals on an individual level. One typical case is that of Jean-Paul Sartre, whose contribution on this topic has often been neglected (Paige 2010: 227–228; Wolin 2010). Sartre took a highly active anti-colonial stand, and joined his thought to that of thinkers like Frantz Fanon, one of the best-known and most influential anti-colonial writers, for whose infamous *The Wretched of the Earth* Sartre wrote a preface (Fanon 1963). Other thinkers published works on a variety of academic fields such as history and political science, like the now conservative David Horowitz (then part of the New Left), who produced important

literature such as *From Yalta to Vietnam* (1969), and Herbert Marcuse, who published *An Essay on Liberation* (1969) and *Counterrevolution and Revolt* (1972).

## Conclusion

During the 1960s and 1970s, the only certain thing was that everything was uncertain. Revolution was in the air, and the Absaloms of the world, who believed that their societies were mired in boredom and indifference, were proven wrong. One of the reasons that not only boredom was absent, but in reality there was a constant movement and upheaval, was the existence of anti-colonialism, the theory and practice of which affected not only the (former) colonies and colonial powers, but the whole world. The globe was a theatre of war and revolution. For almost two decades, every social and cultural practice, from music and film to books and reading habits, was transformed in the light of anti-colonial struggles. That period led to the emergence of intellectuals from below, with political activists becoming researchers for the needs of the struggle.

There is a very popular anecdote in Greece which tells how, during the 1970s in the Greek universities, one of the key questions that troubled the student movement was whether China had sent rice to Pinochet's Chile. Radicals worldwide were troubled during the period under consideration by similar questions on issues concerning countries far away, with which they had no actual relation, apart from being part of an imaginary global revolutionary process. Yet, what is the legacy of the anti-colonial movement of the 1960s and 1970s? A very popular phrase in contemporary social movements is 'think globally, act locally'. The essence of the 1960s and 1970s is that a national liberation or an anti-colonial victory was regarded as one's own by people who acted on a local or national level, but at the same time had a strong belief that their struggle was essentially helping the Vietcong, for example, move one step forward towards seizing power.

This spirit of being part of a transnational project helped intellectuals and artists to overcome the limits of national cultures and perceptions and try to place their works in a wider context. (see Klimke and Scharloth 2008). And along with the war(s), a hope for a better future was brought home. 'Bring the war home' was a popular slogan of the

anti-war movements during the Vietnam War (<[http://www.tompaine.com/articles/2006/08/09/bring\\_the\\_war\\_home.php](http://www.tompaine.com/articles/2006/08/09/bring_the_war_home.php)> [04 June 2013]). A lot seemed to be changing during the 'Long Sixties'. As shown in this essay, this period, as well as the issues involved in it, should be elaborated in a critical manner, without an attempt to either idealise or demonise what took place.

Christos Mais

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## Arab Socialism

Championed by prominent figures like Baath movement leader Michel Aflaq, Arab socialism was a dominant, almost hegemonic ideology of the Arab World throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. In addition to the Baath Party movement, Arab socialism also influenced Nasser's Egypt, Algeria, Yemen, Palestine, and Lebanon. Even though it identified itself with the term socialism, there were vast differences between Western Marxism and Arab socialism in their interpretations of reality, one glaring example being Arab acceptance of the importance of spirituality and the role of religion in societal culture. Other differences included Arab socialists' relatively benign treatment of private property, the bourgeois class and its role in exploitation of labour, their emphasis on the revolutionary role of the whole Arab nation rather than just the working class, and finally their tendency to equate non-Arab socialism with Soviet practice. Hence, stemming from these philosophical differences, one may argue that Arab socialism, rather than being a movement of genuine resistance against prevailing conditions by the working class in the Arab world, was instead a pragmatic choice by Arab military/civilian bureaucratic elites in modernising their respective nations in the wake of their struggle for independence against Western imperialism. This then, leads us to an exploration of the historical causes that gave rise to what we call the modern state and its associated ideologies in the Middle East.

### History of modern Middle Eastern societies

The most important determinant regarding Middle Eastern societies in their pre- and



post-colonial history has been the structure of the state and how other prominent social forces position themselves and act against it. Although some Western writers have tended to view Ottoman and Middle Eastern pre-capitalist formations as identical to European feudalism, Ottoman-style land administration and the general organisation of agricultural production differed from that of the European model. First of all, the existence of huge tracts of state-owned land and communal properties in the Middle East played a primary role in preventing the emergence of a European-style feudal aristocracy within the empire. Second, peasants had more freedom in deciding which crops to cultivate: their main responsibility was tax paying and care of military men the state assigned to their land. In Ottoman lands, the state strictly controlled the use of its properties, since the entire edifice of government depended on the nexus between expansion of arable lands through conquest and their distribution among prominent military men (Quataert 1994). However, these military men largely acted as representatives of the sultan (a kind of a tax collector), rather than as the fully fledged landlords of medieval Europe. Another significant sign of the sultan's control over relationships in rural areas was the appointment of *kadis* (religious judges) to supervise law and order, a system wholly dissimilar to the unbounded power of European feudal landlords in judicial matters within their territories. One should add that central control over land administration was not entirely homogeneous throughout the Empire: in some parts of the Middle East (such as Egypt, Lebanon, and Iraq), privately owned land happened to be more widespread, leading to more pressure by landlords on peasants in the organisation of production (Gibb and Bowen 1957).

When European development began to surpass Ottoman technology and push the Empire from Central Europe in the late 16th century, military conquests which had formed the backbone of the perennial land administration system under Turkish rule came to a halt. The loss of a crucial source of revenue from conquests meant sultans faced the prospect of increasing taxes and other revenues from within their existing borders. The *iltizam* (tax farming) system was implemented to fulfil the urgent need for an intensive accumulation model to replace obsolete territorial expansion. This system envisioned

a spur in revenues through delegating tax collection to regional *ayans* (landlords). After bidding for a region's tax collection rights, the *ayan* tended to restrict the peasants' freedom in organisation of production (Pamuk 1994). This development was concurrent with the erosion of confidence in the justice system of the Empire. Although *ayans* gradually became a source of regional power, their pattern of behaviour did not echo that of the European bourgeoisie: their fortunes generally fluctuated according to the political climate at the centre. Rather than being interested in overseas excursions and capital accumulation through investment, or in the formation of a political alternative, Middle Eastern *ayans* opted simply to increase the burdens on their peasant tenants and to buy political titles (symbols of power) from the Ottoman centre. The power of *ayans* varied greatly according to the specificities of certain regions. While land distribution in Anatolia was relatively fairer than in Arab regions, issues of irrigation, transportation, and proximity to markets determined the state-*ayan* power relationship. In this context, one may say that Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq witnessed a more unequal distribution of land and a more burdened peasantry, with the result that the first peasant rebellions against agrarian conditions erupted in these regions (Beinin 2001). From Anatolia to other parts of the Middle East, peasant rebellions opposed existing land distribution, arbitrary taxes and worsening regional living standards, but they were far removed from establishing any coherent political and economic alternative to the prevailing *iltizam* system. At the same time, the existence of these rebellions conflicts with Eurocentric Orientalist accounts depicting the regions' history as largely stagnant.

By the late 18th century, major European companies had begun to penetrate the Middle East and the Napoleonic wars and British industrial revolution had facilitated military and trade expeditions to the region. The region's rulers, mainly Ottomans, usually opted to collaborate with foreign merchants through benign trade deals with Europeans. The 1838 Baltalimani trade agreement, and ensuing capitulations given to foreigners by the Ottoman sultan in Istanbul and Mehmed Ali Pasha in Egypt, not only put local merchants and guilds at a disadvantage (since these deals meant that local traders paid

more taxes than importers), but also accepted free-trade rules which greatly advanced the position of British and French manufacturing as opposed to Ottoman economic development needs (İnalçık and Quataert 1994). For example, in Egypt all manufacturing capacity was diverted to cotton-related businesses, which limited these regional economies to a single crop and indirectly made them dependent on British textile demands. These capitulations mainly stemmed from the Turkish Empire's lagging behind Europe in economic and technological developments, especially since the Empire's ill-fated second expedition to Vienna in 1688. Moreover, in the lands of the Middle East, industrialisation could not follow the same pattern of development as Europe. While European merchant and traders gradually freed themselves from the yoke of feudal aristocracy and initiated a town-based autonomous economy, the Ottoman manufacturing and trade system, dependent as it was on strictly controlled small-scale guilds and large land owners, resisted competition and delayed the emergence of the wage-labour relation in terms of a capitalist economy. According to Charles Isawi, these guilds, small property owners, and their production and competitive capacities were hugely diminished in the wake of European penetration into regional markets. Even early signs of factory-level production and efforts at industrialisation came from Christian minorities in the Empire, who had connections with foreign merchants and were thus protected by capitulation agreements (İssawi 1980). Furthermore, the nature of the relationship of dominance in the Middle East – landlord-peasant, guild master-worker – meant production was less efficient and more locally focused, which in turn narrowed the dynamism and scale of the markets. State-led industrialisation attempts, especially in the weapons industry, also adhered to the same methods, and were beleaguered by official corruption and inefficiencies that failed to create a healthy working class that could be counted on as a source of demand.

In retrospective analysis, from 1838 to 1918, the Ottomans and Egyptian elite opted to create an economic growth that led to ever increasing indebtedness and capitulations to Europe, and in which local landlords and bureaucrats were the bridgeheads linking the Middle Eastern economy to the

developing world markets. The foundation of Düyün-i-Umumiye and official surrendering of the Empire's finances to European control serve to summarise the hopelessness of the situation. Efforts at unionisation by the urban working class in the late 19th century were also precluded by ethnic and religious divisions, since most of these efforts were led by minority workers such as Jews, Greeks, or Armenians, and as we have mentioned above, peasant rebellions questioning existing power relationships and worsening living standards never came close to formulating a real political alternative that could be a source of social change. From 1918 to the end of the 1950s, what one saw in the Arab world was a relatively quickening economic development. This came about as a result of the Great Depression, which had the fortunate effect of leaving Middle Eastern societies to their own local means, since the great powers such as the British and French had to struggle with their own domestic problems. However, the semi-colonial Western-supported monarchies of the Arab world at this time failed to diminish either rural or urban economic inequality, or to address the problem of independence. Moreover, their mostly urban-based development of industry and service sectors also brought with it a young generation of intellectuals and rural migration to the cities, both of which would help form the base of future populist regimes (Beinin 2001). Since the Sykes-Picot agreement, the French and British had taken over mandate of areas stretching from Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and parts of the Arabian peninsula, in addition to their direct rule over Algeria and Egypt. The Arab revolt of 1936 greatly influenced the psyche of the region's inhabitants, as Arabs witnessed the brutal colonial suppressions of nationalist movements from Palestine to Algeria. Under those historical conditions, Arab radical socialists like Michel Aflaq, seeing no hope of real independence under Western-supported monarchies, decided to organise and rebel against the region's comprador powers.

### **Era of change: populist regimes and socialism**

The mainly populist regimes of Gamal Abdul Nasser in Egypt, Arab Socialist and Baath Party regimes in Syria and Iraq, and the

Algerian FLN all came to power through military coups, a fact that made the backbone of these regimes radical military and civilian bureaucrats rather than a wide cross-section of the popular classes. However, that does not mean that these regimes lacked ideological hegemony over wide sections of their populations. The ruling parties espoused the idea of Arab socialism to embrace the lower classes, but an inquiry into working-class influence on the political process reveals that only upper-income, highly skilled and unionised sections of the class were influential in decision-making circles (excluding poorer sections). In terms of their reformist and 'revolutionary nature', these authoritarian regimes opted for the highly protectionist state-led import substitution model, and large-scale agrarian reform that aimed to redistribute lands from the wealthier classes to the peasantry. Through these two policies, the ruling elite gradually built up a paternalistic relationship with both the countryside and the urban working class; a development which, in the words of Joel Beinin, empowered and disempowered the popular classes at the same time (Beinin 2001).

In order to understand the ideological framework of Arab socialism, one has to grasp the meaning of Arab nationalism, since it forms the kernel from which other associated ideologies like Baath emerged. Military-led governments in the Middle East after the Second World War, seeing their movement as a response to Arab humiliation by Ottomans and then Western powers, defined their eventual goal as unification of the Arab nation. Centuries-long colonial ties and struggles determined the very essence of these regimes as anti-Western, a stand which unequivocally paved the way for adaption of the socialist development idea, in opposition to a post-war Western world strictly identified with capitalism. The last nail in the coffin of western credibility among Arabs was the uncritical support Western governments provided to the state of Israel and the division of historic Palestine. The predicament of Palestinians against a pro-Western force in the heart of the Middle East not only damaged the psyche of the region's population, but also entirely undermined the position of pro-Western forces in these countries. In the words of two main ideologues of Arab nationalism, Michel Aflaq and Gamal Abdul Nasser, their cause was different from ordinary nationalism,

and aimed to unite the spirit of the Arab nation, since they saw perennial subordination to colonial powers and internal divisions as the main causes of underdevelopment and backwardness (Sluglett 1992). In this grand conceptualisation of Arab identity, cultural components of that identity – such as Islam, Arab belief in social justice and so forth – were attributed uncritical positive qualities. Thus, the military coups of patriotic officers and the Baath Party were undertaken to overcome this apparent contradiction between Arab spirituality and material conditions on the ground in the Middle East.

After situating Arab socialist regimes in an economic and political framework, one may begin to dissect the glaring differences between Arab and Marxist socialism in terms of ideological and ontological subjects.

Theoretically, the main divergence between Arab socialists and what they consider Western Marxism is how the former understood the issue of exploitation. The movement's leaders, like Aflaq and Egyptian intellectual Muhammad Haykal, identified exploitative practices with the decades-long Arab experience of Western colonialism and its collaborators in monarchies (Haykal 1968). Rather than trying to find a social foundation for the term, these authors had an arbitrary manner of diagnosing what constituted exploitation. Unlike Marx's argument that it is the appropriation of surplus value during the production process, Arab socialists tended to see it as a form of contemptuous human behaviour, especially apparent in some upper-class greed for disproportionate wealth and the desire to display this wealth. Thus, logically, they stressed that if an individual truly subsumes the essence of Arab nationalism and works for national unity, that individual will not resort to exploitative practices. Hence, Arab socialism attributed the basis of exploitation to human volition. In fact, this idealist thinking pattern was not surprising, since it justified Arab military and civilian bureaucracies' own position towards various social classes, as it theoretically facilitated the separation of loyal capitalists from exploiters. Also, this political understanding helped them control trade-union and communist organisation activities, since any proceeding from Marx's original conceptualisation inevitably brought forth the question of the proportion of working-class involvement in the Arab socialist project. As a further step, and in light of the explanation above regarding the nature

of exploitation, writers like Haykal and Aflaq refuted the Marxist notion of class struggle. According to them, the Marxist class struggle is too extreme in its conception and in its consequences of annulling human freedom and individualism for the sake of society's well-being (Aflaq 1968). On this point, these authors, rather than engaging with Marx's original writings on the subject, tended to divert their criticism to the practices of existent socialism in the Soviet Union. Like their counterparts in Baath, Mohamad Haykal and Clovis Maqsd tried to abstract the USSR experience both from the historical and social conditions that influenced Soviet reality and from the intra-Marxist disputes pertaining to the nature of bureaucratisation and Stalinism. As a concomitant fact, one may stress the following: if the foundation of the class struggle is not the production process itself, then objectively determining the egalitarian distribution of society's wealth in Arab socialism is controversial. Since the nature of trade-union activities were also evaluated on the basis of their primary loyalty to Arab national unity, Arab socialism further disempowered civil society, while criticising communism as an ideology that kills individual spirit (Maqsd 1968). Furthermore, emphasis on the free individual (accepted as an achievement of Western capitalism) by these writers ignored the historical struggles of Western working classes to gradually win their democratic rights against the powers that be. In the Arab socialist understanding, an Arab worker was already a free individual, as their government saved them from the yoke of tyranny and imperialism. In addition to all of the above, Arab socialist regimes tried to balance the USSR and the Western blocs in their quest for development aid, as a result of which the aforementioned authors were at pains to emphasise the differences between their socialism and what they called the crude materialism of the Soviet Union.

One significant issue that we can point out in terms of the variance of Arab socialists from Western Marxism was the role of religion in everyday life and politics in their countries. Unlike Karl Marx's argument depicting religion largely as the opium of the masses, in the Middle East, socialist writers crafted a revolutionary role for religion, especially Islam. For example, in his writings on co-operative socialism, Ramadan Lawand argued that Marxism's insistence on materialism turned

it into a thought pattern that lacked spirituality (Lawand 1968). Former Al-azhar preacher Mahmud Shaltut, in his quest to reconcile Islam and socialist ideas, wrote that issues like social solidarity and the fight against behavioural excesses (i.e. luxurious consumption) were also part of Islam's indispensable agenda. As a corollary to this, Shaltut pointed out the programmatic similarities between Islam and Arab socialists (Shaltut 1968). In a further demonstration of these opinions, Michel Aflaq tried to save Arab socialism's secular leanings by referring to the erroneous application of genuine Islam in the Arab world, which in itself justified a renewal of religion through the socialist governments, this time by implementation of the correct and progressive nature of Islam. Hence, Aflaq professed the essence of Arab identity to be Islamic, and since their cause was a call for betterment of Arab society, their religion could not be anything but revolutionary (Aflaq 1968). All these attempts to integrate religion into Arab nationalist and socialist paradigms, albeit without a strong philosophical foundation, were the results of Arab socialists' search for quick legitimacy among the population, since otherwise the narrow social base of the ruling elite would be too transparent. Also, in the Arab experience, a history that did not witness any secular struggle against religious institutions or any call for social justice and equality inevitably anchored its ethical reference to Islam, since the reversal of that would mean tacit acceptance of the Marxist critique of the social roots of religion.

In a short summary of these historical and ideological discussions, one may argue that Arab socialism and its immediate predecessor Arab nationalism were historically specific ideologues of Arab ruling elites, which were used by them to overcome problems of modernisation and underdevelopment (Karpas 1968). The heavy presence of bureaucratic authoritarianism, coupled with passive acceptance by trade unions and the Arab left of the status quo under Nasser or Baath Party rule, greatly disempowered the working class and prevented the emergence of a reliable opposition. This partially forced silence of the left was another reason – the biggest factor being the humiliating defeat of Arab armies by Israel in 1967 – that facilitated the transition from Arab socialism to neo-liberal forms of rule, beginning with Anwar Sadat's rule in Egypt. In terms of their economic and social

development goals, Arab socialist and nationalist regimes were more successful than their neo-liberal counterparts, which acted to integrate the region's economies into the global economy under IMF tutelage (Kadri, 2012). However, in the final analysis, Arab socialism was insufficient in constructing a viable alternative either to Western capitalism or Soviet socialism. As mentioned earlier, Arab intellectuals and statesmen lacked an ontological analysis of the system in their own time, which reminds us of Marx's premise that any socialist ideology should be a ruthless critique of existing order.

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## Black Panthers

### Introduction

Since arriving on American shores, struggle has characterised much of African and African-American people's experience globally and in the US. Blacks' struggle against political subjection and domination has characterised much of their social relations with the capitalist world economy, has been ongoing, and has taken multiple forms. It has been black resistance to racism and oppression which has been the major form of protest to the domination of black peoples since the 16th century. It is in this context that we must situate the resistance and struggle of the Black Power Movement (BPM) over time more generally and the Black Panther Party (BPP) more specifically.

The BPM is arguably one of the most important forms of modern resistance in African-American history. It can be traced back to the slaves, the African Blood Brotherhood of the 1910s (who fed from the Communist Party USA [CPUSA]), the 1920s with Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, and through the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s with the National Negro Congress, A. Philip Randolph's March on Washington movement, as well as the Nation of Islam and the ideologies of Malcolm X (Austin 2006: 2–9; Haywood 1978; Kelley 1990). This long and enduring history set the stage on which the BPP would emerge.

The BPP was one of many organisations that was created and continued under the umbrella of the modern phase of the BPM during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. It earned

its place in history because of its militancy and the revolutionary stance its members took at the tail end of the Civil Rights Movement. They grabbed the attention of those around them because of the resurrection of a more militant and vigilant stance against discrimination as well as their emphasis on mobilising the masses. It was this stance that led to the BPP's greatest success.

Although much has been written in recent years about the BPP, its organisation, programmes, and activities, very little has been written about the structural conditions which contributed to its ideologies and militant stances. A thorough examination of the Party's ideology in response to these structural conditions over time has yet to be undertaken. In examining the Party and its many actions and activities, central questions are: What was the ideology of the BPP? Where did it come from? Did the ideologies of the BPP change over time, and if so, how and why did they change? Who influenced this ideology? And did changes in ideology change the perceptions and activities of the Party over time?

The thesis of this essay is that the BPP's ideology was grounded in a critique of the dominant perspectives on black equality. Over the course of the BPP's existence, however, this critique and the substance grounding it would go through continuous ideological transformations as a result of larger structural conditions that led to changes in the posture of Party members. There was thus a continuous evolution of perspectives on the part of Party members based on their continuous struggles to make sense of the world. Over the course of the Party's existence, it came to be guided by a number of ideologies that continuously built on and corrected deficiencies in the dominant and more widely accepted ideologies of Black Power and Black Nationalism. Conflicts within the group about what the Party was fighting for shaped each of these ideologies that were promoted at different points in time. At each stage, these ideologies served as guides for the Party's changing activities. Ranging from Black Nationalism to Revolutionary Nationalism to Revolutionary Internationalism to Revolutionary Intercommunalism, each of these ideologies represented different phases in the Party's history and evolution and each brought changes to Party activities and activism. For instance, early on, the Party took on a version

of Black Nationalism because of relationships to the Black Power Movement and agreement with its critiques about the Civil Rights Movement. This ideology influenced the Party's early belief that the struggle was predominantly an African-American one to reclaim the manhood of African-American males. At the height of the Party, in response to the repression and many conflicts and contradictions arising out of these conditions, new coalitions were formed. The Party then took on the ideology that the struggle was one against capitalism and that the fight waged had to be one of African and African-American revolution. Later the Party would again augment this ideology based on new interpretations of old influences and relationships with international organisations. It would take on the belief that the struggle was for all oppressed peoples, and that efforts should be geared toward achieving the self-determination of destiny and life goals absent among many if not all oppressed populations within the US and abroad.

In this essay, I will examine the changes in the ideology of the Party between 1967 and 1971 through an analysis of the BPP's major media and vocal outlet, the organisations newspaper *The Black Panther*. I will particularly focus on the published poetry, speeches, and essays of Party members gathered from the Binghamton University library archive. I will utilise this in conjunction with other methods of acquiring data including biographies and other forms. The hope of this essay is to add to the larger dialogue on the BPP and particularly discussions of Party dynamics and their many functions in order to promote the continuance of its important legacy.

### **Black Power, Black Nationalism and the BPP (1966–67)**

Michael West and many others argue that the rise of modern black resistance began with the global mechanisms of the quadripartite revolutions (global abolitionism, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Haitian Revolution) (West 2005: 87). This is because this period led to Blacks being freed from slavery and being educated by whites. For West, one major consequence of this education was the internalisation of western values and principles on the parts of African elites and intellectuals which, although not inevitable, led

to an integrationist black consciousness and ultimately an integrationist Black protest that was foundational to movements such as the US Civil Rights Movement (West 2005: 89–91). Importantly, capitalism (and in many cases scientific socialism), industrialisation, secularisation, and urbanisation for the African-descent patterned after the Western world was for many intellectuals the way of rising above darkness and getting equality. It was a means to move beyond the conditions that set blacks up for servitude. However, for Michael West and many others it was clear that a large population did not benefit from the strategy of these intellectuals (102). For West, those who benefited least from the quadripartite schema, the end of slavery, decolonisation, and desegregation began to believe that this posturing was limited, and they contested its worth. This opened up spaces for critique centred on the Black Power ideology (102). In noting the lack of ability for integration in some cases and the limitations of integration in others, the non-intellectual masses played a crucial role in this critique.

Black Nationalism, as I argue, was the first form of Pan-Africanism and also dated back to slavery. It began even before integrationist approaches and was the more revolutionary stance of the slave tradition that began in Africa and the Americas with maroons and slave revolts and with field slaves or the non-elite. The integrationist project and approach, however, aligned more thoroughly with dominant white perceptions about civilising blacks, and Black Nationalism in slave form was subsequently hidden and obscured. However, Black Nationalism, in clear opposition to the dominant approach of striving for integration, was always the integrationists' strongest critique. It emphasised self-sufficiency, race pride, and black separatism as opposed to integration and the Westernisation of Africans and Africa (Encyclopedia Britannica 2014; Stanford Encyclopedia 2014). This critique later gained ground because of the lack of changes in the structural conditions of black people in their negotiations for uplift following the integrationist approach. It is only in this context that we may understand the modern phase of the BPM.

The modern phase of the BPM of the 1960s and 1970s began as the result of the disillusionment of many African-Americans with the outcome of the dominant approaches

to subjugation such as Intellectual Pan-Africanism, Négritude and the Civil Rights Movement. Positioning itself against middle-class movements that emphasised the 'talented tenth's' uplift, the BPM found its roots in the maroon communities and revolutionary fervour of slave revolts as well as in organisations and movements such as the African Blood Brotherhood of the 1910s, the CPUSA, the Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, and the ideologies of Malcolm X. It became a force and mobiliser for the empowerment of African-Americans in its own right and with its own dynamic historicity (Austin 2006: 2–9; Haywood 1978; Kelley 1990; Umoja 2006: 225). It was within this tradition that the BPP emerged and became an important fixture within the African-American community, successfully changing the focus from an isolated African-American struggle against racism in the US to capitalism and imperialism everywhere.

Amidst the turmoil of the 1960s and 1970s, the BPP was formed and proved to be a substantial force within the modern phase of the Black Power Movement. Arriving on the heels of the Civil Rights Movement, the BPP was first established in 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale as a nuanced response to the many injustices still plaguing the African-American community. A large part of what made the Party so appealing was its reaching-out to the most downtrodden or the lumpenproletariat, the militant stance the Party was taking at the tail end of the Civil Rights Movement, and its revolutionary activities and actions that came at a time when the pull of non-violence was wearing thin. It was because of these major premises and actions that within the course of a few years (between 1966 and 1971) the BPP became one of the most successful organisations within the BPM, succeeding in transforming the struggle for many African-Americans as well as many others both nationally and internationally.

The world that the BPP knew and understood in its earliest years was heavily influenced by the ideologies and organisation of both the historical and modern phase of the Black Power Movement. From its earliest inception, the BPP identified with and worked with organisations in the Black Power Movement and identified itself as a Black Nationalist organisation. Some of the major influences on the Movement were also influences of the BPP. For instance,

both considered themselves to be the 'heirs of Malcolm X' and took up his ideas about the way the struggles for equality should be approached, including his ideas about the position of whites in the movement (Jeffries 2006: 7). The Party followed the example of many such Black Power Movement organisations by not admitting whites and shunning co-operation with white organisations (ibid.).

Others who contributed to their ideas about liberation and revolution were Robert F. Williams with *Negroes With Guns* and Frantz Fanon with *The Wretched of the Earth* (ibid.). Also, early on, expanding upon and incorporating protection groups of the 1950s and 1960s, the Party defined the struggle as one for racial solidarity and liberation, and geared its activism toward bettering the African-American community. The Party thus sought in its very beginnings to actualise this form of Black Nationalism, particularly by putting an end to the brutality inflicted on many African-Americans within the community, which, for them, was aiding in black liberation (Austin 2006: 7; Calloway 1977: 58; Courtright 1974: 249–267; Umoja 2001: 3–19). In its early years, the Party's emphasis on revolution and liberation centred on the liberation of African-American males from the dominance of the 'White man'.

For instance, Huey P. Newton in the early years of the Party took from Eldridge Cleaver when he spoke of the struggles of the Black community as struggles between the African-American male and the white male, the slave and the slave master, stating that:

The historical relationship between black and white here in America has been the relationship between the slave and the master; the master being the mind and the slave the body. The slave would carry out the orders that the mind demanded of him to carry out. By doing this the master took the manhood of the slave because he stripped him of a mind. He stripped black people of their mind. In the process the slave-master stripped himself of a body .... This caused the slave master to become envious of the slave because he pictured the slave as being more of a man ... in order to reinforce his sexual desire, to confirm, to assert his manhood he would go into the slave quarters and have sexual relations with the black woman

(the self-reliant amazon) .... The slave was constantly seeking unity within himself; a mind and a body. He always wanted to be able to decide .... (Cleaver in Matthews 1998: 280).

Many Party members also espoused similar beliefs. For instance, the April 1967 issue of *The Black Panther* published the article 'Why Was Denzil Dowell Killed?' in which the struggles are outlined as a need for protection against the American white power structure and against police brutality in the community. This particularly highlighted the need for African-American males to begin organising, become aware, and fight for Black power. The author wrote that:

Let us organize to defend ourselves .... We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality .... These brothers have become aware of something that the white racists have been trying to keep secret from Black people all the time: that a citizen has the right to protect himself .... Black people must realize the time is short and growing shorter by the day .... Black people want and need the power to stop the white racist power structure from grinding the life out of the Black Race through the daily operation of this system which is designed to exploit and oppress Black people .... The Black Panther Party For Self-Defense really has something going. These brothers are the cream of Black Manhood ... Black Men!!! It is your duty to your women and children, to your mothers and sisters, to investigate the program of the Party. There is no other way. (quoted in Foner 1995: 9–12)

Many of the subsequent activities of the Party at this time appear to have grown out of these ideologies and understandings. This seemed to be the Party's way of carrying out action based on these ideologies. For instance, members were quite specific in the case of African-Americans in the Bay Area. At their foundation, they developed a ten-point programme entitled 'What We Want, What We Believe' based on what they saw as the



needs of and injustices perpetrated against the African-American community. Their aims included freedom, full employment, an end to the robbery of the black community, decent housing, education, exemption from military service for black men, an end to police brutality, freedom for all black men in prisons and jails, black people to be tried by a jury of their own peers, and land, bread, housing, clothing, justice and peace (Austin 2006: 353; Foner 1995: 2–4; Holder 1990: 28; Jones 1998: 473–475; Major 1971: 291–293; Newton 1980: 119–122). Upon its foundation, the Party took on the title of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. Its first task was the orchestration of armed patrols of the police and community as well as beginning to advocate for armed struggle (Austin 2006: 7; Calloway 1977: 58; Courtright 1974: 249–267; Rodriguez 2008: 119–141; Seale 1970: 37; Smith 1999: 31; Umoja 2001: 3–19).

In addition to the armed patrols that were set up, many of the activities that the Party engaged in during this time were also quite specific to the mobilisation of African-Americans in general and particularly the African-American community in the Bay Area. The Party worked within the African-American community to have stop lights installed at dangerous intersections and to have community review boards set up (Fletcher et al. 1993: 223).

Throughout 1966 and 1967, the Party was strongly committed to the traditions and ideology of the BPM which was specific to blacks in the US. However, these ideas as well as many of the other ideas of the Party would change. The Party would eventually see these organisations' ideologies as limited interpretations of the struggles of African-Americans as their ideology began to move more steadily and heavily to a Marxist-Leninist and Maoist viewpoint. This occurred in tandem with the Party beginning to establish coalitions with other organisations, including aligning with the Peace and Freedom Party (221–223). It would thus be forced to expand its truths, ideologies, assumptions, and actions. These alliances would come to have an enormous impact on the Party's understandings throughout 1968 and 1969. At the start of 1968 and continuing in 1969, its ideologies began to change rapidly, along with which changes came shifts in Party perceptions, activism, and activities.

### **Black Nationalism, Revolutionary Nationalism, and the BPP (1968–69)**

Throughout 1968 and 1969, the Party was faced with many contradictions in relation to the ideology of the larger BPM. For the Party, many in the BPM just did not sufficiently answer these contradictions with their actions (Hayes and Kiene 1998: 164). Beginning in 1968, the Party began to take great issue with black and cultural nationalists' arguments for black-only struggles, with the emphasis on the black male struggle and with black and cultural nationalists' ultimate goals for a 'Black nation'. The BPP argued that this form of thought was limited and problematic in its goals and struggles, particularly in regard to its analysis of race and class as separate struggles (164). This came as a result of its desire and need for alliances. It then began to draw links between many struggles going on throughout the nation and the world which led it to conclude that the black/cultural nationalist ideology was not wholly sufficient to deal with the power structures and processes of oppression that plagued the African-American community. The BPP believed that there were better truths out there to explain things. Because of the many conflicts with the ideologies of black and cultural nationalism which resulted in conflict between the Panthers and other Black Nationalist groups surrounding these issues and turf, the BPP came to define black and cultural nationalism as a reactionary and chauvinistic and part of the problem within the US (*ibid.*). Though the Party in essence retained some of the central premises that had guided them in their early years (for instance, continuing to stress ideas of black liberation and the need to resolve the problems of the American power structure), it also began to emphasise the importance of coalitions and that the goal of the struggles in the US should be for socialism. No longer able to look to Black Nationalist organisations, the BPP began to depend more heavily on Marxist-Leninist theory as well as that of Che Guevara and Mao Zedong, and looked to different revolutions around the world for guidance (164–165). The Party began to emphasise these new sources as its ideological examples of what should be done about the struggles.

The liberation struggles and revolutions that had been taking place around the world became a prime example for the ideology of

the BPP at this time. The principles of Karl Marx, Lenin, Che Guevara, and Mao Zedong thus began to be actualised in the Party in greater and more explicit ways (Abu-Jamal 2004: 105; Hayes and Kiene 1998: 164). The Cuban revolution and its subsequent enactment of socialism, as well as Vietnam, became the dominant influences on the Party during this time, as did the liberation struggles/revolutions in Africa, driven by the writings of Franz Fanon with the case of Algeria and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah (Hayes and Kiene 1998: 164; Abu-Jamal 2004: 105). These became the BPP's point of departure. With these struggles as its example, it reconfigured how it saw the struggle.

A reassessment of the situation of African-Americans in light of these new sources led to the development of the idea of revolutionary nationalism during this time. The Party began to define class as an important feature of the struggle, capitalism as the source of the problem, and socialism as its ultimate goal (Hayes and Kiene 1998: 164). Taking from Huey Newton, the BPP began to see race struggles as a part of larger struggles against imperialism and capitalism, and the African-American situation as similar to that of others who had been colonised (165). At this time, the Party began to define African-American struggles as colonisation struggles, and argued that they were synonymous with struggles for decolonisation (*ibid.*). It began to stress that African-Americans were among the many who had been colonised with the expansion of Western Europe and the US, and that this created a relationship with other forces internationally. All represented a fight against colonisation and the evils of capitalism, imperialism, and racism (Hayes and Kiene 1998: 164–165). The Party began to stress that struggles of African-Americans required international intervention, drawing connections between the US police and military force and other international colonial forces. This began to be reflected to a greater extent in Panther writings.

Within the writings of BPP members, there were increasingly notions of revolution and liberation suggesting that the only way to achieve the wants of the community was via revolution. They now more directly called for guerrilla warfare. They described police in the US as a fascist military organisation that served with the national guard to subordinate African-Americans and subversives. For instance, an article in *The Black Panther*

compared the struggles of African-Americans to those in Vietnam and also emphasised the belief that genocide was upon the nation and revolution:

Just as the Vietnamese people refuse to be controlled by the capitalist racist American government, and are fighting to retain control of their own country, black people in America are fighting to have control of their communities in their hands. With a potential mass of fifty million blacks moving together to control their communities across the nation, the first assault by the political leadership of the racists is to destroy the leadership of the black struggle in order to be able to move against the masses without organized resistance .... The advent of fascism in the US is most clearly visible in the suppression of the black liberation struggle .... The police departments nationwide are preparing for armed struggle with the black community and are being directed and coordinated nationally with the US Army and the underground vigilante racist groups for massive onslaught against black people. But the billy clubs and mass arrests and guns are no longer just for black people: the white peace movement and the student power struggle is also beginning to get a taste of police violence .... The day when the state and its police power ceases to protect the community but in turn attacks the people of the community has arrived in this country. This is the first stage of building the police state .... The next step is genocide. The black community faces two alternatives: total liberation or total extinction. (Clever 1968: 8)

In 1969, the Party continued to believe that immediate revolution was needed and would occur. For instance, Huey Newton appeared to believe that revolution would be sparked because of the nature of the system and that dealing with corrupt political officials was a top priority. Huey Newton, in a message to the Party for the celebration of his birthday (published in *The Black Panther* in February), described the Party's efforts in mobilising the community as a revolutionary force, and emphasised the belief that the revolution would be sparked by some significant event. He foresaw it being brought about in the way the Mao Zedong laid it out. He believed the

people would finally turn on the corrupt politicians and the nation's political means and create new systems in similar ways to what was going on in Vietnam (Newton 1969).

This new ideology clearly influenced and changed many BPP members' perceptions of the struggle. For instance, much of Party writing suggests that members redefined their notions of the problems of African-Americans as struggles centred on the enemy as the capitalist and imperialist power structure. They redefined the solutions to these problems as socialism.

Eldridge Cleaver also goes about discussing the struggle as one against capitalism and colonisation, outlining the nature of the struggle and how revolution could and would be successful in America. In an interview he stated that:

... we don't look upon this situation as being something confined to the geographical boundaries of the United States or the North American continent. We see this as a world-wide contest, and in this world-wide contest, you are in very much the minority, and we are the majority. So you don't have 20 million black people to deal with, you have 700 million Chinese, 300 million Africans and un-numbered billions and millions and millions, and millions, and millions of mad black, red, yellow people to deal with. And you know that. (Cleaver 1968: 6, 14)

This new ideology also guided many of the subsequent BPP actions at the time. In addition to many of its chapters opening nationwide, the Party began to operate some of its earliest survival programmes developed to 'help people survive until their consciousness' was raised to the necessity and importance of revolution (Abron 1998: 178–179; Holder 1990: 78). These survival programmes served as a means of demonstrating to the people a new world (of socialism) through the means of creating community-controlled institutions, but they also developed revolutionaries for the struggle through maximising safety, nourishment, and health care (Abron 1998: 178–179; Holder 1990: 78). No longer centred on the 'Black Man's' struggle, coalitions became central to BPP organising. It began forming coalitions with Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, and Asian-Americans such as those with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and

Students for a Democratic Society as well as those with African-American, Puerto Rican, and white street gangs in Chicago (Holder 1990: 124–130). The BPP also began to branch out internationally. For instance, in June 1968, Eldridge Cleaver took the case of African-Americans to the United Nations, while Bobby Seale attended the World Peace conference in Montreal, Canada in December 1968 (Fletcher et al. 1993: 228; Major 1971: 297). In addition to this, the Party began giving widespread support to both national and international organisations such as the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (*ibid.*). The BPP at this time also developed and fostered important ties with the Black Liberation Army, an underground group of revolutionaries who aimed at disrupting the American/capitalist system (Umoja 2006: 224–225). Within the Party there also developed a secret society of revolutionaries (an underground wing) for guerrilla-type warfare, through its affiliation with the Black Liberation Army. This emphasised military training, particularly with the arrival in the Party of Geronimo Pratt and his training of many chapters (Umoja 2006: 227–228). These changes also culminated with the BPP removing the 'Self-Defense' from its name, a move reflecting its growing and changing connections with other struggles of the world (Matthews 1998: 277). These important changes also prompted massive repressive efforts on the part of the US authorities.

Because of the Party's message and their appeal during this time, the BPP became the target for mass repression on the part of US government agencies. Throughout these years, it continued to be the prime target for government and local law enforcement officials who followed J. Edgar Hoover. Local law enforcement on a national level as well as the FBI and CIA worked to infiltrate the Party, and in doing so killed many of its members, arrested many more, and caused inter-group strife among the different organisations like the BPP and the US organisation, a competing nationalist group, as well as between the Panthers and the Black Stone Rangers and within the Party itself (Ngozi-Brown 1997: 157–170). The political repression of the BPP, orchestrated and carried out by organisations like the CIA and the FBI under COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Programme) in conjunction with local law enforcement, heightened in 1969 and escalated throughout 1970. Such

actions were instrumental in changing the organisation and mobilisation of the Party. For instance, in 1969, the BPP went through massive reorganisation and conducted a purge of members (the first of many expulsions that followed) to remove suspected law enforcement moles as well as to cleanse the organisation of any who were seen as non-productive while at the same time closing off membership for three months (Le-Blanc-Ernest 1998: 310; Smith 1999: 48). These events led to the positioning of many women in the roles once overwhelmingly held by men. Women, because of repression, also increasingly began being seen in a different light as their roles changed, with them becoming central to the functioning and leadership of the Party. As a result, women began taking on more of the leadership and rank-and-file roles, as well as running by far the majority of Party programmes. By all accounts, women became the structure and backbone of the Party. Men and women began working side by side, and in so doing created a gender-neutral setting that was new to the BPM. This was reflected at a national level. The repression of these years influenced greatly the Party's ideology, particularly in regard to women and their role in the struggle.

As a result of the many changes in the ideology of the BPP between 1968 and 1969, Party perceptions and activism went through important and notable transformations that made much of its organisation between 1970 and 1971 possible and were the preconditions for organising at this time. With its beginning very much in the reactionary nationalism the Party would later come to shun, the BPP transformed between 1968 and 1969 from an organisation specifically for the African-American lumpenproletariat to an organisation which also embraced the lumpenproletariat of other cultures and the oppressed proletariat of the world. These processes contributed greatly to the Party's further growth and expansion in becoming both a national and international organisation during this time and to the particular shifts in its ideology between 1970 and 1971.

### **Revolutionary Internationalism and Inter-communalism, and survival pending revolution (1970–71)**

The period between 1970 and 1971 was critical for the BPP, marking its zenith and the

start of its decline. Although the Party continued until 1982, when its last programme, the liberation school, closed its doors, the year 1971 marked its end as a revolutionary organisation. During this time, the Party's ideology would again shift based on its need to again reconcile its position with new understandings of the world. Repression had an immense influence on the ideology and truths of the BPP, with many members beginning to again branch out, this time internationally through forced exile abroad to escape the authorities. The many changes in the Party's ideological views influenced shifts in how members perceived their role in the struggle and their activities and mobilisation.

As a result of repression, many members were forced underground and fled the US. This however facilitated deeper connections with struggles being carried out around the world. For instance, Eldridge Cleaver went into exile and travelled the world forming coalitions in Cuba and with Al Fatah before settling in Algeria (Abu-Jamal 2004: 106–107). Others who fled were Party captain Bill Brent, who went to Cuba; field marshal Don Cox, Sekou Odinga, Larry Mack Michael Tabor, and Connie Matthews who all ended up in Algiers where the Party formed its international wing (*ibid.*). Black Panther organisations also began in Britain, Bermuda, Israel, Australia, India, and Canada (Umoja 2001: 3–4).

Influenced more heavily than ever by Marxist-Leninists, and a certain utopianism of Marx and Mao Zedong, Huey Newton articulated a new ideology upon release from prison in 1970: Revolutionary Internationalism. This, he believed drew heavily from Revolutionary nationalism and particularly its coalitions, but emphasised new things (Hayes and Kiene 1998: 169). This ideology centred on the belief that the US was more of an empire of nations that dominated the world rather than a nation in itself, and saw the US as an international enemy (Hayes and Kiene 1998: 169). He believed that the only way to combat this enemy was through international efforts and strategies and through the unity of all oppressed peoples (*ibid.*). Shortly after this change, another was made. That same year, at the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention, the ideology shifted again, this time to one of Inter-communalism (170). This ideology extended upon internationalism, only breaking down

the idea of nationhood and nation states and emphasising that rather than international coalitions, territories were a part of a world community brought about by the imperialism and oppression of the US (ibid.). These changes were directly reflected in the perceptions of the Party in its paper.

Within the writings of many members, much of this ideology was perpetuated and heightened. This was exemplified in the belief that the role and objective of the BPP was to enlighten the people and aid in their awakening to the truth about the American system and about capitalism and capitalist, imperialist organisations of societies. The Party refined the definition of themselves and emphasised their role as a revolutionary political programme. This, for them, meant they were an armed political programme focused on survival until there was a world revolution. They emphasised their role in serving the people and survival while educating them and showing them a better way until universal revolution occurred. For them, this universal revolution required struggle in all places to destroy the oppression for all. While the Party still advocated a preparedness to die for what they believed in, they ultimately came to believe that in order to change the structure their mission had to be change people within the US and worldwide before revolution could occur. Throughout 1970 and 1971, much of the Party's writings reflected this great shift.

For instance, Huey Newton in 1971 suggested that the revolution would eventually come and that what was important was focusing on survival. He also describes the importance of the community in bringing about revolution (Newton 1971). The Party, furthermore, begins to describe its role as dedicated to the survival of the people until the universal revolution. Many members followed these beliefs and traditions wholeheartedly. For example, , in an article entitled 'Survival Pending Revolution', an anonymous author emphasises the importance of the survival programmes to the survival of the masses and the need to focus on them until the revolution comes about (Anonymous 1971). It was with these ideologies as the Party's foundation that the Party went about conducting its actions.

Between the years 1970 and 1971 the Black Panthers continued to go through dramatic changes organisationally as a result of the war waged against them by the FBI, but also because of their changes in ideology

(Calloway 1977: 69; Holder 1990: 288; Newton 1980: 55). The most important change that occurred was the Party dropping the ten-point programme because they felt it no longer represented the needs of the community (Anonymous 1971). Other big changes came with a shift in the BPP platform, with the Party gradually moving from a paramilitary, revolutionary organisation to more of a political programme centred on serving the community. Because of these changes in ideology, many of the actions of the Party members changed. They began emphasising the survival programmes during this time, expanding them to include the liberation school, multiple free breakfast programmes, welfare rights advocacy, and youth activities as well as the free clothing programme and free health clinics (Abron 1998: 177–188).

Throughout 1970 and 1971, critical changes in the ideology of the Party and its organisation brought about important changes in activism as well as mission that, along with repressive measures, directly influenced the BPP's decline as a revolutionary organisation and served as the precondition for Huey Newton officially putting down the gun in 1972. All of these changes over the brief six-year existence of the Party as a revolutionary organisation were a part of the growth and expansion of the BPP and why it was so successful during its short run. It is this legacy that must be remembered.

## Conclusion

The struggles against capitalism have been multiple and various as have the repressive measures to maintain them. The struggles of African-Americans within the US are just one example. The BPM was one of the most important movements for African-Americans within the US, and was the culmination of all struggles that had taken place up until that point. Despite great gains on the part of these movements, much remained to be done. It was within this tradition and this continuation of repression that the BPP emerged and became important. In its short existence, it attempted and succeeded to a certain extent in changing the very fabric of American society at the same time as it too continually changed.

As has been shown, over the course of the Party's existence it was guided by a number of ideologies that served to build on and

correct conflicts within others. As a result of many occurrences and influences, Party members and particularly Party leadership were forced to re-think many of its major organising premises as well as strategies and tactics for attaining success in its efforts to adapt the Party to a changing environment in order to remain useful within the community. Ranging from Black Nationalism to Revolutionary Inter-communalism, the Party was continuously adapting to the environment around it and expanding upon its thought to fit into growing and enhanced consciousness and understandings. As the BPP's ideologies changed, so did its perceptions and activities, which added to the success and widespread appeal of the Party over time. Connecting the struggles of African-Americans to the struggles throughout the world, though not new, placed the Party on a higher plateau than many others in the BPM and caused wider rifts between them. While the Party began as an organisation seeking to liberate the African-American community through the reclaiming of the masculinity of African-American men (and initially organised in a way that gave precedence to African-American males), it ultimately took on a more politically relevant stance that represented the way in which the world that they lived in was organised. For this, the BPP should be recognised as an innovator of its time that trod territory little explored before and whose legacy continues to this day.

Aminah Wallace

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## Eurocentricity

### Introduction: Formal definitions

'Eurocentrism' or 'Eurocentricity' is an ideological aspect of imperialism. These terms are used interchangeably, both deriving from the adjective Eurocentric, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Eurocentricity has resulted from and justified (both to ordinary people of the imperialist power and to the subject peoples) the colonialism, slavery, the 'civilisational projects' of the Spanish in the 16th century, of the English and French in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the neo-colonialism of the 20th century. Eurocentrism and its avatars have 'distorted ... [social-science] analysis and its capacity to deal with ... problems of the contemporary world' (Wallerstein 1999: 169).

Eurocentricity cannot be separated from the history and political economy of capitalism. As imperialism was germane to capitalism, Eurocentricity was germane to imperialism. It has served to shape public opinion (through education, media, and academic discourse) in support of imperialising efforts on the part of capitalists and the dominant states in which they are located. Possibly, without such effort, imperialism would have been harder to 'sell' to the citizenry of imperialist states.

A simple focus on Western Europe (its culture, politics, history, institutions, etc.) is an inadequate explanation of Eurocentricity. The term 'European' includes the history, culture, etc. of the off-shoots of Western Europe: Canada, the US, Australia, and New Zealand (but not of Latin America presumably because Latin America remained 'backward' and was therefore not 'European' or 'Western'. Similarly, a simple focus on Europe or 'the West' can be perfectly valid. A history of colonialism that indicts the West is not Eurocentric.

A general definition of Eurocentricity might include: (a) a focus on Western Europe or 'the West' as if its history and rise to power can be explained in terms of itself alone; (b) a celebration of Western Europe's history,

society, culture and 'achievements' as models for others to follow; and (c) a tendency to use 'the West', Europe, or the 'European' as a norm against which other peoples, cultures, or social formations are judged.

J.M. Blaut defined Eurocentricity in history as diffusionist. Diffusionist meant that all good ideas and inventions originated in Europe; that all places gained from the diffusion of these; that non-Europe was socially and technologically stagnant; and that Europe was rewarded for diffusion by the wealth of other places being returned to it (Blaut 2000: 7).

Immanuel Wallerstein contends Eurocentricity is expressed in five ways: (a) historiography (the explanation of European dominance of the world in terms of some quality), psychological, cultural or social, that Europeans have evinced; (b) universalism (in the social sciences expressed as a stageist theory of history in which the present is the outcome of the past; stages of history are universalised to include the history of all societies, and the present assumed to be better than the past; (c) civilisation (defined in the social sciences by its supposed opposites), barbarism, or primitiveness; historically, to be 'civilised' meant that the colonised had adopted the coloniser's values and norms; (d) Orientalism '... a stylized and abstracted statement of the characteristics of non-Western civilizations ... [which] ... creates a binary view of the world ...'; (e) the idea of 'progress' which 'became the consensus viewpoint of nineteenth century Europe ... the underlying explanation of world history ... the rationale of stageist theories [and] ... the motor of applied social science' (1999: 173–176). Normative Eurocentrism asserts the universalism of Euro-American values (Dirlik 1999).

### **Loci of Eurocentricity: Social Sciences, History, and Economics**

Eurocentricity is pervasive within academia, from Mathematics (Anderson 1990; Joseph 1987) to Feminism (Mohanty 2003). Practitioners of natural science have a priori relegated the knowledge systems of earlier societies to the category of folk wisdom or superstition, thus manifesting a closed attitude that may have lost accumulated knowledge. The areas in which Eurocentricity most

damages perceptions and distorts analysis are the Social Sciences and History.

Eurocentricity has two loci: the intellectual arenas where Eurocentricity is manifested, and the ways in which Eurocentricity has been applied. The social sciences are Eurocentric in: the denigration and disparagement of non-Westerners, the idea that the West did something special and good, and in normative and prescriptive propositions. Anthropology and Oriental Studies belong to the first category.

Anthropology was created by colonisers to study non-Western, non-literate societies in order to dominate them. This involved attributing to the objects of anthropological study certain characteristics that portrayed them as other than human. Anthropology dehumanises its objects of study by denying them a sense of time or of past history (Fabian 1983). As a sense of history is normal to human-ness, the anthropologised became, by definition, other-than-human. Asmarom Legesse (1973), an anthropologist from Ethiopia, criticised fellow anthropologists for their inability to view the peoples they studied as having rationales and histories, and analysing them in terms that made sense to the anthropologists but not to their informants. 'Tribe', so beloved of anthropologists, is not an analytical category, but originally was a colonial concept denoting a people 'destined for contempt' as Frantz Fanon (1968: 211) said. The term 'tribe' has served to give Africa a 'counter-identity' to the West by creating a comparison between 'dynamic' Europe and 'static' Africa. 'Tribe' has functioned to 'disaggregate the social foundations of power'. It has limited a proper understanding of how the capitalist world-system functions by reducing the problem of global inequality to explanations internal to societies (Ngaruka 2007). The British in India tried to re-introduce 'caste' for similar reasons (Samarendra 2011).

Oriental Studies was the field through which the coloniser 'knew' about those societies that constituted 'great civilisations' of Asia. This meant that the civilisations were characterised by writing, sophisticated numeracy, monumental architecture, well-developed divisions of labour and social hierarchies, and well-developed agricultural and other technologies. Little attempt was made to apply the techniques of analysis used in Anthropology, or to construct a political



economy of any oriental society living or dead. Oriental Studies confined itself to translating (religious) texts. As a variant, ancient and defunct societies of Asia were the focus of archaeological reconstructions, and the deciphering of ancient languages. The approach was to classify them as mid-level in a hierarchy of stages, or consign them to the 'Asiatic Mode of Production', a catch-all category for societies that were not 'primitive' in terms of social organisation or technology, but which were not industrialised like the West.

For the colonisers the problem was how to explain this 'under-development' to justify colonisation. The answer was twofold: that Asians were more concerned with religion than with material conditions, and social conditions were unchanging due to the existence of the Oriental Despot, who supposedly owned or controlled all the resources (especially water) and who exercised life-and-death control over all subjects. The result was a lack of motivation to invest, acquire skills or property, or stage rebellions or make political changes (Wittfogel 1957). Japan's industrialisation challenged this, but because Japan is an Asian country its development in the 20th century '...ensured a more ... effective penetration of normative Eurocentrism in East Asia' (Paik 2000: 74–75).

Thus, Asian societies, like African ones, were constructed to give the West a counter-image of itself, and concealed the functioning of the capitalist world-economy. Conflicts among the colonised could thus be explained away as 'ages-old' religious conflicts, or used to prevent unity against the coloniser. Colonisation could be promoted as the herald of emancipation and change and a regulator of ancient sectarian (hence, irrational) conflicts. Oriental Studies devolved into Orientalism, a cultural construct, which sees the West as rational and the East as irrational and in need of 'control' and modernising, an image promoted in the media, literature, and the Social Sciences (Said 1979).

Two academic fields presenting Europeans as natural masters of the world have been Geography and History. The various cartographic ways whereby the world is mapped carry subtle visual suggestions. The centring of the global map around the Atlantic; the exaggeration of the size of temperate and cold zones, and the presentation of the Northern Hemisphere (where Europe is located) on the upper side have connotations with respect

to importance and hierarchy. Mercator's Projection, which combined these features, was consciously adopted in British maps after 1830 and influenced atlas and map making in France, Germany, and the US. Following Edward Quinn's *Historical Atlas* (1830), world atlases used colours to hierarchalise different parts of the world in accordance with the European evaluation of levels of civilisation. Such maps were often used in schools. Thus, children learned the appropriate social hierarchy of the world's peoples (Black 1997).

J.M. Blaut identified eight historians whom he believed were egregiously Eurocentric: Max Weber, Lynn White, Robert Brenner, E.L. Jones, John Hall, Michael Mann, Jared Diamond, and David Landes. Explanations of what made Europe world-dominating included reference to: climate and geography, Christianity, personality traits, and social institutions. Weber alone relied on a straight-forward racism (Blaut 2000: 200–202). These authors assumed that European domination can be understood by reference to Europe alone. Entirely missing was any mention of imperialism or expropriation of other societies' wealth. As these authors form part of the canon of European history, such historical constructions commonly appear in university curriculums and school textbooks. Thus, such views become 'naturalised' among the population.

Economics has been Eurocentric ever since Adam Smith explained the differences between 'civilised' nations and 'the savage nations of hunters and fishers', with civilisation bringing higher levels of consumption and general well-being, despite the fact that he possessed books which attested to the general well-being of hunter-gatherers (Marchionatti 2012). In the 19th century, neo-classical economics assumed as normal a rational, self-interested individual who was utility-maximising, subject only to his or her own tastes and budget constraint. Such behaviour rejects the ethics of altruism or reciprocity (Mehmet 1995: 136–137). Economics is defined as the study of the efficient allocation of scarce resources through the market activities of hedonistic, rational humans, activities that result in the common good. While economists claim universal validity for this framework, it is Eurocentric insofar as non-capitalist societies practised reciprocal exchanges and redistribution as well as market exchanges (Polanyi 1957).

Economic development models which were implemented in decolonised countries after 1945 accepted the industrialised societies as the model to strive for (Hoogvelt 1997: 36). Economic growth in itself may be considered a Euro-American goal.

International Relations is Eurocentric in its basis because its analytical unit, the nation state, is an institution that originated in Eur-America between the late 18th and the mid-19th centuries. Its theoreticians are mainly European. The field has been criticised for ignoring the legacy of colonialism (colonial conquests, anti-colonial struggles, suppression of anti-colonial struggles, the relations of colonies and neo-colonies with dominating states), and the counter-insurgency activities of dominating states in the periphery and semi-periphery during the Cold War. There has been no sustained analysis of major wars in Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Somalia, Chad, Congo, or Liberia (Gruffydd Jones 2006).

### Temporal perspective and challenges to Eurocentricity

Eurocentricity has had a long history. Its origins may go back to ancient Greece where, in the dramas of Aeschylus and Euripedes, Asia, '... that hostile 'other' beyond the seas ... speaks through and by virtue of the European imagination ...' (Said 1978: 56). In the Middle Ages, Europeans posited an ideological dichotomy between Christendom, then largely coterminous with Europe, and 'others', dangerous infidels who required conquest and/or conversion.

A type of civilisational project can be discerned during the Spanish conquest of the Americas. It imposed Christianity on Native Americans and constructed them as Spanish peasants, while it institutionalised Africans as non-humans and, therefore enslaveable (Todorov 1992). This led to the hierarchalised international division of labour.

English settlers in 17th-century North America justified the expulsion of Native Americans from their lands with the notion that the Natives did not make the land 'productive' in the Lockean sense (i.e. did not make commercial use of their land) nor privatise it as property. This was against Natural Law. Reference to Natural Law appealed to the educated elite. Ordinary people used the rationale that Native Americans did not use the same housing forms, clothing styles,

food, legal or religious frameworks and marriage customs as Europeans did. They were therefore savages, and so, removable (Hodgen 1967).

The Enlightenment was ambiguous in its attitude towards non-Western peoples. Voltaire admired China. West European high society welcomed visits from South Sea Island natives. Yet the Enlightenment thought about non-Europeans was contradictory; they were '... simultaneously exotic and familiar, exemplary and exploitable' (Outram 2005: 59). While advocating the 'brotherhood of Man' the Enlightenment thinkers could not bring themselves to condemn slavery, perhaps because many of them had interests in the transatlantic trades. The 18th century saw the start of classification of humans by physical appearance (Outram 2005).

In the 19th century, Africa, China, the Middle East and parts of Central Asia were brought into the capitalist world-economy, the exploitation of India intensified, and the US government carried out genocide on the Great Plains. The motive for these expansionary policies was to obtain new sources of raw materials, cheap labour, land, and markets. French colonial occupations were justified by the term *mission civilisatrice*. The British had their own model for the 'civilising mission' based on Darwin's concept of evolution. A notion of historical stages with Europe at the apex of a developmental hierarchy was promulgated by Herbert Spenser. In Liberal mainstream thinking, Europeans had a right and a duty to 'civilise' non-Europeans.

Karl Marx introduced his own stages, suggesting that all societies should pass through modes of production characterised as primitive communal, slavery, feudal, and capitalist. This scheme reflected the Liberal notion of progress, and was distilled from European history. In his early writings, Marx (1853) was ambiguous on the effects of colonialism; but in his later work he had second thoughts about historical stages (Lindner 2011). However, some Marxists made his early scheme of consecutive stages into a dogma.

Eurocentricity was first challenged in the 1930s and 1940s in the work of A. Appadurai, C.L.R. James, R.P. Dutt, Eric Williams, and van Leur (Blaut 2000: 8). After the Second World War, colonised territories became politically independent. Anti-Eurocentric scholarship continued. 'Third-World' scholars such as Ramkrishna Mukherjee (1957) and

Walter Rodney (1972) exposed colonialism's destructiveness; Anouar Abdel-Malek (1977) predicted cultural revival in the 'Third World.' Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* books (1987; 1991; 2006) raised an Afrocentric challenge to the civilisational project. Marshall Sahlins's 1974 study of hunter-gatherers showed that non-technologically advanced people could be affluent (living within their means, they were people of leisure amidst plenty). In 1972, Arno Peter's map of the world gave greater emphasis to the southern hemisphere (Black 1997). Yet Western ideas of state formation, economics, household practices, ideologies of gendering, race, and ethnicity as well as their opposites informed politics almost universally (Dirlik 1999: 9–10).

After 1949, the US government promoted the idea of 'development' primarily to make raw materials available on world markets (Hoogvelt 1997: 35), but also as a weapon in the Cold War. It is no accident that the subtitle of Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth* was *A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960). The intellectual underpinning for 'development' was Modernisation theory popularised by W.W. Rostow (1960). Poverty in the Third World was ascribed to stagnant traditionalism. Rostow adopted the stageist view of history, and suggested that all countries model their societies on Western nations in order to 'catch up' with them economically. In practice, 'development' meant industrialisation and Western-style consumerism.

Dependency theory was a reaction to modernisation theory. S. Amin (1988), A.G. Frank (1967), W. Rodney (1972), and others showed how structural relations between the metropole, or core countries (Eur-America) and colonies or semi-colonies in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, caused and deepened economic polarisation between these groups, which explained under-development. There could be no catching-up.

For Frank there were no stages. Amin criticised dominant European and North American Marxist dogma for universalising European stages, but invented other stages. Amin wished to revive the Enlightenment universalism that recognised the validity of all humans, but his view that all societies could become capitalist was Eurocentric. All Dependency theorists were Eurocentric, because of the implied assumption that all societies aspired to the consumption and lifestyles of the Western metropolises.

Immanuel Wallerstein, the main exponent of World-Systems Analysis, also began to criticise developmentalism, and challenged Liberal epistemologies in the Social Sciences. World-Systems Analysis is not a theory but a lens through which may be seen the historical processes by which Eur-America (and now Japan) have increasingly dominated the rest of the world in a social system called capitalism. Capitalism has structures. One is the division of the world into three economic zones: the core, highly developed and wealthy; the periphery, ruralised and impoverished; and the semi-periphery, an intermediate zone. An alliance between capitalists and the state was another structure, and households of a certain type were another. Capitalism also has typical processes: commoditisation, proletarianisation, and incorporation into the system, to name a few. Labour has historically been waged, slave labour, or near gratis labour: serf, debt bondage, or household (usually women). There is a world-scale division of labour in which the position where any individual stands has been determined by race, ethnicity, gender, and class. There is a dynamic between core, periphery, and semi-periphery in which historically the core became wealthy at the expense of the periphery. World-Systems proponents do not see modernism as good; the Industrial Revolution was not the apex of human achievement; and historically capitalism is thought to have generated a negative balance sheet for the world's peoples and environment.

World-Systems Analysis, International Political Economy and Dependency have recently come under attack from Global History, Post-Colonial, and Subaltern Studies. Global History scholars purport to be anti-Eurocentric because they claim capitalism or modernity (and therefore rationality) developed in ancient Chinese and Islamic civilisations. They base this claim on the existence of long-distance trade in these civilisations. Hence Europe was not exceptional. Examples of the Global History school are Andre Gunder Frank and Barry Gills's *The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five Thousand?* (1993), John Hobson's *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilization* (2004), and Janet Abu Lughod's *Before European Hegemony* (1989). Meanwhile, Post-Colonialism and Subaltern Studies claim to attack Eurocentricity by rejecting 'meta-narratives' or 'foundational narratives' which their practitioners say erase

differences among peoples, ignore the local, deny subjectivity to the colonised or subalterns in their own history (Bahl and Dirlik 2000).

Wallerstein's answer is that Global Historians are very Eurocentric because: they have no substantive basis on which to argue for capitalism in former societies, and we still have to account for the European conquest of the world. Most importantly, '[Their] view of ... history ... accepts the significance of the European "achievement" in precisely the terms that Europe defined it ...' (Wallerstein 1999: 179). True anti-Eurocentricity rejects the idea that what Europe did was an achievement. Finally, Eurocentricity leaves no room for alternative possibilities.

Bahl and Dirlik (2000: 6) accuse Frank of attempting to 'erase capitalism from history'. They contend that Global History does this in order to hide the fact that globalisation is really Modernisation theory, but in a new guise (one in which the dominant players are as likely to be members of Third-World elites as Western ones). Bahl and Dirlik suggest that Post-Modernism, Post-Colonialism, and Subaltern Studies disguise the re-colonisation of the world, and that '[d]ismissing meta narratives ... makes it impossible to confront power systematically' (2000: 10). In their promotion of 'difference', practitioners of these intellectual trends become complicit in the de-fusion of collective resistance to this process.

According to Dirlik (2000), culturalist critiques of Eurocentricity provide no explanation for its hegemony. What is needed is a connection to the political economy and power structures of imperialism. The notion that 'to speak of oppression ... erase[s] the subjectivities of the oppressed' ignores the fact that not to speak of oppression '... is to return the responsibility for oppression to its victims', while Third-World revolutions are a reassertion of subjectivities (Dirlik 2000: 35).

### Conclusion: Toward a new universalism

Many have pointed out that the response to Eurocentricity cannot be positing other ethnic-centrism; this would not comprise a project for humanity. If capitalism is intolerable and unsustainable, a new universal project is called for.

The findings that societies have through most of history successfully constructed redistributive systems and practised reciprocal exchanges outside markets, and that non-market-dominated societies have enjoyed affluence, seriously question the assertions of the advocates of capitalism with respect to human nature. Hence, a universalist project to replace the system that Eurocentricity has been used to maintain may have to be constructed from the wealth of knowledge and historical experiences of all societies.

Sheila Pelizzon and Cem Somel

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## Food and Imperialism: The Corporate Regime and Global Peasant Resistance

Marx, who metaphorically described the French peasantry as a 'sack of potatoes' to emphasise their disconnectedness from each other, would be surprised to witness the worldwide extent and connectedness of the recent international peasant movement. Its representative organisation, La Via Campesina (The Peasant Road), 'comprises about 150 local and national organisations in 70 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas' (see Via Campesina 2015), and has become a global platform where alternative theses on agricultural production are being formed and numerous interventions are being organised globally (Borras 2004; Desmarais 2007; Edelman 1998, 2002). The emergence of such a global peasant movement is closely related with the transformation of the food regime in the neoliberal era. Rural producers have always claimed to hold two powers

that stand in the way of agricultural capitalism. First, within the boundaries of the natural and local conditions, they have claimed their right to choose what to produce and how (particularly regarding inputs). Second, they have claimed their power to resist the complete commercialisation of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilisers by reproducing them naturally (Lewontin 1998: 75). This essay addresses the destruction of the peasant autonomy and the almost complete proletarianisation of peasants by the corporate food regime (see McMichael 2005), which has in turn led to the emergence of a global peasant movement aiming at the re-establishment of peasant autonomy by presenting a holistic, radical alternative for food production and consumption.

### Food regimes

Because the history of the decline of peasant autonomy runs in parallel with the transformation of the imperialist system, it is necessary to trace this historical path in order to grasp the deepening of this process in the neoliberal era. In this regard, the concept of the food regime, developed by Harriet Friedmann and Philip McMichael during the 1980s, identifies 'the ways in which forms of capital accumulation in agriculture constitute global power arrangements, as expressed through patterns of circulation of food' (McMichael 2009: 140), and thus provides a useful theoretical framework to understand the shifting modes of power relations with regard to agriculture and food production (see Friedmann and McMichael 1989; McMichael 1998, 2009). The first global food regime, which emerged during the era of classical imperialism led by Britain, was based on the global division of labour in agricultural and industrial production. Within this division of labour, powerful European states, particularly Britain as 'the workshop of the world', focused on industrial production, while the colonies and settler colonies undertook agricultural production. Following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act in Britain, which abolished all traditional mechanisms of protecting and feeding wage labour, in 1846 the government repealed the Corn Law, which had protected cereal producers in Britain and Ireland. This enabled the task of feeding the huge proletarian masses that capitalism was creating in cities to be

outsourced to the colonies. Thus, the emerging international food market linked agricultural production in the wider colonial world that was based on bloody practices, such as 'extermination of indigenous populations and the seizure of extremely productive lands, alongside with continuing plantation slavery and unpaid family labour' (Araghi 2009: 122), to industrial production based on the wage labour system in the industrial centres. In this way, underpriced food kept wages in Western industrial centres low, thereby increasing the rate of accumulating surplus value.

The post-colonial food regime that emerged after the Second World War took a developmentalist economic perspective that aimed to integrate the agricultural and industrial sectors within newly independent nation states (see Harriet 1982). Thus, following decolonisation, the food policies of sovereign states were reformulated on the principle of self-sufficiency, with agricultural modernisation being introduced as the only way to achieve this aim. Rapidly introduced agricultural technologies were accompanied by land reforms that rearranged class relations and moderated conflict in rural areas. The 'Green Revolution', first implemented in Mexico in the 1940s before spreading to South Asian states like India and the Philippines in the 1960s, fundamentally transformed the agricultural sector. New factors in agricultural production, such as agricultural machinery, irrigation systems, hybridised seeds, and synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, resulted in the dependence of agriculture on the emerging agri-industrial sector. Moreover, the expansion of agricultural development agencies in many countries and the dispersal of their 'experts' and 'technicians' into all rural areas led to the consolidation of nation states and a spreading of their developmentalist perspective in the countryside.

This post-colonial food regime, however, was not to last, undergoing a gradual transformation which opened the way for corporate power to dominate, primarily because of the US and European invasion of world cereal markets. Specifically, after the Second World War, the production surplus of the US agricultural sector, created mainly as a result of the New Deal's agricultural policies, was pumped into underdeveloped countries as food aid or through agricultural loans offered by the US Government with long terms and low interest rates. This process was

seemingly contradictory: on the one hand, the Green Revolution introduced highly efficient agricultural technologies; on the other hand, US-originating food aid and low-cost food import loans made agricultural imports highly attractive for the same countries. The result was decreasing agricultural production and growing food import expenditure across the entire underdeveloped world, where the ratio of food imports to food exports increased from 50 per cent in 1955–60 to 80 per cent in 1975 (Manfredi 1978, quoted in Araghi 1995: 350). In contrast, the US increased its exports in agricultural products between 1970 and 1980 by 150 per cent, and was followed by France with an increase in exports of 100 per cent (Edelman 1998: 106). Thus, having gained independence as nation states, the countries that had previously fed the European proletariat during the colonial era became increasingly dependent on the food surplus produced in the US and Europe. Moreover, their rulers were quite happy with this dependence, considering it a cheaper way to feed their own newly emerging urban masses. However, the destruction of rural life was appalling, with farmers who were unable to compete with cheap food imports abandoning the countryside to become the ‘new workers’ of the global South. In short, an intense depeasantisation was experienced (see Araghi 1995).

This gradual transformation was accompanied by the emergence of corporate agribusiness, particularly in the US, with an expansion of businesses mediating the one-way food traffic between the US agricultural surplus and underdeveloped countries. In this new regime, the US Government provided financial incentives to US agricultural producers, and the resulting agricultural surpluses were then bought by giant corporations at low cost before being mostly distributed to underdeveloped or developing regions of the world under various international agreements signed by the US Government. That is, US agricultural policies actually functioned to transfer public resources to facilitate the emergence and development of global giants of agribusiness, such as Cargill and Continental. They also allowed the capital of corporate agribusiness to become increasingly concentrated: ‘In 1921, 36 firms accounted for 85 per cent of U.S. grain exports. By the end of the 1970s, six giant “Merchants of Grain” controlled

more than 90 per cent of exports from the United States, Canada, Europe, Argentina, and Australia’ (Shiva 2000: 27). This concentration increased further thanks to the industrialisation of food production, both as an incentive for and as a response to the escalation of mass consumption. Meanwhile, agricultural products gradually became inputs for these industries. In particular, increasing meat consumption led to the creation of a huge ‘meat complex’:

Beef, the symbolic centre of the post-war diet, after staying steady for the first half of the century, increased 50 per cent after 1950. Much more impressively, poultry consumption per person, also steady from 1910 to 1940 at about 16 lb/person, increased almost 45 per cent between 1940 and 1950, and almost tripled to 70.1 lb/capita in 1985 ... To supply this consumption livestock producers were increasingly linked to corporate purchasers that processed and distributed livestock products on an ever-extending scale geographically and socially. (Friedmann and McMichael 1989: 106)

This transformation in meat production also created its own agricultural supply chain. To meet the demands of the feedstock industry supplying large-scale animal husbandry, there was widespread adoption of capital-intensive production of hybrid maize. The durable food industry also triggered the integration of similar products. For instance, since sweeteners were one of the main inputs of this industry, the production of sugar cane, sugar beet, and later, with the increased use of high-fructose corn syrup, corn became integrated into the durable food industry.

Hence, the post-war food regime brought about the almost complete linkage of agricultural production to agribusiness at all levels, thereby creating a corporate food regime. However, the neoliberal era should be understood as the radicalisation and institutionalisation of this tendency at a global scale, rather than as a rupture. During this era, the impractical ideal of agricultural self-sufficiency was abandoned both ideologically and politically. In 1986, when the process that would end in the foundation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 started, John Block, the US Minister of Agriculture, described this transformation as follows: ‘The idea that developing countries should feed

themselves is an anachronism from a bygone era. They could better ensure their food security by relying on US agricultural products, which are available in most cases at lower cost' (quoted in McMichael 2003: 174). The necessary condition for removing all remaining obstacles to this ongoing process was the elimination of various public interventions in agricultural production in order to make it subject to the rules of the free market. After 1980, this process was conducted first by the World Bank and then by the International Monetary Fund through structural adjustment programmes which imposed the decreasing of the agricultural supports and making agricultural loans further controlled by finance-capital. However, the key moment in forcing agriculture to engage with the rules of free trade was the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1994.

When GATT was originally signed in 1947, the agricultural sector was not even included within its system. After GATT's replacement by the WTO in 1995, agriculture was opened up to the global regulations of trade liberalisation. When the Agreement on Agriculture was signed by most of the underdeveloped or developing countries, the main motive was to increase their foreign exchange revenues by increasing agricultural exports. Given that the public agricultural subsidies were mostly implemented by the US and other developed countries, others were expecting to benefit from the free trade rules enforcing the removal or at least reduction of such subsidies. However, because of the WTO's complicated and unfairly implemented subsidy regime, the result has been the total opposite of what had been originally expected. While the demands of Southern governments for subsidies with 'legitimate environmental, economic, and rural development purposes' were caught in the net of the WTO subsidy regime, Northern countries maintained in various ways their own domestic agricultural subsidies, export subsidies, and other dumping practices (Schanbacher 2010: 36). The 'world price' that emerged from these practices was totally disconnected from actual production, with world agricultural prices falling from a mean of 100 in 1975 to 61 by 1989 (McMichael 2005: 278). The invasion of the markets by corporate agribusiness through these artificial prices further accelerated the elimination of small producers in the

global South, while food expenditure in those developing countries that had signed the WTO agreement in the expectation of increasing their foreign exchange revenues increased by 20 per cent between 1994 and 1999.

Another dimension of corporate agribusiness domination has been built on new patented gene technologies, known as the second Green Revolution. While the first Green Revolution made peasants dependent on the agricultural industry, the second one deepened this dependency almost to the point of slavery. For instance, the modified and patented seed industry made peasants totally dependent on corporations, as became obvious in the case of Indian peasants forced to pay transnational companies for patented Basmati rice, although such rice had already been produced and enriched for centuries by Indian peasants themselves. Underpinning this process were regulations related to intellectual property rights. For example, the agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), signed when the WTO was established, concerns intellectual property rights that are subject to trade, and is now one of the major threats against rural producers. Unsurprisingly, Jose Bové, one of the celebrities of the global peasant movement, defines genetically modified products 'a technique of tyranny', and their patenting as the most significant tool of this technique (Bové and Duvour 2001: 89). The use of genetically modified products has expanded rapidly because of government policies. According to one report, '2012 marked an unprecedented 100-fold increase in biotech crop hectareage from 1.7 million hectares in 1996 to 170 million hectares in 2012 – this makes biotech crops the fastest adopted crop technology in recent history' (ISAAA 2012). This development can undoubtedly be considered as embodying the new imperial practices of seizure in agriculture, defined by Harvey (2003) as 'accumulation by dispossession'.

And lastly, as a result of the 'supermarket revolution' (Reardon, Timmer, and Berdegue 2004), processing between the production and consumption of the food started to be controlled by large companies, such as Carrefour and Wal-Mart, namely the giants of the retail sector where capital is highly concentrated. Because of the 'the technologies of seed modification, cooling and preserving, and transport of fruits and vegetables as nonseasonal or year-round',



seeding times and size of agricultural products have become detached from their 'natural cycle' to become instead subject to the supply chain management of the global retail companies that increasingly represent – or in fact, create – the demands of Western consumers (McMichael 2009: 150; see Burch and Lawrence 2007). Consequently, more and more Southern peasants have been turned into contract workers of these retail corporations.

### **A radical alternative: food sovereignty**

The opposition of La Via Campesina to the corporate food regime can be traced back to the Declaration of Managua, drawn up by representatives of eight agricultural organisations that convened in a congress held in Nicaragua in 1992. Officially, however, the organisation was established one year later by 46 farmers' leaders assembled in the Belgian town of Mons. La Via Campesina made its international debut at the Global Convention of Food Security in Quebec, Canada, in 1995, before making its first significant impact by attending the Food Security Conference of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome one year later. La Via Campesina refused to sign the conference declaration drawn up by non-governmental organisations and asserted its independence from both government agencies and non-governmental organisations that had, until then, held decision-making powers on agriculture on the international arena. From this point on, La Via Campesina gradually increased its authority to become the internationally recognised representative organisation of the global peasant movement.

La Via Campesina struggles in particular against the elimination of small producers or their conversion into the proletariat of the corporate food regime, with the consequent loss of autonomy. In this sense, the international peasant movement is engaged in a struggle against both the free trade regulations, implemented and administered by a global power network comprising international financial institutions, the WTO, free trade agreements, transnational corporations, and governments, and the practices of agribusiness based on the notion of 'accumulation by dispossession'. From 'the dumping of food at prices below the cost of production in the global economy' and a policy of 'food aid that disguises

dumping, introduces GMOs into local environments and food systems and creates new colonialism patterns' to the 'technologies and practices that undercut our future food producing capacities, damage the environment and put our health at risk', such as transgenic crops and industrial bio-fuel monocultures, La Via Campesina has a huge agenda of opposition (see Declaration of Nyéléni 2007).

Despite this, La Via Campesina should not be regarded as a mere oppositional organisation because the approach it takes implies an alternative constitutive tendency. This sustainable agriculture perspective, which centres on small producers, is expressed in the concept of 'food sovereignty'. The 2007 Declaration of Nyéléni describes food sovereignty as follows:

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. (Declaration of Nyéléni 2007: 1)

This presents a model which conflicts in every aspect with the corporate model. While the corporate model reduces agricultural products to a matter of global commodity trade, the food sovereignty model, which takes the food as a basic human right, is predicated on the principle of local, national, and regional self-sufficiency. The corporate model is capital-intensive with the incentivised use of machinery, chemicals, and genetic technology, while the ecological agriculture model has a labour-intensive character based on the balance between the producers' historical experience and the ecological environment. However, the contrast is not just a matter of production. First, the former model is company-based while the latter is family- and community-centred. Second, while the alternative model sees the increase of geographical distance between production and consumption as a problem, the industrial model is based on this very principle. Finally, the corporate model wishes to impose a diet intended to become globally standardised, while the alternative model highlights product diversity and localism, and therefore

diversity of diets. That is, the alternative agriculture advocates cultural diversity.

In brief, the alternative agriculture model, developed within a framework of food sovereignty, is not just an opposing model; rather, it is based on a far-reaching perspective regarding how food production and consumption, two of the basic activities of human life, should be organised. It is a model which integrates many issues within its struggle: the prevention of rural poverty; prioritising women's labour as the principal and determinative force in rural areas; problematising the spatial distribution of production and consumption; and highlighting the relationship between the human and ecological environment and diversified food consumption. In this sense, the food sovereignty movement is also transformative for most of the participating peasant organisations. Stedile, a leader of the Brazilian Landless Movement, summarises this rich blending of ideas and experience in *La Via Campesina* as follows:

From the time of Zapata in Mexico, or of Juliao in Brazil, the inspiration for agrarian reform was the idea that the land belonged to those who worked it. Today we need to go beyond this. It is not enough to argue that if you work the land, you have proprietary rights over it. The Vietnamese and Indian farmers have contributed a lot to our debates on this. They have a different view of agriculture, and of nature – one that we've tried to synthesize in *Via Campesina*. We want an agrarian practice that transforms farmers into guardians of the land, and a different way of farming, that ensures an ecological equilibrium and also guarantees that the land is not seen as private property. (Quoted in Metres 2004: 43)

As a model describing food not as a commodity, but a basic human right, food sovereignty, first, is predicated on local distribution networks that directly connect small producers with consumers against the dominance of companies and agricultural product markets; second, it highlights the organised knowledge of producers regarding agricultural production against capital-intensive technologies; and third, it includes the ecological sustainability as a fundamental principle. Thus, the food sovereignty model carries the potential of surpassing the conventional limits of the concept of sovereignty: 'Food

sovereignty is the right of peasants, as subjects of production, to control production, land, seed and water, and it is at the same time the right of consumers to choose safe foods to consume' (Whan 2006: 30). In contrast, other definitions tend to force the concept to fit into more conventional limits of the idea of sovereignty and to convert it into a merely governmental policy: 'Food sovereignty is defined as the right of peoples and sovereign states to democratically determine their own agricultural and food policies' (IAASTD 2008: 15). As a matter of fact, the food sovereignty concept was actually first proposed to overcome the limits of an officially approved concept, namely 'food security', which is recognised by international governmental agencies such as the FAO. Food security attributes sovereignty to governments, imposing on them the obligation to provide sufficient nutrition to their population. It therefore surrenders all decision-making processes to nation states or relevant institutions of the international system created by nation states. Thus, food security, which before the neoliberal era was defined within the general principle of 'agricultural self-sufficiency', has been redefined in the last two decades as something attainable through the mechanisms of global trade which necessitates the reshaping of global regulations and nation states accordingly. The break signified by the notion of food sovereignty is, therefore, deeply ideological and political. According to McMichael (2004: 4),

Whereas food security is a concept associated with the state/system, food sovereignty is at bottom a non-state concept, concerned with political and economic rights for farmers as a precondition of food security. Food security and food sovereignty represent distinct organizing principles shaping development trajectories at the turn of the twenty-first century. Each concept represents a model of agriculture: whereas food security has come to depend on the agroindustrial model, food sovereignty is rooted in agro-ecological relations.

Thus, food sovereignty represents a radically democratic reconstruction of relations within the agricultural sector, predicated primarily on the power of production communities and standing against the global

capitalism represented by the corporate food regime. This perspective carries it onwards from being a mere agricultural movement to a wider force regarding the structuring of a radically alternative society. As Hardt and Negri put it,

The most innovative struggles of agriculturists today, for example, such as those of the *Confédération paysanne* in France or the *Movimento sem terra* in Brazil, are not closed struggles limited to a sector of population. They open new perspectives for everyone on questions of ecology, poverty, sustainable economies, and indeed all aspects of life. (Hardt and Negri 2004: 125)

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## Food and Imperialism: Food Regimes, Hegemony and Counter-hegemony

### Introduction: the mutations of imperialism

According to the economist Samir Amin, imperialism is 'the perpetuation and expansion of capitalist relations abroad by force or without the willing consent of the affected people' (Amsden 1998: 728). Imperialism has always been closely related to agriculture

and food. This is particularly clear from the work of Rosa Luxemburg (Kowalik 1998), who, putting agriculture at the centre of imperialist relations of exploitation, defined imperialism as 'the political expression of the accumulation of capital in its competitive struggle for what is still left of the non-capitalist regions of the world' (Amsden 1998: 728).

Modern imperialism has also been defined as a certain period in the history of capitalism, from around 1870 to 1914. However, it has been recognised that imperialism has adopted new forms and is still a current phenomenon. This is important if we focus our attention that we give to food, more precisely, on the political economy of food.

### Imperialism and food regimes

Food goes beyond agriculture. Therefore it is more accurate to speak of an agri-food system, which includes inputs into farming (seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, machinery and implements, and fuel) as well as purchasing farmers' products, processing, transporting, wholesaling, and retailing (Belasco 2009; Burch and Lawrence 2007; Friedland 1994; Magdoff and Tokar 2010). The agri-food system comprises a net of global commodity chains which links developed and underdeveloped countries and regions (Fold and Pritchard 2005). Therefore, understanding the relation between imperialism and food is particularly useful to the food regime theory, developed from the perspective of Marxist political economy (McMichael 2009). According to this framework the subordination of food to the self-regulating market system involves specific methods of disembedding the economic relations of land and people. On the other hand, capitalism and its self-regulating market must become world systems in order to reproduce their existence. Capitalism can only be world capitalism, and in the realm of world capitalism the food regimes have emerged, together with imperialism, as certain periods of stable relations in the areas of power, production, and consumption in the world food economy (Friedmann, 1993: 220, 214). Three food regimes have been identified. The first one (1870–1914) functioned around Great Britain as hegemonic power. (Friedland (1990) suggests that it started with capitalism and with the modern form of slavery at around the

middle of the 17th century, and was based upon sugar and slavery.) After a period of turbulence the second food regime (1945–80) took shape under the leadership of the US. The third food regime began to appear in the 1980s and is still under construction.

Fundamental to the first food regime was the trade in agricultural products (foodstuffs and raw materials) from the colonies and other underdeveloped countries to the centre of the British Empire, which at the same time played the role of 'the workshop of the world'. In this case, cheap food from abroad was the key to keeping the wages of the growing industrial labour force low and to increasing the urban population in the developed world. At the same time, these regions and countries were forced to specialise as exporters of such products.

During the second food regime a link was created between agriculture and 'national' development, supported by protectionism. The axis of this regime was the mechanism of foreign aid, which allowed the US to channel its agricultural surplus abroad through subsidised exports. This increased the vulnerability of other countries to American subsidised agricultural exports, which they were forced to assimilate. Thus their domestic agriculture remained underdeveloped and their economies became increasingly dependent on imported food. The transnational integration of agri-food sectors was also consolidated. The 'Green Revolution' promoted the industrialisation of agriculture, whose products changed from final consumer goods to industrial raw materials for the manufacture of processed foods. Farms became integrated with and subordinate to agri-food industries. These industries, linked to key sectors such as chemicals and energy, have since then been some of the most dynamic parts of the advanced capitalist economies. Farmers in intense competition with each other were on a 'technical treadmill'. They had to buy industrial inputs (foodstuffs for animals, chemicals and machinery for crops) and to sell their products, at low prices, to food-processing industries, and increasingly had to borrow capital, thus struggling to strike a balance between their own livelihoods and the commercial criteria of farming businesses (Friedmann 1993: 222–225). The imposition of the industrial agriculture in the Global South was initially carried out by the World Bank and International Monetary

Fund through 'development' aid and later imposed through structural adjustment programmes and the rules of 'free trade' of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Several authors (Friedland 1990; Le Heron and Roche 1995; McMichael 1992) identified the first signs of the birth of a third food regime during the 1970s and its consolidation in the 1980s. This food regime is characterised by the dominion of corporate agribusiness, which has begun to develop 'industrial' production systems and contractual integration arrangements in which decisions about how to produce crops and animals are increasingly being taken over by the large agribusinesses. Moreover, contractual integration reduces independent farmers to the position of labourers, but without the rights of workers to bargain collectively (Lewontin 2000). At the same time, in the third food regime trade flows of fresh fruits and vegetables are the pillar of a new 'international division of labour', whereby underdeveloped countries and regions must specialise in the production and export of these products for consumption by the affluent strata in the US, the European Union, and Japan.

### **Hegemonic central powers, food regimes, and counter-hegemonic social movements**

From the point of view of an imperialism and anti-imperialism analysis it is important to highlight the fact that each food regime has been centred on a particular hegemonic power: Great Britain in the case of the first one, the US in the second, and corporate transnational agribusiness in the present third food regime. We speak of hegemony in the Gramscian sense, that is, as economic and political dominion together with intellectual and moral direction or leadership. This is valid in the realm of nation states as well as in the international or global economy and politics (Gill 1993; Morton 2007), and it has been especially significant in the second and third food regimes, because the economic and political elites in underdeveloped countries have usually entered into alliances with foreign governments and companies and have shared with them the profits of the exploitation of their own peoples. Besides, it has often been the case that such elites promote the dominant ideology and try to

replicate the way of life of the metropolis in their own countries. (The Mexican experience of the triumph of neoliberalism during the government of Carlos Salinas is a good example of this phenomenon; see Morton 2007: 153–167.)

For more than a century, the world food economy has shown a tension between expansion of the self-regulating market system and the self-protection of society (Friedmann 1993: 218). In each food regime counter-hegemonic or anti-systemic movements have emerged to challenge the imperial hegemony. The dialectic of expansion of the self-regulating market system at different levels (nation states, international relations, global economy), and the corresponding movements of self-protection of peoples and societies faced with the disruptions caused by the aforementioned expansion, explain the relationship between imperialism and anti-imperialism in each of the three food regimes.

### **Imperialism and anti-imperialism in the first food regime**

In the first food regime the growth of capitalist industrial and agricultural production in Europe included the huge expansion of a class of workers whose income was in the form of money and whose food was obtained through markets. Poverty, together with the opportunities offered by flourishing food markets, created the basis for a world food market. Many Europeans, unable to survive either on the land or in labour markets, migrated en masse, mainly to North America, Australia, and Argentina. They settled there at the expense of the indigenous peoples, whom they forcefully dispossessed. Many of them became not peasants but commercial farmers directly involved in world markets, and their grain and livestock products were cheaper than those of the Europeans. The flood of imports of these foods into Europe further impaired domestic agriculture and displaced more people, who too became potential migrants. Particularly relevant was the world wheat market, which linked waged workers in Europe to European settlers in the Americas and Australia. Both workers and settlers promoted movements for self-protection, demanding governmental social welfare for workers and price regulation for farmers. Tensions and contradictions within

the first food regime engendered social and political movements against the British imperial rule. The struggle for independence and national sovereignty in the former colonies, together with the breakdown of the civilisation of the 19th century (Polanyi 2001: 3), put an end to the first food regime centred on British political and economic power (Friedmann 1993; Friedmann and McMichael 1989; McMichael 2009).

### **Imperialism and anti-imperialism in the second food regime**

The forms of self-protection that emerged at the end of the first food regime, after a long period of turbulence, were the background of a second food regime, in which the self-regulating market expanded and new movements for self-protection appeared. In this regime, capitalist enterprise swelled thanks to the state regulation of land, labour, and agricultural products, and expanded the self-regulating market system beyond the limits of national economies. The problems of disembedding food, land, and labour from their social contexts led to attacks on the old forms of self-protection, which created obstacles to further expansion. The second food regime depended on the US having a monopoly over world trade and its own subsidised exports, and it conditioned by the Cold War. The US food aid policy was used as a weapon against the expansion of Soviet influence on the Third-World countries. Later, the monetary and oil crises allowed several countries to join world markets in ways that weakened the status quo. Underdeveloped countries, which had borrowed to pay for oil and food imports in the 1970s, entered the debt crisis of the 1980s and 1990s. Since then they have been forced to export at any cost, and their non-traditional agricultural exports deeply transformed the second food regime (Friedmann 1993: 218–219, 227).

### **Imperialism and anti-imperialism in the third food regime**

Following the crisis of the second food regime, the 1970s and 1980s saw the emergence of the third food regime, whose principal features are the concentration of corporate power in the hands of transnational agribusiness and the increasing relevance of fresh vegetables and fruits in global trade flows. In

this regime the power is exercised not just by a single country, like Great Britain in the first food regime and the US in the second, but above all by corporations whose economic and political interests do not always coincide with the immediate aims of American and/or European governments. However, usually the governments of the hegemonic nations, as well as those of the subordinated nations, are in the service of these corporations. They control the key points of the global commodity chains of the agri-food system, from the seed sector and the agrichemical market (Monsanto, Aventis, DuPont, Syngenta, Bayer, Dow) to the food manufacturing sector (Nestlé, Unilever, Philip Morris, Kraft, Coca-Cola, Pepsi) and even the retail sector (Wal-Mart, Kroger, Carrefour, Albertsons, Safeway, Ahold, Tesco) and food service sector (McDonald's and Burger King). These powerful companies decide what is produced, chiefly in underdeveloped agri-export countries, to satisfy the demand from developed nations and also the high-income strata of Third-World societies. But they also exercise a considerable influence on patterns of consumption around the world, particularly in poor countries. The transformation of people's diets in the Global South has also been encouraged by the US Government through 'aid' programmes. At the same time, overwhelming marketing of Western cultural values and products (especially foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt, and low-fibre fast foods and soft drinks) is carried out by transnational companies. Important effects of this penetration have been the high levels of migration from the countryside to big cities slums, the promotion of crops for export, and the growing dependence on cheap food imports from the US (Magdoff and Tokar 2010). However, eco-imperialism is negatively affecting people in developed as well as underdeveloped nations. Accordingly, there are critical responses throughout the world, some of them mostly based in the European Union and the US (for instance Slow Food, Food Sovereignty, community-supported agriculture, the promotion of the local over the global), and others more related to the Global South (for instance Fair Trade, La Vía Campesina). In addition, several non-governmental organisations are playing an important role in these struggles, and even within international organisations such as the WTO there is some room for anti-imperialist

initiatives (Bello 2009; Morgan, Marsden, and Murdoch 2006; Patel 2013; Wright and Middendorf 2008).

## Conclusion

Under certain circumstances foodstuffs can be treated as commodities, but the total commodification of food is a complete nonsense and tragic mistake, because access to food is first of all a human right (Magdoff 2012; Rosset 2006). However, the commodification of food has been the channel for reproducing imperialist rule over peoples and nations, and the central form of imperialism today is eco-imperialism or agribusiness imperialism, which allows corporations to control energy, water, air, land, and biodiversity (McMichael 2000). To break this imperialist rule a radical transformation of the global agri-food system is necessary and must be promoted as a movement for the self-protection of society against the unlimited expansion of the market economy that supports the corporate agri-food system. This movement may lead to a new agri-food system, whose underlying principle must be 'food for people, not for profit'. It may follow a path of re-ruralisation, because 'Food means farming, and farming means rural livelihoods, traditions and cultures, and it means preserving, or destroying rural landscapes. Farming means rural society, agrarian histories; in many cases, rural areas are the repositories of cultural legacies of nations and peoples' (Rosset 2006: 9–10), stopping the coercion of trade liberalisation, and re-writing the rules of trade to favour the local (Magdoff and Tokar 2000).

In the current circumstances of climate change, peak oil, and food crisis, the self-protection of society means the recovery of dignity and sovereignty, the conquest of sufficiency and satisfaction through self-organisation. In other words, the struggle is for the recognition that all beings and all peoples are equal and have rights to the earth's resources.

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## Guerrilla Warfare and Imperialism

Like all historical phenomena, guerrilla warfare has its roots in the past. Elements, mostly in tactics, that constitute this form of war can be more or less found in every historical period since antiquity. But the guerrilla as we know it, however surprising, is a modern form of war. Most writers agree to place its origins in the Spanish resistance to Napoleonic forces (the term 'guerrilla', meaning a small war, was transferred into the English language from this



conflict) during the Peninsular War from 1808–14. The most important war theoretician of that time, Carl von Clausewitz, devoted a chapter to ‘The People in Arms’ in his monumental ‘On War’. This form of fighting was adopted during the 19th and early 20th century by conquered and oppressed nations and ethnicities, as European imperialism was progressively conquering the entire globe. Episodes like the Philippine resistance to US occupation, the Boer War (often described as the greatest 19th-century partisan war), the wars in the periphery of the Ottoman Empire (as in Libya and Morocco) and at its heart (in Turkey after the First World War) spread guerrilla warfare worldwide. During the inter-war period, guerrilla warfare intertwined with the communist movement in the Chinese resistance against Japanese aggression, and found its more important modern expert in the person of Mao Zedong. The Second World War marked the return of guerrilla warfare to the European continent, then heavily occupied and exploited by Nazi Germany, in the form of ‘partisan war’. This successful reappearance initiated its renewed practice in the other continents as the high hopes of an end to colonialism were frustrated by the realities of the Cold War and the aggressiveness of old and new imperialisms. The Cuban Revolution became a symbol of the victorious guerrilla strategy and a paradigm for other insurrections. Forms of guerrilla warfare, usually combined with other tactics, persist to this day, although their identification is becoming more difficult as they are blurred with ‘terrorism’ and their political goals are sometimes indistinct.

## People and nations under arms

‘Like smoldering embers, it consumes the basic foundations of the enemy forces.’  
(Carl von Clausewitz)

Guerrilla warfare is fought by small groups of volunteers, armed civilians defending their land from foreign intervention. The two elements – small groups (militias) and civilian character – were piecemeal intertwined in 18th-century Europe and during the American Revolution. Small detachments, auxiliary

to the tactical forces, were used by the middle of the 18th century in Europe, for example by the French against the British. These fighters were often mercenaries and foreigners, despised by army officers but nevertheless employed. Across the Atlantic, groups of civilians started riots against the British administration in America and later fought as ‘irregulars’ against British troops, gradually building a local identity and forming a regular army from and besides the initial militias (Polk 2008: 4–18).

The idea of civilians bearing arms to defend their homeland originated in the modern era from the French Revolution and the rise of the democratic citizen instead of the royal subject. Until then (and well after that in many territories), a non-military bearing arms was simply an illegal fighter, an outlaw, and his punishment was usually death without trial. Armed resistance against any kind of oppression was sometimes associated (and almost always treated as such) with banditry. Banditti, haiduks, kléphtes, ‘primitive rebels’ (Hobsbawm 1981) were the ancestors of the modern revolutionaries and guerrilla fighters. The introduction of the general military conscription transformed the way of waging war by setting new laws. But the guerrilla fighters, engaged in an illegal practice, were still excluded from any protection, even if operating in co-operation with tactical forces.

The massive participation (*levée en masse*) by conscription to the Revolutionary Wars marked the turn from the professional armies of the monarchs to the modern massive armies of the nation states. War was thus ‘democratised’ and from then on the use of arms and military training became common knowledge, at least in Europe. Ironically enough, the first conflicts characterised as guerrilla fighting were in fact a reaction to this procedure and its outcomes. This was the case of the revolt in the Vendée, the uprising by locals against military conscription in 1793, caused also by the local reaction to the revolutionary state’s measures against the Roman Catholic Church. Similarly religious features can be found in the original guerrilla of the Spanish people against the French, and ‘atheist’, occupation of their country during the Napoleonic wars (1808–14). There, the basic elements of the guerrilla, as we shall know it, were crystallised: armed civilians in small groups fighting a superior foreign

army to liberate their homeland. As no tactical army existed there to assist it, the guerrilla became the main form of war. But a crucial parameter was the aid given to the Spanish rebels by the British navy; from then on, external aid was considered a basic element for guerrilla warfare.

Foreign authorities or institutions loyal to them were overthrown, popular support was obtained and new authorities (the *juntas* in the Spanish case) were organised in liberated areas. It was a people's war with no military end, while the society continued to resist the invaders. This idea of continuing the resistance in the name of the society or the nation, while the state had capitulated, would have radical repercussions in the 20th century. The Spanish throne, wisely enough, dismantled all guerrillas and *juntas* after the French withdrawal.

As the phenomenon of armed popular resistance was growing, military theory acknowledged it, beyond legal considerations; after the Napoleonic Wars, Carl von Clausewitz treated this matter in his famous Chapter 26 entitled 'The People in Arms'. Having studied, and actively participated in the Napoleonic Wars of his time, he formulated a general war theory based on his experiences. Concerning the popular uprising, he promoted its combination with regular army operations and pointed out successfully some main characteristics, such as the national character of this kind of war and its success in rather mountainous or otherwise inaccessible lands. Despite its early theorisation and limited documentation, Clausewitz's chapter on people's war was unique for a long period. Therefore it was used by supporters of the guerrilla tactics and even thoroughly studied by partisan leaders until the Second World War, as in the case of the Central Committee of the Greek People's Liberation Army (*EΛAΣ*). But times had changed, and with them guerrilla fighting had gone a long way before returning to the Old Continent.

### Resisting colonialist expansion

'I never saw a Boer all day till the battle was over and it was our men that were the victims.' (General Sir Neville Lyttelton)

During the second half of the 19th century and until the outbreak of the First World

War, Europe remained peaceful. It was the imperialistic era and the Europeans were off to conquer the world. A kind of total war was therefore fought against the natives; the efforts to establish rules in the wars between 'civilised' nations in Europe had no place in the rest of the world. No distinction was made between fighters and civilian population and the extermination of the latter was a gloomy forerunner of the horrors of the Second World War. The inequality between the opposing sides was growing with the use of modern weapons and other fruits of the industrial revolution (Traverso 2003, 63–68).

In the colonies, national sentiment was growing and with that the ideas of independence and the overthrow of the foreign yoke. A series of national parties and leagues were founded between 1881 and 1914; amongst them, the Indian National Congress and the Panindian Muslim League, the Chinese Tongmenghui, the Indonesian Budi Utomo and Sarekat Islam, the Young Arab Society and the Filipino Katipunan. From the latter emerged the Filipino guerrilla army of Emilio Aguinaldo against US occupation. Against the massive and brutal American colonial war against the population (waged by 150,000 US troops in 1900, as in Iraq in 2007), a guerrilla campaign was deployed which, despite its official defeat, continued to fight the Americans, then the Japanese and then again the Americans, in the form of the Hukbalahap and more recently, the New People's Army.

But the most notorious guerrilla war of this period was fought between Europeans in the south of the African continent: the Boer War. As British imperialism was reaching the edges of the world in search of rich resources, it came to confront previous European settlers of Dutch origin in South Africa. These settlers, known as Boers, fought back, trying to preserve their control of the land and force out the new invaders. They deployed guerrilla tactics, setting ambushes and inflicting serious damages on British tactical forces. The British, in order to crush Boer resistance, deployed measures until then imposed only on, 'inferior races'. The civilian population was imprisoned in concentration camps, behind barbed wire, where they died in their thousands. To defeat the Boer guerrillas the British Empire had to wage its largest land campaign of the century, larger even than its effort against Napoleon (Jones 1996: 42). The Boer War ended at the beginning of the

20th century. Sixty years later, another armed struggle would appear there, that of MK (Umkhonto we Sizwe), the armed branch of the African National Congress (ANC) under the leadership of Nelson Mandela against South African apartheid (Seddon 2005: 323).

## People's war

'The strategy of guerrilla war is to pit one man against ten, but the tactic is to pit ten men against one.' (Mao Zedong)

Despite the spread of guerrilla tactics, these had proved quite unsuccessful by the end of the 19th century. The use of modern weapons, like machine guns and chemical weapons, radically transformed warfare into an industrialised operation. The concept of total war was also developing during the First World War, as parts of populations were seen as targets. Amid this mass carnage in battlefields between trenches, there was no room for guerrilla tactics.

In this transitory period, the ascent of the communist movement would change the nature and status of guerrilla warfare. While not used in the Great War, the October Revolution or the subsequent Civil War in Russia, the importance of guerrilla warfare was acknowledged by Lenin in an early article ([1906] 1998), in his conception that no method of struggle should be excluded on grounds of principles.

But it was in China, where peasant revolts periodically broke out, that the Communists deployed an epic guerrilla campaign, under the name of the 'People's Protracted War', from 1927 until the seizure of power in 1949. That was a guerrilla war with an essential difference from all previous ones; it was organised and led by a Communist Party and thus was not waged to defend a prior state of affairs but to combine national independence with radical social revolution. The areas controlled by the guerrillas would abolish the old laws and became the nucleus of a new authority, legitimised by the struggle against the foreign aggressor and reforms in favour of the local peasant population.

The Chinese peasantry was for a long period on the brink of insurrection against a central government whose cohesion and power were fragile. The provinces were exploited by local warlords and bandits, while

revolts erupted sporadically. Most probably, it was the Japanese conquest and occupation policies that gave the spark that started the 'prairie fire' of the first successful communist-led guerrilla war (Moore 1966: 201–223). In 1934 the Red Army began its Long March to its base in Yan'an, and soon Mao Zedong became the leader of both the Party and the Army.

In 1938, the Japanese had occupied the biggest part of northern and central China, the main harbours and all the industrial centres. But, as the Nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek retreated inland, the Communists under Mao Zedong gained support in the occupied countryside, established their power in liberated areas and from there unleashed guerrilla warfare against their enemies. This year, in Yan'an, Mao would give a series of lectures, later published under the title 'On Protracted War'; he supported the secondary but absolutely essential role of guerrilla warfare in combination with what he called 'mobile warfare' of tactical forces (point 95). American journalist Edgar Snow wrote that the Chinese communists had created 'the largest guerrilla organization in the world'. In the final stage of the war against Japan, in December 1941, while partisan fighting was dynamically reappearing in Europe, the Communist Party decided upon dispersing its Eight Army and concentrating on guerrilla warfare. By the time of Japan's defeat in 1945, at least one million fighters were under communist command (Rice 1990: 85). After a four-year civil war, the revolution had won in this immense country.

## Partisan warfare

'In the occupied regions conditions must be made unbearable for the enemy and all his accomplices. They must be hounded and annihilated at every step, and all their measures frustrated.' (Stalin)

The reappearance of guerrilla war in Europe during the Second World War was a successful one. This success led to the spread of such methods in the post-war world, from the anti-colonialist struggles to the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Political as well as military-technical factors allowed this successful re-emergence of guerrilla tactics in Axis-occupied Europe. At first, the density

of the Axis forces was not equal in the vast occupied areas of Europe, including the Balkans and parts of the Soviet Union from spring-summer 1941 onwards. Especially in the Balkans, the mountainous landscape multiplied the strength of forces necessary to control it, just at the time that all resources and manpower were required for Operation Barbarossa against the Soviet Union. In the critical period of autumn 1941, partisan warfare broke out in Yugoslavia, inaugurating a successful resistance against Axis occupation in the Balkans. Moreover, the military needs of the German attack plans created two different levels within the German army: the first-quality troops were used in the military operations and the second-quality troops were assigned to controlling and policing the occupied territories. The latter were an easier adversary for the partisan fighters.

Soon the Second World War took the form of a total war; the orientation of all social functions to the service of massive military mechanisms turned all aspects of social life into 'targets'. With more than the two-thirds of the 60 million victims being civilians, the word 'civilian' lost its meaning. Under these circumstances, the choice to resist behind enemy lines became more popular (Margaritis 2014).

The Soviet leadership openly called for resistance behind the enemy's lines and the population of the country, facing extermination by Nazi racial policies to 'germanise' their land, organised a strong partisan movement, backed by the remains of the state and the Communist Party.

The British, once more facing a Continental blockade, decided to unleash an 'ungentlemanly warfare' using a special unit, the Special Operations Executive (SOE) to 'set Europe ablaze', in Churchill's phrase. This unit, trained in sabotage and information gathering, deployed guerrilla tactics and systematically co-operated and supplied partisan armies in occupied Europe. Nearly 150 years after the Peninsular War in Spain, the British found again in these modern guerrilleros an ally against the greatest Continental power.

Leaving aside Soviet and British goals, armed resistance in Europe emerged as a new phenomenon; it resulted from the quick collapse of the European states' sovereignty and the reaction against Axis policies aiming to enslave populations or even annihilate some of them. In several cases, resistance took the form of secession from the body of Hitler's

'New Europe', with movements facing the challenge of administering liberated territories long before the actual end of the war. The political forces of the resistance movement – characteristically the Communist Parties – were grossly designing a political programme for the post-war period. No intention for return to the *status quo ante bellum* existed in this case. On the contrary, belief was strong in the coming of a new era which would bring radical social changes, deep-rooted reforms or even revolution. These aspirations were based not only in political programmes but also in the reality of the liberated areas, where partisan movements – as in Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece – established their own governments in the form of Committees of National Liberation (Skalidakis 2014).

Post-war Europe was no place for guerrillas. In some cases, conflicts originating from the war or even before it endured for years before fading away, as in Spain against the Franco regime (1944–50) or in the Baltic countries, Ukraine and Poland against the Soviet Union. Perhaps the only guerrilla conflict worthy of the term was the Greek Civil War (1946–49). As the massive leftist movement of the country, originating from the resistance against Nazi occupation and its collaborators, was suppressed by the old establishment, under British tutelage, a civil war began, mainly in the mountainous countryside. The fighters of the Republican Army of Greece (Dēmokratikos Stratos Ellados – DSE) applied guerrilla tactics successfully until 1948, but it failed to secure a necessary liberated base and the National Army prevailed in 1949. Meanwhile, the US had replaced Great Britain as the protector of the country, the Truman Doctrine for aid in Greece being the forerunner of the Marshall Plan and eventually the Cold War. The country became a laboratory for applying counter-insurgency methods while American military experts pored over the various Wehrmacht reports about partisan war in the Balkans. On the other hand, the glory of the victorious anti-fascist Resistance fostered the expansion of guerrilla warfare around the rest of the world.

## Decolonisation

'Strike to win, strike only when success is certain. If it is not, then don't strike.'  
(General Vo Nguyen Giap)

After the Second World War, the Cold War era emerged but the so-called 'First' and 'Second' worlds remained relatively peaceful. It was the Third World that would from then on be the scene of endless wars. Between 1945 and 1983, more than 20 million people died 'in major wars and military actions and conflicts' in this part of the globe; and during this period guerrilla warfare seemed to be the primary form of fighting (Hobsbawm 1995: 434–437). It was adopted by the various movements of national liberation in Asia, Africa and Latin and Central America in their struggle to gain national independence from colonial powers and to defend this independence from neo-colonialism and mainly imperialistic US intervention. As the colonial powers or the local settlers resisted the path to decolonisation, theatres of guerrilla warfare opened up in Indochina, Malaya, Philippines, and Indonesia in South-East Asia; Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Kenya, Rhodesia, and Congo in Africa. The strategy of the colonial powers facing this new situation differed. The French chose to wage full-scale war against their rebellious colonies while Great Britain took a more political stance, trying to suppress the dangerous, that is mainly communist, elements of the various movements and to negotiate with the rest for a controlled disengagement.

After the Second World War, the British Empire was in decline. During the war, the British made several concessions in order to maintain it, but the dynamic of decolonisation was stronger than the Empire's resistance. British governments after 1945 thus promoted a process of reforms aiming towards a 'Commonwealth of Nations'. Nevertheless, the British fought against a guerrilla campaign in Malaya while bitter fighting burst out also in British Africa, notably in Rhodesia and Kenya, where the white settlers were against the Empire's disengagement strategy.

On the other hand, post-war France didn't opt for a federal-type Commonwealth but for a centralised 'Union Française' (1946). What that meant was foreshadowed by the symbolic events in Algeria on 8 May 1945. The same day that Europe was celebrating the end of the war and the defeat of Nazism, the French police opened fire on a demonstration of natives in Sétif supporting independence. Over the following days, French repression left thousands of victims.

The national insurrection in Algeria finally began in 1954, but until then the French had confronted another guerrilla army and fought and lost another colonial war far away from the Mediterranean in Indochina. This vast area was lost to the French during the war but after that, they meant to take it back. That was not acceptable to the Viet Minh independence movement and its leader Ho Chi Minh who had fought the Japanese, and another war began in 1946. The Vietnamese applied guerrilla tactics in the country's jungles and benefited from the Chinese Revolution after 1950. Guerrilla warfare spread to Laos and Cambodia, while China and the Soviet Union officially recognised the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Finally the Viet Minh forces, under the leadership of Vo Nguyen Giap, crushed the French in their base at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. It was the first time that a colonial European power had been defeated by 'natives' in the 20th century – the only previous such incident being the Italian defeat in Ethiopia in 1896 (Margaritis 2014).

This debacle didn't seem to dishearten France, which prepared its next colonial war in insurgent Algeria that same year, 1954. The Algerian Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) was established on 1 November and the revolution began. In a greatly inferior position, the Algerian insurgents gradually gained support, men and weapons as French repression of the population grew. Guerrilla tactics were then applied in the countryside, in the form of *wilayah* (district) war. Small groups of locals would ambush isolated French detachments, seizing their weapons and other supplies. In the area of Kabylie, a counter-government was established providing political status to the movement (Polk 2008: 138–142). But, in this case, it was the events in the capital during the Battle of Algiers, and their political repercussions, that finally forced the French, after years of brutal repression and use of torture, to withdraw from Algeria in 1962.

While the Algerian revolution broke out, the baton was decisively passed from the French to the Americans in Vietnam, as the first military mission arrived in November 1954. The Ngo Dinh Diem Regime, backed by the US, used repression against South Vietnam's peasantry, creating thus an even more favourable environment for the Viet Minh. Relocation of hundred of thousands, incarceration in concentration camps and

exploitation paved the way for another guerrilla war waged by the experienced Vietnamese movement. The pattern of a successful insurgency was once more applied; the insurgents gained popular support, abolished previous structures of authority, and imposed their rule in liberated areas before finally accomplishing a military victory (Polk 2008: 173–174).

Another example of guerrilla warfare against colonial rule took place in Portugal's African colonies. The Popular Liberation Movement of Angola (MPLA), the Partido Africano da Independência do Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC) of Amílcar Cabral in Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) shook the Portuguese 'New State' during the 1960s. These movements led to large military expenses and subsequent decline of the Portuguese economy, causing social unrest and accelerating the fall of the country's dictatorship (Galván 2009: 2731). The murder of Patrice Lumumba in Congo in 1961 consolidated the viewpoint that no political compromise was possible with imperialism. We hear this realisation in the words of Amílcar Cabral in his address delivered to the first Tricontinental Conference of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America held in Havana in January 1966:

The past and present experiences of various peoples, the present situation of national liberation struggles in the world (especially in Vietnam, the Congo and Zimbabwe) as well as the situation of permanent violence, or at least of contradictions and upheavals, in certain countries which have gained their independence by the so-called peaceful way, show us not only that compromises with imperialism do not work, but also that the normal way of national liberation, imposed on peoples by imperialist repression, is armed struggle. (Cabral 2008: 138)

## Social revolution

'It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them.' (Che Guevara)

At the peak of the Cold War, the unexpected triumph of the Cuban Revolution and the

ascent to power of Fidel Castro, who had started the campaign with a handful of supporters, gave an almost mythical (and mystical) dimension to guerrilla warfare. After Vietnam and Cuba, guerrilla warfare became an irresistible method for revolutionaries worldwide. A theory was even created preaching that guerrilla warfare could succeed even if political or social conditions were unfavourable; the guerrilla as a focus would concentrate the necessary means so that the revolution could triumph. This was 'focalism' or 'foco', supported by Che Guevara and formulated by the French journalist Régis Debray as the predominance of military (guerrilla) tactics over political strategy: 'the principal stress must be laid on the development of guerrilla warfare and not on the strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties' (Debray 1967: 115). These estimations would in fact sadly fail the same year, along with Guevara's execution and Debray's arrest in Bolivia, after an unsuccessful attempt to expand the revolution.

This omen wasn't enough to restrain the spread of guerrilla wars in Latin America and Africa, as movements of national independence continued their struggle and a new spirit of social revolution was growing all over the world in 1968. The symbol of Che and his cry for 'two, three, many Vietnams' was calling to action thousands of militants and conquered the hearts and minds of youths in universities all over the globe. World revolution was envisaged as guerrilla wars broke out throughout the Third World, leading to the dispersal and defeat of the US military and the growth of support by Soviet Union, China or Cuba, as a contemporary writer formulated it (Vega 1969).

Indeed, guerrillas emerged in almost all Latin American countries – Venezuela, Argentina, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Peru – with some of them surviving in various forms down to the present day. One of the most well-known surviving guerrilla armies in Latin America is the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). In a country with long-standing political violence, guerrilla resistance emerged in the 1960s in the countryside, under the influence of the Cuban Revolution, and in 1966 the FARC was founded. In the 1980s it participated in political negotiations with the government and since then has formed several political fronts. In the 1990s FARC's military strength continued to

increase while counter-guerrilla operations were held by paramilitary groups in a 'dirty war'. Since 2002, the Colombian government has received counter-terrorism funding from the US as part of the latter's 'war on terror' (Leech 2011). The fighting in Colombia continues today as a proof of guerrilla warfare's enduring presence in the 21st century.

Several other guerrilla campaigns have similarly continued from the 1970s to the 1990s, gradually transforming into political parties and even taking governmental power. The most notable cases are the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMNLF) in power now in San Salvador, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in power in Nicaragua in the 1980s with its leader Daniel Ortega being president today. José Mujica, current president of Uruguay, was a member of the Tupamaros National Liberation Movement (MLN-T), a former urban guerrilla group there. Other more radical guerrillas didn't adjust to the political system after the revolutionary tide, and still continue their armed struggle. The most notorious among them is the 'Sendero Luminoso' (Shining Path) in Peru. This guerrilla was organised by the Maoist Communist Party of Peru, a splinter-group from the initial Peruvian Communist Party with its roots in the university campuses and its leader a former university professor, Abimael Guzmán (Gonzalo) now in prison. It started its armed struggle in 1980 following the classic Maoist methods of guerrilla warfare; that is, abolishing state institutions in the remote countryside and creating counter-state organs. At the beginning of the 1990s, Shining Path's control of the countryside had expanded significantly when in 1992 its leader Guzmán was arrested and the downfall began. Nevertheless, its activity has not ceased entirely even today.

The radicalisation of social and national struggles in the 1960s with the rise of guerrilla warfare affected also pre-existing conflicts in Europe. Characteristically, the Basque movement for national self-determination shifted to the left, adopting social demands. A significant part of it, Euzkadi ta Askatasuna (ETA), embraced armed struggle. A former faction of the youth of the Basque nationalist party PNV, ETA became an independent organisation in 1959 and rapidly radicalised in the 1960s. National oppression by the Franco dictatorship was combined with an intensified social conflict as the Basque Country became the

epicentre of labour protest and political opposition to the dictatorship. From the late 1960s until the late 1970s, half of all labour protest throughout Spain was Basque in origin. In the context of worldwide armed struggles against imperialism and aspirations for social revolution, ETA considered the Basque Country as a land colonised by Spain and opted for revolutionary, that is guerrilla, warfare. This strategy was fully applied from the 1970s onwards and continued unchanged after the fall of the dictatorship. Violence escalated at the end of the decade as military factions of ETA chose terrorist methods to respond to the growing state repression. There were dozens of victims. Another tactic was to take the war to 'the enemy', choosing targets in Spain, outside the Basque Country. In recent decades, a series of peace negotiations and ceasefires have paved a way for a politicisation of the conflict (Dowling 2009).

## After the Cold War

'Marcos is all the exploited, marginalised, oppressed minorities resisting and saying "Enough". He is every minority who is now beginning to speak and every majority that must shut up and listen.' (Subcomandante Marcos)

As the revolutionary tide began to ebb in the 1970s and 1980s, many guerrilla movements faded away while others degenerated in internal clashes for regional power. The end of the Cold War had multiple consequences, such as the withdrawal of external aid for and against armed movements challenging state power in Africa. But, as the post-Cold War period didn't prove to be one of sustainable peace and growth, as had been declared by its 'winners', guerrilla warfare continued to be a means of challenging political, national and economic realities. In Africa, guerrilla war was in essence related with movements of national independence and not of socialist aspiration. The 'failure' of the existing states to handle the post-colonial inheritance fuelled numerous contemporary guerrilla campaigns as a 'manifestation of rage against the patrimonial "machinery" of [these] dysfunctional states' (Bøås and Dunn 2007: 36–37). Often seen as remnants of the past, these 'non-classical' guerrillas are nonetheless expressions of political reaction against

the reality of many African states, in the context of the current form of imperialistic international relations, that is globalisation.

The emblematic guerrilla of the globalisation era has undoubtedly been the Zapatistas movement (EZLN) since its insurrection in the Mexican state of Chiapas in 1994. Its strategy of creating autonomous institutions while not aiming to seize state power has been very influential in political theory and philosophy and has inspired many forms and actions of the anti-globalisation movement. Nonetheless, some more 'classical' guerrillas continue to exist or have emerged during this period. In Nepal, a guerrilla war was launched by the (Maoist) Communist Party in 1996 with remarkable results, as the centuries-old monarchy was finally abolished ten years afterwards and a federal democratic republic established. The wars in Afghanistan, lasting from the resistance to the British and the Soviets to the contemporary form of religious war against US intervention, and the expansion of the guerrilla war by the various Sunnite groups as a form of jihad in Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere, must also be mentioned.

As our world becomes more obscure, with a threatening global economic crisis triggering international disputes, the long-celebrated globalisation reveals its essential nature; imperialism is still a valuable term to describe the current phase of the capitalistic system. While history didn't finally end, nor did politics. To return to Clausewitz and his famous quotation 'War is merely the continuation of policy by other means', we must expect to see variations of guerrilla fighting in the future.

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## Labour and Decolonisation, Anti-Imperialist Struggles (Australia/South-East Asia)

### Introduction

Labour constituted a significant site of struggle in favour of decolonisation and against the reimposition of the imperial order in the period immediately following the Second World War. In Australia, this struggle against the return to the pre-war regime in the Netherlands East Indies (NEI)/Indonesia flared up within months of the surrender of Japan and became a long-running dispute on the waterfront that lasted until the formal handover of sovereignty to the Indonesian nationalists. The actions involved the unions 'black banning' Dutch and British ships that were intended to support the Dutch military in the Indies. Similar bans and strikes were seen globally, with actions in the US, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom all contributing to popularising the anti-imperial cause and aiding in the back-catch-up of the Netherlands. More than 500 ships were declared black and the delays caused by the black bans allowed the Indonesian Republic to secure itself and push for a negotiated peace, where otherwise it might have been swept away (Lockwood, 1987: 4–6).

While earlier historical accounts of this event lionized the role of Australia's white workers in taking a strong stand against renewed conflict and imperialism, recent studies have revised this narrative significantly. Instead, the emphasis has turned to the role of 'foreign workers' in Australia at the end of the war – the Chinese, Indonesian and Indian seafarers who maintained the maritime arteries of Asia – and placed these workers in their rightful position as highly conscious, well organised anti-imperialist members of a transnational coalition determined to ensure independence not just for Indonesia, but for all victims of colonialism.

### The wartime situation for labour in Australia

The war in the Pacific, which had begun with the Japanese assault on China in 1937, saw the imperial Japanese forces cut a wide swathe through the colonial regimes of South-East Asia, sweeping British and Dutch forces from their colonies in Malaya and the Indies, and gaining de facto control of Cochin China from collaborationist France. The speed with which the Japanese had been able to clear these forces from their positions was staggering, and caused a large number of Dutch and British vessels that were manned by sailors from China, India, and Indonesia to find themselves in Australian waters, with thousands of stateless workers (Cottle and Keys 2008: 2–3). The NEI elite also retreated south, establishing themselves in Australia as a government in exile and bringing with them a retinue of up to 10,000 Indonesians including sailors, soldiers, and their most dangerous political prisoners from the Tanah Merah concentration camp (Fitzpatrick and Cahill, 1981: 168).

Formally excluded from Australia's existing unions, and seen as naturally subservient and unfit for unionism by the ideology of 'White Australia' dominant in the labour movement, Asian seafarers had taken steps to organise themselves during the war. Chinese sailors who found themselves stranded in Australia on vessels commandeered for wartime service took strike action for wages owed to them in Fremantle in 1942, where two of their own died at the hands of police violently dispersing their picket. The Seamen's Union of Australia (SUA) negotiated with the Chinese sailors to join the Australian Army and provide other assistance to the war effort, while at the same time an independent branch of the Chinese Seamen's Union (CSU) – technically an affiliate of the Kuomintang that had existed since 1913 – was established in Australia under militant leadership and with the endorsement of the SUA. By the end of the war, the CSU could claim a well-organised membership in the hundreds (Cottle 2003: 138).

Indonesian seamen likewise took action with the support of the SUA for better wages and conditions on board ships during the war, and by the end of the war had seen their monthly wages increase twentyfold (Fitzpatrick and Cahill 1981: 171). Indian sailors had also been organising, with a major strike in 1939 securing better wages and

conditions throughout the Commonwealth, although they were still largely an unknown factor in industrial struggles and, unlike the Indonesians or Chinese, had no significant communal bonds in Australia (Balachandran 2008: 65).

Within this context, one of the most significant issues facing the Allied powers as the end of the war drew closer was the issue of decolonisation – an issue that was most pressing in the Asia Pacific region, where the retreating forces of imperial Japan had acceded to the demands of nationalist movements and granted independence to former European colonies. The war-shattered European powers were keen to resume exploiting the resources of their lost colonial possessions, and Australia, which had become the home of the displaced colonial apparatus of the NEI, was expected to be the rallying point of the push to restore the status quo ante (see Dorling 1994: x).

### Initial strikes of 1945–46

News of the Indonesian declaration of independence was broadcast by shortwave radio to Australia, and within two days desertions from the Dutch government in exile were occurring. Australia was home to an active network of Indonesian nationalists thanks to the release in 1943 (under Australian pressure) of the prisoners transported from the Tanah Merah concentration camp. These ex-prisoners had put their release to good work, and had established Indonesian Independence Committees in major ports that actively propagandised to the Indonesian sailors (Lockwood 1982: 33–35).

Within a week of the declaration of independence, the Dutch ships in Australia were preparing to sail back to the archipelago – with Indonesian sailors manning them – to re-establish ‘order’.

The Indonesian Seamen’s Union had been monitoring radio from the Indies when the Republic was declared, and with the support of Australia’s maritime unions had resolved to mutiny. By early September 1945, several thousand Indonesian sailors were refusing to man their ships, and the Indonesian Seamen’s Union was working with the Waterside Workers’ Federation (WWF) and the SUA to place a ban on any shipments to aid the Dutch and their allies in their struggle with the Indonesian Republican forces

(Fitzpatrick and Cahill 1981: 171). The CSU organised food and supplies for Indonesian sailors left stranded in Australia – including for more than 60 patients who had been expelled from a Dutch-run tuberculosis clinic (Cottle 2003: 146).

On 23 September, the WWF and SUA declared all Dutch ships destined for the Indies ‘black’. Dutch forces began using coercion to attempt to get their employees back to work, but to no avail. Nevertheless, there was still a lack of co-ordination on the part of workers, and Indian mariners had continued working Dutch ships, to the confusion and anger of some strikers. Indian sailors had quietly alerted waterside workers to the fact that they were being compelled to load munitions and other military supplies onto ships bound for Java. The Indian Seamen’s Union in Australia organised for a mass liberation of workers being coerced on ships in Sydney Harbour, with a flotilla of small boats ferrying Indian soldiers to land from the *Patras*, where they had been held at gunpoint. In other instances, Indian sailors agreed to work ships, only to withdraw their labour at the critical moment that a ship was to leave port, causing maximum disruption. When British forces, concerned by the problems the Dutch were having in re-establishing order, flew Indian sailors by military transport to Australia to scab on the ban, they were met by Indian union organisers asking them to join the strike. The overwhelming majority of these workers did so. Indian organisers also went ship to ship, eventually organising more than a thousand Indian sailors (Goodall 2008: 53–59; Lockwood 1982: 149–155).

The leader of the Country Party, the third largest political party, denounced the strikers as ‘busy running rickshaws through White Australia’ (quoted in Fitzpatrick and Cahill 1981: 171). The Dutch ships, unable to get the necessary coal from the waterside workers or the necessary manpower, remained idle in Australian ports.

The demands of troublesome foreign workers from Indonesia, China, and India to be repatriated were acceded to from late 1945 through 1947, but the white maritime unionists in Australia were committed to the strike and continued the bans. Attempts by the Dutch to bypass the bans by manning ships with army personnel or fuel ships with firewood failed. Some 31 unions joined the strike, and the bans were retrospectively endorsed by the Australian Council of Trade

Unions (ACTU), the peak organisation for unions (Lockwood 1982: 189).

In desperation, the commander of South-East Asia Command, Lord Mountbatten, flew to Australia in March 1946 to negotiate directly with the union movement and Australian government to lift the ban. The leader of the SUA informed Mountbatten that no Dutch ships would leave Australian waters unless expressly approved by the Indonesian Republic. Mountbatten was unable to secure this approval from the Indonesian prime minister, Sjahrir (Fitzpatrick and Cahill, 1981: 175).

The conservative press campaigned against the ban, declaring that Australian unionists were holding up 'mercy ships' filled with medical supplies for war-ravaged Asia, despite evidence provided by maritime workers that every single 'mercy' ship was carrying weapons and war supplies. Pressure from the Federal Government led to the New South Wales Trades and Labour Council and the ACTU rescinding its support of the boycott. Only the WWF and SUA pledged to continue the boycott until asked to lift it by the Indonesian government. A small union of coal lumpers (comprising around 30 members) was induced to break the ban in mid-1946, and most Dutch ships were able to limp out of Australian ports crewed by ex-internees and military personnel. It was 11 months after the declaration of independence that the last Dutch military ship was able to leave Australia, and the ban – though still in place theoretically – became a dead letter as the Dutch military steered clear of Australia or were able to avoid engaging Australian workers for work covered by WWF and the SUA (Lockwood 1982: 211–214).

### The bans return (1947)

The Dutch were still hopeful of being able to rescue military supplies still in Australia and, in July 1947, WWF Secretary Jim Healy publicly threatened reprisals after a Dutch ship in Melbourne began loading army vehicles (Lockwood 1982: 215). The isolation of the maritime unions still engaging in a boycott was short-lived. In July 1947, the Dutch launched attacks on Republican forces across Indonesia, in breach of undertakings they had given the Indonesian nationalists and the international community to negotiate a peaceful settlement. This was the first 'Police Action' – a phrase concocted to sidestep

potential breaches of the new United Nations charter.

The effect in Australia was immediate, with a spontaneous reimposition of bans on Dutch ships by workers covered by the Building Workers' and the Amalgamated Engineers' unions. There was also a significant shift in official policy with the government's Stevedoring Industry Commission instructing its Brisbane Port affiliate to refuse requests from Dutch ships to refuel and repair (Lockwood 1982: 215–217). The Australian government also referred the actions to the United Nations as a breach of the peace – the first such instance for the new international body (Dorling 1994: vii). An August 1947 meeting of the ACTU, which had been active in breaking the previous ban, passed a motion calling on all Australian trade unionists to refuse to handle any Dutch goods until the ACTU had received advice from the United Nations and the Indonesian trade union movement (Lockwood 1982: 218).

This opposition continued through to the second 'Police Action' of 1948, which was met with similar levels of resistance and provoked significant opposition across class divides. Though only two Dutch ships were in Australian waters, they were denied tugs and were unable to have cargo loaded or unloaded. More importantly, Australians took to the streets to voice their support for Indonesian independence and the new international order. Hundreds of students joined maritime workers in protests, and the first student 'riot' in Australian history led to the arrest of several students of the University of Sydney. The bans continued in place until the formal transfer of sovereignty negotiated by the Dutch and Indonesian nationalists (Barcan 2002: 196–198).

### Towards a world boycott

The strikes against Dutch shipping were not isolated to Australia, although Australia's proximity to the contested islands magnified the significance of strikes there. The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union of America under Harry Bridges, the dockworkers of London and New Zealand all at some point during Indonesia's struggle for independence withheld labour on Dutch ships or goods in support of Indonesia's claims, as did the dockworkers of Ceylon,

Singapore, the Philippines, and China in a truly international boycott aimed at isolating the intransigent Dutch (Lockwood 1982: 228–230).

### Motivation of workers participating in the anti-imperialist struggle

There were naturally different motivations for labour organisations to take part in the bans. The first distinction that must be made is between the two types of union which simultaneously engaged in strike action against Dutch interests: the formal, almost exclusively white Australian trade unions, and the semi-legal ‘foreign worker’ unions that had been formed by colonial subjects who found themselves in Australia during the war. The CSU and the Indian Seamen’s Union both looked to the nationalist movements in their homelands for political direction; the Indonesian Seamen’s Union in Australia was formed solely within Australia with political guidance from the Tanah Merah network of former political prisoners.

The motives of these foreign-worker unions are clear: as a social group, all were victims of colonisation, and as workers in the dangerous and extremely stratified seafaring industry, the workers shared a common bond of racial and class oppression. The ‘foreign-worker’ unions in Australia were already notoriously restive, all three having taken action at various times for improved conditions and Australian rates of pay. The war had thrown the imperial division of the world into chaos, and a sense of solidarity was strong enough to transcend ethnic divisions and the usual ‘divide and rule’ tactics of colonial authorities. These workers were united not just by their exclusion from the white workforce: the CSU and Indonesian Seamen’s Unions both had members from the Chinese diaspora community of Java, and many Indian and Indonesian seamen shared a common Islamic faith. Despite this, anti-colonialism was the key to their coalition. At one banquet organised by Indian sailors to thank their supporters, strike leader Mohamed T. Hussain gave a speech in which he declared:

There can be no new world while there are any people who are slaves of others ... The winning of freedom in Indonesia will surely be followed by the freedom of India.

For that reason we must do everything possible to see that the Dutch are driven out of Indonesia. (Quoted in Goodall 2008: 55)

The motives of the ‘white’ unions are more complex. On the one hand, it is clear that sections of the union movement and the communist leadership of the maritime unions in particular were sympathetic to the cause of decolonisation and autonomous unionising amongst Asian sailors. Jim Healy and Elliot V. Elliot, the leaders of the WWF and SUA respectively, were doctrinaire Stalinists who would have been fully aware and supportive of the post-war Popular Front policies of the communist movement which included a renewed emphasis on peace, internationalism, and national liberation for imperial subjects.

Preventing another war into which Australia would be dragged, this time against the nationalists of Indonesia, also loomed large in the rationale of senior union leaders for their support for the ban. This reasoning has spurred much of the mythologising of the black ban, with Jim Healy’s biography including the (most likely) apocryphal story of his first public declaration on the Indonesian independence campaign:

Indonesia is calling, calling for our help, for a black ban on all ships. They call on us to stall the armada with which they would start a new war in the Pacific. Haven’t we had enough of war? (Williams 1975: 60)

While it is true that support for decolonisation and war weariness were important factors for the unions in taking a principled stand for Indonesian independence, the WWF – which went the farthest of any union in preventing Dutch forces access to Australian ports – also had its own motives for flexing its industrial muscle, and the Indonesian Revolution can be seen in many ways as the first opportunity that presented itself.

The WWF had been forced to back down over the so-called ‘pig iron’ dispute of 1937–38, and the Dutch bans were an opportunity to prosecute again the case of conscientious objection. In 1937, workers in some Australian ports – inspired by Popular Front anti-fascism and egged on by communist agitators – refused to load scrap iron on to ships bound for Japan, citing their right to conscientious objection. Workers argued that

Australian scrap iron was contributing to Japan's war machine and that it wouldn't be long before Australia 'got it back in bullets'. The Lyons Government, which had previously expressed guarded sympathy for fascism, quickly moved to stop the dispute escalating into a national ban and to get the 'wharfies' back to work. Threatened by invocation of the punitive measures in the Transport Workers Act (which had previously been used to 'break' the union on the Melbourne docks), the disorganised union was unable to expand or sustain the strike and was forced into an embarrassing retreat by its own membership without, however, surrendering the principle of conscientious objection to certain jobs (Lockwood 1987: 208).

The war, which in many ways proved the anti-fascist dockworkers right, greatly strengthened the position of the union as it performed the vital role of organising the waterfront for Australia's war effort. At the same time, the exact strength of the union could not be tested as the war placed a dampener on strikes and political activities in the name of the fight against fascism. The union leadership was co-opted onto the Stevedoring Industrial Commission, and worked hand in hand with the Labour Government to improve productivity in exchange for concessions that secured the WWF position on the docks and brought some stability to workers. The end of the war meant that the union leadership could use these concessions and its position of power to fulfil the union's political policy (Beasley 1996: 115–118).

### **Importance of the strike to history of decolonisation of South-East Asia**

The strikes and bans that struck Dutch shipping in Australia reveal some important aspects of decolonisation in the aftermath of the Second World War. Firstly, they demonstrate that a transnational anti-imperialist coalition could be formed on the ground, and that support for this coalition was secure enough for people to risk significant punishment to support its anti-colonial actions. No group represented this more than the sailors from India, who walked off their ships or flatly refused orders from their bosses in opposition to the Dutch attempts to reclaim Indonesia. These men suffered great personal punishment for their stand. Each was

labelled a deserter on their discharge papers, effectively barring them from working for any of the large international shipping lines. That the workers of China, India, and Indonesia were striving and suffering for their common goal of ending colonialism a full decade before the Bandung Conference of 1955 shows that there was a heightened consciousness amongst the masses of the links between groups exploited by colonial and imperial structures of domination, not just amongst the educated elite.

Secondly, the strikes provide evidence of the ways that the war had seriously weakened the imperial project in the Pacific. The old colonial apparatus had been swept away by the Japanese, who supported certain nationalist groups with the aim of developing a 'Co-prosperity Sphere' in Asia free from Western imperialism. It would have taken more bloodshed and war to re-establish the colonial states in Asia that the West's elite wanted. But Allied victory in the war had been predicated on class collaboration and the full strength of the working class being integrated into the war effort. When this was withdrawn after the war (due to unhappiness with the self-denial inherent in wartime labour conditions and war weariness), the balance of forces in Western society was ultimately for peace and against intervention in imperial ventures, at least until the Cold War hardened political thinking and isolated pacifism from the political mainstream. (See Hobsbawm [1994: 45–49] for a broad view of what 20th-century 'total war' meant. Zinn (2005: 407–442) challenged the idea of the Second World War as a 'people's war'.)

Another important element of this struggle is the way that the participants used the language and symbolism of supporting the Atlantic Charter and United Nations in defending their actions. A new language and symbolism had been introduced into the global discourse on colonialism and imperialism. Opponents of the Dutch – be they far-left communists or centre-right anti-intervention liberals, white Australians, or Indian seafarers – couched their demands in the language of support for the principles of the Atlantic Charter. This Charter and its promises of non-intervention, equality, and world peace became more than an agreement between nations, but also a challenge to national elites from their own citizens to refrain from imperial and colonial

enterprises that violated these aspirations. Future actions, such as the anti-apartheid movement and the promotion of human rights, followed this pattern of appeals to a universal standard.

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## Latin American Solidarity: Human Rights and the Politics of the US Left

Modern US–Latin American solidarity came of age during the Cold War through the human rights and peace movements of the 1970s and 1980s. US-based solidarity tentatively emerged around the Dominican Republic and Brazil in the 1960s following US interventions, gathered steam during the 1970s in response to US support for South American dictatorships, and reached its apogee during the 1980s when Ronald Reagan's aggressive backing of military regimes in Central America drew tens of thousands of people into the peace movement.

The following essay situates this Cold War solidarity boom within a longer history of international solidarity, and asks a straightforward, but complex, question: Why human rights? Why did activists turn to human rights in the 1970s and 1980s as a way of framing, confronting, imagining, and mobilising solidarity? Why were human rights, as opposed to other currents of internationalism, the vehicle through which US–Latin American solidarity emerged as an identifiable political project? And, perhaps most importantly, what did it matter that US-based solidarity developed (primarily) through a particular form of internationalism? What is the legacy of human rights for the US left?

In retrospect, the close association between international solidarity and human rights appears almost inevitable. By the 1980s, the two were increasingly synonymous as many

activists simply saw human rights as the way to engage in progressive internationalism. Yet, as late as 1970, the capture of internationalism by human rights was far from assured. Human rights were barely on the map and not part of mainstream discourse. More than this, there were other, more prominent and longstanding internationalisms from which people could (and did) draw upon in order to understand and organise solidarity in the Americas, including most notably socialism, anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, labour solidarity, and pan-Africanism. What needed to happen, in a sense, was that human rights had to replace other better travelled internationalisms in the marketplace of ideas. Human rights had to become established, in relation to already existing projects, as a compelling and useful vision, cause, and form of advocacy and engagement.

Human rights would do this, and in the process (as human rights and peace gained prominence during the 1970s and 1980s) other internationalisms faded, becoming further marginalised even as they continued to inform and challenge their more visible counterparts. The following, then, traces the interrelated histories of two broad (and internally differentiated) currents within US-based international solidarity, one defined by human rights and the other by left internationalism, arguing that the dramatic ascent of human rights not only profoundly shaped US–Latin American solidarity during its formative period, but assumed and facilitated the marginalisation of other forms of internationalism. Human rights became the dominant way to think about and practise internationalism, a process that drew unprecedented human and financial resources to international activism, while at the same time largely detaching such solidarity from an identifiably left politics. Nor was this uneven process without long-term consequences. Subsequent generations of international solidarity activists not only inherited a narrowed political vision from the human rights movement, but acquired an organisational infrastructure and analysis that has been ill-equipped to deal with the central concern of solidarity since the 1990s: neo-liberal capitalism.

### The emergence of solidarity

US–Latin American solidarity first emerged around the Haitian Revolution during the

early 1800s. At its core, Haiti was a struggle by blacks to overthrow both colonialism and slavery, in effect claiming full citizenship before a world audience. It was an early precursor to post-Second World War anti-colonial movements that took revolutionary nationalism in internationalist directions. The quest to achieve the nation state, to become citizens, required dealing a blow to empire. In its time, Haiti became a radical inspiration for freed and enslaved blacks and a promoter of revolution within the Americas. US-based efforts at solidarity were limited, but small groups actively supported the Haitian revolution.

Subsequent solidarity tended to follow US aggression. The US war against Mexico in the mid-1800s generated considerable dissent from mainstream politicians, peace groups, anti-imperialists, abolitionists, immigrants, and even some of the soldiers charged with carrying out the war. Such opposition, however, involved little active solidarity with Latin Americans, and virtually evaporated once the war was in full swing. Similarly, when the US flirted with becoming an overseas colonial power in the late 1800s, the American Anti-Imperialist League was formed (1898) to oppose US annexations of the Philippines, Cuba, and other territories after the Spanish-American War. Although it put limits on US imperial designs, its perspective was more isolationist than internationalist and offered little in the way of cross-border solidarity.

The deepest example of international solidarity during the pre-Second World War era occurred around the Mexican Revolution in the 1910s. US-based actors participated in the first truly trans-border solidarity with Mexican rebels who rose against the US-supported dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. Drawing on the left internationalism of the period, this was a radical and working-class solidarity that went beyond anti-imperialism. The newness and permeability of the border itself, the fluidity of Mexican-American identities in the region, and the common experience of an integrated and highly exploitative borderlands economy allowed for a uniquely rooted and revolutionary form of international solidarity to emerge (Foner 1988; MacLachlan 1991).

Finally, when the US occupied the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua during the 1910s and 1920s, a vibrant anti-imperialism re-emerged. When Dominicans

launched a campaign in the US to get its military out of their country, they were able to build on a growing internationalism that facilitated connections with allies in the US who worked with them to shift public opinion and pressure the US government. By the end of a very effective campaign, the US was internationally embarrassed and effectively forced from the country (Calder 1984; Juarez 1962: 182).

The US occupations of Haiti and Nicaragua lasted longer. African-Americans took up the cause of Haiti, with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, black press, and black churches, along with small groups of white allies, exposing the brutal nature of the US occupation while supporting the Haitian struggle for independence. The US would eventually be forced out, but it would take two decades (Pamphile 1986; Plummer 1982: 130–131; Renda 2001; Suggs 1988). The US occupation of Nicaragua, which effectively lasted from 1912–33, generated very little opposition until 1926 when Augusto Sandino began a seven-year guerrilla war to oust the US Marines. Sandino would capture the imagination of a portion of Americans. Some campaigned against the US occupation while others even actively supported Sandino in his rebellion (Gosse 1993; Grossman 2009).

The point here is not that pre-war solidarity was deep or wide, evolving in any particular direction, or somehow more ideologically pure or radical than what came later. In all these cases, we are talking about very few people in the US, acting for brief moments, sometimes for quite reactionary motives, and rarely in active/direct solidarity with Latin Americans themselves. Yet, not only did these efforts draw and develop from a wide range of existing internationalisms (not just peace/pacifism but pan-Africanism, anti-imperialism, and labour) but they all contained and promoted political projects, visions, and agendas. Such projects were, to be sure, incomplete, inconsistent, and muddled on a number of levels, but they nonetheless assumed that the world should be ordered in fundamentally different ways. They were political not simply in the sense of being partisan, or in the recognition that power and wealth were unequally distributed, but in that they were implicitly or explicitly grounded in collective notions of liberation that would usher in a fundamentally different world.

## Solidarity and the Cold War

The Second World War and the Cold War deeply disrupted this uneven development of international solidarity by bringing about the near complete destruction of all forms of US-based left internationalism. This, in turn, created space for alternative internationalisms such as human rights to emerge.

During the Second World War, much of the US, and especially the liberal left, set aside concerns about US empire and participated in the anti-fascist struggle. This was reasonable enough given the importance of the fight and the fact that the US government itself was preoccupied with Europe, and hence not intervening as aggressively in Latin America (i.e. FDR's Good Neighbor Policy). In a world threatened by global fascism, the political projects of anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, and pan-Africanism seemed like secondary concerns, and labour internationalism and pacifism started to feel like quaint anachronisms of the 19th century.

Moreover, because anti-fascism quickly gave way to anti-communism following the war, left internationalism within the US was slow to rebound. The US emerged a superpower, its imperialism turbo-charged by anti-communism, and there was very little in the way of domestic opposition to empire. Opponents either acquiesced to, or were silenced by, imperial power. Some within the liberal left joined the fight against communism, seeing it as part of a broader struggle against 'totalitarianism', while others stayed the course and found themselves under attack (Gosse 2005: 10–15).

The real impetus and energy for internationalism during this period ultimately came not from the US and Europe, but from Asia and Africa where anti-colonial movements defined the two decades following the Second World War. More than 40 countries threw off colonial rule and became independent nation states during this period (Wu 2013: 29–30), reducing the number of people living under colonialism from some 750 million to less than 40 million (Moyn 2010: 95). In this global pursuit for self-determination and the nation state, anti-colonialists drew from a range of leftist projects that were both nationalist and internationalist in scope, including most notably communism, but also from a variety of pan-isms (pan-Arabism, pan-Africanism, etc.). This collective struggle against empire rarely drew



on human rights for inspiration, and when it did it conceptualised them not in terms of individual protection against the state, but as part of a collective struggle for self-determination against imperial rule (Keys 2014; Moyn 2010).

More importantly for our story, although the anti-colonial nationalism of Third-World revolutionaries had a significant (and complex) impact on US radicalism during the 1950s and 1960s, its ability to become a central way of framing, inspiring, and organising solidarity was limited by a number of factors. Not only was it centred in other parts of the world, but anti-colonialism's close association with communism put it at a considerable disadvantage within the ideological marketplace of the Cold War US. This was especially true as the romance of Third World revolutionaries, which appealed to young Americans during the 1960s, started to wane in the 1970s. The effective end of formal colonialism, marked by Portugal's withdrawal from its colonies in the mid-1970s, only added to this tendency. Anti-colonialism not only seemed less urgent, even outdated, once self-determination been achieved, but it became less attractive to many Americans as revolutionaries began to govern new nations beset by poverty and violence (Moyn 2010).

The fragility of left internationalism, including the uneven appearance of anti-colonialism within US radicalism, was both reflected in and shaped the primary instance of solidarity from the period. Solidarity with Cuba in the early 1960s occurred at a time when open support for the revolution was becoming virtually impossible within the US. It came from two sources: African Americans and the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, a solidarity organisation that 'brought together the broadest array of constituencies of the early New Left, from old-fashioned liberals to early Black Nationalists' (Gosse 2005: 59). Both groups mobilised support for Cuba just as mainstream opinion turned against the revolution. Collectively, they refigured and stimulated a multi-racial, anti-imperialist, anti-colonial strand of solidarity that would expand within the US during the Vietnam War (and then largely evaporate as a political force).

These efforts, which were severely restricted by the conservative milieu of the early 1960s and then actively crushed by the US government, were then followed by the Venceremos Brigades of the late 1960s. An

outgrowth of Students for a Democratic Society, the Brigades brought hundreds of US citizens to Cuba to support the revolution at a time when anti-imperialism/colonialism, which had been on life support, was once again informing a greatly expanded and diversified US radicalism. During a period when activists were frustrated by the inability to end the Vietnam War, trips to Cuba offered people an opportunity to practise hands-on solidarity. This did not last long, however, as solidarity with Cuba effectively ceased when the US government made travel to the island impossible (Lekus 2004: 63–64).

What this ultimately suggests is that when US-backed Cold War violence swept over Latin America, the very forms of left internationalism that might have been expected to offer a challenge were either absent or severely debilitated. Few within the US paid much attention to Bolivia during the 1950s, the violence surrounding Stroessner's Paraguay in 1954, the overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala in the same year, military rule in Brazil during the mid-1960s, or the US invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965. More to the point, when Latin Americans sought foreign allies they had few places to turn. Human rights networks had not yet developed, leaving Latin Americans to appeal for solidarity through the most familiar of internationalisms, as socialists reaching out to fellow socialists. Their calls were not completely ignored, especially in the Soviet Union and Europe, but there was not much to connect to in the US.

And yet, in many ways the origins of modern US solidarity with Latin America are found during this relatively bleak period in the thousands of US Church people who began travelling and working in the region in the 1950s and early 1960s. Their first-hand experience of US-sponsored repression in Latin America (at a time when Americans were starting to question foreign policy more broadly) coincided with a deeper and often politicising engagement with Latin Americans (Gosse 1988: 16–21; 1995: 24–25). Together with an increased emphasis on social commitment within religious communities, in effect institutionalised through the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) and the Medellín Conference (1968), this lived experience of US foreign policy, and its often devastating impact on Latin American friends, provided the basis for a growing collective

awareness within faith-based communities about the role of the US and the presence of social movements in the region.

In this respect, President Johnson's 1965 invasion of the Dominican Republic was particularly important and 'had a profound impact on a cluster of radicalised missionaries and former volunteers who had served' (Green 2003: 92) in the country and returned to the US 'committed to turning their own religious institutions away from complicity in dominating the hemisphere' (Gosse 1988: 17). Although their efforts, combined with those from small groups of academics and activists, would only produce a minor public backlash (Calandra 2010: 22), the phenomenon of religious actors returning from Latin America and energising the movement would become a recurring theme. More than this, the 1965 invasion itself would become one of the foundational events that over time formed part of a shared knowledge and consciousness among growing numbers of progressives. Solidarity's most important research centre, the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA, founded in 1966), and its oldest activist group, the Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA, founded in 1968), were both by-products of the Dominican experience (Gosse 1988: 16–17).

The occupation of the Dominican Republic, then, along with the unravelling of Vietnam, the US presence in Latin America more broadly, the emergence of democratic socialism in Chile, as well as the civil rights movement, liberation theology, and the rise of the New Left, were all part of a leftward shift that led faith-based groups to view US foreign policy more critically at the exact moment when they were developing sustained connections with Latin Americans. To be sure, the long-term consequences of this process were far from clear in the mid to late 1960s. It would take years to attract significant numbers to the embryonic movement, build institutions, and develop visions and strategies. But it was this diverse faith-based community that would, in the 1970s and 1980s, provide the human, financial, and organisational core of the broader solidarity movement. In its early small-scale manifestations in relation to events in the Dominican Republic, Brazil, and Central America during the 1960s, this solidarity, much like its secular counterpart, was part and parcel of the broader left.

There is probably no clearer evidence of both the poverty of US-based internationalism during this period, as well as the energy, promise, and tensions embodied in early solidarity efforts, than in the case of Brazil during the mid-1960s. When the Brazilian military, with the full blessing of the US government, staged a coup in 1964 with the goal of restoring the domestic political order by eliminating all forms of dissent, there was little in the way of opposition from groups within the US. Vietnam had not sufficiently unravelled to allow for the broader questioning of US foreign policy, and few Americans were interested in, let alone challenged, US policies toward Latin America.

However, as James Green charts, by 1968 when the Brazilian military regime renewed its commitment to violence, the political winds had shifted sufficiently to produce a small, but energetic, solidarity campaign between Brazilians, made up largely of exiles, and Americans, made up largely of academics, clergy, and other progressives with experience and expertise in Brazil. The campaign, which would eventually expand to include leaders within the World Council of Churches and the Catholic Church, a wide range of academics, prominent civil rights activists such as Ralph Abernathy and Andrew Young, and Amnesty International (which launched one of its first widely publicised campaigns regarding torture) succeeded in shaming the Brazilian regime internationally (Green 2003; 2010).

Its emergence, moreover, was due in part to the fact that activists began to unevenly and tentatively frame the Brazilian cause in the language and practices of human rights. In what would become routine within a decade, Latin Americans asked international allies to publicise the crimes of the Brazilian military government. Human rights would prove to be a particularly effective way of doing this, in part by separating the violence itself from the messiness of political agendas, and doing so in a way that the 'international community' could understand, connect with, and rally around. Although this shaming strategy would not prove particularly effective in lessening the repression or removing Brazil's military government, the campaign did succeed in turning the Brazilian government into an international pariah defined by human rights violations. This 'success' ensured that the tactic of shaming military governments by

exposing human rights abuses would become a central part of the solidarity toolkit.

It is important to note, however, that the small number of activists who were most actively involved in the initial efforts, including both Brazilians and their US allies, tried to articulate and use a (left) version of human rights that made connections between repression and the broader political projects of both the military regime and its opposition. It was by no means common sense during this period to understand repression as 'human rights violations', or to disconnect such violations from a larger politics of oppression or emancipation. As James Green highlights, activists worked to help people make connections between, on the one hand, the horror of human rights abuses and, on the other, the military's war on the poor; on US backing for repressive regimes in Latin America, support for similar governments in other parts of the world, and regressive economic policies; on the relationship between repression and the Brazilian government's treatment of indigenous people in the Amazon. These efforts at education, at making connections, met with some success as the mainstream media in the US caught on to some of these themes and issues, especially as they resonated with the war in Vietnam. Yet, torture and brutal prison conditions, particularly when disconnected from politics, were always an easier sell than economic inequality, especially in a climate where such discussions could quickly be labelled communist (Green 2003; 2010).

Moreover, the broader effort to link the 'human rights' cause to leftist programmes for social change, to understand and support the political projects of those being targeted by state violence, did not find much traction in the US. Not only was there not much to connect to in the US, but what there was tended to focus narrowly on torture, leaving aside the question of broader collective political projects and solidarity. James Green captures the complexity of this early campaign, including not only its inability to produce a fundamental shift in the policies and practices of the Brazilian dictatorship, but also the ambiguous nature of 'solidarity' itself.

The campaigns against torture won international support and linked the Brazilian government to repressive actions but did not seem to have a palpable effect on the military's policies. The regime was not

about to introduce political liberalization, and the opposition was still reeling from aftershocks of the previous four years. In the United States, torture in Brazil had been denounced, and then men and women of good will had moved on. Even the phrase *Brazilian solidarity group*, has a clumsy, inauthentic ring to it, because many signatories of petitions against Brazilian torture and repression were reacting against an inhumane situation and not necessarily in favor of a program or political current in Brazil. (Green 2010: 3)

Brazil provided a hint of solidarity's future, but both international solidarity and human rights in the Americas were in their infancy in the late 1960s. Latin Americans were much more comfortable with other internationalisms, particularly socialism, and were often sceptical or simply unclear about human rights as a concept or tool. On the US side, both Cuba and Brazil demonstrated the political limits of US-based internationalism, and although activists found human rights to be useful in the case of Brazil, the campaign remained quite small and the concept itself had limited traction.

Even as late as the 1973 coup in Uruguay, where intense repression seemed ideally suited for a human rights framing, Uruguayan activists were slow and reluctant to adopt the language, instead understanding 'torture and death as part of the risks of leading a proper revolutionary life. In the years immediately before the coup, denunciations of abuses by the police, the military, and paramilitary forces adopted a revolutionary language in which local ruling elites and US imperialism were to blame' (Markarian 2005: 99). This was no doubt common sense to many Latin American leftists who had long struggled with how to combat state violence while simultaneously fighting for socialism. Many activists assumed that occasional arrests, brief stays in prison, periodic exile, and certain levels of state violence were fundamental features of being active in the left. The primary question was how to 'advance the popular cause' by overcoming repression and persecution (*ibid.*).

Even with respect to political prisoners (the very issue that would animate the human rights movement for the rest of the decade), Uruguayan leftists felt the problem 'should be confronted politically, positioned in terms of

class struggle' (ibid.). Such a framing by no means precluded international solidarity, and Uruguayans found some like-minded allies in Europe, but it was not intended to (nor could) attract an emerging human rights movement, much less appeal to US policymakers. The potential audience for a revolutionary framing of repression remained small and weak in the US.

Nevertheless, if Latin Americans were sceptical/unclear about human rights as a form of engagement, by the early to mid-1970s the emerging international movement was difficult to ignore. The level of repression in many countries had intensified so dramatically that it made it increasingly difficult to even be a leftist. The struggle for socialism, many reasoned, could not be advanced without first securing basic civil and political rights. More than this, initial indications suggested that human rights possessed the potential for attracting a wider range of allies both at home and abroad, in part because even people who agreed on little, who shared no political project, could agree that governments should not falsely imprison and torture their citizens. Human rights were also difficult for Latin Americans to ignore because other internationalisms were bringing relatively few allies (especially from the US) to the table at a time when they were so desperately needed. And, as the growing presence of organisations like Amnesty suggested, the international human rights movement seemed poised to provide support from around the world at a time when allies were scarce. It was a potentially useful tool.

### **Amnesty International and the rise of human rights**

The rise of Amnesty International captures most clearly the sudden and powerful emergence of human rights during the 1960s and early 1970s, as well as the long-term impact of its brand of solidarity. Founded in 1961, Amnesty barely survived the 1960s. It almost collapsed in 1967 due to internal disputes, and the US section (AIUSA), which emerged in 1965, nearly folded under financial pressure in 1970 (Cmiel 1999: 1234). The organisation's fortunes then changed dramatically in the 1970s:

Between 1970 and 1976, the number of dues-paying members in the US went

from 6,000 to 35,000. AIUSA had one paid, half-time staff member in 1970. The organization, such as it was, was run by a volunteer board of directors. A decade later, however, there were fourteen paid staffers with offices in New York City, San Francisco, California, Chicago, Illinois, Colorado, and Washington, D.C. The international organization grew similarly in those years. In 1977, it was awarded the Nobel peace prize. (1235)

Within a decade, then, AI went from near collapse to become the world's foremost human rights organisation.

Timing was clearly part of its success. Human rights activism exploded during the 1970s. Organisations formed, governments took note, and the term itself became part of mainstream public discourse. By the end of the decade there were more than 200 groups working on human rights in the US. The Ford Foundation and other funding agencies made human rights a focus, channelling millions of dollars toward the cause. The US Congress held hearings, eventually tying foreign aid to a country's human rights record. And President Carter made it a cornerstone of US foreign policy. Human rights had arrived. It had become respectable. (1234–1238)

Amnesty's success was due to more than good timing, however. It did not simply benefit from the human rights boom. It propelled it, an achievement that was due in part to strategic decisions by the organisation's staff. In 1970, AIUSA committed resources to organising local branches around the country, a tactic that worked remarkably well in expanding its base, and helped bring human rights out of the hallways and offices of the United Nations and into the public arena. This emphasis on building at the grass roots, especially on college campuses, was a by-product of the political milieu; 'nearly all of the 1970s AIUSA staff had done antiwar and civil rights work', and assumed mass mobilisation was a fundamental feature of progressive politics and social change (1240).

With AI, however, the tactic was not about mass mobilisation in the sense of taking to the streets, but mass membership to support well-orchestrated letter-writing campaigns. This was AI's central tactic during the early years. Each AI affiliate, or adoption group, was assigned a political prisoner. Members then wrote letters to offending governments,

journalists, politicians, and international organisations. Done with increasing sophistication, and in large enough numbers, this tactic proved relatively effective in securing the release of prisoners (1240–1241). What this also meant, however, was that AI had to devote more and more resources to identifying worthy prisoners in order to satisfy the demand of growing numbers of local affiliates.

As a result, AI leaders discovered fairly quickly that not only did the organisation not need the masses for street mobilisations, but they did not need a membership to adopt prisoners and write letters. Professional human rights organisations could do the work themselves, saving prisoners in Latin America by lobbying politicians in Washington. Gathering information ceased to be a means to an end, a way of building a mass base. It became the end in itself. AI became a professional organisation that gathered facts and then directly lobbied journalists and politicians in an effort to put pressure on human rights violators (1240–1241). In short, it became a modern human rights organisation. Whatever its virtues, this was a different type of politics, one that relied on insider access to political elites and a mass membership whose central purpose was not taking to the streets or writing letters, but writing a cheque to support Amnesty's efforts.

As Kenneth Cmiel outlines, the question as to what path of political engagement to pursue, of whether to be a grass-roots type organisation or a professional lobby (or a bit of both), was one that AI leadership debated quite intensely during the 1970s (1240–1245). The leaders had, after all, come from a tradition of grass-roots organising. However, for other human rights organisations (which were emerging almost on a daily basis during the 1970s, and in many ways became the path within US–Latin American solidarity), the question itself was increasingly off the radar. A new political formula, supported in part by the innovation of direct-mail fundraising and the largesse of philanthropic foundations, had emerged. If a network of professional activists, lawyers, and academics could influence elites, get results, and be financially sustainable through grant writing and fundraising, why bother building a mass base? And Amnesty was hardly alone. Its rival, Human Rights Watch, was a product

of Ford Foundation funding and created as an 'independent' human rights monitor focusing on abuses in the Soviet Union (Keys 2014: 265–266).

This was a form of politics that increasingly required being divorced from (traditional) politics altogether. As the central task of human rights organisations became the professional gathering and public dissemination of accurate information about human rights violations, the legitimacy of human rights organisations within the eyes of governments, the United Nations, and the broader public became crucial. Human rights organisations came to deal in information, and that information had to be reliable. This legitimacy rested, at least partially, on ensuring that human rights organisations were themselves not only professionally run, but were neutral and non-partisan, that their activities were independent of politics, particularly the (transformative) political projects of human rights victims, violators, and their supporters. Like most human rights organisations of the period, AI not only 'traded on its claim to be above and beyond politics', but 'defined itself against the left', even when it targeted the victims of right-wing dictatorships (Moyn 2010: 132). As it developed, then, the heart of human rights activism did not simply forget or postpone a larger political vision. It actively separated itself from broader political agendas.

In this sense, the meteoric rise of this brand of human rights did not simply serve to further marginalise a range of left internationalisms, to replace one internationalism with another. Its rise altered the very nature of internationalism itself, of solidarity, by displacing a range of internationalisms that assumed a collective politics of liberation with a form of internationalism that was openly antithetical to political projects or visions rooted in notions of collective emancipation. This was solidarity without politics as the left had traditionally understood it, whereby politics assumes collectively struggling for an alternative way of ordering the world. The emerging human rights movement, by contrast, treated 'political problems as moral ones, thereby eliding the deeper political changes that social justice often required', a tendency that would gather steam during the peace movement of the 1980s (Keys 2014: 201).

Many activists recognised this tension, with some reasoning that in order for the human

rights movement to be effective its organisations had to be seen as legitimate, and this required a strict separation from partisan politics. This was a strategic decision. The torture had to be stopped, and required a pragmatic, whatever-works, act-now-think-later approach. Some adopted the non-partisan practice and language of human rights quite consciously as a way to attract larger numbers of people into political activism, and as a tool for gaining access to policymakers and the mainstream media (even as they tried to tie human rights work to a larger politics by maintaining relationships with movements in Latin America). For many, then, human rights remained contested terrain, particularly with respect to whether it should or should not be openly connected to a larger politics. Regardless, however, when the left in both Latin America and the US began to resist and frame their opposition to repression through human rights, they not only helped elevate human rights – a remarkably vague and elastic concept – to new heights. They also embraced a concept and set of practices whose broad contours and uses the left would ultimately not control. This was a ‘decision’ that in turn generated a range of short and long-term consequences that were not immediately transparent at the time.

What is perhaps even more important than the open tensions within solidarity circles is the fact that this distinction itself, between human rights and various forms of left internationalism, became increasingly invisible to a generation that came of age during the 1980s and 1990s. For many activists who had limited connection with left internationalism and took it for granted that socialism was dead, or who simply ‘became political’ when human rights overshadowed other forms of solidarity, human rights was simply a ‘progressive’ way of engaging the world in a meaningful way. Human rights became the beginning and end of political work. The goal was to end human rights abuses, a supremely worthy cause, and other projects were deemed too complicated, impractical, or (more often) simply not part of a narrowed political imagination.

To be sure, there was always a portion of activists for whom human rights served as a gateway towards a more radical politics. Currents of left internationalism persisted, pushing the human rights movement and attracting activists who were inspired by

the urgency of human rights, but ultimately frustrated by its limited political project. Yet, over time, especially as the 1970s slipped into the 1980s and 1990s, the political avenues of left internationalism faded from public view and became increasingly hard to find for new generations of progressives. There were fewer places to pursue a more militant politics even for those who became radicalised. More importantly, this broader shift towards a solidarity divorced from politics was stimulated by, and brought with it, a very different method of political engagement, one that relied much more heavily on professional staff, lobbying, insider access to political and media elites, etc. This NGO-isation of solidarity work, which emerged very unevenly during the coming decades, would never become completely hegemonic, but nevertheless became a defining form for much of international solidarity in the coming decades, regardless of one’s ‘politics’.

## Chile

Chile made human rights and human rights made Chile. Chile, including the 1973 overthrow of Allende, the intense repression that followed, and the global debate that emerged, was central to the development of the broader human rights movement. Human rights came of age in part through Chile, a process that not only encompassed the left, liberals, religious communities, the media, policymakers, and broad swathes of the US population, but also ensured that human rights would be a dominant political current within US solidarity from the 1970s onward. At the same time, the growing presence of human rights during this period also made Chile a subject of global interest and a site for political engagement through the 1970s. Chile would not have garnered so much interest, especially in the US, had it not emerged through a blossoming human rights movement.

At the time of the coup, however, it was far from clear that human rights would become a vehicle through which the coup was understood and political activity channelled. Chile itself was home to a powerful left that, although caught off guard by the level of repression following the coup, understood Pinochet’s assault as part of a broader class war. Intense debates and divisions emerged within the Chilean left over how and when to respond to the coup, but the broader goal was

to forge a political opposition that could regain political power and build a better future.

On a global level, there was very little certainty that human rights would become the primary way through which international actors would understand Chile. The million-plus people throughout Latin America, Europe, and to a lesser extent the US who took to the streets after the coup did so not because Chile was understood as a human rights cause, but because it inspired as a socialist democracy (Power 2009: 52). Within the US, despite some inroads made by Amnesty, 'human rights' was a largely unfamiliar term that was most commonly understood as a rough equivalent to civil rights, and thus associated with domestic issues. For the broader public, the term 'international human rights' was largely connected with conservatives who adopted the concept to re-energise the Cold War fight against communism. It was not something that mainstream liberals had yet captured in order to confront right-wing military dictatorships supported by the US (Keys 2014). More than this, Chile itself was not of great interest to the US mainstream. On the eve of the coup, Chile was the province of the left, and understood primarily in terms of an anti-interventionism that was seen through the lens of anti-imperialism.

In this sense, given that the left had such a head start and there was no human rights movement at the time of the coup, how and why did human rights become so central, so quickly, to understanding and engaging with Chile? And how did the rise of human rights shape the potential of other internationalisms to frame Chile and solidarity efforts in general? The short answer to this latter question is that as the left lost hold of how solidarity with Chile would be framed it was also losing hold of how international solidarity would be understood and practised.

Events in Chile played a decisive role in elevating human rights. The repression on and after 11 September was so intense that it essentially wiped out pre-existing political actors on the left. Virtually all forms of political activity were curtailed and Churches quickly emerged as among the few actors which still possessed a relatively intact organisational infrastructure (Cleary 1997; Frühling 1992; Hawkins 2002). Chileans who wanted to remain politically active flocked to the relative protection of Church-led organisations. The turn to human rights also happened very

quickly in large part because other political avenues were cut off. The international spotlight gave Churches limited room to manoeuvre, but they could not criticise the regime on most matters or be seen as taking a 'political' stance (Frühling 1989; Hawkins 2002; Power 2009). Yet, as a moral authority, religious institutions could cautiously criticise the regime for actions that were simply 'beyond the pale'. Human rights provided both the language and practice for such an intervention. It became the preferred path for political activity in part because it was one of the only ones that remained.

Within three weeks of the takeover, Chilean religious leaders founded the Comité de Cooperación para la Paz en Chile (COPACHI). COPACHI was not actively or formerly opposed to the military regime, and initially saw itself as an apolitical human rights office, but it quickly developed an expansive social agenda (Frühling 1992: 121–141). COPACHI's human rights reports, documenting hundreds of cases, became the raw material for groups like Amnesty, the Red Cross, Americas' Watch, and the United Nations (Hawkins 2002: 57). COPACHI's successor, the Vicaría de la Solidaridad, would also stress that it was a humanitarian (and not political) organisation, both for safety reasons and to win more conservative supporters within and outside the Church, but the lines between economic aid, charity, and more political work were inevitably blurred (Cleary 1997: 10–11; Frühling 1992; Hawkins 2002).

Even still, within the US, it was far from clear that Chile would be framed through human rights. What interest and solidarity there was prior to the coup came from small groups of academics, independent journalists, religious actors, radicals, and others who were broadly influenced by or actively part of the New Left, and in some cases had lived in Chile. They understood Chile primarily in terms of an anti-interventionism coloured by anti-imperialism, and in many cases saw their work as supporting the Allende Government and Chilean opposition to the coup. Consequently, much of the work focused on educating Americans about the truth regarding Allende, the military regime, and US government/corporate intervention. Most of the pre-coup efforts did not reach mainstream audiences, but journalist Jack Anderson's 1972 report, followed by Senator Frank Church's (March 1973) investigation

into International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT) represented high-water marks that both energised solidarity and led sectors of the media and political establishment to view events in Chile more critically (Gosse 2003: 102–104).

Anti-interventionist solidarity expanded dramatically following Allende's overthrow. Significant numbers of prominent academics and other professionals quickly 'labeled the coup as beyond the pale'. Such a consistent and immediate reaction from respectable members of the intelligentsia proved decisive in forcing media outlets to provide more critical coverage of the coup and US involvement. Academics also led the first national protests after the coup (Gosse 2003).

Solidarity subsequently went in a variety of directions, reflecting the diversity of the left. US communists took something of a leadership role, establishing local solidarity organisations throughout the country while establishing the National Coordinating Center in Solidarity with Chile. Anti-imperialists cohered in the form of Non-Intervention in Chile, were committed to a fairly militant style of protest, and stressed connections between US corporate capitalism at home and abroad. The National Chile Center took a more moderate stance and stressed a pragmatic emphasis on legislation and working with liberals (Gosse 2003: 103–106; Calandra 2010). There were eventually somewhere between 50 and 100 solidarity groups working throughout the country in large cities and college towns, holding events, distributing newsletters, and otherwise trying to get the message out. Cultural icons of the liberal-left, such as Joan Baez and Pete Seeger, also lent support (Goff 2007: 101–105).

Chile also represented perhaps the earliest example of dissension within the labour movement over the staunch support of the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO) for Washington's Cold War anti-communism (a break that would widen around Central America during the 1980s). Numerous unions, such as the United Farm Workers, United Automobile Workers, and others, quickly passed resolutions against the coup, and for a moment it even looked as though the AFL-CIO was going to take a strong stance against continued aid and trade with Chile. In the end, after Pinochet offered up a few labour concessions, the AFL-CIO

returned to form, but the presence of labour within the broader opposition served to tie economic issues (particularly aid, trade, and international lending) to human rights abuses (Tinsman 2014: 178–195).

The left's (albeit limited) success in promoting and framing Chile was made possible not only by the fact that they were the only ones paying attention prior to the coup, but by the strong anti-interventionist current running through American society following Vietnam. Opposition to US foreign policy was now mainstream, producing a liberal-left bloc that rejected the basic premises of the Cold War and was willing to contest US efforts to contain popular movements overseas (Gosse 2003: 100–102). As a minority partner, the left's challenge was to take this anti-interventionism in an anti-imperialist direction, in effect making the case that US intervention was not apolitical or well intentioned, but supported repressive regimes that undermined democratic movements and sustained wealthy interests at home and abroad.

This would have been an uphill battle under any circumstances, but human rights complicated the terrain. The success of human rights was tied to the fact that it would effectively capture anti-interventionism, disconnecting it from a left politics while taking it in a depoliticised direction. Liberal versions of human rights offered an anti-interventionism that was politically neutral (and neutered), one whose central requirement was that the US government should not support military regimes that committed the grossest of human rights violations (no doubt, a worthy goal). The politics and policies of these regimes, as well as the politics of their opponents, were essentially irrelevant, as were the deeper motivations and practices of the US government and corporations in other parts of the world. This is an anti-interventionism that moves beyond the politics of the Cold War by ignoring it, in effect declaring traditional politics irrelevant and left solidarity obsolete, undesirable, or anachronistic.

This soft anti-interventionism was also central to the success of human rights as a movement. The human rights movement allowed for a diverse range of anti-interventionists to work under its broad umbrella, to oppose US policy, in part because the vagueness of the human rights concept allowed people to work together who had quite different understandings of what 'it' meant. The



net result was that as human rights experienced a meteoric rise in the second half of the 1970s, what passed as anti-interventionism was increasingly disconnected from a left politics. Human rights did not simply marginalise other internationalisms, but also co-opted them while defining the outer limits of opposition to US foreign policy in politically neutral terms. Nevertheless, it was by no means given that human rights would capture and energise Chilean solidarity. It had been effectively captured by conservatives in order to reinvigorate anti-communism through a focus on Soviet repression. Most of what Americans would come to associate with international human rights, including its affiliation with liberals, its principle institutions, and its tight focus on torture and political prisoners, either did not exist or was barely off the ground in 1973. The US section of Amnesty International had a total of 3,000 members in 1974, and struggled to find meeting space in Washington DC. Human Rights Watch did not exist, nor did the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, the Human Rights Law Group, nor the hundreds of other rights groups that would emerge in the second half of the 1970s. There was one international human rights organisation headquartered in the US at the time (Keys 2014; Moyn 2010).

And yet, between religious groups, secular non-governmental organisations, and sympathetic policymakers (the three core constituencies of what would eventually become the human rights movement) there was a sufficient presence to respond to calls for solidarity from Chile. Of the three groups, religious actors were in the best position to respond to a call for human rights solidarity at the time of the coup. From the end of the Second World War until the late 1960s, the most consistent source of human rights discourse emanated from small groups of religious actors and international lawyers. They toiled away in relatively obscurity, often working with largely unknown and impotent sections of the United Nations (Keys 2014; Quigley 2002). The relative readiness of church groups was heightened by the growing emphasis on social commitment within religious circles, along with increasing distrust of US foreign policy, two trends brought about by a decade of civil rights organising, the rise of liberation theology, and the broader disenchantment surrounding

Vietnam. A growing sector of the religious community was, in a sense, ready for Chile.

The religious response to Chile was immediate, global, included a wide range of denominations, and had support from the highest levels of Church hierarchy. Pope Paul IV immediately expressed concern, as did Church leaders from around the world. Calls for restraint quickly turned to concrete action, including direct support for Chilean human rights organisations, the development of a sophisticated lobbying campaign in the US, and active aid to refugees/exiles. The World Council of Churches (WCC) immediately established the Emergency Task Force on the Chilean Situation, promising to commit over \$500,000 to the cause, a fundraising goal that was immediately surpassed. The WCC, along with Catholic, Presbyterian, and Lutheran Churches, helped COPACHI get off the ground, and foreign sources would provide the organisation with almost all of its budget. Between 1974 and 1979, international actors, with Churches taking the lead, would funnel more than \$100 million to Chilean Churches and their human rights organisations (Hawkins 2002: 57–79).

The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) was quickly formed by the Latin American Strategy Committee, an ecumenical collection of North American Church groups that had coalesced in connection to Brazil in 1968 (Calandra 2010: 25; Quigley 2002). WOLA would become a significant force on Capitol Hill with respect to Latin American policy. Efforts steamrolled, and by the mid-1970s, groups like WOLA, the US Catholic Conference, and the (Quaker) American Friends Service Committee had established what came to be known as ‘the religious lobby’, a relatively small number of faith-based activists, numbering probably less than 150 people at the end of the decade, who were well resourced, well informed, and had strong connections with sympathetic policymakers. With close ties to human rights organisations in Chile, they became an important information source for the media, decisionmakers, and the broader public (Calandra 2010: 22–26; Quigley 2002; Schoultz 1981: 77–80). They were also, by and large, quite sophisticated in their analysis of repression in Latin America, including the role of the US (Schoultz 1981: 77–97), and very committed to the region in a way that emphasised building pragmatic, strategic,

non-sectarian alliances aimed at addressing an urgent situation.

The collective efforts of this very diverse religious community were predicated on and stimulated by the broader rise of secular-liberal human rights within the US. Within a very short period of time, it was liberals, both within the US government and outside in organisations such as Amnesty, who would take the lead, defining the broad contours and orientation of the movement. The liberal turn to human rights happened slowly and unevenly during the late 1960s and early 1970s, shaped by events in Greece and Brazil, as well as growing awareness about the Holocaust and political prisoners in South Vietnam. International human rights attracted liberals in part because its limited aspirations were such a good fit at a moment when there was little appetite for a more ambitious US foreign policy; in part because dictatorships were a very real problem; in part because human rights allowed the US to reclaim the moral high ground without investing much at all; and in part because human rights proved effective at garnering public attention (Hawkins 2002; Keys 2014: ch. 7). The increasingly sharp focus on torture and prisoners propelled this process by defining human rights and foreign policy aspirations in narrow terms while framing the issue in a way that captured the public's attention and confirmed the US's moral superiority.

The liberal embrace of human rights could not gain full momentum until after the Vietnam War finally ended in January of 1973, in part because it was difficult to lecture the rest of the world about human rights abuses when the US government was committing massive atrocities in Asia. In this respect, the September coup in Chile was timely, and was 'the watershed event that would grab headlines and bring liberal human rights concerns – political imprisonment and torture above all – into mainstream public consciousness' (Keys 2014: 148). Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists responded immediately after the coup, cabling the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to insist that refugees be allowed to leave the country and that the new government respect human rights (Hawkins 2002: 55–56). Within the next two years, virtually every major human rights organisation would send delegations to Chile and/or issue reports. Sectors within the UN did all they could to keep up.

It took a bit longer to establish a critical mass in the US Congress, and the process was the product of both politics in the US and genuine concern about human rights abuses in Chile. Human rights activists pushed policymakers with increasing intensity and sophistication, providing information, talking points, and even wholesale legislation. More than this, human rights and Chile provided liberal Congresspersons with a compelling avenue for challenging the Nixon Administration. Kissinger's intransigence and hostility, his initial unwillingness to give an inch on Congressional human rights proposals, created an energetic backlash at a time when the Nixon Administration was vulnerable and increasingly seen as morally bankrupt. Subsequent revelations that the US, under Kissinger's direction, had actively undermined the democratically elected government of Allende provided Congressional opposition with powerful ammunition and elevated Chile to a cause célèbre. Supported by human rights organisations, leading liberal Congressional Democrats such as Donald Fraser, Edward Kennedy, and Tom Harkin adopted human rights as a liberal tool for pursuing a foreign policy project that was at once remarkably limited and profoundly important: to make sure the US government did not aid dictators who torture and imprison their own citizens. On the one hand, ceasing to pay for dictatorship did not require even modest change to a country's political or economic system, or necessarily imply a more democratic vision for the future. It could simply be 'an outlet for moral indignation and a program for virtue without cost' (Keys 2014: 156). On the other hand, the withdrawal of military aid could (in certain countries at particular moments) have profound consequences for Third-World social movements. This possibility would be a central concern as solidarity activists turned their attention to Central America from the late 1970s onward, a region that contained not only repressive military dictatorships backed by the US, but armed revolutionary movements pursuing radical political agendas.

### Human rights and the US left

By the late 1970s, the broad contours of US–Latin American solidarity were set on a shifting ground defined by two differentiated

and intertwined currents, left internationalism and liberal human rights, with the latter coming to occupy a dominant place within the movement as a whole. Both strands would blossom and expand in the 1980s on a scale that was unimaginable during South American solidarity efforts of the 1970s. Left internationalism, which occupied a key place within Chilean solidarity even as human rights became ascendant, would experience a revival during the Central American peace movement. This resurgence was, somewhat ironically, tied to the broader rise of the right and decline of the left.

When Carter embraced human rights in the late 1970s, it seemed quite plausible that human rights would thoroughly capture, and in effect become, progressive internationalism in the US. With Reagan in office, however, conservatives would try with renewed vigour (and considerable success) to claim human rights in the fight against communism. And yet, Reagan's obsession with communism, combined with the fact that his foreign policy had horrific consequences in Central America and lacked support in the US, ensured that not only would an important current of human rights remain under the jurisdiction of liberals, but that the left was handed a cause at a time when domestic issues failed to inspire. As the remnants of a broader US left based in the civil rights, labour, and anti-war movements evaporated in the late 1970s and 1980s, activists turned their attention to Reagan's foreign policy with such energy that the progressive wing of the peace movement essentially became the left in the US. They were, however, increasingly isolated.

This 1980s surge of internationalism was, to be sure, a testament to the unpopular nature of Reagan's foreign policy and the hard work of activists, but it also signalled the broader decline of the left in the US. The Central American peace movement did not represent the reinvigoration of the US left as much as it marked one in a long series of last gasps. The rapid decline of the broader left not only placed real limits on what a politically isolated peace movement could accomplish in an increasingly conservative climate. It also pushed internationalists to focus narrowly on Central America and US foreign policy while largely avoiding connections to domestic issues altogether. Central America was attractive to many US leftists precisely

because Central Americans were advancing political projects that were completely off the table in the US.

Nevertheless, this left internationalism was quite real, significant, genuinely radical, and had both secular and religious elements. US-based solidarity with Nicaragua during the 1980s was defined not only by an anti-interventionism deeply soaked in anti-imperialism, but more often than not sought to support socialist revolution. Solidarity with El Salvador, which would ultimately be the primary focus of the broader peace movement, was also shaped by a left (primarily through the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador [CISPES]) that was fighting imperialism to advance socialism in Central America. In the hands of the left, human rights often served as a tool (alongside anti-interventionism, self-determination, anti-imperialism, and socialism) that could be disconnected or connected to a larger politics depending on the strategic needs of the moment.

This was not, to be sure, a struggle to build a US left that would advance a domestic political agenda, or one that was particularly interested in connecting working-class struggles across borders. Such a project was not offered, in part because it seemed impossible given the US political climate, in part because the movement prioritised the needs of Central Americans, and in large part because Central American revolutionaries saw their US allies as a 'North American Front.' US actors were to advance the Central American cause by confronting Reagan while providing physical protection, emotional support, and material aid (Gosse 1988). On this, the solidarity left, working within and outside human rights, had considerable success, even if in the end the results may have been less than had been hoped for. This history is important to remember.

And yet, the broad parameters of US–Latin American solidarity that had been established in the 1970s would hold through the 1980s. That is, as dynamic as left internationalism was during this period, the dominant current of international solidarity was a human rights/peace movement based in Church groups, liberal human rights organisations, and Washington DC-based policymakers. It was also a movement that inherited and deepened a contradiction from 1970s' solidarity efforts in South America.

On the one hand, the movement as a whole cohered around a fairly narrow, but important, political project, namely opposition to human rights abuses and US support for military regimes in Central America. To be sure, a significant and important minority saw solidarity in terms of radical transformation, and worked directly with revolutionary movements to advance socialism in Central America. Yet, the core of a heavily faith-based movement, supported by liberal human rights organisations and sympathetic policymakers, saw solidarity not in terms of a long-term struggle to build a new world, but as an urgent call for help to end human rights atrocities and military repression (or to protect its victims). The gravitation towards this limited political project came from a now familiar set of sources. Many Church people shied away from taking sides in the civil wars, either because they did not support the revolutionary movements themselves, did not see it as their place to intervene, or simply felt that being 'political' would empower anti-communist rhetoric and otherwise undermine a fragile movement that was struggling against a popular president in an increasingly conservative climate. The tendency to cohere around a soft anti-interventionism that avoided connections with broader political projects was also embraced because it was a useful way for communicating with political-media elites and attracting larger numbers to the movement. Regardless of whether one supported the FMLN or simply wanted to end/lessen the repression, everyone could agree (or at least enter into a discussion) about US military aid being stopped. More than this, the struggle to stop military aid (pushed by Central Americans themselves) had potentially radical implications in that it could undermine dictatorships and allow revolutionary movements to succeed.

On the other hand, and here lies something of a paradox, although the fact that the movement coalesced around a fairly limited project may explain why it was able to bring thousands of people under its broad umbrella, this narrowed political vision did little to facilitate the movement's own coherence. It never possessed anything resembling an organisational centre. As Gosse aptly noted about the movement, 'everyone knew it was there, but few, even among its supporters, knew where it came from or how it operated' (Gosse 1995: 23). Activism came in a variety of forms, from

candlelight vigils, street marches, and traveling to Central American war zones to illegally housing refugees, committing civil disobedience, and pressuring political representatives. National-level entities such as Sanctuary, Witness for Peace, Pledge of Resistance, Neighbor to Neighbor, and CISPES gave the movement a certain coherence, but in many ways 'the movement' was characterised by the proliferation of local solidarity organisations, most of which were sharply focused in one way or another, working on a particular country/city, organised by or around a particular group (i.e. nuns, students, etc.), or limited to a particular type of solidarity (e.g. lobbying). This was no doubt a strength, lessening sectarianism, inviting broad participation, and making a relatively small and isolated movement appear as though it was everywhere at all times (Gosse 1995: 23).

Yet, it also produced a movement that was, despite some significant national-level organising efforts, rooted in hundreds of relatively small, autonomous, and semi-isolated organisations that had few resources. They were increasingly sophisticated at political lobbying, fundraising, accessing media attention, and aiding individual victims from Latin America; but they were largely incapable of, or simply unconcerned about, building a political base with the level of coherence required to achieve even short-term goals, let alone to advance a larger political project. That such a description captures today's solidarity landscape is not entirely a coincidence.

In this sense, it was not simply that the broader shift to the right in the US, and the corresponding decline of the left, put serious limits on international solidarity. As Latin Americans pointed out over and over again, the type of international solidarity they needed most was one that would 'change things in the US', something that in the long term required precisely what the peace movement could not deliver: a meaningful left that would not only stop military aid but transform the fundamentals of US engagement with the region. More than this, the peace movement, due both to the urgency of its cause, directives from Central Americans, and its increasing political isolation within Reagan's US, was not simply unconcerned with domestic politics, but settled on a mode of politics that resisted cohesion and undermined the possibility of forging a viable left.

The movement's limited political project, combined with its embrace of organisational fragmentation, signalled a form of internationalism that was never designed to outlive its short-term goal of stopping human rights atrocities and the US policies that supported them. It was not simply that a portion of the movement lacked a larger political vision, that activists failed to make connections between human rights abuses and the regressive economic policies being implemented by Central American regimes; or between repression and the political projects being pursued by 'human rights victims'. It was that much of the peace movement pursued a form of internationalism that actively dissociated itself from politics altogether, offering up instead a form of solidarity whose noble aspiration worked to obscure a limited goal that was to be pursued through an organisational infrastructure that was not built for sustained international solidarity.

Nor was this without long-term consequences for US-based internationalism. At a time when domestic issues were failing to inspire a rapidly disintegrating US left, human rights and the peace movement appeared as a progressive bright spot. It was how increasing numbers of would-be activists came to 'progressive' politics in the first place. The urgency of the human rights cause, the limited nature of its political project, and its active separation from left internationalism, brought large numbers of people into internationalism relatively quickly. People who shared little in common ideologically, or found the Cold War politically paralysing, could agree that state violence against its own citizens had to be stopped immediately. The fact that such violence appeared to be on the upswing, was being meted out by both right and left-wing regimes, and engendered deep resistance from Central Americans themselves, made the human rights movement both compelling and attractive to those who wanted to engage in 'progressive' politics. People were drawn to a movement that had avenues for political participation and that was addressing an urgent social issue. And they made an important difference.

Yet, ultimately, in part because human rights were not a long-term project rooted in a collective politics of liberation, many international activists considered their work to be 'done' once state-led violence was reduced and political prisoners freed. What this meant in practical terms was that once the Cold War

was over, and democracies slowly replaced military regimes throughout Latin America, the number of US-based actors engaged 'in solidarity' declined dramatically. Perhaps more importantly, those who remained or became active in the 1990s inherited a solidarity infrastructure, complete with established practices, tactics, strategies, and institutions, that had been built through human rights/peace and was often poorly equipped to analyse, let alone effectively challenge, neo-liberal capitalism, the central concern of US-based solidarity since the 1980s.

What remained, to oversimplify more than a bit, was a solidarity left that possesses a narrowed political vision, agenda, and imagination, in part because so many activists came of age at a time when left internationalism was all but disappearing from public space and 'progressive' international solidarity came to be defined by the very limited politics of human rights. This narrowed vision was accompanied by an understanding of solidarity that is defined more in terms of responding to calls for help than linking struggles, is often disconnected from US political currents, and inhabits an organisational infrastructure that is rooted in the proliferation of non-governmental organisations that have few resources, are not designed to advance political mobilisation, and are overly focused on witnessing, exposing, and establishing (largely disconnected) 'campaigns' against the most extreme and high profile of abuses.

### Acknowledgements

My understanding of US–Latin American solidarity has been shaped by a decade-long conversation and political engagement with Aviva Chomsky. John French, Lesley Gill, Van Gosse, and Adolph Reed Jr have also shaped my understanding of solidarity and politics both through their own work and thoughtful comments on this essay. I also thank participants of the 2014 Empire and Solidarity Conference at the University of New Orleans for their insights, including Marc Becker, Jonathan Brown, Leo Gorman, Heidi Krajewski, Kris Lane, Eric Larson, Jana Lipman, Elizabeth Manley, Theresa Meade, William Schmidli, Megan Strom, Edith Wolfe, and especially Justin Wolfe. All errors of fact, argument, and common sense contained in this essay are mine alone.

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## Maoism, Nationalism, and Anti-Colonialism

### Introduction

The national liberation and anti-colonial struggles of the post-Second World War period are often represented as if they were a unified global movement carried out under the banner of decolonisation. Despite a common primary aim (i.e. that of decolonisation), reality proves that there were diverse of political and ideological viewpoints and principles within these struggles and movements.

The subject of this essay is the interrelation between nationalism, anti-colonialism, and Maoism. Its aim is not to elaborate on the relation between anti-colonialism and nationalism in general, but to focus on the period in which the two concepts interacted with the communist movement, and specifically with Chinese communism, or Maoism. We are interested in the period beginning with the revolutionary taking of state power in 1949 and ending with the death of Mao Zedong in the mid-1970s, which led to an overall shift in Chinese politics. Before we examine the

period under consideration, we must first clarify what we mean by the term 'Maoism'.

### Clarifying terminology: Maoism, nationalism, anti-colonialism

Despite the fact that 'Maoism' has been a widely used term since the 1960s, it is neither well defined nor used in a single context. 'Maoism' was equally used to refer to the ideology of China and to designate that of supporters of Mao in the rest of the world from the mid-1960s onwards. It also came to be used by an ideological trend that emerged during the 1960s which upheld the ideological and political views of Mao and Chinese politics in general, yet at the same time rejected Stalin's views and rule of the Soviet Union.

In terms of terminology, groups that did not follow the "Marxist-Leninist" tradition that saw a continuity between the pro-1956 USSR and Mao's China, and thus, preferred the term Maoism instead of Marxism-Leninism or Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought. Such groups could be found in France, where they constituted of a particular ideological and political trend, that of Mao Spontex. (See: Benny Lévy 1971).

In terms of ideology, Maoism has at its core the centrality of the peasants in a revolution in countries that it characterised as semi-colonial and semi-feudal—a characterisation that can easily be made to apply to the so-called Third World countries as a whole. Maoism also claimed that the path to seizing power passed through the creation of rural base areas that would eventually lead to encircling the cities in the course of a protracted people's war. This was a theoretical framework to which anti-colonialists in the Third World could relate and for whom it served as a source of inspiration.

Apart from Mao's own views on anti-colonialism and nationalism, as well as their impact on anti-colonial struggles, a very important – if not the most significant – aspect of the question under consideration concerns Chinese foreign policy, regardless of whether it was dictated by Mao and his principles or not. Although 'Maoism' can be captured by a single definition, 'Maoist' China functioned at three distinct levels:

- an ideological and political framework related to anti-colonialism, as has been documented in the works of Mao and other Chinese communists

- the relation between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and parties, organisations, and groups that conducted, or were part of, anti-colonial struggles
- the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China (PRC) towards anti-colonialism and newly founded states.

Thus, we must examine the relationship between nationalism and anti-colonialism in their relation to Chinese foreign policy rather than in their relation to the Maoist ideology – in any of its definitions – per se. In addition to the vagueness of the definition of 'Maoism', the complexity of anti-colonialism and the decolonisation struggle in general makes it possible to describe the relationship between the three terms as if they might be grasped in linear fashion. Anti-colonialist forces, and therefore the decolonisation process, ranged from those who dreamed of a new socialist or communist homeland to those who would settle for the declaration of independence of their country.

That being said, nationalism and – to a greater extent, anti-colonialism—are terms that have also been subjected to multiple interpretations. Michel Caher (2012) elaborates on the issue of nationalism in relation to Marxism, colonisation, nations, states, and nation states. According to Caher, it would be rather difficult, if not impossible, to attempt to interpret the transformation process of decolonisation in a univocal manner, and by the same token anti-colonialism in terms of the path taken in order to fulfil the goal of decolonisation, nationalism in terms of the ideology of (part) of the anti-colonial forces, and Maoism as a concrete policy towards the former two issues.

Nationalism relates to anti-colonialism on two different levels. The first is the function of nationalism in relation to anti-colonial struggles as such, and the second is the relation between nationalism and communism within an anti-colonial struggle, front, or alliance. Both levels have ideological and political projections, but to view these issues in such a manner alone would be incomplete, since anti-colonialism is not merely a scholarly issue but a political orientation that is based in a material and practical situation. On the other hand, trying to analyse these matters by viewing the facts isolated by ideological doctrines and their respective political lines can easily lead one to draw

hasty conclusions. Despite the fact that proletarian internationalism had been a fundamental task for every or any communist party, defending the PRC and its rights was also a basic commitment of the CPC, and maintaining an equilibrium between defending the state and upholding internationalism has not always been possible, despite the best efforts of the CPC.

### **The three phases of the Chinese foreign policy throughout the Maoist era**

Assisting (mainly South-East Asian) national liberation and anti-colonial movements during the 1960s in fact served both tasks, by ensuring that the US would not be anywhere near China's backyard and by fulfilling the commitment of the PRC and CPC to proletarian internationalism (Karl 2010:113–115). As with any political formation, the CPC was not uniform, and serious opposition was raised against various political decisions or positions it took (Pillsbury 1975: 2). Such opposition was reflected in international relations and foreign policies. But prior to the 1960s, it is necessary to refer to a very important incident in the history of Chinese foreign policy, as well as a milestone of the decolonisation process: the Bandung Conference that took place in Indonesia in April 1955. The particularity of Bandung included the fact that it was a meeting of nation states representing different ideological and political positions (Herrera 2005: 546); that some of China's counterparts in the conference were countries with strong communist movements – such as India and Indonesia; and that it was the first time that both *non-alignment* and the *Third World* were so central in the agenda of a significant number of countries. The Bandung Conference approach to China's international relations was gradually reinstated in the 1970s and especially after Mao Zedong's death in 1976.

### **The Bandung Conference**

The Bandung Conference was where nationalism, anti-colonialism and Maoism intersected. The conference mainly served the interests of the Chinese state in ensuring that the surrounding states would be neutral in case of a possible intensification of the relations between China and the US. This would



be achieved by declarations of non-alignment by these states in any possible theatre of war between the Great Powers (Betts 2004: 44). Even if this was a tactical alignment of the PRC in order to secure its borders, it had a major impact on the various communist parties of the region regarding their attitude towards nationalist forces in their countries. Headed by Premier Zhou Enlai, the Chinese delegation attended the Bandung Conference not as 'a communist nation but as a third world country' (Karl 2010: 89). Townsend (1980: 328–329) also refers to the foreign policy of PRC during that period as Zhou Enlai's 'peaceful coexistence' policy that was at the core of this conference's decisions, and according to Townsend a foreign affairs policy during the mid-1950s. Eight years later, in the Sino-Soviet exchange of letters that made the split of the Communist camp official, one may read the position of the Chinese on this very issue and especially in relation to those countries they refer to as nationalist ones:

We differentiate between the nationalist countries which have newly attained political independence and the imperialist countries.

Although fundamentally different from the socialist countries in their social and political systems, the nationalist countries stand in profound contradiction to imperialism. They have common interests with the socialist countries – opposition to imperialism, the safeguarding of national independence and the defence of world peace. Therefore, it is quite possible and feasible for the socialist countries to establish relations of peaceful coexistence and friendly co-operation with these countries. The establishment of such relations is of great significance for the strengthening of the unity of the anti-imperialist forces and for the advancement of the common struggle of the peoples against imperialism. (Communist Party of China 1965a: 273)

This can be interpreted as a change of direction in Chinese foreign policy, away from a focus on the USSR and the Eastern bloc (Jian 2008a: 132; Townsend 1980: 328) and towards what was called 'The Third World'. According to Mao (1974) 'We are the Third World. ... All Asian countries, except Japan,

belong to the Third World. All of Africa and also Latin America belong to the Third World.' Until then, China's attitude towards countries of the so-called Third World under nationalist rule was a combination of 'harsh criticism with tactics and actions designed to neutralize them in the Cold War confrontation' (Jian 2008b: 207). Thus it can be argued that after the first five years of the establishment of the PRC, the international affairs policy shifted from criticising 'non-Western, nationalist countries' (Jian 2008b: 207) to embracing them. Jian (2008b: 208–209) argues that Bandung – as well as the Geneva talks that took place one year earlier, in 1954, in order to resolve the issues concerning Korea, Vietnam, and Indochina in general, with the PRC represented by Zhou Enlai – should not be seen as change of course in Chinese foreign relations. For Jian, Bandung and Geneva should be viewed as part of the same revolutionary foreign policy that had been adopted since the very beginning of the PRC. Although Jian provides some very interesting arguments, there are a few indications that the PRC's foreign policy did not follow a single revolutionary policy, but that there were deviations from Mao's own views on foreign policy. Teiwes and Sun (2007: 85) also argue that there were no substantive divisions, at least for the period 1972–76, but throughout their work are several references to conflicts and disputes regarding foreign policies or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs even during the period 1972–76, where the authors see no major differentiations regarding foreign policy between the two major actors; that is, Mao and Zhou Enlai (2007: 30, 54–64, 85–93, 114–115, 124–146, 158–164, 427–434, 515–521).

The essence of the Bandung Conference was nothing more than the 'Five principles of peaceful cooperation': 'mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in other country's internal affairs, equal and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence' (Jian 2008b:). But can we assume that this five-point agreement is in reality an agreement of non-interference in countries, some of which had strong communist movements, an agreement that would benefit the nationalist blocs that ruled them? Just two years before, China had intervened in Korea and was aligned with the Korean communists. Can this be viewed as a continuum?

It is true that, as Jian notes (2008b: 209–211), Chinese communists gave attention to the national aspect in revolution. But Maoism, here understood in terms of the doctrine formulated by the works of Mao, clearly stated that communists must act in an independent manner within a national front, take initiatives, and also work outside the front (Zedong 1967/1938: 213–217). In the aftermath of the Bandung Conference, the strategy and tactics of communists became both diverse and vague. In retrospect – and judging by the turnout in Indonesia alone – the results for China in terms of their task of promoting the revolution were unsuccessful, if not devastating. Zhou Enlai himself was forced to undertake self-criticism in 1957 regarding his work in the foreign affairs of PRC. More specifically:

Zhou devoted a large portion of his self-criticism to his ‘conservative and rightist tendency’ in handling the PRC’s foreign relations. He admitted that the Foreign Ministry’s work under his direction had neglected the necessary struggle in dealing with nationalist countries, had maintained a kind of wishful thinking concerning imperialism (especially toward Japan and the United States), and had failed to conduct necessary criticism of the revisionist policies of other socialist countries. He particularly mentioned that while it was reasonable to learn from the experience of the Soviet Union, it was a mistake to copy it completely. (Jian 2001: 73)

The case of Indonesian communists was a striking example of this situation. The Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) left the initiative to President Sukarno. This was admitted in a document that was published after the Suharto coup took place in 1965 – when the PKI was destroyed and the vast majority of its members and sympathisers were slaughtered – that re-evaluated the politics of PKI during the period preceding the coup (PKI 1968: 25–56). Despite the fact that the outcome of the Bandung Conference is referenced as having had a causal effect on the PKI’s politics, it is not so difficult to relate the two. The 6th Congress of the PKI, which took place in 1959, was addressed by Sukarno, who praised the party for its co-operation in the struggle for national unity. One year later, the PKI prioritised national

struggle over class struggle (Mortimer 2006: 84–85). But can the subordination of a communist party to nationalist forces be regarded as a Maoist strategy? If we understand by ‘Maoism’ the doctrine based on the writings of Mao Zedong, the answer would be negative. However, if we understand by ‘Maoism’ the policies promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of the PRC, including those that came out of the Bandung Conference, the answer would be positive.

A very interesting comment on the nature of PKI, which to some extent can be generalised to refer to other parties as well, has been made by G.P. Deshpande (2010: 474). According to Deshpande, the PKI had been a pro-Chinese party without for all that being Maoist, in terms of sharing the same ideological and political views; and this regardless of the PKI’s strategy and how it related itself to the policies of the PRC. This valid assessment on the PKI’s identity can be generalised. The history of the Maoist movement shows that the case of the PKI was very common, in terms of both parties and organisations that were aligned with the CPC during the Sino-Soviet split, and those that were created due to the split and adopted the CPC’s positions.

### **The Sino-Soviet split and the abandonment of the Bandung Conference line**

During the Sino-Soviet split in the mid-1960s, the CPC redirected their international policy towards supporting revolutionary movements and parties, making a distinction between progressive and reactionary nationalism and reaffirming the precondition of communist leadership within a national front. The CPC criticised the Soviet Union for aligning itself with reactionary nationalists such as Nehru (RCPC 1978: 21) who, along with Zhou Enlai, was one of the two keynote speakers of the Bandung Conference.

In 1963, the Editorial Departments of *Renmin Ribao* (People’s Daily) and *Hongqi* (Red Flag) published the ‘Fourth comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU’ that was entitled ‘Apologists of Neo-colonialism’ and, later on, was published in 1965 as part of the collection *Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, by Peking Foreign Languages Press. This document, although seemingly nothing more than a criticism of the

Communist Party of the Soviet Union's political views, was in reality a political manifesto of the CPC. In this document, the CPC explicitly stated that although it did not oppose 'peaceful coexistence', this could not replace revolution (Communist Party of China 1965b: 194). Furthermore, while Bandung unified former colonies through the notion of the 'Third World,' the CPC introduced the new term 'neo-colonialism' to its vocabulary:

Consider, first, the situation in Asia and Africa. There a whole group of countries have declared their independence. But many of these countries have not completely shaken off imperialist and colonial control and enslavement and remain objects of imperialist plunder and aggression as well as arenas of contention between the old and new colonialists. In some, the old colonialists have changed into neo-colonialists and retain their colonial rule through their trained agents. In others, the wolf has left by the front door, but the tiger has entered through the back door, the old colonialism being replaced by the new, more powerful and more dangerous U.S. colonialism. The peoples of Asia and Africa are seriously menaced by the tentacles of neo-colonialism, represented by U.S. Imperialism. (Communist Party of China 1965b: 189)

In addition, the CPC's position on dealing with neo-colonialism is quite clear:

The national liberation movement has entered a new stage. ... In the new stage, the level of political consciousness of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples has risen higher than ever and the revolutionary movement is surging forward with unprecedented intensity. They urgently demand the thorough elimination of the forces of imperialism and its lackeys in their own countries and strive for complete political and economic independence. The primary and most urgent task facing these countries is still the further development of the struggle against imperialism, old and new colonialism, and their lackeys. This struggle is still being waged fiercely in the political, economic, military, cultural, ideological and other spheres. And the struggles in all these spheres still find their most concentrated expression in

political struggle, which often unavoidably develops into armed struggle when the imperialists resort to direct or indirect armed suppression. It is important for the newly independent countries to develop their independent economy. But this task must never be separated from the struggle against imperialism, old and new colonialism, and their lackeys. (Communist Party of China 1965b: 191-192).

In achieving this, the CPC still holds the position that in each of these countries, the formation of a broad anti-imperialist united front in the national liberation movement under the leadership of the proletariat (i.e. the Communist Party) should take place (Communist Party of China 1965b: 204-205). But where does the PRC fit in all this?

According to Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, every socialist country which has achieved victory in its revolution must actively support and assist the liberation struggles of the oppressed nations. The socialist countries must become base areas for supporting and developing the revolution of the oppressed nations and peoples throughout the world, form the closest alliance with them and carry the proletarian world revolution through to completion. (Communist Party of China 1965b: 207).

The CPC even accuses the Soviet Union of abandoning proletarian internationalism, since, from their perspective, the latter wanted 'to subordinate the national liberation revolution to their general line of peaceful coexistence and to the national interests of their own country' (Communist Party of China 1965b: 207). If one reviews Bandung, which took place about a decade before the polemics directed at the CPSU by the CPC, it can be said that it promoted a general line of peaceful coexistence and tried to harness national liberation movements in terms of the national interests of the PRC. In this respect, it is very similar to the political line of the CPSU that is now being criticised. Thus, the polemics of the split period can be perceived as an indication of a shift back to the pre-Geneva/Bandung foreign policy of the PRC, or to a more orthodox communist/Maoist orientation in foreign affairs.

This shift in the PRC's international relations, from the moderate stance of the 1950s towards an open support of revolutionary movements worldwide during the 1960s, is also visible in terms of Chinese propaganda. In 1960, Radio Peking initiated a radio broadcast – in its French Language section – called 'Irresistible Tide' that referred to the rising independence movements in Africa. Two years before, it had launched a programme against the 'Western intrusion' in the Middle East. In the early 1960s, there was an expansion of the language sectors of Radio Peking. Most broadcasts aimed at Third-World countries either directly (in native languages, such as Arabic, Swahili, Hausa, Malay, Burmese, Thai, Filipino, Urdu) or indirectly (in the languages of colonialists, like Portuguese and French). Propaganda was also manifest in the launch of magazines such as *Peking Review*, *Pekin Information*, *China Reconstructs* – published in Arabic as well, from 1964 onwards – and an intensification of Foreign Language Press production both in terms of titles and in translations intended to promote Chinese politics worldwide. (Ungor 2009: 154–158, 258).

### Back to Bandung

In 1974, Deng Xiaoping reintroduced the spirit of Bandung in the speech he delivered at the United Nations (1974). Two years later, shortly after Mao Zedong's death, *Remin Rinbao* published an article titled 'Chairman Mao's Theory of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds is a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism'. This article offered a deeper analysis of Deng's aforementioned speech, and both texts took the spirit of Bandung to the next level by identifying the so-called Second World as a potential ally of the Third World against the two superpowers, namely the USA and the Soviet Union. This article produced a major split in the Maoist camp, with most of the Maoist parties denouncing the article as having been fabricated, and the Three World Theory as not being part of Mao's work. Whatever the case, it illustrates the complexity not only of Chinese foreign policy, but also of ideological and political shifts in the CPC that tracked changes in the balance of forces between the different factions of the party.

### Conclusions

It is now evident that there cannot be a general assessment of Maoism in relation to nationalism and anti-colonialism, for the simple reason that there has not been a unitary approach of Maoism towards these two notions.

Chinese foreign policy shifted several times during the 1949–1976 period. In brief:

- 1949–1954: orientation towards the USSR and the socialist camp, with the Korean War being the key event.
- 1954–late 1950s: establishment of relations with former colonies that are mainly ruled by nationalist political forces.
- 1960s: promotion of revolution throughout the world.
- 1970s: shift towards a coalition with Third-World countries (similar to 1954–late 1950s) and an opening to the West.

Each of these shifts in the foreign policy of the PRC reflected a turn towards nationalism or anti-colonialism and altered relations between the two orientations. The 1960s had been the most favourable period for anti-colonialism, while in the 1950s, and again in the 1970s, anti-colonialism was set aside in favour of nationalism.

In terms of the theoretical approach of Maoism towards anti-colonialism and nationalism, Mao regarded anti-colonial struggles as anti-imperialist. For Mao, anti-colonial armed struggle should be undertaken by an anti-imperialist united front that would constitute the national liberation movement. These fronts or movements should, on the one hand, include nationalist forces that could unite with the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist goals, but, on the other, should be under the guidance and leadership of the communist forces.

Christos Mais

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## Naxalite Movement: An Anti-imperialist Perspective

The Indian Communist movement, formed around the 1920s, is now fragmented. The undivided Communist Party of India (CPI) split after the Sino-Indian border war of 1962, which was simultaneous with the international communist schism of 1963–64; and a second party, the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), was born in 1964. Both are non-Maoist parties. As regards Maoist organisations, there are now: (a) various Naxalite groups of the now disintegrated CPI (Marxist-Leninist) or CPI-ML led by Charu Mazumdar, which was created in 1969 after the Naxalbari peasant uprising in 1967; (b) one major Maoist party, the CPI (Maoist), which was founded in 2004 through the merger of the CPI-ML People's War Group and the Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI). Maoists of the 1960s and 1970s came to be known as 'Naxalites' after the uprising in Naxalbari, and the CPI-ML was the predecessor of today's CPI (Maoist).

While the Naxalite movement was centring on the peasants and was indeed basically an anti-feudal movement, this essay attempts to highlight and analyse the anti-imperialist perspective of the Naxalite movement.

Both the CPI and the CPI-M advocate a peaceful parliamentary path and have been totally involved in the parliamentary system. Contradictions between these two parties are non-antagonistic. Meanwhile, contradictions within the Maoist movement are also non-antagonistic insofar as all reject the parliamentary path and agree on a Maoist model of revolution.

Initially, the CPI had a confused understanding of the role of imperialism and India's independence in 1947. Adopting the 'Tito-ite' analysis, it concluded that India was already a fully capitalist country (rather than semi-feudal and semi-colonial) and therefore linked the two stages of the revolution (democratic and socialist) into a single stage through an attack on the whole Indian bourgeoisie.

This view was repudiated by the Andhra Communists, who had been conducting a peasant partisan war in Telengana since 1946. The Andhra Communists invoked Mao Zedong's 'New Democracy' and 'The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party' to justify their strategy for a two-stage revolution in 'semi-feudal semi-colonial' India, involving a four-class alliance for agrarian revolution. It refers to an alliance led by the proletariat, with the peasants as their main allies, the petty bourgeoisie as allies to be won over through careful organisational work, and the non-monopoly bourgeoisie as potential but less reliable allies.

In 1950 the Cominform persuaded the CPI towards a two-stage revolution based on a four-class alliance. This was a vindication of the Andhra line, as opposed to the CPI central leadership's anti-capitalist struggle, based on urban insurrection and general strike. Soon, however, Soviet foreign-policy interests required that the CPI discard armed struggle in favour of peaceful constitutionalism since the USSR wanted to placate Nehru as a non-aligned ally in the peace front against imperialism. In 1951 the Cominform intervened and forced the CPI to abandon armed struggle. The CPI therefore participated in the country's first general elections in 1952.

The CPI and the CPI-M differed over their assessment with respect to the role of

imperialist foreign finance capital in India's economy and polity. The CPI maintained that the Indian state is the organ of the national bourgeoisie as a whole, in which, however, the big bourgeoisie is powerful and has links with the landlords. In contrast, in the opinion of the CPI-M, the state is in the hands of both the bourgeoisie and the landlords, but it is actually led by the big bourgeoisie, which increasingly collaborates with foreign finance capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development. According to the CPI, in order to go ahead on the socialist road, India must complete its present anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, and national democratic stage of revolution. The CPI programme, therefore, proposed an intermediate stage, the 'non-capitalist path of development', as distinct from the capitalist path pursued by the Indian ruling classes. This stage is to be attained through a national democratic front composed of the working class, the peasantry, the rising classes of urban and rural intelligentsia, and the national bourgeoisie (excluding the monopoly bourgeoisie). The leadership of the front will be shared by the national bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The CPI-M, however, advocated a narrower, people's democratic front. It believed that India must go for a people's democratic revolution in order to accomplish radical agrarian reforms and oust foreign capital from the country. Agrarian revolution is the axis of the revolution. The front will be led by the party, and comprise the working class and the peasantry. It will have agricultural labour and poor peasantry. Attempts would later be made to include middle peasants to the front and the party even considered that rich peasants could be won over through suitable tactics. The urban and other middle classes are also to be recruited and attempts made to win over the non-monopoly section of the bourgeoisie. The character of the revolution is the same for both parties (anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-monopoly, and democratic), but they differ over the class composition of the front.

### **'Eight Documents' on imperialism**

After the brief Maoist interlude in the late 1940s in Telengana, the Maoist perspective began to develop in the 'Eight Documents' written by Charu Mazumdar during 1965-67, even before the Naxalbari uprising. As early as 1965, Charu Mazumdar in his famous

'Eight Documents' referred to the role of US imperialism behind the India-Pakistan war of 1965. He said: 'So it is in the interest of the reactionary bourgeoisie of India that India has attacked Pakistan. The US imperialist plan of the world war is also operating behind this war' ('What Possibility the Year 1965 is Indicating?' Document no. 5, secretly circulated during August–September 1965).

Regarding the true nature of Soviet aid, Charu Mazumdar referred to the collusion of US imperialism and the USSR. He said:

If support is given to the government of India which is following the path of co-operation with imperialism, and feudalism, it is the reactionary class which is strengthened. So Soviet aid is not strengthening the democratic movement of India, but is increasing the strength of the reactionary forces in co-operation with US-led imperialism and the Soviets. It is the Soviet–US co-operation of modern revisionism that we are observing in India .... ('Carry on the Struggle Against Modern Revisionism', Document no. 4, secretly circulated during the middle of 1965)

Mazumdar further exposed the designs of imperialism behind bourgeois nationalism. He said:

As the Indian Government is carrying on compromising with imperialism, that sense of unity is being struck at its root. ... The consciousness of a new unity will come in the course of the very struggle against this government of India of imperialism, feudalism and big monopolists .... (ibid.)

Mazumdar explained how Soviet revisionism presented new hopes for the neo-colonial forces and also how the Indian Government opened up India to imperialist exploitation:

... no imperialism could wipe off the Chinese Revolution .... Decadent imperialism also realized that it was not possible to carry on in the old method. So it took a new form, introduced a new method of exploitation by giving dollars as gift. Neo-colonialism began. When imperialism and all the reactionaries of the world were groping for a way out, to save themselves, the revisionist policy of the traitor

Khrushchev in 1956 made its appearance before them with a light of new hope. The reactionary government of India found a way to create illusions about Khrushchev's independent capitalist path. ... The reactionary government of India's bourgeoisie entered into a secret pact with the US imperialism in 1958 .... This traitorous government ... turned India into a playground of imperialist exploitation. It has converted the entire Indian people into a nation of beggars to the foreigners. ('What is the Source of the Spontaneous Revolutionary Outburst in India?' Document no. 3, 9 April 1965)

Mazumdar believed that the main aim of US imperialism was to establish India as the reactionary base in South-East Asia. He wrote:

The Indian government has gradually become the chief political partner in the expansion of American imperialism's hegemony of the world. The main aim of American imperialism is to establish India as the chief reactionary base in South-East Asia. ('Our Tasks in the Present Situation', Document no. 1, 28 January 1965)

In the same document, Mazumdar further maintained that the Indian government was becoming more and more dependent on imperialism, hence the arrest of the communists under its instruction. He said:

... there is no other way for the Indian bourgeoisie to come out from this crisis excepting importing more and more Anglo-American imperialist capital. As a result of this dependence on imperialism, the internal crisis of capitalism is bound to increase day by day. The Indian bourgeoisie has not been able to find out any other way except killing democracy, faced with the instructions of American imperialism and its own internal crisis. There were imperialist instructions behind these arrests, since the American police chief 'Macbright' was in Delhi during the arrest of the communists, and the widespread arrests took place only after discussions with him. ... The more the Government will be dependent on imperialism, the more it will fail to solve its internal crisis. ... Imperialist capital demands the arrest of communists as a precondition

before investing; ... American imperialism is writhing in death pangs, in keeping its commitment to those countries of the world which it has assured of giving aid. Meanwhile, an industrial crisis has developed in America. It can be seen from President Johnson's utterance itself that the number of unemployed is increasing in the country. According to the official statement, four million people are absolutely unemployed; 35 million people are semi-unemployed and in factories also semi-unemployment is continuing' (ibid.).

Charu Mazumdar also drew attention to how Soviet revisionism was colluding with US imperialism and how the revisionist party leaderships of the CPI and the CPI-M were concealing this fact. It should be noted that at this point he had not yet used the term 'Soviet Social Imperialism' as he would do later. Mazumdar now said:

Soviet revisionist leadership in collaboration with the US imperialism is today trying for world hegemony. ... They are trying to establish the revisionist leadership by splitting the revolutionary parties and are shamelessly acting as agents of the US imperialism. ... So no struggles against American imperialism can be made without carrying out an open struggle against this Soviet revisionist leadership. ... The party leadership ... are trying to conceal in a cunning manner the fact that the Soviet leadership is transforming the Soviet Socialist State into a capitalist state gradually and that the Soviet-American collaboration itself is because of that. So, in the political and organizational analysis of India during the last two years [made by the party leadership], there has been no mention of imperialist, particularly American imperialist interference, although from Johnson to Humphrey, all the representatives of US imperialism have repeatedly declared that they will use India as a base against China ... in the political and organizational resolution [of the party leadership], no word of caution has been uttered for party members against the imperialist counter-offensive. ... In no part of their resolution it was mentioned that this election was being held to hide the exploitation and indirect rule by imperialism. The reactionary government of India ... under imperialist instructions

wants to build up our country as a counter-revolutionary base of South East Asia ... The experience of Indonesia has taught us how violent today dying imperialism can become. ('The Main Task Today is the Struggle to Build Up the True Revolutionary Party Through Uncompromising Struggle Against Revisionism', Document no. 6, 30 August 1966; circulated in a clandestine manner and published in the name of 'Maoist Center' of the CPI)

### **Charu Mazumdar's later writings on imperialism**

Apart from the 'Eight Documents', Charu Mazumdar wrote several other important documents before his death in police custody in 1972, after which the Naxalite movement of the first phase gradually subsided. In one such document written after the Naxalbari peasant uprising, he analysed how the Central Committee of the CPI-M proved to be an ally of US imperialism, Soviet revisionism and the Indian government. In his words:

The ulterior motive of the ... C.C. Resolution (of the CPI-M) is ... to act secretly as a stooge in the interests of US imperialism, Soviet revisionism and Indian reactionary forces .... It has not explained the real character of the joint nuclear monopoly by America and Russia, but has only aired a semblance of criticism in this vein .... The collaboration between America and Russia turns out in fact to be a collaboration for world domination. ... The C.C. has ignored an event like exchange of nuclear secrets between America and Russia .... Even when American imperialism and Soviet revisionism in spite of their giving all possible help are failing to revive people's confidence in the government, the C.C. like a faithful lackey comes forward in defence of this reactionary government. The C.C. has thus proved to be an ally and friend of American imperialism, Soviet revisionism and the Indian reactionary government .... This vast country of fifty crore-strong population happens to be a strong base of the imperialist powers and the mainstay of Soviet revisionism. So with the victorious completion of the revolution in India the doomsday of imperialism as well as of Soviet revisionism would fast draw near. ... All the might



of the imperialists and revisionists will fail to stop the tide of revolution in this country. ('It is Time to Build up a Revolutionary Party', *Liberation*, November 1967).

Mazumdar was very optimistic about the victory of revolution in India and the subsequent collapse of imperialism. He asserted:

The victory of the People's Democratic Revolution in this country of 500 million people will lead to the inevitable collapse of world imperialism and revisionism. The People's Democratic Revolution in this country can be led to a victorious end only in opposition to all the imperialist powers of the world. Particularly, we shall have to reckon with U.S. imperialism, the leader of world imperialism. U.S. imperialism has not only adopted all the aggressive features of pre-war Germany, Italy and Japan, but has further developed them to a great extent. It has extended its aggressive activities to all corners of the globe and has enmeshed India in its neocolonialist bondage. ... The victorious Indian revolution will destroy this imperialist monster ('The Indian People's Democratic Revolution', *Liberation*, June 1968).

Mazumdar further explained at greater length how Soviet revisionism collaborated with US imperialism and how the leadership of the CPI and the CPI-M helped them. He said:

The People's Democratic Revolution in this country will have to be carried through to a victorious end by actively opposing the Soviet Union .... This is because the present leaders of the Soviet state, party and army have adopted a revisionist line and set up a bourgeois dictatorship in their country. In collusion with the U.S. imperialists, they have extended their exploitation and established their domination over various countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In India, the Soviet leaders have become the chief peddler of U.S. imperialism .... With the help of their stooges (the Dange clique [of the CPI] and the neo-revisionist clique [of the (CPI-M)]), nurtured by themselves, the Soviet leaders are turning India into a field for their unrestricted exploitation and are deceiving the fighting masses, thus proving themselves to be the running dogs of U.S. imperialism

and friends of the Indian reactionaries. ... Today, all the political parties of India have turned into active accomplices of US imperialism, Soviet revisionism and Indian reactionaries .... People engaged themselves in a heated controversy at Burdwan [Plenum of the CPI-M] over the extent of restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. To engage oneself in a controversy over the restoration of capitalism in a country where the proletarian dictatorship has already been abolished ... is ... to blunt the edge of struggle .... All the reactionaries of the world ... are trying to use India as their base for supplying cannon-fodder for their aggression against the great Chinese people. It was precisely this that the renegade Kosygin, Tito and Chester Bowles conspired about with Indira Gandhi in New Delhi recently ...'. ('The Indian People's Democratic Revolution', *Liberation*, June 1968)

In another article written after one year of the Naxalbari movement, Mazumdar mentioned the international significance of the Naxalbari struggle: 'India has been turned into a base of imperialism and revisionism .... That is why the Naxalbari struggle is not merely a national struggle; it is also an international struggle' ('One Year of Naxalbari Struggle', *Liberation*, June 1968).

Mazumdar vehemently criticised the Burdwan Plenum of the CPI-M and said:

They [the CPI-M] are merely the running dogs of foreign and Indian reaction and of the Soviet revisionists. It was on behalf of Indian and foreign reaction that Dinesh Singh came and warned Jyoti Basu not to expose their reactionary character too much at the Burdwan Plenum [of the CPI-M]. In this way the conspiracy of international revisionism was successful at the Burdwan Plenum, ... even if temporarily, ... to deceive the revolutionary masses of India'. ('The United Front and the Revolutionary Party', *Liberation*, July 1968).

Mazumdar branded the leaders of the CPI and the CPI-M as lackeys of the Soviet Union. He wrote:

US imperialism and Soviet revisionism are intensifying their oppression and exploitation in India ... The Dangeite traitorous

clique [of the CPI] and the neo-revisionist clique [of the CPI-M] are ... trying to confuse the masses by ... indulging in all sorts of pseudo-revolutionary talks. But the Soviet revisionists' fascist aggression against Czechoslovakia has torn off their mask and with each passing day they will be clearly shown up as mere lackeys of the Soviet Union, which is today a pedlar of neo-colonialism and one of the aggressive powers of the world. ('Develop Peasants' Class Struggle through Class Analysis, Investigation and Study', Liberation, November 1968).

In another essay written at the end of 1968, Charu Mazumdar repeated at length his assertion about the collusion of US imperialism and Soviet revisionism. He said:

The victory of the great Chinese revolution ... stirred up ... armed struggle ... in every colony in Southeast Asia. .... As world imperialism neared its final collapse, the revisionist leadership of the Communist Parties of the world began to betray the people's struggles. After the death of Stalin the Soviet revisionist renegade clique usurped the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the world's revisionist renegade cliques began to work jointly with a view to saving world imperialism from its destruction. The renegade traitors in India ... withdrew unconditionally from the Telengana struggle and took to the path of parliamentarism. After the twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union the Soviet revisionist renegade clique, in collusion with US imperialism, spread disruption and confusion among the people of the colonies and semi-colonies wherever they were waging armed struggle. Chairman Mao has said that world imperialism today is like a house which rests on a solitary pillar: US imperialism. And so, the destruction of US imperialism will completely smash world imperialism. This is why the traitorous Khrushchev clique extended its hand of cooperation to US imperialism. ... In the present era when imperialism is heading towards total collapse, revolutionary struggle in every country has taken the form of armed struggle; Soviet revisionism, unable to retain its mask of socialism, has been forced to adopt imperialist tactics .... ("Boycott

Elections!" International Significance of the Slogan', Liberation, December 1968).

In December 1968 Mazumdar repeated his views about US imperialism and Soviet revisionism but put forward a new term for the first time, namely that India had become a 'US-Soviet neo-colony'. He wrote:

Without such a [revolutionary] party it is impossible to lead the ... struggle against imperialism and its lackeys .... Chairman Mao has taught us that in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country ... the peasantry is exploited and ruled by three mountains, namely, imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. ...The Vietnamese people's struggle against the US imperialist aggressors has filled the minds of the oppressed people with a new hope. ... Comrades, the events in Czechoslovakia have fully exposed the naked fascist nature of Soviet revisionism. These events have also clearly revealed the fact that the traitorous Dangeite clique [of the CPI] and the neo-revisionist clique [of the CPI-M] are obedient tools of the Soviet revisionists. ... India has today become a US-Soviet neo-colony. With the help of the Indian reactionaries they have turned India into a base of counter-revolution in Southeast Asia. ('Undertake the Work of Building a Revolutionary Party', Liberation, December 1968)

In another article, Mazumdar repeated his view about India being a 'US-Soviet neo-colony'. He said, 'Every Indian has the inalienable right to rise in revolt against the reactionary Indian government – a government that has again turned India into a colony, this time a neo-colony of US imperialism and the Soviet revisionists ...' ('We Salute the Peasant Revolutionaries of Kerala!', Liberation, December 1968).

On the eve of the installation of the CPI-ML, Mazumdar, while underscoring the need for formation of the new party, emphasised the importance of a successful Indian revolution against imperialism:

All the imperialist powers of the world, whether the US imperialists or the Soviet social-fascists, are trying to win a fresh lease of life by exploiting the five hundred million people of India. They ... are trying

to use the 500 million people of India as cannon-fodder in a war to destroy the great Chinese Republic, the base of the world revolution .... By making the revolution we shall be able ... to deal a staggering blow to world imperialism and revisionism .... ('Why Must We Form the Party Now?' Liberation, March 1969)

During the formation of the new party (the CPI-ML) in April 1969, Mazumdar reiterated his assessment of the collusion of US imperialism, the Soviet revisionists, and the leaders of the CPI and the CPI-M thus:

After the death of ... Stalin, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique usurped the leadership of the state, party and the army and established a bourgeois dictatorship in the Soviet Union .... They have become the No. 1 accomplice of the imperialists; particularly, they have advanced far along the road of collaboration with the US imperialists. This is because US imperialism is today the leader of the imperialist camp, and is pursuing even more fiercely and widely the aggressive policies of the German, Italian and Japanese imperialists. The traitorous leaders of the Soviet Union are supporting these aggressive activities and ... carrying on colonial exploitation with various imperialist powers and, in particular, with US imperialism. ... In India also they are acting as No. 1 accomplice of US imperialism and are directing the state power .... That is why India's liberation struggle can win victory only by fighting against the guns of the Soviet revisionists and ... the Soviet revisionists' state power. This explains why the Dange clique [of the CPI] and the neo-revisionist leadership [of the CPI-M] have, by their actions, joined the Indian reactionary clique .... They ... support the bourgeois and imperialist propaganda ... (while) the thought of Chairman Mao can be called Marxism of the era of the total collapse of imperialism .... ('To the Youth and the Students', Liberation, April 1969).

After the formation of the CPI-ML, Mazumdar criticised Parimal Dasgupta, another Maoist radical, and for the first time asserted that the USSR was a social-imperialist country:

... Parimal Dasgupta ... has placed the recent happenings in Czechoslovakia on the same footing as the Hungarian event of 1956. ... [But] to place these two events on the same footing means denying the fact that the Soviet Union has degenerated into a social-imperialist country, and endorsing the Soviet imperialist aggression against Czechoslovakia as a correct action .... The fact that the Soviet aggression took place with the knowledge of Johnson has little importance for him. This is because he either rejects or fails to understand the fact that Soviet social-imperialism, in collaboration with US imperialism, is striving to dominate the world. This leads to one thing: to deny in effect the fact that the Soviet Union is a social-imperialist country. ('On Some Current Political and Organizational Problems', Liberation, July 1969).

During the First Congress of the CPI-ML held in May 1970, Mazumdar found a similarity between the international and the Indian situations. He said:

On the one hand, there is US imperialism's naked aggression against Cambodia. ... On the other hand the revolutionary united front of the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, under the leadership of China, has been built up to fight the US aggressors .... The same kind of phenomenon exists in India also. India's reactionary ruling classes are making frenzied preparations to suit the global strategy of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. They are hatching criminal war plans against China. But the emergence of the C.P.I. (M-L) has changed the internal situation in India. ('Hate, Stamp and Smash Centrism', May 1970)

Although the Andhra Maoists had already alleged that Charu Mazumdar was not vocal about British imperialism, here we find that Mazumdar clearly repudiated British imperialism:

... the Soviet State is today collaborating with British-American imperialists .... With the help of the native bourgeoisie the Soviet Union is also trying to invest capital in our country. In the sphere of trade and commerce with our country

it has come to enjoy special facilities. ... That is why, as a collaborator of Britain and the U.S.A., the Soviet State also is our enemy'. ('Long Live the Heroic Peasants in Naxalbari!', Liberation, July 1971–January 1972)

### Organisational views on imperialism

Like Charu Mazumdar's individual writings, the Maoists' organisations also expressed their deepest concern about imperialism in their various documents. In the 1967 general elections, the Congress Party lost its electoral monopoly. In Kerala and West Bengal, the CPI-M was the leading partner in coalition ministries, which also included the CPI. The peasant upheaval in Naxalbari, led by radicals still belonging to the CPI-M in West Bengal, put the CPI-M in a dilemma: if their ministry did not suppress the uprising, it would attract dismissal by the central government for failing to maintain law and order; but if it trampled the insurgency, the party would invoke the allegation that it was subordinating class struggle to the bourgeois parliamentary system and prioritising the maintenance of the governmental seat of power in the bourgeois state machine. The West Bengal government, led by the CPI-M, opted to suppress the rebellion.

The Communist Party of China (the CPC), endorsed the Naxalbari uprising and called upon the CPI-M cadres to oppose its leadership. The CPC held that India is a semi-feudal, semi-colonial, only nominally independent country; the Indian bourgeoisie have turned comprador. It further maintained that the objective conditions for a revolution existed in India.

Charu Mazumdar's theoretical leadership, Kanu Sanyal's mass leadership, inner-party ideological struggle of various Maoist radicals inside the CPI-M in West Bengal (namely, Asit Sen, Parimal Dasgupta, Souren Basu, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Datta, Suniti Kumar Ghosh etc.), the consequent Naxalbari uprising in 1967 and a revolt by the Andhra Pradesh state unit of the CPI-M led by T. Nagi Reddy, D.V. Rao, Chandra Pulla Reddy etc. in 1968 all finally induced a powerful Maoist movement in different parts of India.

Shortly after the Naxalbari uprising, an All India Co-ordination Committee

of Revolutionaries (AICCR) of the CPI-M was formed within the CPI-M to accelerate the struggle against revisionism and to launch mass struggles. Centring around the Naxalbari revolt, most of the dissident radicals assembled together under this new committee, which was formed on 13 November 1967 in Calcutta. The AICCR issued a 'Declaration of the Revolutionaries of the CPI (M)' in which, inter alia, the neo-colonial nature of India was stated. It said:

By disowning, in the name of independent analysis, the neo-colonial nature of our country and its semi-feudal, semi-colonial character ... they [the neo-revisionist leadership of the CPI-M] indirectly indicated that what was being built up in India was an independent capitalist economy and that the Indian big bourgeoisie had not exhausted its anti-imperialist role .... ('Declaration of the Revolutionaries of the CPI (M)', AICCR, 13 November 1967, Liberation, vol.1, no. 2, December 1967).

The Burdwan Plenum of the CPI-M was held in April 1968 and the breach was final. After leaving the CPI-M, on 14 May 1968, the AICCR expanded itself into the All India Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar. Soon the Maoist dissidents centring around the AICCCR wanted to build up a new Maoist party through spreading Naxalbari-type peasant struggles all over the country. The emergence of a strong Maoist perspective during the Naxalbari uprising in 1967 resulted in the formation of the AICCCR comprising a large number of Maoists who either left the CPI-M or were expelled from it. The AICCCR, however, expelled its Andhra unit before converting itself into the CPI-ML. This soon led to a split within the CPI-M itself in 1969, but not all Maoist groups and individuals joined the CPI-ML (e.g. the Andhra Maoists).

The AICCCR issued the 'Second Declaration' on 14 May 1968. Along the lines of argument put forward by Charu Mazumdar, the document provided a detailed analysis of how the semi-colonial and semi-feudal India has been turned into a neo-colony of some imperialist powers, the principal of them being the US and the Soviet Union. The document said:

... the heroic peasants of Naxalbari rose in revolt ... this event has caused panic in

the minds of US imperialists, Soviet revisionists, the Indian big landlord class, comprador-bureaucrat bourgeois class .... A little over twenty years ago India was a colony of Britain; today India has been turned into a neo-colony of some imperialist powers, the principal of them being the United States and the Soviet Union. The US imperialists ... are also the worst enemies of the Indian people. Their neo-colonial grip over India is now complete. The traitorous Soviet ruling clique ... are today actively collaborating with the US imperialists and they have turned India into a neo-colony of both the United States and the Soviet Union. India is a perfect example of the entente into which the US imperialists and Soviet neo-colonialists have entered to jointly establish hegemony over the world .... In the semi-colonial and semi-feudal India, the contradiction between imperialist and neo-colonial powers and the people, the contradiction between feudal classes and the peasantry and the contradiction between comprador-bureaucratic capital and the working class have assumed the most acute form. Today, US imperialism, Soviet revisionism, the big landlord class and the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie of India are the principal enemies of the Indian people – these are like four mountains .... Today India has a position of vital importance in the counter-revolutionary world strategy of US imperialists and Soviet neo-colonialists. They have reduced India to a powerful bastion of reaction ... the Soviet betrayers, hand in gloves with the US imperialists, have increased their supply of military hardwares to the Indian reactionaries. Supersonic jet bombers and submarines are among those hardwares. They have set up MIG-factory and missile bases on the soil of India and have been trying to secure marine bases for their warships in the Andamans and Nicobar islands. (Sen Samar et al. 1978: 196–201).

In his famous 'Terai Report', Kanu Sanyal, the mass leader of the Naxalbari uprising and a follower of Charu Mazumdar, explained how the armed revolt of the peasants in the Terai region centring around Naxalbari not only attacked feudalism but also imperialism. He said:

The comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie, the landlords and the jotedars have been carrying on their rule and exploitation through their political organization, the Congress party, by protecting fully and developing imperialist interests and by covering up the basis of feudalism with legal coatings .... The peasants of Terai not only dealt a fierce blow at feudalism, they also expressed their intense hatred for the imperialist exploitation of India, specially the exploitation by US imperialism .... It is never possible to overthrow the rule of the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and the landlords, who have come to terms with imperialism, without arming the peasants ... because ... the feudal landlord class is the main social base of the imperialist and comprador-bureaucrat bourgeois exploitation .... At the present time, every anti-feudal armed struggle is certain to be opposed by imperialism .... In the propaganda being carried on by the bourgeois papers, representing different imperialist interests, by the Voice of America and by the BBC, we are witnessing this opposition in an embryonic form ... as soon as the anti-feudal struggle of the workers and peasants of Terai grows more intense, it will have to face direct opposition from imperialism. ('Report on the Peasant Movement in the Terai Region', Kanu Sanyal, September 1968, Liberation, November 1968)

It should be noted that, meanwhile and throughout the first phase of the Naxalite movement, many scattered and small-scale agitations and protests especially of the students and youth were being organised by the Naxalites and more specifically the AICCCR against imperialism (apart from feudalism) in different corners of India. One massive demonstration took place in Kolkata in 1968 in order to protest against the visit of the World Bank President Robert McNamara.

### **CPI-ML on imperialism**

The new CPI-ML was created in April 1969. It excluded however the Andhra Maoists and some other Maoist radicals who considered its formation premature. The CPC, however, recognised the new party.

The CPI-ML, which followed the Chinese view, differed from the CPI-M. The CPI-ML held that India is a semi-feudal and

neo-colonial country; its outdated semi-feudal system serves as a base for US imperialism and Soviet social imperialism. The big comprador-bureaucrat capitalists, the pawns of imperialism, are in state power. The basic task of the revolution is the elimination of feudalism, comprador-bureaucratic capitalism, and imperialism. Of the major contradictions, that between feudalism and the broad masses is principal. Thus, the present stage of the revolution is democratic, the essence of which is agrarian revolution. The peasantry is the main force of revolution, led by the working class through the CPI-ML. The working class must rely on landless and poor peasants, unite with middle peasants and win a section of the rich peasants while neutralising the rest. Urban petty-bourgeoisie and revolutionary intellectuals will be reliable allies, while the small and middle bourgeoisie, the independent businessmen, and the bourgeois intellectuals will be vacillating allies. The CPI-ML sought to build a democratic front through worker-peasant unity, through the process of armed struggle and after red power has been established in some areas. The path is people's war, through creating bases of armed struggle and guerrilla warfare. This will remain the basic form of struggle throughout the democratic revolution.

Mohan Ram, however, pointed out the differences between the CPI-ML and the Andhra Maoists on the question of imperialism. In 1973 Mohan Ram commented:

The CPI-ML assertion that the principal contradiction is between feudalism and the broad masses of the people leaves unclear the anti-imperialist task of the democratic revolution .... It lays lopsided emphasis on the anti-feudal task. By contrast, Maoists of the Andhra Pradesh Revolutionary Communist Committee, who are outside the CPI-ML, hold that the main contradiction is between the Indian people and imperialism (including social imperialism) in alliance with feudalism. They see imperialism and comprador-bureaucrat capitalism as the props of feudalism. The CPI-ML does not regard the national bourgeoisie as an ally of the revolution, either firm or vacillating. But the Andhra Maoists want the national bourgeoisie in the front along with the workers, the poor peasantry, and the middle classes. Further, the CPI-ML is silent

on the need to fight British imperialism; its references are limited to United States imperialism and Soviet social imperialism. The Andhra Maoists are more specific on this point. (Ram 1973: 348).

Visibly influenced by the formulations made by the CPC and its endorsement by Charu Mazumdar, the 'Political Resolution' of the new CPI-ML, adopted on 22 April 1969, described in detail the 'four mountains' weighing upon the Indian people, namely, US imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism, feudalism, and comprador-bureaucrat capitalism. It said:

... (Indian) government is a lackey of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. The abject dependence of Indian economy on 'aid' from imperialist countries, chiefly from US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, the thousands of collaboration agreements, the imperialist plunder of our country through unequal trade and 'aid', the utter dependence for food on P.L. 480 etc, go to prove the semi-colonial character of our country .... The fleecing of the Indian people by extracting the highest rate of profit, the concentration of much of India's wealth ..., the utilization of the state sector in the interest of the foreign monopolies and domestic big business ... all ... prove that it is the big landlords and comprador-bureaucrat capitalists who run the state .... The political, economic, cultural and military grip of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism on the Indian State, the dovetailing of its foreign policy with the US-Soviet global strategy of encircling Socialist China and suppressing the national liberation struggle, the recent tours of Latin America and South East Asia by the Indian Prime Minister to further the interests of this counter-revolutionary strategy, the total support given by the Indian Govt. for the Soviet armed provocation against China, the fascist approval of Soviet aggression against Czechoslovakia and the active collaboration with the US imperialists against the national liberation struggle of Vietnam clearly show that the Indian Govt. is a lackey of US imperialism and Soviet revisionism .... To destroy feudalism, one of the two main props (comprador-bureaucrat capital being the

other) of imperialism in our country, the Indian people will have to wage a bitter, protracted struggle against US and Soviet social-imperialism too. By liberating themselves from the yoke of feudalism, the Indian people will also liberate themselves from the yoke of imperialism and comprador-bureaucrat capital, because the struggle against feudalism is also a struggle against the other two enemies ... the four mountains ... are US Imperialism, Soviet Social-Imperialism, Feudalism, and Comprador-Bureaucrat Capitalism. (Liberation, vol. 2, no. 7, 20 May 1969)

The 'Programme' of the CPI-ML adopted at the First Party Congress held in May 1970 contained a more detailed analysis of India's situation vis-à-vis imperialism. It said:

10. During these years of sham independence the big comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and big landlord ruling classes have been serving their imperialist masters quite faithfully. These lackeys of imperialism, while preserving the old British imperialist exploitation, have also brought US imperialist and Soviet social-imperialist exploiters to fleece our country. 11. They have mortgaged our country to the imperialist powers, mainly to the US imperialists and Soviet social-imperialists. With the weakening of the power of British imperialism the world over, the Indian ruling classes have now hired themselves out to US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. ('Programme of the CPI-ML', Sen Samar et al.: 1978: 275-284)

Further, the connection among the 'four mountains' was discussed: 'Thus, ... the Indian people are now weighed down under the four huge mountains, namely, imperialism headed by US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, feudalism and comprador-bureaucrat capital. Thus India has turned into a neo-colony of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism ...' (ibid).

It further analysed the various contradictions in India, and detected that between feudalism and the broad masses as the principal one in the present phase. It said:

16. In brief, out of all the major contradictions in our country, that is, the contradiction between imperialism and

social-imperialism on the one hand and our people on the other, the contradiction between feudalism and the broad masses of the people, the contradiction between capital and labour and the contradiction within the ruling classes, the one between the landlords and the peasantry, i.e., the contradiction between feudalism and the broad masses of the Indian people is the principal contradiction in the present phase. 17. The resolution of this contradiction will lead to the resolution of all other contradictions too. (ibid.)

The programme of the new party provided a detailed analysis of the economic aspects of the exploitation by imperialism thus:

18. While preserving and perpetuating the semi-feudal set-up, the big comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and big landlord ruling classes have become pawns in the hands of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. 19. The phenomenal increase in the total quantum of foreign capital, the heavy remittances of profits abroad, thousands of collaborationist enterprises, total dependence on imperialist 'aid, grants and loans' for capital goods, technical know-how, military supplies and armament industries for building military bases and even for markets, unequal trade and P.L. 480 agreements have made US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism the overlords of our country. 20. US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism have brought the vital sectors of the economy of our country under their control. US imperialism collaborates mainly with private capital and is now penetrating into the industries in the state sector, while Soviet social-imperialism has brought under its control mainly the industries in the state sector and is at the same time trying to enter into collaboration with private capital. 21. US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism do everything possible to foster the growth of comprador-bureaucrat capitalism for continuing their unbridled exploitation of the Indian people. 22. The much-trumpeted 'public sector' is being built up by many imperialist exploiters for employing their capital and for exploiting the cheap labor power and raw materials of our country. The public sector is nothing but a clever device to hoodwink the Indian people and

continue their plunder. It is state monopoly capitalism i.e., bureaucrat capitalism. 23. With their octopus-like grip on India's economy, the US imperialists and the Soviet social-imperialists control the political, cultural and military spheres of the life of our country. (ibid.)

It also furnished a separate discussion of imperialism's penetration in India's foreign policy. It said:

24. At the dictates of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, India's reactionary ruling classes pursue a foreign policy that serves the interests of imperialism, social-imperialism and reaction. It has been tailored to the needs of the global strategy of the US imperialists and Soviet social-imperialists to encircle Socialist China and suppress the national liberation struggle raging in various parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America, of which Vietnam has become the spearhead. India's aggression against Socialist China in 1962 and her continual provocation against China since then at the instance of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, her support to the Soviet attack on China, her tacit approval of Soviet aggression against Czechoslovakia, her dirty role in supporting US imperialism against the Vietnamese people prove beyond a shadow of doubt that India's ruling classes are faithful stooges of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. 25. These hard facts irrefutably prove the semi-colonial character of our society, besides its semi-feudal character. 26. As the obsolete semi-feudal society acts as the social base of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism and as it facilitates also the plunder of our people by comprador-bureaucrat capital, the problem of the peasantry becomes the basic problem of the Indian revolution. 27. Therefore, the basic task of the Indian revolution is to overthrow the rule of feudalism, comprador-bureaucrat capitalism, imperialism and social-imperialism. This determines the stage of our revolution. It is the stage of democratic revolution, the essence of which is agrarian revolution. (ibid.)

Among other things, the CPI-ML propagated the politics of attack against foreign capital

and imperialism. Point 38 of the 40-point 'Programme' adopted by the CPI-ML Party Congress of May 1970 indicated that the People's Democratic State in post-revolutionary India in future would carry out, inter alia, the following major tasks: (a) confiscation of all the banks and enterprises of foreign capital and liquidation of all imperialist debt; (b) confiscation of all enterprises of comprador-bureaucrat capital; (c) development of a new democratic culture in place of colonial and feudal culture.

## Conclusion

In this essay, we have tried to show that although the Naxalite movement was basically a peasant movement against feudal oppression, its anti-imperialist orientation was also quite pronounced. After its rise in the 1960s and subsequent fall in the 1970s, the Naxalite movement had undergone a series of fragmentations. At present there is a resurgence of the 'Maoist' movement (as it is commonly called to distinguish it from the old Naxalite movement). There is a lot of controversy about the similarities and differences between the old Naxalite movement and the present Maoist movement, and also about whether the current Maoist movement is a continuation of the old Naxalite movement or not. However, the new Maoist movement is, like the old Naxalite movement, both anti-feudal and anti-imperialist. But that is a separate story.

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## Négritude

*We have used Surrealism like Surrealism has used the nègre.*

(Damas, quoted in Racine 1983: 202)

A poetic, literary, political movement, Négritude remains one of the most emblematic discourses of African and Black Atlantic, anti-colonial, cultural politics. Although formulated in the specific context of late French colonialism and its assimilationist politics, its singular aesthetics and the depth of critiques travelled far beyond Francophone countries. Born out of the intellectual revolt of three friends – the Guyanese Léon-Gontran Damas, the Senegalese Léopold Sédar Senghor, and the Martinican Aimé Césaire – the concept of Négritude emerged in the inter-war period from their search for poetics able to capture their specific experience as colonised black subjects. 'Négritude' comes from 'nègre', a derogatory term historically used to designate African slaves, generalised to black African people in the 19th century. By the beginning of the 20th century, it was used both as a racial term and as a slur, situated in US English of the 1920s somewhere between 'nigger' and 'black' (Edwards 2003: 34–35). Damas, Senghor and Césaire were not the first to subvert and appropriate 'nègre', a distinction claimed by anti-racist activists such as Lamine Senghor and Tiemoko Garan Kouyaté from

the 1920s onwards (Edwards 2003; Miller 1998). Against the racial hierarchy prevailing in the French Empire, which distinguished Antillean 'évolués' (evolved), civilised mixed-race people and backward 'nègres', the latter came to be a symbol of the struggle and solidarity against colonial oppression. Négritude thinkers grounded their literary movement in this founding gesture, turning the vocable into an existential condition, an aesthetic style, and a pan-African form of identity. From an array of creative and political practices of the Paris-based black diaspora, 'négritude' only emerged as a self-conscious movement after the Second World War II, and continued to be reconfigured in light of the evolution of Third-World nationalisms, decolonisation, and the advent of post-colonial states. Thus, the challenge is to understand it in the complexity of its historical transformations as Négritude progressively incorporated new dimensions: from a literary movement emerging in student politics, through reformism, it was retrospectively reconfigured as a precursor of radical anti-colonialism and Third-Worldism. In addition, some of its central theoretical concepts (race, culture, civilisation, racism) underwent dramatic changes in the same period.

## Colonial elites

[...]

Bleached

*My hatred grows on the fringe  
Of their wickedness  
On the fringe  
Of gun blows  
On the fringe  
Of wave blows  
Of slave merchants  
Of the foul freight of their cruel trade*

Bleached

*My hatred grows on the fringe  
Of culture  
On the fringe  
Of theories  
On the fringe of the chatters  
That were deemed fit to be stuffed into me from  
the crib  
While everything in me only aspires to be nègre  
Like my Africa that they plundered*

(Damas 1972: 60)

Césaire and Senghor met in the lycée Louis-le-Grand, where they had both come to attend preparatory classes for the entrance at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, one of the most prestigious higher-education institutions in France. While the aim of colonial schools was to form native élites, intermediary between French administrative functions and local populations, the French meritocratic system also helped a few native students to partake in the entry competition for some of the most prestigious schools of the capital with bursaries. In command of flawless French language, these deserving students were held up as examples of ‘assimilated’ subjects, but these living exemplars of an impossible ‘success’ only revealed the contradictory nature of the French assimilation politics. As Damas would summarise: ‘he who will be assimilated expects from assimilation the equal treatment that the metropole will never grant him, and on the other hand, they will ask him to pay a price that the other cannot pay: they both agree to try to whiten the nègre, but that cannot happen’ (Wilder, 2005: 223).

Senghor, born into a rich Serer family of the small town of Joal, had received his secondary education at a missionary boarding school, and after attending lycée in Dakar he obtained half a scholarship to study Letters in Paris (Vaillant 1990). Aimé Césaire, coming from a modest family in Basse-Pointe, Martinique, had moved to Fort-de-France at the age of 11 to study at the lycée Victor Schoelcher, where he met Léon-Gontran Damas. The latter, originally from French Guyana, had moved to France in 1928, and to Paris in 1930 where he had encountered Senghor through an acquaintance (Racine 1983: 27). Senghor, who immediately befriended Césaire, was the first African person Césaire had ever known. Together with Damas, they read the same books, shared poetry, and discussed Africa, the Antilleans and the US. All three had experienced forms of racism; they were concerned with defining who they were vis-à-vis French culture, and revolted against the exclusionary character of French society and its paternalistic discourse. Their ‘lived experience’ as black, as Fanon would later theorise in *Black Skin White Masks*, and their ungraspable feeling of uprooting, called for words they had to invent. With their modest bursaries, Césaire and Senghor were living in extremely poor conditions, often on the verge of depression. But Damas, unlike them, had no scholarship at all. He was

studying Law, Languages and Ethnology, at the same time as working in various small jobs at Les Halles, Paris’s main wholesale market, for survival. In these distressing and consuming life conditions, Damas, who was the most ‘tormented soul’ of the three, was also considered the most *engagé* (Racine 1983: 9), and in many ways their inspiration.

### Négritude’s genesis: Black internationalism and translation in inter-war Paris

Much of the ideas of the young Senghor, Damas, and Césaire was formed through their encounter with previous journals and other collectives created amongst the black communities of the French capital. These earlier organisations ranged from the Garveyist internationalist journal *les Continents* (1924) to the Republican-reformist journal *La Dépêche africaine* (1928–32), through the Marxist-anti-colonial *Comité de Défense de la Race Nègre* (1926–27) as well as the short Marxist-Surrealist experience of *Légitime Défense* (1932), in which Damas got involved. After their arrival in Paris, these three students took part in what Gary Wilder proposed to call a ‘black public sphere’ composed of students, activists, and militants, Antillean, African, and African-American writers, artists and workers. Latin Quarter cafés, the Cabane Cubaine in Montmartre, apartments and student dormitories provided spaces for lively debates between pan-Africanists, anti-fascists, communists, artists, and writers (Wilder 2005). For Césaire, Senghor, and Damas, this cosmopolitan network of associations was epitomised by the intellectual milieu surrounding the Nardal sisters’ salon, held every Sunday to discuss the ‘Negro race’ and its future, and to promote ‘the solidarity between different Negro groups spread around the world’ (171). In relation to these gatherings, a bilingual journal, *La Revue du Monde noir* (hereafter, ‘*La Revue*’), was launched in 1931 (and lasted about a year). It published articles and poems by Antillean writers such as Etienne Léro, René Maran, Gilbert Gratiant, and René Ménil (Vaillant 1990: 125), as well as ethnographic research by Delafosse and Frobenius. As Louis T. Achilles would later recall, this movement was ‘no longer political like the Pan-Negro movements that preceded it, but cultural and sociological’ (quoted in

Wilder 2005: 174). Yet, colonial politics was at the centre of their preoccupations.

For Damas, Senghor, and Césaire *La Revue* not only connected them to 'wider socio-cultural networks of the imperial metropolis' (173) and older generations of colonial migrants, it also made them discover a number of important writers. Claude McKay's *Banjo* (1928), Alan Locke's *New Negro* (1925) and Langston Hughes's poetry were crucial references, along with recent anthropological studies on Africa. Along with the Achilles and the Nardal sisters, the Guianese René Maran, internationally famous for winning the literary Goncourt prize, was, in Mercer Cook's words, a 'focal point for transatlantic contacts' (166) and had been the first to publish translations of Harlem poetry in *Les Continents*. In their flats, one could regularly meet writers and political figures such as Claude McKay, Mercer Cook, Carter G. Woodson, Alain Locke, Countee Cullen, and Hale Woodruff (Edwards 2003: 120). Césaire would later explain that the importance of the Harlem Renaissance was to 'encounter another modern black civilization, Blacks and their pride, their consciousness to belong to a culture' (Césaire 2005: 25–26). Like the Harlemites writers, they were seeking to express, in Langston Hughes's formulation, their 'individual dark-skinned selves' (Wilder 2005: 176), but also to foster and herald the renaissance of African civilisation. As Brent Hayes Edwards (2003) has admirably shown, Négritude, like other cultures of black internationalism, arose from translation practices. An internationalist black consciousness could only emerge across, and from articulation of, linguistic and historical differences.

In 1935, Césaire, Senghor, and Damas, who were active in student politics, got involved in the writing of the newly renamed journal of the Association of Martinican students, *L'Étudiant noir*. The first and only issue that has survived contained articles by Paulette Nardal, Gilbert Gratiot, Léonard Sainville, and Henri Eboué, and addressed similar themes as the *Revue du monde noir*, mostly focused on assimilation and black humanism. Damas, in his role of editorial secretary, described the journal's ambition as that of ending the Quartier Latin student 'tribalism', so that they 'cease being essentially Martinican, Guadeloupean, Guianese, African, and Malagasy students to become one single and same étudiant noir' (Wilder 2005: 187) Yet, as Senghor was one

of their only non-Antillean contributors, this was more a wish than a fact. Far from being a Négritude manifesto the journal was principally a platform for Césaire and Senghor to begin writing publically in a non-academic context. By 1934, Damas had already published some poems in the famous personalist review *Esprit*. Damas, who 'hung out in the most diverse neighbourhoods and milieux' (Senghor quoted in Wilder: 206) was the first to step outside the purely academic system of recognition in which they were entangled. For Césaire, Damas was 'the first to liberate himself', to become, in a truly bohemian spirit, a 'cursed poet' (*poète maudit*) (Césaire, quoted in Wilder: 280). In the poems of his small, 1937, self-financed volume titled *Pigments* the questions of assimilation and the complicity of black élites with the French colonial system figure prominently. They are expressed in a vehement, sometimes threatening voice, as in 'Bleached' (quoted above). While they circulate through revolt, racial authenticity, and Afro-centric identifications, Damas's poetic forms are much indebted to the Harlem Renaissance, displaying a strong engagement with spirituals, blues, and jazz, through rhythm and anaphoric repetitions.

### Notebook of a return to the native land

The first occurrence of the word 'négritude' appeared in the middle of Césaire's long poem *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (Notebook of a return to the native land; 2000), which became a classic of French and Antillean literatures and overshadowed *Pigments* as the seminal text of the movement. Césaire started writing the poem during a stay in Croatia, where he had been invited by his friend, in 1936, and published it for the first time in 1937, at the age of 25. Against the élitist alexandrines of Martinican poets, the *Cahier* stages the epic journey of an experience of self-recovery in an insurrectional prose. By titling it as he did, Césaire announces a return to Martinique, and a return to his fundamental self. Framing this search in a 'notebook' locates it halfway between the schoolboy *cahier* and the personal diary, and evokes it as a learning process. The path of learning is that of Négritude, which constitutes the overcoming of racial and colonial normativity at the same time as being an affirmative endorsement of black people's historical

condition. Négritude constantly circulates through historical subjects, realising itself through multiple voices: 'I have worn parrot feathers and / musk-car skins / I have worn down the patience of missionaries / I have insulted the benefactors of humanity' (Césaire 1969: 57). The nihilistic description of the filthy, poor, and motionless Basse-Pointe and the 'crumbled island' of Martinique, with which the poem begins, averts any exotic praise. Leaving for Europe does not mark a narrative progression but the discovery of the disguised racism of the metropole: that is, in the 'vogue nègre', the belittling admiration for the 'good nègre' and the denigrating praise for the Lindy-hop dancer. A first escape would be to embrace these clichés and to cling to the meagre and disparaging recognition it discharges. 'As a result of an unforeseen happy conversion I now respect my repellent ugliness' (65). But this victory is a complacent lie. 'I refuse to pass my swellings off for authentic glories / And I laugh at my old childish imaginings' (66). The return begins with the end of these mystifications; by embracing the real and ghostly presence of (black) suffering. 'How much blood there is in my memory! In my memory are lagoons ... / My memory is surrounded by blood. My memory has its belt of corpses!' (63–64) Négritude's movement of reversal draws a trajectory from inertia to life, from shameful wounds to full acceptance. 'I accept ... I accept ... completely, with no reservation ... / ... My race gnawed with blemishes' (80). Towards the end of the poem the poet's call for Négritude as a vital force, a virile and incarnated life against the machinistic Europe becomes the herald of hope. The prose becomes increasingly incantatory, inflated by future promises:

In their spilt blood  
the niggers smelling of fried onion  
find the bitter taste of freedom  
and they are on their feet the niggers

the sitting-down niggers

unexpectedly on their feet  
on their feet in the hold  
on their feet in the cabins  
on their feet on deck  
on their feet in the wind  
on their feet beneath the sun  
on their feet in blood

on their feet  
and  
free  
on their feet and in no way distraught  
free at sea and owning nothing  
veering and utterly adrift  
surprisingly  
on their feet  
on their feet in the rigging  
on their feet at the helm  
on their feet at the compass  
on their feet before the map  
on their feet beneath the stars  
and  
free  
(89)

From the comical 'nègrerie' of *l'Étudiant Noir*, through the derogatory 'négraille', 'Négritude' is not the only neologism created by Césaire with the prefix 'nègre', but it is the only one that could sustain the radical inversion they called forth, turning an epidermic slur into an existential condition. Although one easily recognises a progressive linearity in the poem, signalling the temporality of 'return', the text is a collage of leaps back and forward; its objects are plunged into a confounding night. Whilst consciously appealing to a certain 'cannibalistic violence' (Wilder, 2005: 280) in order to explode formal references, it simultaneously draws on a dense network of historical and geographical references. The poem, which incarnates the pilgrimage of a (singular collective) self in relation to a specific historical context, is affirmative but has not much to do with the notion of 'cultural affirmation', by which one often characterises Négritude.

Rather than ascribing *culture* to black people, as Senghor does, Césaire opposes Western civilisation for its intrinsic barbarism. Civilisation, with its 'machinistic' overtones, is the decaying antithesis of the self's vitalism, and its structural racism is the backdrop for revolt. The pitfalls of recognition are central to the poem; it is Nietzsche's influence that 'emboldened Césaire to rise above the need for confirmation, which can only imply conformation' (Jones 2010: 168). In Gary Wilder's analysis (2005: 278), the *Cahier* is to be considered as the 'crowning achievement of interwar Négritude, its summit and

synthesis. But it must also be read as an auto-critique of Négritude itself, a text in which the self reflexive doubt about cultural nationalism that momentarily surfaced in the work of Gratiant, Sainville, Ousmane Socé Diop, Damas, and Senghor is pursued deeply and directly’.

### Négritude as ontology

In contrast to Césaire, Senghor’s early concept of *négritude* was an attempt at revalorising African cultures in a positive way, as ontology and an ethical way of life. In the case of Césaire, Négritude’s vitalism is expressed in a poetic idiom, staging the revolt against colonialism as an inward and organic violence. In Senghor’s case, though, vitalism was a theoretical frame to think what *négritude* was. By 1939, Senghor had already reached a complex theory of African Art as philosophy, which, combined with that of civilisational *métissage* (hybridity) laid out the ground for his subsequent writings on Négritude:

The service provided by the Nègre will have been to contribute along with other peoples to re-creating the unity of man and the World: to link flesh with spirit, man with his fellow men, a stone with God. In other words, the real with the spiritual surreal – through man, not as the center, but the hinge, the navel of the World. (Senghor, quoted in Wilder 2005: 249)

African art, for Senghor, was defined by this very connection with this sub-reality of vital forces (Bachir Diagne: 2011) beneath the level of the visible. Influenced by the study of Guillaume and Thomas Munro on primitive negro sculpture, Senghor developed an understanding of African art form as a ‘unity of rhythmic series’ (81). Through this move to ontology, Senghor was able to transcend the available concepts of ‘culture’, trans-valuating the civilisational yardstick of development into the language of humanist values. As he would repeat throughout his life, ‘Négritude is the set of values of the black world civilization, which is to say a certain active presence to the world: to the universe’ (Senghor 1977 : 69). Understanding these values as a ‘presence’ becomes meaningful once situated in Souleymane Bachir Diagne’s proposition that Négritude is Senghor’s way to think

‘African art as philosophy’. Indeed, as Jones recently argued, ‘there was nothing inherently reactionary about this part of their program insofar as it attempted to open up cognitive possibility rather than essentialize African perception as the simple other of a caricatured West’ (Jones 2010: 144) But Senghor’s Négritude was also closely connected to his conception of humanism. Drawing on Teilhard de Chardin, who professed a form of evolutionism of human consciousness at a global scale, Senghor called for an encounter and *métissage* between civilisations from above, a humanisation through the ‘best’ contributions of each. True humanism would be ‘totally human because formed of all contributions of all peoples of the earth’ (Senghor 1977: 91). Grounded in a concept of ‘culture’ relying on a preconceived notion of alterity, his humanist vision of world civilisation could only restrict the disruptive potential of his ‘Negro-African ontology’.

Césaire, for his part, remained faithful to the historical perspective of the *Cahier*, and continued to ground Négritude in past and present oppression and in the movement of historical remembrance. In a 1987 discourse on Négritude, he unmistakably asserted ‘Négritude, in my eyes, is not a philosophy. Négritude is not a metaphysics. Négritude is not a pretentious concept of the universe. It is a way of living history within history ...’ (Bachir Diagne 2011: 34). To the analytic stylisation of black heritage through Western ontological concepts, Césaire opposes an incommensurable ‘heritage’ of suffering. As the friendship between the two men always prevailed over their theoretical and political disagreements, these two faces of Négritude’s legacy remained, in a way, dialogically linked. Damas, their self-proclaimed ‘holy spirit’ (Racine 1983: 193), was less determined to theorise Négritude than to situate it in the historical movement of ideas. Faithful to their initial quest, he considered Négritude to be a search for identity through the rehabilitation of African culture (189).

### Négritude and politics

Proponents of civilisations’ dialogue and of cultural *métissage*, Négritude’s protagonists at no point advocated a total break between metropolitan and native cultures. Nor did they advocate an absolute political break. The politics of Négritude is riddled with problems

of interpretation, as the violent anti-colonial stance against colonialism surfacing in their poetry does not find direct translation into their political discourse and decisions. While much of the early scholarship on Négritude was concerned with describing its clear identification with either radical anti-colonialism or cultural reformism (Wilder, 2005: 202), Gary Wilder's important study has shown how Négritude responded to the specific conditions and contradictions of the inter-war 'French imperial Nation-state', which was characterised by a greater level of integration between metropolitan and colonial societies, and by new methods of colonial administration. The post-war need to improve colonial productivity led to a form of government that was based on the simultaneous transformation and preservation of indigenous societies, at the same time rationalising national belonging and racialising citizenship, or ethnicising development (4–5). In this context Négritude can be read as a response to this contradictory situation, working within French Republican politics and against colonial racial hierarchy. It expresses itself in Négritude's simultaneous demand of citizenship and rejection of assimilation, a project that could 'accommodate both republican and Panafrican identifications' (256). Resituating Négritude in the context of Greater France helps one to understand why their critique did not lead to a project of complete separation, such as Fanon's call to 'leave Europe'. It explains why Négritude remained in the register of immanent critique, taking its clue from radical counterpoints to European modernity and rationality, such as philosophical vitalism, surrealist aesthetics, or ethnology (257).

### Historical watershed, 1945

The immediate aftermath of the Second World War constitutes a break within the history of the Négritude movement. Whilst Césaire moved back to Martinique with his wife Suzanne and created a literary review called *Tropiques*, Senghor and Damas were both mobilised in French army battalions. Senghor was held captive for two years in German labour camps and Damas worked for the Resistance. In the 1930s, Senghor, Césaire, and Damas were notorious among small communities of Antillean and African students in Paris; they elaborated their own discourse in the margins of mainstream

politics. After 1945, however, all three took up political roles within the French Empire as deputies and sat at the National Assembly in Paris. Only then did Négritude become a self-conscious movement, signalled by the creation of the journal *Présence Africaine*, by Alioune Diop, their friend and ally. The journal proposed to edit black writers and studies on Africa, with a particular emphasis on African literature. Moreover, the publications of two anthologies – *Poètes Noirs d'Expression française, 1900–1945* by Damas in 1947 and Senghor's *Anthologie de poésie nègre et malgache* in 1948 – were key in publicising Négritude on a wider scale. Jean-Paul Sartre's long preface to Senghor's anthology, 'Black Orpheus', became Négritude's political manifesto, propelling the movement onto the world stage of revolutionary politics. His intervention signals the entry of French anti-colonial thought into a new era, where readings of Sartre, Hegel, Kojève, phenomenology, and psychoanalysis prevail over those of Nietzsche, Bergson, and anthropology (Frobenius, Delafosse, Delavignette). In the course of the 1950s, reflections on life and civilisation were thus replaced by existential phenomenology, Marxism and development discourse.

Sartre's preface redefined Négritude in connection to post-war revolutionary politics, at the convergence of existentialism, Marxism, and his own theory of literature. For Sartre, Négritude designates the black man's taking consciousness of himself (Sartre, 1948: 11) in the nexus of capitalist relations of forces. 'And since he is oppressed in his race and because of it, it is first of his race that it is necessary for him to take conscience' (15, emphasis added). The paradoxical framing gesture of Sartre was to celebrate Négritude poets as 'authentic revolutionaries' while negating the autonomy of their political demands, reducing it to the 'weak stage of a dialectical progression' (60). Since Négritude, through Césaire's voice, lays claim to the universal struggle against oppression, Sartre deduces that Négritude's voice is ultimately reducible to a main, overarching historical subject: the proletariat (59). Sartre's analysis, by prioritising a historical definition of Négritude over its anthropological or cultural facets, foreshadowed the subsequent problems and debates surrounding it, simultaneously ontological definition, cultural inventory, and emerging from struggle – positing race and undoing it.

## Négritude: between culture and politics

The heterogeneity of positions and political tensions surrounding Négritude was never so glaring as during the First Congress of Black Writers and Artists, organised by *Présence Africaine* in September 1956. Gathering over 60 'delegates', the aim of this three-day congress was to engage a 'dialogue' between black 'men of culture' from Africa, the Caribbean, and the US, re-enacting in an official way the trans-continental groups of inter-war Paris. Senghor, Césaire, Achilles, Alexis, Fanon, Hampaté-Bâ, Cook, Wright, amongst others, gave papers and participated in heated debates. But behind its constant invocation, the polymorphous notion of 'culture' proved to be a very unsteady ground for the reunion. The Congress was structured around the idea of an authentic 'African heritage', which was to be unearthed, inventoried, and modernised. But by the time this 'dialogue of civilizations' could finally take place, several delegates and a large part of the public were expecting the speaker to endorse radical anti-colonial positions. The word 'nègre' and its correlate 'négritude' were hardly pronounced during the conference. Senghor, who at the time represented Négritude's canon, presented a paper titled 'The Laws of Negro-African Culture', in which he defined the negro-African civilisation by a set of integrated characters, insisting on its complementarity with European civilisation:

The negro (nègre) reason does not exhaust things, it does not mould them in rigid schemes, eliminating the juices and the saps; it sticks itself within the arteries of things, it adheres to their rims to dive into the living heart of the real. The white reason is analytical by utilization, the negro reason, intuitive by participation. (*Présence Africaine*, 1956: 52)

Several delegates criticised this idealised image of the African civilisation, entirely disconnected from the colonial problem. Césaire's important intervention, 'Culture and Colonisation', constituted a stark opposition to the latter, arguing that the question of black culture was completely unintelligible without reference to colonisation. For Césaire, the issue was not to address colonised people as an *audience* anymore, but as *agents* and *creators*. The time to 'illustrate the

presence of black men of culture', as *Présence Africaine* claimed to do, was over. More generally, these proceedings reveal the growing importance of psychology and existential phenomenology, in the mid-1950s, as ways of understanding racism and colonisation. Frantz Fanon's notorious speech – 'Racism and Culture' – contained an implicit critique of Négritude's lack of reflection on their psychological mechanisms as colonial élites. Recalling the themes of the *Cahier*, Fanon's 'Racism and Culture' referred to an *interior struggle* of the colonised with himself, evoking a bloody and painful 'corps-à-corps' between the colonised and his culture, a struggle at the level of his 'being'. In 1956, Fanon had abandoned the upbeat dynamic of 'cultural choices' and situated liberation in both psychic and physical violence, within the concrete experience of liberation struggles.

## Négritude after decolonisation

With Senghor's presidency in Senegal (1960–80), Négritude accessed the status of state discourse, and met its most virulent critiques from among the Antilleans and the newly independent African states. At the 1969 Pan-African Cultural Festival held in Algiers, the Dahomeyan (now Benin) Stanislas Adotévi asserted: 'Négritude is a vague and ineffective ideology. There is no place in Africa for a literature that lies outside of revolutionary combat. Négritude is dead' (Jules-Rosette, 2007: 276). Similarly, the Haitian communist René Depestre characterised the movement as the 'epidermisation of his [the black's] miserable historical situation' (Depestre 1980: 50), and made the brutal claim: 'All these chatters around the concept of négritude are actually defining an unacceptable black Zionism, which means an ideology that, far from articulating itself to a desalinating and decolonization enterprise, is incapable of dissimulating that it is one of the columns supporting the tricks, the traps and the actions of neo-colonialism' (53).

A few years later, the Benin-based philosopher Paulin J. Hountondj developed a criticism of Négritude specifically targeted at its philosophical aspects, which he called 'ethnophilosophy'. To reclaim, he argued, an African way of life as philosophy can only be an external point of view, *about* them and not *by* them, which can only generate an alienated African philosophical literature. Négritude,

he wrote, 'has lost its critical charge, its truth. Yesterday it was the language of the oppressed, today it is a discourse of power' (Hountondji, 1983: 170).

In the wake of these polemics, Négritude scholarship has focused intently on the thorny questions of its lack of political radicalism and on its cultural 'essentialism', seemingly at odds with 1990s paradigms of identity (creolness, hybridity). More recently, the tendency has been to resituate these questions in their historically specific contexts, addressing Négritude's archive as a multi-disciplinary resource of study. The crucial role of Jane and Paulette Nardal in launching and inspiring the movement through their use of transnational networks has represented an important step towards reconfiguring Négritude from the point of view of gender critique (Sharpley-Whiting 2002; Edwards 2003). But Négritude has also been increasingly analysed at the level of its philosophical discourse, emphasising its relation to the Western canon (Jones 2010; Bachir Diagne 2011). Emphasising Négritude's historical depth does not mean, however, that it only retains a documentary value. Today, Négritude's truth resides not only in the complex sum of its influences; it has also become, over the years, one of the main foundations of the black radical tradition.

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## Orientalism

If it were not for the work of one man, and the impact of one book in particular, then it is entirely possible that Orientalism would still continue to be what it had previously been: the relatively lesser-known or under-explored corner of the academic world devoting itself to a study of the Orient. Although Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) was not the first work to offer a critique of Orientalist assumptions and practices, its impact has far outstripped anything written before or since in relation to the field. Indeed, Orientalism's influence has been quite simply transformative in a whole range of academic disciplines, and much of what follows in this essay will therefore (entirely



properly, I would argue, given its importance) concern itself with the arguments and implications of Said's book, as well as some of the criticisms levelled against it.

One of Said's crucial first steps (and already a step too far for those with an investment in traditional Orientalism) was to broaden the meaning of the term far beyond its ordinary academic reference. Said's repositioning begins with what he calls 'imaginative geography'. For Said, all cultures divide the world into those who are like us, and those who are not: Us and Them, or, borrowing from philosophy, Self and Other. Ideas are then created about Us and Them, stories are told, myths embroidered, values ascribed; in other words, representations are produced about the two groups. Unsurprisingly, our representations of Us are usually very positive, while those of Them are not infrequently the negative opposites. The difficult final step concerns what We feel licensed to do towards Them (avoidance, aggression, negotiation, incorporation, subjugation) on the basis of the knowledge derived from the representations.

For Said, Orientalism is most usefully understood as the ways in which the West has represented the East to itself, and the ways in which it has behaved towards the East. He sees that process beginning as far back as the ancient Greeks (Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides) which has earned him criticism from those who, quite erroneously, think that he is suggesting an unbroken continuity of attitude and interest spanning two millennia. On the contrary, however, although certain aspects are by and large consistent (the division into East and West; the tendency to regard the West as superior), Said is very clear that different ages and different circumstances produce different Oriental 'Others' through their systems of representation. Medieval Christian Orientalism, for example, operates with a very different set of concerns and conceptions regarding the East from those which were prevalent in the period of classical Greece. The particular history Said intends to explore focuses on the ways in which Western countries, especially those with colonial ambitions, have, from the 18th century onwards, felt licensed to behave towards the Orient on the basis of the knowledge derived from Orientalist representations of that part of the world.

The intimate connection between 'knowledge' (representation) and power is

something that Said takes from the work of Michel Foucault. For Foucault, 'savoir/pouvoir' is a relationship of mutual implication and production: knowledge leads to power; power enables the production of knowledge. By the 18th and 19th centuries, what the West knew about the Orient centred on the range of disciplines (long-established, such as philology and history; or newly emergent, such as ethnography, and encompassing linguistics, theology, economics, geography, literature, archaeology, among others) that concern themselves in different ways with matters Oriental. For Said, this period marks a major shift: 'Taking the late 18th century as a very roughly defined starting point, Orientalism can be discussed and analysed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient' (3). Not just Western knowledge, but the deployment of Western power marks Orientalism henceforth, as would-be disinterested knowledge is increasingly made to serve very 'interested' material ends.

Central to Said's argument is the way in which the types of knowledge (widely divergent, at least as far as their sources are concerned) act to inform and legitimate the political, economic, and military power which is unleashed on the Orient. In particular, the supposedly discrete academic disciplines produce astonishingly similar, and mutually reinforcing, 'knowledge' about the Orient as deviant, dysfunctional, civilisationally stagnant, technologically backward, socially retrogressive, morally deficient, culturally impoverished; in all senses the Other to the West. The mutually reinforcing nature of Orientalist 'knowledge' is, on one level, to be expected, insofar as Said is making use of Foucault's concept of a discourse as a framework within which 'appropriate' knowledge is regulated, produced, and constrained, (though arguably he might have been better served by treating it as an ideological formation, which has different theoretical and political implications). As he says: 'My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically,

sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period' (ibid.). From 'hard' science to imaginative literature, the Orient is constructed as inferior, in need of Western intervention, and whether the representations aim to be sympathetic or are unrepentantly derogatory, they are recuperated by Orientalism in the production of its sanctioned forms of knowledge. One result of the operations of Orientalism as a discourse is therefore that the representations it produces are much more concerned with internal consistency than with providing the truth about the Orient (though they nevertheless claim to do that also). That focus on internal consistency helps explain the strength of the discourse and the longevity of Orientalist ideas over several centuries, factual contradiction notwithstanding.

The inferiority of the Orient and Orientals is marked by the fact that, in the phrase from Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* which Said uses as one of the epigraphs for the book, 'They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented' (1978: xiii). The power, cultural and Other, of the West allows it to represent the Orient as it chooses, but in addition there is the legitimating 'must': since they are incapable of representing themselves, it falls to us to do it for them. This doubles the power of the West, as it speaks not only in its own voice, but also in that of the Other.

A great deal of critical attention has been devoted to the process of Orientalist representation, as well as its object, the Orient. Said, for example, argues that there is no such thing as a true representation, only varying degrees of misrepresentation, and also that there is no such thing as a real Orient to be represented. Without entering unnecessarily into the prolonged theoretical debates (for a representative poststructuralist critique, see Young, 1990), it is important to clarify Said's position. First, a representation cannot provide a perfect copy of the original, and therefore is inevitably to some degree a misrepresentation. Much more important for Said than any question of putative fidelity to the original, however, is what the representation actually does: its power to persuade, to legitimate, to dominate. Second, because the Orient is a Western construct, there is indeed no 'real' Orient for Orientalism to 'truthfully' represent. As Said comments, 'There were – and are – cultures

and nations whose location is in the East, and their lives, histories and customs have a brute reality obviously greater than anything that could be said about them in the West' (1978: 5); and they are not the 'Orient'.

The truth of knowledge is another of those apparently uncontroversial topics which somehow become controversial when articulated by Said. As he says, 'the general liberal consensus that "true" knowledge is fundamentally non-political (and conversely that overt political knowledge is not "true" knowledge) obscures the highly if obscurely organised political circumstances obtaining when knowledge is produced' (10). Scholars in the humanities, and Orientalists above all, were, however, scandalised at the suggestion that their work was not disinterested, above politics as they claimed (and some, like Bernard Lewis, still claim). It is, nevertheless, one of the successes of Orientalism that it demonstrates so convincingly that not only is Orientalist knowledge not above politics, but it is precisely and deeply enmeshed in the very worst sort of politics, namely colonial domination and exploitation.

One of the principal objects of Orientalist knowledge has been, at least since the Middle Ages, Islam and the Muslim world more generally. As Said comments, 'For much of its history, then, Orientalism carries within it the stamp of a problematic European attitude towards Islam ...' (1978: 74). More than this, wrote Said, 'I have not been able to discover any period in European or American history since the Middle Ages in which Islam was generally discussed or thought about outside a framework created by passion, prejudice and political interests' (Said 1981: 24). He then adds: 'This may not seem a surprising discovery ...'; perhaps not, but its unsurprising assertion is precisely the kind of claim which makes Said a controversial figure.

Even as 19th-century European colonial expansion moved the territory of the Orient beyond the confines of the Muslim world, and the terms of representation changed, Islam continued to function negatively in the Orientalist imaginary: 'the "good" Orient was invariably a classical period somewhere in a long-gone India, whereas the "bad" Orient lingered in present-day Asia, parts of North Africa, and Islam everywhere' (1978: 99). However, although the geographical location might change, and although the categories of representation might alter, what remained

the same was the hierarchical nature of the relationship: 'In a quite constant way, Orientalism depends for its strategy on this flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand' (7).

In the central chapters of *Orientalism*, Said tracks the assumptions, forms, languages, and outcomes of 'this flexible positional superiority' through the great age of European, particularly British and French, colonial expansion in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and on into the contemporary world where the US has taken over the role of pre-eminent Orientalist power. In so doing, he analyses the works of a range of representative figures: travellers such as Edward Lane, Richard Burton, Gerard de Nerval, and Chateaubriand; politicians like Balfour and Cromer; novelists including Flaubert and Kipling; scholars of many kinds, including Ernest Renan, Silvestre de Sacy, H.L.R. Gibb and Louis Massignon, as well as ones like Bernard Lewis, whose *Orientalism* is so egregious that Said would have difficulty including him among the ranks of the scholarly. This period marks the definitive shift in Orientalism 'from an academic to an instrumental attitude' (246), its forms of knowledge ever more useful for, and used by, the institutions of Western power. The categorical flexibility is demonstrated by the shift around one term – 'Semite' – from the European Ernest Renan to modern US-led Orientalism. For Renan, the great philologist, practitioner of the discipline that Said so much admires, 'the Semitic languages are inorganic, arrested, totally ossified, incapable of self-regeneration; in other words, he proves that Semitic is not a live language, and for that matter, neither are Semites live creatures' (145). Here, Semitic covers both Jew and Arab, to the benefit of neither. Later, in the period of American dominance, there is a need to shift and differentiate the representation of Semites: around the time of the 1967 and 1973 wars between Israel and its Arab neighbours, Arabs take on all the negative characteristics ('their sharply hooked noses, the evil moustachioed leer on their faces' [286]) that might previously have been shared by, or indeed have belonged principally to, Jews. 'The transference of a popular anti-Semitic animus from a Jewish to an Arab target was made smoothly, since the figure was essentially the same' (*ibid.*).

Another significant shift in the period of US dominance is from the figure of the scholar to that of the 'expert', and for Said, this is an altogether negative transformation since 'the experts instruct policy on the basis of such marketable abstractions as political elites, modernisation and stability, most of which are simply the old Orientalist stereotypes dressed up in policy jargon, and most of which have been completely inadequate to describe what took place recently in Lebanon or earlier in Palestinian popular resistance to Israel' (1978: 321). Inadequate or not, Orientalist 'expertise' continues to have significant influence on US foreign policy, so much so that 'the accommodation between the intellectual class and the new imperialism might well be accounted one of the special triumphs of Orientalism' (322).

For Said, writing in 1978 in the phase of US Orientalism, the centuries-long persistence of Orientalist modes of thought and representation was remarkable. Some 25 years later, in the context of the invasion of Iraq, the situation in terms of representing and understanding Muslims was visibly much worse. While this offers little comfort to those who might hope that critique as powerful as Said's could bring the ideology it is attacking to an end, it does nevertheless demonstrate the accuracy of his contention that the knowledge production of Orientalism is intimately linked to the material interests of Western (in this case US) supremacy, and sadly is unlikely to disappear any time soon.

The problem of Orientalist representations is exacerbated by the proliferation of modes for their transmission. In the 1970s, 'One aspect of the electronic, post-modern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardised moulds' (26). In the 21st century, this is even more the case, with the appalling stereotypes circulated by the likes of Fox News and CNN, and the expansion of the domain of popular culture: 'These contemporary Orientalist attitudes flood the press and the popular mind. Arabs, for example, are thought of as camel-riding, terroristic, hook-nosed, venal lechers whose undeserved wealth is an affront to real civilisation' (108). Although commentators would no doubt also point to the way in which proliferating media forms and technologies

such as the Internet, smart phones and social media may be able to play an empowering role, as, for example, in the uprisings of the Arab Spring, they are equally available for the circulation of Orientalist stereotypes.

### Assessing Orientalism

Some years ago, in the introduction to a collection of critical work on Edward Said, I suggested that 'in general, Said has not been well served by his critics' (Williams 2000: xxv). Over a decade later, the situation is, if anything, rather worse, since the period following Said's death has witnessed the emergence of a sub-genre of attacks (often scurrilous and personalised) claiming to give a more clear-sighted or balanced assessment of this over-rated individual. We will return to these later, but firstly it is important to note the surprisingly widespread inability of critics, even those well-disposed towards Said, to read him with any degree of accuracy. That is all the more surprising when we consider that Said's style is not obscure, nor as theoretically dense as that of many of his contemporaries. It is perhaps a little unfair to highlight any of the well-disposed, but A.L. Macfie may stand as an example. In his introduction to *Orientalism: A Reader*, he says: 'What divides Said from many of his critics is the fact that while Said, in *Orientalism*, tends to view his subject through the prism of modern and post-modern philosophy (in particular the philosophies of Nietzsche, Foucault, Derrida and, surprisingly, the Marxist Gramsci), his critics remain, for the most part, firmly wedded to a traditional (realist) approach to the writing of history' (2000: 5). This is an unusual sentence. *Orientalism* has nothing whatsoever to do with Derridean deconstruction, particularly not in a formal or philosophical sense. Nietzsche appears a couple of times in the book but could hardly be said to offer an analytical framework for Said. On the other hand, the idea that Said's use of Gramsci is surprising is, well, surprising: although Said never declared himself a Marxist, his engagement with, and interest in, a range of Marxist thinkers (Gramsci, Adorno, Lukacs, C.L.R. James, Fanon, Raymond Williams, and others) forms a long-running thread through his work. Also, the idea that Said is seeing the world through a post-modern prism is not borne out by evidence, either here or elsewhere. Indeed, post-modernism for Said

precisely typifies a great many of the problems of contemporary intellectual practice.

Orientalism has been criticised for many things, often in completely contradictory fashion. It has, for example, been accused of being wildly over-theoretical, or of being insufficiently theoretical; of being excessively indebted to Foucault, or of failing to make proper use of the range of insights a Foucauldian perspective offered. It has also been taken to task for not including an examination of the gendered dimensions of Orientalism, as well as for not including any consideration of the resistance on the part of colonised people to Orientalist and colonialist incursions. The first of these, typified by a book like Meyda Yegenoglu's *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (1998), is an example of the slightly better or more accurate criticisms of Orientalism (gender was arguably never one of Said's strong points in any of his books), but it hardly constitutes a total omission in the way that is often asserted. The second typifies the way in which Said is criticised for not doing something which he had no intention of doing: Orientalism is a study of the forms of power (discursive, textual, and ideological, as well as economic, political, and military) deployed by the West in its relations with non-Western cultures; indigenous resistance is dealt with elsewhere, particularly in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993).

That trope of criticising Orientalism for failing to provide something that was never part of the book's project in the first place occurs in some surprising contexts. Daniel Martin Varisco's *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (2007) is by far the best of those post-humous reassessments of Said mentioned a little earlier. His is the most thoughtful and scholarly of any of these works. Nevertheless, despite spending several hundred pages carefully and critically dissecting *Orientalism*, he is still able to summarise the book, and Said's intentions, in ways which may be critical, but do not seem particularly careful. 'The notion of a single conceptual essence of Orient is the linchpin in Said's polemical reduction of all Western interpretation of the real or imagined geographical space to a single and latently homogeneous discourse' (290). 'Single conceptual essence ...', 'single and latently homogeneous discourse': arguably, the excessive reductiveness here is Varisco's, since despite Said's highlighting of Orientalism's

efforts to create internal consistency out of disciplinary multiplicity, singularity and homogeneity are not the result. As Said says, 'My whole point about this system is not that it is a misrepresentation of some Oriental essence – in which I do not for a moment believe – but that it operates as representations usually do, for a purpose, according to a tendency, in a specific historical, intellectual, and even economic setting' (1978: 273). Undeterred, Varisco continues: 'What is missing from *Orientalism* is any systematic sense of what that real Orient was and how individuals reacted to the imposing forces that sought to label it and theoretically control it' (2007: 291), yet Said had already addressed that point in his introduction to *Orientalism*: 'There were – and are – cultures and nations whose location is in the East, and their lives, histories, and customs have a brute reality obviously greater than anything that could be said about them in the West. About that fact this study of *Orientalism* has very little to contribute, except to acknowledge it tacitly' (1978: 5). Finally, Varisco concludes that 'It is time to read beyond *Orientalism*', since 'The goal of serious scholarship should be to improve understanding of self and other, not to whine endlessly or wallow self-righteously in continual opposition' (2007: 304). However, to suggest that Said, as someone subjected to repeated death threats, the firebombing of his university office, and routine vicious abuse from political opponents, 'whine[d] endlessly' in a position of victimhood is as straightforwardly preposterous as to claim that his 'continual opposition' to the (continual) brutal treatment of his people by the Israeli state constitutes anything like self-righteous wallowing.

A different kind of (unsuccessful) undermining of Said occurs in the work of the sociologist Bryan Turner. In *Orientalism, Post-Modernism and Globalism*, for example, Turner says 'the book [*Orientalism*] is now obviously outdated ...' (1994: 4) because, among other things, 'It is simply the case that globalisation makes it very difficult to carry on talking about Oriental and Occidental cultures as separate, autonomous or independent cultural regimes' (8). Apart from the fact that Said was at great pains to stress the inter-related and overlapping nature of cultures, the ability to represent the West and the East as indeed separate, if not fundamentally antagonistic, in classic Orientalist fashion, has obviously

been one of the defining features of the history of the world in the last decade, in the context of the 'War on Terror' and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In a more recent piece, 'Orientalism, or the politics of the text', Turner criticises Said for errors of which he is arguably not guilty, and concludes that, 'The traditional game of the Orientalist text appears to have come to an end' (2002: 30). Part of the reason for this is that in a putatively post-modern world, 'intellectuals are unwilling or unable to defend grand narratives, since academic intellectuals no longer have the authority to pronounce on such matters' (29). If nothing else, however, Said's life and work provide a powerful example (though by no means the only one from the 'postmodern' world) of precisely why Turner is wrong. As the editors of a recent collection of essays on Said point out (Iskander and Rustom 2010), it was the analysis offered by *Orientalism* which was revelatory for them as undergraduates in the mid-1990s (i.e. after Turner had already declared the book was outdated), while at the same time it was Said's unwavering determination to defend grand narratives of enlightenment and liberation that inspired them and their contemporaries.

While it would indeed be wonderful if we lived in a world where the insights and analyses of *Orientalism* were no longer relevant, that is unfortunately not the case. The current spread of Islamophobia marks the return of Islam as the always available supreme ideological Other, while, in the context that was closest to Said's heart, there is the unedifying spectacle of one Semitic people (the Jews, particularly as the State of Israeli) Westernising themselves at the same time as they perversely construct another Semitic people, and their closest neighbours (the Palestinians) as Orientalised Others (cf. Laor 2009; Piterberg 2013; Williams 2013). The final and longest chapter in *Orientalism* is entitled 'Orientalism Now', and the final words in the book are: 'If the knowledge of Orientalism has any meaning, it is in being a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, of any knowledge, anywhere, at any time. Now perhaps more than before' (Said 1978: 328). Now more than before, indeed.

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## Pan-Africanism

### Introduction

There has never been one universally accepted definition of exactly what constitutes Pan-Africanism. Some writers on the subject are even reluctant to provide a definition, or suggest that one cannot be found, acknowledging that the vagueness of the term reflects the fact that Pan-Africanism has taken different forms

at different historical moments and geographical locations (Ackah 1999: 12–36; Geiss 1974: 3–15; Shepperson 1962). Nevertheless, most writers would agree that the phenomenon has emerged in the modern period and is concerned with the social, economic, cultural, and political emancipation of African peoples, including those of the African diaspora. What underlies the manifold visions and approaches of Pan-Africanism and Pan-Africanists is a belief in the unity, common history, and common purpose of the peoples of Africa and the African diaspora, and the notion that their destinies are interconnected. In addition, many would highlight the importance of the liberation and advancement of the African continent itself, not just for its inhabitants, but also as the homeland of the entire African diaspora. Such perspectives may be traced back to ancient times, but Pan-Africanist thought and action is principally connected with, and provoked by, the modern dispersal of Africans resulting from the trafficking of captives across the Atlantic to the Americas, as well as elsewhere, from the end of the 15th century. This 'forced migration', the largest in history, and the creation of the African diaspora were accompanied by the emergence of global capitalism, European colonial rule, and racism. Pan-Africanism evolved as a variety of ideas, activities, organisations, and movements that, sometimes in concert, resisted the exploitation and oppression of all those of African heritage, opposed the ideologies of racism, and celebrated African achievement and being African.

### Forerunners

Before the concepts of Pan-African and Pan-Africanism emerged at the end of the 19th century, there were various organised efforts by Africans in the diaspora during the 18th century to join together in order to combat racism, to campaign for an end to the kidnapping and trafficking of Africans, or to organise repatriation to the African continent. In Britain, for example, there appear to have been several informal efforts before African abolitionists such as Olaudah Equiano and Ottobah Cugoana formed the Sons of Africa organisation to collectively campaign for an end to Britain's participation in the trans-Atlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans (Adi 2007). In Boston in 1784, the abolitionist Prince Hall organised the first African

Masonic lodge in North America as a means of combatting racism and for mutual support and with a clear orientation towards Africa. Three years later, an African Church movement developed in North America out of the Free Africa Society founded in Philadelphia by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones with similar anti-racist aims (Geiss 1974: 34). Such early initiatives were often accompanied by efforts to refute the dominant racist ideology of the day, which argued that Africans were inferior to Europeans, subhuman and only fit for enslavement. The best-selling writing of Equiano and Cugoana, for instance, aimed to undermine the racism that justified slavery, as well as attacking the slave trade and slavery itself. Such writing was sometimes a collective endeavour undertaken in the interests of all Africans and had a wide influence.

Perhaps the most important event to undermine both racism and the slave system during this period was the revolution that broke out in the French Caribbean colony of St Domingue in August 1791. That revolutionary struggle eventually led to the creation of Haiti, the first modern 'black' republic anywhere in the world and only the second independent country in the entire American continent. The revolution elevated Haiti to iconic status amongst all those of African descent, and produced new heroes such as Toussaint L'Ouverture, Dessalines, Christophe, and Pétion. The country's constitution established the principle of equal human rights and established the country as a safe haven for all Africans (for a useful summary, see Popkin 2012). Indeed, in the early 19th century, several thousand African Americans migrated to Haiti from Philadelphia and other US cities (Geiss 1974: 86). Haiti also acted as a base for future assaults on the ideology of racism by some of Haiti's leading intellectuals and statesmen such as Anténor Firmin and Benito Sylvain.

There were several efforts by Africans in the diaspora to return to the African continent. Thomas Peters, born in Africa, enslaved and then self-liberated during the American War of Independence, led over a thousand 'Black Loyalists' from Nova Scotia in Canada to the new British colony of Sierra Leone, where they continued to agitate for their rights and even self-government (Walker 1992). Other African Americans also organised repatriation to Sierra Leone in the 19th century, including the Bostonian merchant Paul Cuffee. Similar efforts to repatriate to West Africa were also

made by Africans and their descendants who had been kidnapped, enslaved, and transported to Brazil and the Caribbean. The West African country of Liberia, which was founded and developed by the American Colonization Society in the early 19th century, also became a haven for repatriated African Americans and after its declaration of independence in 1847 was viewed by many as yet another symbol of African achievement, alongside Haiti and the African kingdom of Abyssinia.

The growth of colonies of Western-educated Africans in Sierra Leone, Liberia and elsewhere in West Africa, many of whom were personally connected with the struggle against enslavement and racism, was certainly a factor contributing to the emergence of emancipatory ideas with a broad Pan-African rather than just local character throughout the 19th century. Indeed, it could be said that an African intelligentsia (clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and teachers) emerged on all sides of the Atlantic, that is to say in Europe, the Americas and in Africa during this period, whose members influenced and drew inspiration from each other. Several prominent figures emerged such as Martin Delany, from the US and Edward Blyden from the Caribbean. Delany, an abolitionist, writer, and medical practitioner, welcomed the 'common cause' that was developing between 'the blacks and colored races' of the world, travelled to West Africa and advocated the 'regeneration of Africa' by those in the diaspora. He clearly stated his policy: 'Africa for the African race and black men to rule them' (Adi and Sherwood 2003: 34–39). Blyden, a politician, writer, educator, and diplomat, has been seen as one of the key thinkers in the development of Pan-Africanism. He emigrated to Liberia and became a strong advocate of 'racial pride' and repatriation to Africa from the diaspora. His newspaper *Negro* was specifically aimed at audiences in Africa, the Caribbean, and the US. Blyden believed that Africans had their own unique contribution to make to the world and an equally unique 'African personality'. During his own lifetime he was a very influential figure and his contradictory ideas can be seen as influencing later Pan-Africanists such as Marcus Garvey and even Kwame Nkrumah. However, he was also a firm supporter of British and other forms of colonialism in Africa, a position that he shared with many other Western-educated Africans in the 19th century (11–15).

## Ethiopianism

At the end of the 19th century the strivings of Africans in West Africa and southern Africa against what were perceived as racist practices and attitudes within Christian Churches led to what was commonly referred to as the Ethiopian movement, a movement to establish independent African Churches such as the Ethiopia Church founded in South Africa in 1892 and the Native Baptist Church founded in Nigeria in 1888. In both regions, the movement was sometimes influenced by African American missionaries, and although often expressing itself through religion, it also articulated a range of anti-colonial strivings encapsulated in the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' (Esedebe 1992: 23–24). As a broad cultural and political movement, an early form of Pan-Africanism, it was enhanced by Abyssinia's military victory over Italy at the Battle of Adowa in 1896. Ethiopianism was also seen as being a contributory factor to the Zulu or Bambatha Rebellion in Natal in 1906, a struggle which led to one of the earliest Pan-Africanist texts, Bandle Omoniyi's *A Defence of the Ethiopian Movement* (Adi 1991).

## The First Pan-African Conference

The first gathering to be described as 'pan-African' was the Chicago Congress on Africa held in 1894, but the first Pan-African Conference was held in London in July 1900, convened by Henry Sylvester Williams, a Trinidadian lawyer, and the organisation he founded in 1897, the African Association. The African Association was mainly concerned with various injustices in Britain's African and Caribbean colonies but it soon consulted leading African Americans such as Booker T. Washington about its aims to hold a conference. This was timed to coincide with the Paris Exhibition in order to assemble 'men and women of African blood, to deliberate solemnly upon the present situation and the outlook for the darker races of mankind', and establish 'a general union amongst the descendants of Ham'. Plans for the conference, which was still mainly aimed at influencing enlightened public opinion in Britain, were also widely reported in the African American press, as well as in Anglophone Africa and the Caribbean. It seems that after Williams met Benito Sylvain in Paris, the scope of the conference

was broadened to include 'the treatment of native races under European and American rule. One important aim of the conference was to demonstrate that those of African descent could speak for themselves against all the injustices they faced and contemporary reports stressed that this was the first occasion on which Africans had united for 'the attainment of equality and freedom'. Benito Sylvain, who represented Emperor Menelik of Ethiopia, the African American educator and activist Anna J. Cooper, and W.E.B. Du Bois were amongst the distinguished participants of this international gathering, which concerned itself with many of the key issues and problems facing 'African humanity'. The conference 'Address to the Nations of the World', which condemned racial oppression in the US as well as throughout Africa and demanded self-government for Britain's colonies, was drafted under the chairmanship of Du Bois and included the famous phrase 'the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color-line'. The conference recognised the importance of the 'three sovereign states' and intended to establish branches in Africa, the Caribbean and North America of a new Pan-African Association. Plans were also announced for a second conference in the US in 1902, and Williams was able to launch the first few issues of a magazine the *Pan-African*. However, despite Williams's strenuous efforts and extensive travel, both the Pan-African Association and the *Pan-African* soon collapsed (Sherwood 2011).

## Du Bois and the Pan-African Congresses

Following the London conference, several years passed before such a major event was again organised. In 1912, Booker T. Washington convened an 'International Conference on the Negro' at Tuskegee. It is possible that both Washington and the editor Thomas T. Fortune had planned to hold such a gathering even earlier, but it was not designed to develop the overtly political concerns established in 1900. W.E.B. Du Bois had emerged as one of the key figures in London in 1900, and three years earlier had elaborated his views on what he referred to as 'Pan-Negroism' and the need for a 'Pan-Negro movement' in his well-known essay, published in 1897, 'The Conservation of Races' (Du Bois



2010/1897). It was Du Bois who sought to continue the tradition of major international Pan-African gatherings when he organised the first Pan-African Congress in Paris in 1919.

Du Bois had some official support from the French government for the Congress, but faced opposition from the governments of Britain and the US. Nevertheless, 57 participants from Africa, the Caribbean and the US made their way to Paris. Du Bois proposed the creation of new states in Africa based around the confiscation of some of Germany's former colonies, supervised by the other major colonial powers but taking into account the views of the 'civilized Negro world', by which he had in mind mainly African Americans. He also called for a permanent Pan-African secretariat based in Paris and hoped that the Congress would enable the voice of the 'children of Africa' to be heard at the post-war peace conferences held in the city. However, the first Pan-African Congress had little lasting influence, was criticised for its proximity to the French government, and its demand that the rights of Africans and those of African descent should be protected by the League of Nations was ignored (Geiss 1974: 234–258).

Du Bois then took the initiative to organise a second congress, held in 1921 in London, Paris, and Brussels, then a third in London and Lisbon in 1923, and a fourth, originally scheduled to take place in the Caribbean but finally held in New York in 1927. In 1929 he also made plans to hold a fifth congress in Tunis in North Africa, but was denied permission by the French government. The four congresses established the idea of Pan-Africanism, consolidated Pan-African networks, and drew activists from the US, Liberia, Ethiopia, and Haiti, as well as those from Africa and the Caribbean resident in Europe. The congresses took a stand against racism and began to raise the demand for self-determination in the colonies. However, few representatives from organisations in the African continent participated, there was little support from African American organisations, and no permanent organisation, organising centre, or publication was established. The congresses were also criticised for the moderate political views expressed and for the exclusion of Marcus Garvey, perhaps the leading Pan-Africanist of the time (ibid.).

## Garvey and Garveyism

The Jamaican writer and activist Marcus Garvey first established his Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA) in Jamaica in 1914. It included amongst its aims 'a universal confederacy amongst the race', as well as promoting 'racial pride', education, commercial enterprises, 'conscientious Christian worship', and assisting in 'the civilizing of backward tribes in Africa' (Adi and Sherwood 2003: 76). Garvey re-established the UNIA in New York in 1917 where it soon attracted thousands of adherents, first throughout the US and soon after internationally. At its height, the UNIA's membership has been estimated to have been over 4 million, but no precise figures exist. Undoubtedly it was the largest political movement of Africans during the 20th century, embracing not just a few intellectuals but the masses both on the African continent and throughout the diaspora. The organisation's newspaper *Negro World* preached an anti-colonial message, 'Africa for the Africans at home and abroad', challenged notions of white supremacy, and extolled the greatness of Africa's history and of Africans. It circulated, often illegally, throughout colonial Africa and the Caribbean, indeed throughout the diaspora. The UNIA established women's and children's organisations, and promoted commercial ventures of many kinds. The best known of these was the ill-fated Black Star shipping line which aimed to aid commercial ties between West Africa, the Caribbean, and the US.

The UNIA's *Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World*, launched in 1920, demanded self-determination, condemned anti-African racism, and defended 'the inherent right of the Negro to possess himself of Africa', and the 'necessity of Negro nationalism, political power and control'. The UNIA also envisaged a 'Negro independent nation on the continent of Africa' to which those in the diaspora could return (78). In the meantime, Garvey attempted to forge links with the government of Liberia and declared himself provisional president of a future independent African republic. Garvey's politics, overtures to the Ku Klux Klan, and links with the masses put him at odds with Du Bois and other African American leaders, while his movement was feared by the major colonial powers and the US government. In

1922 he was arrested in the US on charges of fraud, eventually imprisoned and then in 1927 deported to Jamaica. Garvey remained active in Jamaica, Britain, Canada, and elsewhere until his death in 1940, but the UNIA became divided and Garvey himself sometimes espoused a political orientation that was rejected as too moderate by other Pan-Africanists. Nevertheless his legacy was immense, particularly in Jamaica where, following his death, his ideas exerted a major influence on the Rastafarians and where he was subsequently declared the country's first national hero. His influence was acknowledged by other Pan-Africanists, most notably Kwame Nkrumah. Garveyism too has remained an influential trend of Pan-Africanism, especially in the African diaspora.

Despite the undoubted influence of Garvey and the UNIA, many radical activists were as critical of his politics as they were of Du Bois. The most significant critics and those who developed a different Pan-African vision were those connected with the international communist movement of the 1920s and 1930s. Although acknowledging that Africans worldwide faced similar problems of racism and various forms of colonial oppression and exploitation, the black communists advocated the need for a united struggle of all Africans in unity with working and oppressed people of all countries, and disseminated their views through a publication, the *Negro Worker*, as well as through communist parties internationally. In 1930 in Hamburg, Germany, the communists even held their own Pan-African gathering, drawing participants from Africa, the Caribbean, the US, and Europe. The politics of the communists did not attract as many adherents as the UNIA but it was significant for its critique of colonialism and imperialism, its insistence on the need for an organised struggle around specific demands which would lead to a socialist future in which all Africans would be empowered. One of the most notable black communists before the mid-1930s was the Trinidadian George Padmore, who acted as the editor of the *Negro*. After he parted company with the communist movement, Padmore became a leading Pan-Africanist. Communism, or various aspects of Marxism, also had a significant influence on other Pan-Africanists including Du Bois, Aimé Césaire and Kwame Nkrumah (Adi 2013).

## Négritude

Yet another strand of Pan-Africanism developed amongst African and Caribbean intellectuals living in France between the two wars. Known as Négritude, the movement was principally developed by three students (Aimé Césaire from Martinique, the Senegalese Léopold Senghor, and Léon Damas from Guyana) who had come under a variety of influences including Marxism and the Harlem Renaissance. Négritude propounded a reconciliation between those from the continent and the diaspora, through a rejection of assimilation, colonialism, and Eurocentrism and a common struggle to embrace and celebrate African culture and the uniqueness of being African, at times almost harking back to the notion of 'African personality' espoused by Blyden. Its impact was greatest in the Francophone world and exemplified in Césaire's poem *Cahiers d'un retour au pays natal* (Kestlelout 1974).

## Ethiopia and radical Pan-Africanism

In the mid-1930s the Pan-African movement was further radicalised by the influence of Marxism, especially in Britain and France and many of the colonies of these two imperialist powers. It was the Communist International that first promoted the idea of a United States of Socialist Africa and provided an uncompromising critique of colonialism, while several activists were impressed by the economic developments in the Soviet Union and that country's attempts to end racism and national oppression. A more radical approach to colonial rule was also the consequence of the dire economic situation during the Depression years, which led to major strikes and rebellions throughout the Caribbean, and by fascist Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, which led to a major international campaign to support Ethiopia that was particularly strong in many parts of Africa and throughout the diaspora. The outbreak of the Second World War only strengthened Pan-African demands for an end to colonial rule; while in Britain, Padmore and the Pan-African Federation made preparations for a new Pan-African congress.

## The Manchester Pan-African Congress

The Manchester or Fifth Pan-African Congress, held in Britain in 1945, has been seen as the most important of all the Pan-African conferences. It was dominated by the thinking of Padmore and other British-based Pan-Africanists, including by this time Kwame Nkrumah. The Manchester Congress grew out of the radicalism of the 1930s and the war years, as well as Padmore's experience as a key organiser of the communist-led International Conference of Negro Workers in Hamburg in 1930. One of the main features of the congress was that its participation was restricted to representatives of workers' and farmers' organisations: 'the masses' who were considered to be the main force that would end colonial rule by force if necessary. It therefore also broke with previous gatherings that had merely the aim of lobbying the governments of the imperialist powers. The congress expressed its opposition to the 'rule of capital' and the imposition of Eurocentric values and political institutions in the colonies. It also condemned the colonial borders that had been imposed on African states, an issue that would later become controversial in the post-independence period. Although it did not openly refer to the need for socialism, the Congress clearly had this general orientation. Several of the participants had also attended the recent founding conferences of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), and proceedings in Manchester reflected an internationalist spirit in the espousal of the slogan 'Workers and oppressed people of all countries unite!' Although Du Bois attended, there was very little emphasis on the US. Participants were mainly from Britain's colonies in Africa and the Caribbean, and there was an increasing emphasis on African liberation (Adi and Sherwood 1995).

## Pan-Africanism in Africa

Although the Manchester Congress and the activities of Padmore and others made Britain an important centre of Pan-Africanism, in the period after 1945 the centre of the Pan-African world was already shifting to Africa. In 1947, the WFTU organised two Pan-African trade union conferences. The first was held in Dakar and four years later a second, similar

conference took place in Bamako, attended by over 140 delegates including the future leader of Guinea and leading Pan-Africanist Sékou Touré. Nkrumah had returned to the Gold Coast in 1947 and his Pan-Africanist activity was initially focused on achieving the independence of that country from British colonial rule, although he had already indicated his aim of a federation of independent states in West Africa, both Anglophone and Francophone, as a step towards the 'United Socialist States of Africa'. With this aim in mind, Nkrumah had made plans on several occasions to hold a conference of nationalist movements in Africa, particularly those in West Africa such as the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain*, but evidently without success. Finally, as 'leader of government business' in the Gold Coast, he convened the West African Federation Conference, which was held in Kumasi in December 1953. The participants discussed how to establish a West African federation that could create the conditions for the liberation of the entire African continent and the African diaspora.

## Nkrumah and the road to the OAU

Nkrumah played a major role in reinvigorating an African-centred Pan-Africanism even before 1957, but in that year the independence of the Gold Coast from British colonial rule created the conditions for a new stage in the Pan-African struggle to liberate and unite the entire African continent. As the new Ghana celebrated its independence, Nkrumah declared that it was 'meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of Africa', and he began to organise to achieve that liberation and his vision of a United States of Africa. In 1958, with the assistance of George Padmore, he hosted the Conference of Independent African States, (at that time a gathering of Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, the Sudan, Tunisia, and the United Arab Republic). It was the first time in history that such a meeting had taken place. Later the same year, Nkrumah hosted the All-African Peoples Conference, which brought together over 300 representatives of political movements, trade unions, and other organisations from 28 African countries, including those still under colonial rule. Both conferences aimed to encourage a spirit of Pan-African unity amongst the participants and to discuss

ways of working jointly to ensure the end of colonial rule throughout the continent. Even at this early stage, Nkrumah urged the African states to consider measures to enhance economic co-operation and to develop a common foreign policy, and both conferences looked forward to a commonwealth of independent African states.

The same year the Pan-African Freedom Movement for East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) was founded, with Julius Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda playing leading roles, and with the aim of facilitating the independence of colonies in that part of Africa. These initiatives were followed by a series of other conferences in Africa in the years before 1963, and Nkrumah and Sékou Touré also agreed to establish a union between their two independent countries as the basis for a federation of African states and an eventual United States of Africa. However, their initiative was seen as too radical by many other African governments and reflected differing approaches to the question of African unity and whether this meant merely increasing economic co-operation or implied a more immediate political union (Nkrumah 1963). The growing differences between African states, which all claimed to be adhering to the principles of Pan-Africanism, were exacerbated by the continuing interference of the big powers in Africa's affairs, but this did not prevent the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 (Legum 1962: esp. chs 3–5).

### Organisation of African Unity

The founding of the OAU in Addis Ababa in 1963 has been seen as a compromise between 'radical' and 'moderate' African governments. Its formation was clearly a major victory for Pan-Africanism on the African continent, although it also had a significant influence amongst the African diaspora. It was, however, the Pan-Africanism of African governments not of the peoples of Africa, although there were also attempts to forge that kind of unity, too, most notably through the labour organisation the All-African Trade Union Federation, established in 1961 (Agyeman 2003).

The OAU was established with four main aims:

To promote the unity and solidarity of the African States;

To coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa;

To defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence;

To eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa.

(Organization of African Unity 2004)

However, it was also confronted with what was increasingly being called neo-colonialism: the attempts by the major imperialist powers to maintain economic and other forms of control of nominally independent states. The impact of neo-colonialism, the legacy of colonialism, and the effects of the Cold War in Africa all contributed to increasingly undemocratic African governments and an ineffective OAU. Perhaps its greatest achievement was the support given to those struggling to remove the remaining colonial regimes in Africa, in the Portuguese colonies, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, as well as the apartheid regime in South Africa, through the auspices of the OAU's Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa (Salim 1996).

Although it had no direct mandate in regard to the African diaspora, the OAU's influence and the manifestation of African unity could still have an influence. It was particularly evident in the work of the African American activist Malcolm X, who established his Organisation of Afro-American Unity in order to address the many problems still faced by those not just in the US but also throughout the diaspora. At the end of his life, Malcolm X spoke for a whole generation when he called not only for those in the diaspora to identify and learn from Africa but also demanded that the OAU take up for solution the problems confronting African Americans. The militant approach of Malcolm X and others ushered in a new era and a demand for what was referred to as Black Power, a new Pan-Africanist trend that exerted its influence not only amongst those in the diaspora from Britain to Brazil, but even in parts of the African continent, most notably in the Black Consciousness Movement led by Steve Biko in South Africa (West and Martin 2009: esp 24–28).

### Sixth and Seventh Pan-African Congresses

Attempts to strengthen the links between the diaspora and Africa, between African

and Caribbean governments and non-governmental organisations, led to the convening of the 6th Pan-African Congress in Tanzania in 1974. Indeed, Julius Nyerere, the president of Tanzania, played a leading role in convening the congress, although the original initiative and many of the key organisers were based in the US. The Sixth PAC, as it was often known, was often presented as the first such congress to take place on the African continent. Its main aims included:

Increasing the political unity between African people in the west and African people on the continent ...

Exploring strategies for increasing our support for the liberation wars in southern Africa ...

Encouraging a need for self-reliance and self-determination among the masses of African people wherever we may find ourselves. (Hill 1974)

The congress aimed to discuss practical solutions to a range of problems including greater unity amongst Caribbean states and greater economic cooperation and ways to eliminate 'economic dependency and exploitation' (Cox 1974).

However, it represented an uneasy alliance of delegates from 26 African governments (and one from the Caribbean), several southern African national liberation organisations and those from the diaspora communities in the US, Canada, Britain, Brazil, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Nevertheless, it could certainly claim to be the largest and one of the most representative of all the Pan-African congresses. The congress undoubtedly played an important role in consolidating support for the liberation struggle in southern Africa, one of the few issues that united all strands of the Pan-African movement. However, at the same time, there were many who were critical of what they saw as the hijacking of Pan-Africanism by the unrepresentative member governments of the OAU and their staunch defence of colonial boundaries. As the well-known Guyanese historian and activist Walter Rodney put it, 'the OAU does far more to frustrate rather than to realize the concept of African unity'. In his remarks before the Sixth PAC, Rodney also urged that the Pan-African movement should

re-establish the revolutionary and socialist orientation it manifested at the time of the Manchester Congress. The Sixth PAC eventually resolved that Pan-Africanism should be a force for liberation 'within the context of the class struggle' (Rodney 1975).

The Sixth PAC reflected the fact that Pan-Africanism had become a broad movement that encompassed governments and NGOs, those who demanded the political union of African states as well as those that defended national boundaries. It was also apparent that the clear political orientation that existed in 1945 was no longer so much in evidence, and the demands for revolution and socialism by some were seen as a threat by others, not least by most African and Caribbean governments. The years that followed did nothing to minimise the differences that existed amongst all those claiming adherence to Pan-Africanism, although there were also many cultural manifestations of Pan-Africanism, especially musical ones, the reggae of the Jamaican Bob Marley and the Afro-Beat of the Nigerian Fela Kuti, for example, that served as unifying factors. Cultural manifestations had long existed and were evident in the two Conferences of Negro Writers and Artists held in Paris and Rome in 1956 and 1959, and the World Festivals of African Arts and Culture held in Senegal and Nigeria in 1966 and 1976, although a diversity of approaches could also be found in these Pan-African events. New ideological currents, such as Afrocentrism, that emerged at the end of the 20th century only contributed to the diversity of opinions but did not prevent the convening of another Pan-African congress in Uganda in 1994.

The Seventh Pan-African congress brought together over 800 delegates under the theme 'Facing the Future in Unity, Social Progress and Democracy'. The congress was held at a time when the entire African continent had been liberated from colonialism and apartheid had been defeated. It was most notable for the fact that at its conclusion a Pan-African Women's Liberation Organisation was established, and for the decision to establish a permanent Pan-African Secretariat hosted by the government of Uganda (Abdul-Raheem 1996). Unlike the previous congress, the event was dominated by non-governmental organisations, although some nine governments sent delegations including Libya and Cuba. However, just as during the Sixth PAC, there were major

ideological differences during the proceedings, even over the definition of who was an African. Several major issues were debated including the preferred scope and meaning of reparations for Africa and the diaspora and most importantly the role and position of women and youth. A key declaration at the conclusion of the congress was that Africans should resist economic and other forms of re-colonisation, oppose the 'New World Order', and 'take action that will rid the world of the curse that has plagued humanity for over five centuries' (Campbell 1998). The congress also resolved to hold an eighth congress in Libya, a meeting that was eventually not convened.

### The African Union

Although the eighth Pan-African congress was not held in Libya, that country and its leader began to assume an increasingly important role in Pan-African affairs on the African continent. There had been many criticisms of the OAU from those outside it but there was also a recognition from member states that the organisation required an overhaul if it were to be fit for purpose in the 21st century. This became particularly evident after the founding of the African Economic Community (AEC) in 1994. The AEC aims to bring about the eventual economic integration of the entire continent leading to an African central bank and single currency. It was the initiative of the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi to convene an extraordinary summit of OAU heads of state in his hometown Sirte in 1999, and from this summit emerged the Sirte Declaration and a new organisation of African states, the African Union (AU). The AU was an attempt to revitalise the OAU, which had become widely discredited as a 'club of dictators', but also to establish a more robust continental organisation in the era of globalisation. Gaddafi was the most enthusiastic proponent of a United States of Africa and a strong and united continent able to stand up for itself in the world, and although other leaders were more cautious there was an agreement to speed up the founding of continental institutions such as the Pan-African Parliament. The aims of the AU are much wider than those of the OAU and specifically include accelerating 'the political and socio-economic integration of the continent', promoting 'peace, security and

stability', and promoting 'democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance' (African Union 2002). The AU was officially founded in May 2001.

Although the AU also has many critics, one of its most important acts was to recognise the importance of involving the African diaspora in its activities and deliberations. In subsequent years the African diaspora has been more fully incorporated within the structures of the AU as the 'sixth region', although it is clear that these structures and the heterogeneous nature of the diaspora do not allow easy integration. Nevertheless, such steps are more than symbolic and have been extended by Haiti's application to be the first country situated in the Caribbean to become a full associate member of the AU.

In 2013 the AU celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of the OAU by promoting the theme 'Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance', although it had been powerless to prevent NATO intervention and the toppling and assassination of one its key architects, Muammar Gaddafi, two years earlier. Nevertheless, both inside and outside meetings and conferences held during the anniversary year, Pan-Africanism was celebrated and invoked by its numerous and disparate adherents, some of whom looked forward to an imminent 8th Pan-African Congress. The problems and challenges confronting Africa and its diaspora remain and so too does a sense of common purpose and aspiration, the basis for Pan-Africanism and a Pan-African movement in the 21st century.

Hakim Adi

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## Pan-Arabism and Iran

Pan-Arabism is the philosophy of unifying all present-day Arab nations and Arab-speaking regions into a singular and unified super-state stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf (Davis 1993: 266). More specifically, Baathist philosophy defines the

greater Arab nation as consisting of Arab League countries as well as non-Arab territories such as Alexandretta (Iskenderun) in Turkey and Khuzestan in Iran. Pan-Arabism has also been characterised as inciting prejudice against and downplaying the role of non-Arab Muslim peoples such as Turks and Iranians (Chaudhary and Chaudhary 2009: 172). The relation of Pan-Arabism towards Iran can be described within four broad categories: (1) historical antecedents of 20th-century Pan-Arabism; (2) the formulisation of anti-Iranism in 20th-century Pan-Arabism; (3) retroactive Arabisation of history and geography; and (4) the Iran–Iraq War and Pan-Arabism.

### **(1) Historical antecedents of 20th-century Pan-Arabism**

One defining feature of Pan-Arabism is its negative characterisations of Iranians, a phenomenon existing since at least the Islamic conquest of (predominantly Zoroastrian) Sassanian Iran (637–51). As noted by Ettinghausen (1972: 1), Iran after the Arab-Islamic conquests ‘had lost its independence, though not its cultural identity’. As noted by Zarrin’kub (2002), the Ummayyad caliphate (661–750) instituted a number of discriminatory anti-Iranian measures for eliminating the Persian language and wider Iranian culture, a dynamic corroborated by Islamic sources reporting of punitive measures taken against Persian-speakers (Al-Isfahani 2004: vol. 4, 423). The Persian language was banned in Iran for nearly three centuries by the caliphates (Abivardi 2001: 468).

The caliphate’s discriminatory practices were not confined to the followers of the Zoroastrian faith but also operated against Iranian converts to Islam. Clawson (2005: 17) writes of the Arabs implementing a system of ‘ethnic stratification that discriminated against Iranians’, who then ‘chafed under Arab rule’. A prominent example is Al-Baladhuri’s report of Ummayyad Caliph Muawiyah (602–80), who declared in his letter, ‘never treat them [Iranians] as equals of the Arabs’ (Al-Baladhuri 1916: 417). The caliph’s letter to Ziyad Ibn Abih stated (Bahar 2002: 82; Qomi 1982: 254–256) that the caliphate’s Iranian Muslim subjects were to be (1) barred from frontier duties safeguarding the caliphate’s frontiers; (2) granted lower pensions and jobs; (3) discriminated

against in prayers when Arabs were present (i.e. they were not to stand in the first row or lead prayer congregations); (4) forbidden to marry Arab women (Arab men were allowed to marry Iranian women); and (5) forbidden to dress in Arab garb (Goldziher 1889–90: vol. 2, 138–139). Other discriminatory measures against non-Arabs included declarations that only persons of ‘pure Arab blood’ were worthy to rule in the caliphate (Momtahan 1989: 145). The succeeding Abbasid caliphate (750–1258) failed to adequately address the discriminatory practices against the Iranian population.

Negative views of Iranians are documented centuries later and into the early 20th century. A clear reference to this is seen in a meeting in 1911 between Ibn Saud (Abdul Aziz bin Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saud, 1876–1953, founder and first king of modern Saudi Arabia) and William Shakespear (a British political agent in Arabia at the time), in which they discussed the possibility of forming a common front against the Ottomans. It was during this meeting that Ibn Saud told Shakespear, ‘we hate the Persians’ (Allen 2006: 245). What is significant about the Ibn Saud–Shakespear exchange is the articulation of the Arab cultural dislike of Iranians, despite the mainly anti-Ottoman character of the meeting.

### **(2) The formulisation of anti-Iranism in 20th-century Pan-Arabism**

The roots of modern Pan-Arabism have often been attributed to the great Arab revolt in Hijaz during the First World War (1914–18), which was essentially organised and led by the British intelligence officer T.E. Lawrence (1888–1935). As an anti-Ottoman movement, the Hijaz revolt was fought by the Arabs to carve out a singular Arab state in the aftermath of the First World War. This ambition was to be unfulfilled in the wake of the Versailles post-war negotiations in Paris. Despite this failure, the idea of a large Pan-Arab state had taken hold among the Arab intelligentsia of the Middle East.

It was in the newly formed post-Ottoman states of Syria and Iraq that the modern basis of Pan-Arabism was to be formulated. Notable figures in Iraq (which was recognised as an independent country by the League of Nations in 1932) were Rashid Ali (who led the anti-British revolt in 1941) and resident



Syrians (especially Jamil Mardam and Shukri al-Quwatli) and the Mufti of Jerusalem (Haj Amin al-Husseini), who were exiled to Iraq for their political activities against the French and British. Prominent Syrian Pan-Arabists were Salah al-Din Bitar and Michel Aflaq (1910–89; a Christian), who were influenced by European-style fascism during the 1930s (Davis 1993: 266). The Pan-Arabist origins of anti-Iranism were mainly constructed in Iraq, especially from 1921 when King Faisal I (1885–1935) bought Satia al-Husri (1882–1968; of Syrian-Turkish descent) to Iraq; he first became the director-general of education and later dean of Iraq's Law College. Al-Husri was soon accompanied to Iraq by a number of Palestinian, Lebanese, and Syrian Pan-Arabist thinkers to help implement King Faisal's project of establishing Iraq's educational system. Masalha (1991: 690) has noted that Syrian Pan-Arab educators were 'Ummayad in their perspective', which may partly explain the implementation of anti-Iranism by Husri and his team into the Iraqi educational system and mass media in 1921–41 (Adib-Moghaddam 2006: 19).

Makiya (1998: 153–160) outlines Husri's anti-Persian educational policies in Iraqi schools, such as the publication of the monograph *Iranian Teachers who Caused us [Arabs] Big Problems*. This may have contributed to the perception among Pan-Arabist thinkers that the historical decline of the Arabs was due to the Persians (Keddie 1969: 18). Husri is also notable for his discriminatory practices in the Iraqi education system in rejecting the appointment of teachers of Iranian origin.

The advocacy of force for the advancement of Pan-Arabism is traced to Sami (Saib) Shawkat, who became director-general of education in 1938. He is notable for his 1933 speech 'Sina'at al-Mawt' ('Manufacturing of Death') promoting militarism and mass violence, which was printed for mass distribution in Iraqi schools (Makiya 1998: 177; Miller and Mylroie 1990: 73). This provided the ideological foundation for Iraq's manufacture and deployment of chemical weapons decades later, during the Iran–Iraq War. Shawkat became the leader of the Nazi-inspired Nadi al-Muthanna society (active c. 1935–41) (Ghareeb and Dougherty 2004: 167), and in 1939 founded the organisation's youth wing, the Futtuwa, which was patterned after the Nazi Hitler Youth movement (Makiya 1998: 178). Shawkat's fascist organisations

are believed to have provided the model for their later counterparts in the Baath regime of Iraq (Kechichian and Von Grunebaum Center 2001: 84).

### (3) The retroactive Arabisation of history and geography

Pan-Arabist history revisionism involves retroactive Arabisation. This is the process of attributing Arabic origins to non-Arab entities and domains (e.g. non-Arab scholars, regions, and so on). Retroactive Arabisation revises the legacy of Persia's heritage in Arabic and Islamic civilisations with respect to Persian cultural and scientific achievements and Persian geographical areas (the Persian Gulf and Iran's Khuzestan province). Mojtahed-Zadeh has noted this process in Arab history and geography textbooks which aim to revise history in an anti-Iranian manner (2007: 350). Several Arab states (e.g. Iraq, Egypt, Sharjah, Abu-Dhabi, Saudi Arabia) as well as a select number of Western academic institutions have been involved in retroactive Arabisation. McLoughlin (2002: 218) and Parsons (1985: 38) have noted significant funding accorded to British Arabist studies by wealthy Persian Gulf Arab states.

The re-naming of historical territories and waterways often leads to irredentist claims on the territorial integrity of the present Iranian state. The attempt to define the Persian Gulf as the 'Arabian Gulf' was first initiated without success by Richard Belgrave. The term was first officially used in a political context by Egypt's Pan-Arabist president Gamal Abdul Nasser (1918–70) from the 1950s onwards (Taheri 2010: 135); prior to this he had referred to the waterway as the Persian Gulf. Support for this name change came soon with Roderick Owen's text *The Golden Bubble of the Arabian Gulf: A Documentary* (1957). The process of re-defining the history of the Persian Gulf as the 'Arabian Gulf' is largely funded by the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Examples include Michael Rice's *Archaeology of the Arabian Gulf* (1994), which acknowledges the support of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Qatar (1994: xvii). Daniel Potts's two-volume *The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity* acknowledges the support of Saddam Hussein's Tikriti clan (1990: vol. 1, vii). Primary sources and cartography spanning the Classical, Islamic, and Medieval eras fail to corroborate the thesis that the

Persian Gulf has been known as the 'Arabian Gulf' since antiquity (Hansen 1962: 135–138; Mojtahed-Zadeh 2007: 20–21, 64; Sahab et al. 2005). Notably, Arab maps up to the 1960s cite the Persian Gulf by its correct historical name (Abdul-Karim 1965; Hasan 1935; Heikal 1968). The United Nations has twice recognised the legality of the term 'Persian Gulf' for this body of water (UNAD 311 of 5 March 1971 and UNLA 45.8.2(c) of 10 August 1984; for more on these documents see Abdi 2007: 221, 232).

Pan-Arabism also lays territorial claims to Iran's south-west Khuzestan province (Parsi 2007: 22), called 'Arabistan' by Pan-Arabist thinkers who describe this as an ancient Arab territory (Seliktar 2008: 30) that must be restored to the greater Arab nation (Gielsing 1999: 13). Historiography however challenges the Pan-Arab thesis, as Khuzestan was the basis of the ancient Elamite civilisation, which heavily influenced the Achaemenid Persian Empire (559–331 BCE), with Khuzestan being an integral part of Parthian (c. 250 BCE–224 CE) and Sassanian Persia (224–651 CE) (De Graef and Tavernier 2012; Zarrin'kub 2002: 185; see also the Shapur inscription of Sassanian provinces from the early third century CE cited in Wiesehofer 2001: 184). Khuzistan remained politically intertwined with Iran in the post-Islamic era after the Arab conquests (Farrokh 2011: 76–77, 153–158; Kasravi 2005).

Retroactive Arabisation redefines past non-Arab peoples (notably Iranian scientific figures in Islam) and their achievements as Arab (Lewis 1989: 33). This cultural appropriation process may have historical antecedents, such as the aforementioned letter of Muawiyah, which also states, 'Arabs are entitled to inherit their [the Persians'] legacy.' Specifically, persons such as Omar Khayyam, Ibn Sina, Farabi, and so on are retroactively Arabised in Arab educational, political, and media outlets. This process is contradicted by primary Islamic sources such as the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun (1332–95), which report the majority of Muslim intellectual-scientific scholars as having been of Iranian descent (Frye 1977: 91; Ibn Khaldun 1967: vol. 3, 271–274, 311–315). Pan-Arab educators, notably Sami Shawkat, have called for the elimination of books such as those of Ibn Khaldun because they discredit Pan-Arab theories that all Muslim sages were Arabs (Makiya, 1998: 177). While mainstream

scholarship has outlined the extent and significance of Persian contribution to Arabo-Muslim civilisation with respect to sciences, medicine, mathematics, grammar, and so on (e.g. Abivardi 2001: 148–149; Elgood 2010: 58–301; Kennedy 1975; Nasr 1975; Saliba 1998; Yarshater 1998), Arabian historiography in general rejects the Persian legacy in Arabo-Muslim civilisation.

Other examples of historical revisionism include attempts by the Iraqi state to link Iraq's Shiite population with the country's pre-Islamic Iranian population, a theory first propagated in two books published in 1927 and 1933 (Dawisha 2003: 90; Masalha 1991: 690). The notion of viewing Iraqi Shiites as an Iranian fifth column inside Iraq was expanded during the Saddam Hussein era (Ajami 2003: 12). This may be explained by the Pan-Arabist dynamic of culturally distancing the Arabian world from Iran; as Shiism is the official state religion of Iran, Iraqi Shiites, though Arab, are retroactively redefined as Persians.

A number of official events in the Western world have engaged in retroactive Arabisation, such as the Centre d'Études Euro-Arabe of Paris, which hosted a conference in November 1992 defining over 80 per cent of Iranian artistic displays as Arab (Matini 1993: 467) and the Saudi Arabian government's exhibitions in London (October 2004) and Washington, DC (August 1989) displaying Persian cultural artifacts as Arabic or Turkish (Matini 1989). Another example is Toronto's 33rd International Congress of Asian and North African Studies, in which the Persian poetry of Jalal-e-Din Rumi was erroneously presented as 'Arabic Literature' (Estelami 1992: 305). More recently (August 2012) the Louvre museum used the term 'Islamic' in reference to its post-Islamic Iranian artifacts. This may have been related to the museum's decision to establish a branch in the United Arab Emirates, an initiative characterised by academics such as Marjolein (2007) as 'a clearly-defined strategy: profit maximization'. The British Broadcasting Corporation reported a total of 400 million Euros being paid by the Emirates to the Louvre for this project (BBC News 2007). Matini asserts that terms such as 'Arab science' or 'Islamic art' are European academic inventions that have been adopted by new Arab nation states such as Bahrain, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait (1992; 1993: 465).

#### (4) The Iran–Iraq War and Pan-Arabism

Following the overthrow of the Pahlavi order by February 1979, Saddam Hussein and the Baath Party, who were cognisant of Iranian military weakness, hoped to facilitate a rapid Iraqi conquest of Iran's Khuzestan province, which as noted previously was claimed as part of the greater Pan-Arab state. The invasion of Iran was officially known by the Baathist regime as the 'Qadissiya Saddam' in reference to the Arab victory over the Sassanian Empire (224–651 CE) in 637 CE, which led to the conquest of Iran (Adib-Moghaddam 2006: 37–38). Saddam made specific reference to the Iranians as 'the magi' who were to be crushed once again by the Arabs (Mackie 1996: 318).

There have been a myriad of reasons proposed as to the causes of the Iran–Iraq War, such as border disputes traced back to the Ottoman–Iranian wars as well as sectarian (Shia versus Sunni) rivalry (Souresrafil 2006: 27). Baathist philosophy regarded as a primary cause of the war the supposed racist 'Aryan versus Semite' rivalries dating back thousands of years (Makiya 1998: 264; Pipes 1983). This thesis contradicts the long-term history of cultural and anthropological admixture between the Iranian plateau, Fertile Crescent, Anatolia, Caucasus, and Central Asia. As noted by Halliday, Iraq is the Arab state with the strongest Persian legacy in the Arab world.

Tehran's Pan-Islamic rhetoric of unity between all Muslim (Arab and non-Arab) peoples contradicted Michel Aflaq's Baathist definition of Islam as 'a revolutionary Arab movement whose meaning was the renewal of Arabism' (Makiya 1998: 198). When the war was ignited by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iran on 22 September 1980, King Khalid of Saudi Arabia (ruled 1975–82) supported the annexation of Iran's Khuzestan province by stating that he stood with Saddam Hussein in the 'pan-Arab battle and its conflict with the Persians, the enemies of the Arab nation' (*Guardian* 1980). The Iraqi educational system also produced textbooks promoting conspiracy theories and alleging a collusion between Iranians and Jews against the Arabs that went back thousands of years to the time of Cyrus the Great (559–530 BCE) (Adib-Moghaddam 2006: 36).

Baathist propaganda participated in the war effort by promoting racism. Propaganda films often equated the Arabic–Islamic conquests of the Sassanian Empire with the

contemporary Iran–Iraq War (Mackie 1996: 318). Racist writings were widely distributed to Iraqi government institutions, educational settings, and the military establishment, notably with the republishing in 1981 of the pamphlet *Three Whom God Should Not Have Created: Persians, Jews and Flies* by Khairallah Tulfah, Saddam Hussein's maternal uncle (Bengio 2011: 133). The publication defined Iranians as 'animals god created in the shape of humans' (Karsh and Rautsi 1991: 15). Official racist discourse in fact involved descriptions of Iranians as animals (mainly insects and donkeys), especially by the high echelons of the Baathist leadership, for example General Maher Abdul Rasheed (Hiro 1991: 108). Racist literature (textbooks, poetry, newspaper articles, etc.) described Iranians as bearing racial characteristics such as cruelty, mercilessness, hatred against Arabs, 'backstabbing', and 'the destructive Persian mentality' (Adib-Moghaddam 2006: 35–36). Nazi-type race laws were instituted against Iraqis of Iranian background, including financial incentives for Iraqis to divorce marriage partners of Iranian ancestry (Aburish 2000: 123), and Iraqis of Iranian ancestry were deported en masse to Iran by Saddam Hussein's regime (Al-Ansari 1991; Al-Zubaidi 2010: 49). The Baathist regime also attempted to destroy Iran's historical identity through 'archeological warfare' by deploying artillery, missiles, and aerial bombardment against ancient Iranian historical sites, including UNESCO World Heritage sites (Hojjat 1993).

Pan-Arab philosophy significantly influenced Baathist military planning in four ways. First was the tendency of Iraqi military planners to underestimate Iranian military capabilities, leading to inadequate war preparations (Woods et al. 2011: 8) and assumptions of a rapid victory over Iran within 10–14 days (Zabih 1988: 169). While many of the Iraqi assumptions of victory rested upon the state of Iranian military disarray following the 1979 revolution (Farrokh 2011: 346–349), Pan-Arabism appears to have influenced Iraqi assumptions of the Iranian will to resist the invasion. As noted by Jawdat, 'Iraqi strategy bears no evidence of any planning beyond the assumption that the Iranian armed forces would collapse at the first shot' (1983: 91). Even as Iraqi forces were ejected from Khuzestan by late May 1982, Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi leadership often relied on Pan-Arabist assumptions of Persian military

inferiority by claiming that their ejection from Iranian territory in late May 1982 was due to the 'voluntary' withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Iran (Hiro 1991: 56).

The second impact of Pan-Arabism on Iraqi military planning was in the assumption that Iranian Arabs would welcome Iraqi troops as they entered into Khuzestan's provincial cities. This led the Iraqi military brass to conclude that close-quarter urban combat would not take place as they invaded Iran, which may partly explain why they failed to provide adequate infantry forces to support their tank thrusts into Khuzestan. The majority of Iranian Arabs did not support the invasion, with many joining the Iranian military in resisting the Iraqis (Hiro 1991: 43). This resulted in Iraq's failure to capture all major Khuzestani cities, except for Khorramshahr, which fell only after very heavy urban combat over several weeks, another factor preventing the Iraq conquest of Khuzestan in 1980.

The third impact of Pan-Arabism on the Iraqi war effort was in its success in recruiting Arab volunteers from various non-Arab countries to fight against Iran, notably Jordan's Yarmuk Brigade (Rajaei 1997: 15). Dawisha however notes that the majority of the 'volunteers' were non-Iraqi Arab guest workers forcibly recruited by Iraq into the war (2003: 275).

The fourth manner in which Pan-Arabism affected Iraqi military planning was in terms of chemical warfare. The Iraqi media promoted Pan-Arabist propaganda by de-humanising Iranians through violent imagery and language, thus helping to minimise the moral impact of non-conventional weapons. The Iraqi press often produced various de-humanising cartoons portraying Iranians as animals, burning in furnaces, being eaten by fishes, and so on (Bengio 1986: 474). When General Mahir Abdul Rashid deployed chemical weapons to kill Iranian troops, he officially characterised his dead Iranian victims as 'Majoosi [Zoroastrian Magi] insects' (Bengio 1998: 153), a description announced on Baghdad Radio on 28 February 1984 (Hiro 1991: 278). Iraqi television would support this process by broadcasting images of dead and mutilated Iranians for hours.

### Conclusion: educational discourse and cultural rapprochement

Negative characterisations of Iranians continue to appear at the official level in the

Arab world, one prominent example being the Iraqi Sunni politician Adnan Al-Dulaimi, who made the following statements on Saudi Arabia's Safa TV (aired on 17 January 2012): 'When facing the Persian personality you have no choice but to use force, they understand nothing but force ... whenever they are in power, they want you to worship them, but when they are ruled by others who are stronger, they lick their boots ... they become submissive to the point of masochism ... Persian personality is characterised by insolence.'

Educational discourse is recommended as the primary tool of overcoming the anti-Persian element of Pan-Arabist discourse. This process may be put into practice by the organisation of conferences and seminars involving Arabian, Western, and Iranian educational and academic institutions specialising in the Islamic domains. It may be hypothesised that such proceedings should help to overcome Arab perceptions of Iranians with respect to their collective characteristics as well as their legacy in Arab-Islamic civilisation.

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## Pan-Asianism

### Introduction

Pan-Asianism (also referred to as Asianism) is an idea, movement, and ideology based on an assumed cultural and ethnic commonality of Asians. It assumes the existence of common political and economic interests and of a shared destiny which necessitate a union of Asian peoples or countries to realise common aims. Such politicised ideas of Asian commonality and unity probably originated in Japan in the late 19th century but quickly became known throughout East Asia, in other parts of Asia, and outside Asia. One major impetus to the spread of Pan-Asianism was the racial exclusion legislation in the US from the 1880s onwards and the accompanying 'Yellow Peril' discourse there and in Europe. Depending on whether one prefers to interpret Pan-Asianism as an idea, as a movement, or as an ideology, the period during which its impact was strongest can be placed at different times between the 1880s and the early 1940s. However, as a political concept, discussed at first only occasionally by a specialist minority and later widely in mainstream public discourse, pan-Asianism has never completely disappeared since its inception and continues to be invoked frequently in social, economic, and political discourse today.

### Concept and conceptions

Pan-Asianism as a concept can be approached by analysing its semantic components: 'pan' (Greek: all) signifies togetherness, completion, or unity, while 'ism' refers to a theory, doctrine, or principle. 'Pan-Asianism' could therefore be translated as 'All Asia Principle' or 'Theory of Asian Unity'. In Japan and China, Pan-Asianism became widespread under the term 'Greater Asianism' (Jap. *Dai Ajiashugi*, Ch. *Da Yazhouzhuyi*) or simply *Asianism* (Jap. *Ajiashugi*, Ch. *Yazhouzhuyi*; for an overview of different conceptions of Pan-Asianism see Saaler and Szpilman 2011). The

most ambiguous part of the concept is its regional referent, Asia. Since Asia discourse in the 'West' usually ascribed Asian commonality to the 'yellow races' of East Asia, and because Pan-Asianism as a self-referential concept had the greatest impact in Japan and China, most discussions of Pan-Asianism centre on the region today comprising Japan, China, Taiwan, and the Koreas, with occasional references to South-East Asia and South Asia and only rare inclusions of Western Asia. Pan-Asianism's Asia therefore by and large refers to the region that was traditionally under the strong influence of Chinese civilisation, including its material culture (diet, chopsticks) and non-material culture (script, Confucianism, Chinese Buddhism), as well as its political and social order (tributary and dynastic system, scholar-officials, examination system). While this heritage served as a basic unifying factor in many conceptions of Pan-Asianism, the central focus usually lay on Japan, not China. The main reasons for this are, first, Chinese disinterest in alternative concepts of Asia (other than the hegemonic, but looser, Sinocentric tributary order), second, the Japanese origin of Pan-Asianism as a new political concept, and third, the shift in power relations within East Asia from Chinese to Japanese dominance by the late 19th century. As a consequence of the latter, most Japanese conceptions of Pan-Asianism included a self-assigned leadership role for Japan as the strongest and most 'modern' or 'advanced' country in East Asia. This position is prominently reflected in the Japanese proposals for the Asian Monroe Doctrine, which was formulated in imitation of the Monroe Doctrine declared by the US president James Monroe in 1826 (see Swale 2011). Just as the original Monroe Doctrine was not a non-hegemonic policy, but aimed rather at securing the national interests of the US in the Americas vis-à-vis the European colonial powers, the Asian Monroe Doctrine proposed a Japan-centred equivalent in opposition to the Western colonial powers in Asia. Asian Monroeism, like its American model, symbolises the ambivalence of Pan-Asianism as a concept that accommodates both imperialist and anti-imperialist views. While, on the one hand, most conceptions of Pan-Asianism argued for the liberation of Asian peoples and territory from Western imperialism, they implied – or explicitly called for – the replacement of Western hegemony by

Japanese supremacy. Most Asianist conceptions are therefore both imperialist and anti-imperialist. This co-existence of opposing political agendas made Pan-Asianism a highly contested concept, an extremely disputed political agenda, and an ideal concept for imperialist propaganda in the name of anti-imperialism. The over-use of Pan-Asianism as an instrument of propaganda by the Japanese military and state authorities during the so-called Fifteen Years War (1931–45) in East Asia discredited the concept until the early post-war period and may have contributed to the fact that Japanese scholars only hesitantly started to study Pan-Asianism in the late 1950s (on the development of scholarship on Asianism in Japan see Furuya 1996). With few exceptions, scholarship in Western languages on the subject appeared only from the late 1990s onwards; among the first substantial articles dealing with Pan-Asianism in English are Beasley 1987, Hashikawa 1980, and Miwa 1990.

### Scholarship and classifications

The rehabilitation of ideas of Asian commonality in the context of the anti-imperialist Afro-Asian Bandung movement from the mid-1950s onwards encouraged the emergence of the first academic studies of Pan-Asianism in post-war Japan. Shorter articles on the development of Japanese Pan-Asianism by the historians Harada Katsumasa (1959) and Nohara Shirō (1960) formed the analytical basis of a first longer essay by the Japanese China scholar Takeuchi Yoshimi (1910–77) on ‘The Prospect of Asianism’ (*Ajishugi no tenbō*), published in 1963 (for an interpretation and partial translation of this text, see Uhl 2011, and for a full and annotated translation in German, see Uhl 2005). This study has remained the most influential scholarly work on Pan-Asianism up to the present day. Takeuchi defined Asianism as an ‘inclination’, not an independent school of thought, contrasted Asianism’s ‘intention of solidarity’ to its function as an ‘instrument of invasion’, and distinguished between ‘real’ and ‘self-professed’ Asianism. In addition, Takeuchi established a canon of thought and thinkers that he viewed as representative of Asianism. This canon included, among others, activists of the left-wing Freedom and People’s Rights Movement of the 1880s (Ueki Emori, Tarui Tōkichi, Ōi Kentarō), radical

right-wing groups such as the Kokuryōkai (Black Dragon Society) and the Genyōsha (Dark Ocean Society) that supported Japan’s imperial expansion on the Asian mainland, the art historian Okakura Tenshin (who established the phrase ‘Asia is one’: see below), and the Sinophile writer and activist Miyazaki Tōten (supporter of the Chinese revolutionary Sun Yat-sen) (for these groups and thinkers see the relevant chapters in Saaler and Szpilman 2011). Takeuchi’s main concern was to (re-)establish an understanding of Asianism that emphasised solidarity over invasion and that would, consequently, facilitate a positive Japanese understanding of Asia. In other words, he aimed at the rehabilitation of Asianism without denying the crimes committed in its name. Takeuchi therefore dismissed Asianist political and military propaganda, such as the euphemism ‘Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere’ which the Japanese government used to disguise its imperialist policy in Asia, as well as apologetic and self-professed conceptions of Asianism as ‘pseudo-thought’, ‘non-intellectual’, and eventually non-Asianist. In this way, Takeuchi differed from Nohara, who had distinguished chronologically between the originally liberal and non-hegemonic ‘Asian Solidarity Thesis’ of the 1880s and the imperialist ‘Greater Asianism’ from the early 1890s onwards, which had gradually developed into a militaristic and emperor-centred doctrine. Also unlike Nohara, Takeuchi sidelined Chinese interpretations of Asianism, for example by Sun Yat-sen (the ‘Kingly Way’) and the Marxist thinker Li Dazhao (‘New Asianism’), both of whom were critical of Japanese Asianism without denying the concept as such. For Takeuchi, the existence of Chinese Asianism was not instrumental in his effort at restoring Asianism as a significant part of the historical and contemporary Japanese concern with Asia and the world.

Since the 1990s, Japanese scholarship has gradually started to shift its focus away from the Takeuchian approach, beginning instead to focus on Pan-Asianism’s ‘Asia’ as a significant element of understanding the concept’s meaning and implications. For example, the historians Furuya Tetsuo and Yamamuro Shin’ichi have historicised Asia with a focus on functional aspects of Asianism. Yamamuro distinguishes between Asia as a conceived, linked, and projected space. In his view, the Japanese were initially forced to accept Asia



as a Western spatial classification, together with its negative civilisational implications. Eventually, however, they managed to utilise the concept for their own purposes (Yamamuro 2001). More than any previous studies, Furuya and Yamamuro have explored the historical use and meaning of Asianism and thereby contributed to the diversification of the Asianist canon. In addition, they have integrated Asianism discourse into the wider context of transnational and global history by emphasising linkages between political reality and discourse in Japan, different parts of East Asia, and the world. One important result of this re-contextualisation is the discussion of Asianism in the (perceived) global hierarchy of West → Japan → rest of Asia that informed the world view of many thinkers and activists in Japan from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century.

In 20th-century China, studies of Asianism usually indiscriminately dismissed Japanese Asianism as blunt imperialism, while praising in a politically prescribed manner Li Dazhao's 'anti-imperialist' and Sun Yat-sen's 'patriotic' conceptions of Asianism. Since the early 2000s, however, Chinese scholars have started to revise this orthodox interpretation of Asianism. In 2004, the historian of modern Japan Wang Ping has proposed to evaluate Asianism chronologically, in terms of co-operative Classical Asianism (until 1898), expansive Greater Asianism (until 1928), and the invasive 'Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere' (until 1945) (see Weber 2011c). Against the background of China's contemporary rise, partial affirmations of historical Asianism have started to emerge in public discourse too. They imply that Asianism could become a formula for China's new approach to Asia in the 21st century but, at the same time, are rather explicit about China's self-appointed leadership role in any such project. If one sees present-day China as a post-modern empire, this conception of new Chinese Asianism could be classified as new imperialist Asianism.

Unlike scholarship in China and Japan, scholarship in English has often focused on Pan-Asianism's 'pan' and the assumed common genealogy of Pan-Asianism and other pan-movements. For example, William G. Beasley distinguished between transnational anti-hegemonic pan-movements (e.g. Balkan Pan-Slavism, Pan-Africanism) as an expression of anti-colonial resistance and

interventionist hegemonic pan-movements (e.g. Russian Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism) as instruments of expansion (see Beasley 1987). Beasley concluded that Japanese Pan-Asianism contained both elements of anti-colonialism (stemming from its weakness vis-à-vis the West) and expansionism (stemming from its strength vis-à-vis Asia). This typology was taken up and refined by Sven Saaler, who suggested distinguishing between irredentist, regionalist, hegemonic, and anti-colonial pan-movements. Saaler concluded that Japanese Pan-Asianism overlapped with each of these types because it was 'never clearly structured and defined' and 'took vague and frequently changing forms' (see Saaler 2004: 14). These attempts to classify Pan-Asianism in comparative perspective have contributed to the integration of scholarship on nationalism, regionalism, and imperialism in different world regions.

Approximately half a century after scholarship on Asianism began with a simple solidarity-versus-invasion dichotomy, scholars today have returned to contrasting two types of Pan-Asianism: imperialist and anti-imperialist conceptions (Itō 1990). Placing current discussions of regionalism and mechanisms of regionalisation into a historical context, Prasenjit Duara has proposed to discuss Asianism in the framework of a distinction between 'imperial regionalism' and 'anti-imperialist regionalization'. According to Duara, both types can be found in historical Asianism: 'Japanese pan-Asianism at the turn of the century had several different strains, including imperialistic ones, but also egalitarian and compassionate feelings toward fellow Asians who had been exploited and devastated by more aggressive cultures' (Duara 2010: 970). Intentionally or not, Duara's binary typology constitutes a return to the Takeuchian distinction between (imperialist) invasion and (anti-imperialist) solidarity.

A possible conclusion drawn from these different attempts at classifying Pan-Asianism may be that both in thought and practice different conceptions of Pan-Asianism varied greatly in content and intention. During most of its history these conceptions co-existed but differed in influence. When ideas and practices of Asian commonality and solidarity were 'hijacked by Japanese militarism' (Duara 2010: 973) from the 1930s onwards, however, Pan-Asianism became meaningless beyond its function as propaganda.

## Pan-Asianism before the First World War

While 'Pan-Asianism' as a term appears not to have been in use in East Asia before the early 1890s, other concepts implying cultural and ethnic commonality or the common political fate of Asians in opposition to the West had been used in Japan and China from no later than the 1880s onwards. Among them were 'same culture, same race' (Jap. *dōbun dōshu*, Ch. *tongwen tongzhong*) implying cultural and ethnic commonality, 'lips and teeth' (Jap. *shinshi hōsha*, Ch. *chunchi fuche*) implying interdependence, or the more practically oriented terms 'revive Asia' (Jap. *Shin-A*, Ch. *Zhen Ya*) and 'raise Asia' (Jap. *Kō-A*, Ch. *Xing Ya*) (on these concepts and their relation to Asianism see Furuya 1996). Some of these concepts served as names of Asianist organisations active before and around the turn of the century, such as the *Kō-A Kai* (Raise Asia Society, 1880–1900), the *Dōbun Kai* (Common Culture Society, 1898), or the *Tōa Dōbun Kai* (East Asia Common Culture Society, 1898–1946) (see Zachmann 2011). The founding of Asianist organisations since the 1880s in Japan must above all be seen in the context of anti-Westernism. This anti-Westernism both directly and indirectly targeted the West, seen as a more or less monolithic bloc representing political, economic, and rhetorical oppression of the non-West. Most immediately this anti-Westernism was directed internally at the Japanese Meiji government, which preferred to modernise by adapting models in law, education, economy, politics, military, and other areas from European countries and the US, thereby neglecting Japan's long-standing links with East Asia. In addition, it was also directed externally at the West itself; by forming personal alliances with like-minded Chinese, Koreans, and other Asians, Japanese Asianists hoped to prepare for an eventual clash with the West in order to regain freedom from Western oppression. The anti-imperialist element is therefore deeply rooted in the programmes of early Asianist organisations. However, the self-assigned privilege of leadership of Pan-Asia by Japanese Asianists increasingly came under attack from non-Japanese participants as relations between Japan and its Asian neighbours deteriorated, first in the struggle over Korea (since 1875, leading to annexation in 1910), then during the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), and finally during and in the

immediate aftermath of the First World War (the Twenty-One Demands of 1915, the anti-Japanese demonstrations in Korea and China in 1919).

The activities of these Pan-Asianist organisations were nevertheless meaningful. In meetings, in publications, and most importantly through educational activities (such as the establishment of language schools, e.g. *Tōa Dōbun Shoin* in Nanjing/Shanghai) they contributed, in the literal sense, to a growing mutual understanding, to the spread of political and scientific knowledge, and to an awareness of Asian commonality. In the decade following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, which had ended with China's defeat and its partial colonisation by Japan, exchanges between students and teachers from both countries boomed to an unprecedented degree (see Reynolds 1993). During this time, the first proposals emerged that not only suggested assistance and co-operation but went one step further to propose political unions of Japan and other parts of East Asia. The most famous proposal was authored by the liberal activist Tarui Tōkichi (1850–1922), who proposed 'to ally with the friendly nations of the same Asian race' (Kim 2011). His *Union of the Great East* (written in 1885, published in 1893) envisaged an alliance of Japan and Korea, later to be joined by China. Such a union, Tarui argued, would be advantageous economically and militarily, particularly in opposition to Russia, and would also strengthen the sense of East Asian racial commonality versus the White race. Tarui's treatise today is usually interpreted as a counterpart of the more well-known *Leaving Asia Thesis* (Jap. *Datsu-A Ron*, 1885) by the famous Meiji thinker Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834–1901), who had taken a stance completely opposite to Tarui's (for an English translation of this classic text see Lu 1997). After the failed Japanese intervention in Korea in 1885, Fukuzawa had called upon Japan to depart from 'the bad company of Asia' and to join the West in order to be recognised by it as a civilised country that was – despite its shared historic roots and geographical position – fundamentally different from the Asian barbarians. Against this anti-Asianist civilisational argument, Tarui's Asianism focused on a combination of practical and racial arguments. Despite the existence of Asianist organisations and ideas, Fukuzawa's call to depart from Asia is believed to be more representative of the

dominant politico-intellectual mood of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Japan.

A second important Asianist writing produced around the turn of the century was *Ideals of the East* (1903) by Okakura Kakuzō (1862–1913, better known as Tenshin) (see Tankha 2011). This book, written in English for a foreign audience and not published in Japanese before the 1920s, contains the famous line ‘Asia is one’, which today is often quoted as the politico-cultural epitome of Asianism. Okakura, however, admired the diversity of Asian civilisational traditions and arts, which only appeared as ‘one’ when compared with the external other, namely the West. This West increasingly came to be negatively portrayed, not only in the parts of Asia that had been colonised by the West, but also in Japan. After Japan’s victory over China in 1895, the so-called Triple Intervention by Russia, Germany, and France forbade Japan extensive territorial gains in China. While even Japanese Asianists had been tolerant to some degree of the Western colonial presence in Asia, there was little tolerance in Japan of the Western restriction of Japan’s own expansive ambitions within Asia. In this context Japanese politicians and thinkers coined an imperialist version of Asianism to which they thought it was difficult for the West to object since it constituted an imitation of a Western policy: the Asian Monroe Doctrine. One of the first proponents of this doctrine was the prominent politician Prince Konoe Atsumaro, who was also the leading figure in the Asianist East Asia Common Culture Society. In 1898, Konoe first proposed the adoption of an Asian Monroe Doctrine to the Chinese reformer Kang Youwei: ‘The East is the East of the East. Only the peoples of the East must have the right to decide the matters of the East. The American Monroe Doctrine denotes exactly this. It is the duty of our two peoples [Chinese and Japanese] to implement an Asian Monroe Doctrine in the East’ (see Zachmann 2009). While in this formulation the idea appeared to be anti-imperialist and pluralist in character, it lent itself perfectly to the justification of Japanese claims of hegemony and imperialist expansion when China continued to struggle politically, economically, and militarily around the time of the Republican Revolution (1911–12). In fact, Asian Monroeism became a key concept in the justification for Japan’s assumed special mission in Asia during the 1910s and

was a key argument also in the 1930s when the Japanese government sought to justify its establishment of Manchukuo as a protectorate in north China (Szpilman 2011).

The anti-Western element in Pan-Asianism was not fuelled solely by Western imperialism in Asia. Another source was the rhetorical denigration of Asians in Western political and popular discourse. Movements in the US to ban Chinese immigration in the late 19th century were accompanied by an array of racist statements known as ‘Yellow Peril’ discourse. When Japan, too, became increasingly affected by these policies and discourse from the early 20th century onwards, Asianist thought and proposals spread rapidly. As the antithesis of Yellow Peril discourse, the term ‘White Peril’ was coined and interpreted by some as the core meaning of racialist conceptions of Asianism (Duus 2011, Kamachi 2005). While various ideas of Asian commonality had been discussed in Japan (and to a much lesser degree in China) since the 1880s, it is important to note that debates on Pan-Asianism were highly unpopular with the Japanese government. Although we know today that the Japanese government supported some of the Asianist organisations mentioned above, officially it rejected any ideas of an Asian union including Japan, particularly if under Japanese leadership (this position was promoted by special government envoys during and after the Russo-Japanese War in the US and in Europe; see the introduction to Saaler and Szpilman 2011: 13). This stance was part of its pro-Western and accommodationist orientation, which produced an imperialist-cum-anti-Asianist rather than Asianist position and changed openly only when Japan announced its departure from the League of Nations in 1933.

### **Pan-Asianism in the 20th century**

The greatest impact on the spread of Pan-Asianist ideas in Japan and China may be attributed to the First World War. It not only triggered the birth of a great diversity of Asianist conceptions, adding economic, educational, academic, literary, and other elements to the previous range of mainly political and racialist-culturalist ideas. It also brought discussions about the meaning, significance, and usefulness of Asianism to the mainstream of public debate. Articles discussing Pan-Asianism now started to appear

in national newspapers and widely read journals. Despite very obvious imperialist tendencies in Japan's Asia policy during the 1910s (the annexation of Korea in 1910, the Twenty-One Demands to China in 1915, the Siberian Expedition during 1918–22), this was also the period during which Asianism exerted the strongest appeal throughout Asia, including China and India.

The First World War served as a trigger since it challenged the widespread belief in the superiority of Western civilisation and modernity. More practically, the focus of the Western powers on Europe as the main theatre of war allowed for the planning of more proactive policies by Asians in Asia, including renewed demands for the declaration and implementation of an Asian Monroe Doctrine. In addition, the refusal to accept the Japan-sponsored racial equality clause at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 fuelled the growing disillusionment with the West and became a perfect occasion for anti-Western agitation in Japan (Shimazu 1998). The protests against Western racial discrimination reached a peak with the US–American Racial Exclusion Legislation of 1924 and stimulated racialist Asianist thought and activities in Japan to an unprecedented degree (Stalker 2006). This stream of Asianism would remain at the forefront of debate (and later of propaganda) until the end of the Second World War (Dower 1986).

However, the legacy of the war and of Versailles, including Wilson's (and Lenin's) declaration of the self-determination of nations, also inspired different anti-imperialist conceptions of Asianism in the colonised parts of Asia, including West Asia. In fact, after the Japanese victory over Russia (1905) Japan had begun 'to serve as a metaphor for Asian modernity for the Ottomans, Egyptians, and Indians' (Aydin 2007: 78). In particular, many Indians came to study and live in Japan, although their concern with national independence seems to have mostly taken priority over a substantially Pan-Asian cause. This is very obvious in the writings of Rash Bihari Bose (1886–1945), the most famous Indian dissident in Japan. He had fled to Japan in 1915, acquired Japanese citizenship in 1923, founded the Indian Independence League in Tokyo, and used the Pan-Asianist boom in Japan to promote Indian independence (Hotta 2011). Bose's activities in exile illustrate the dilemma of

Pan-Asianism at that time. There was no other Asian power to appeal to in the fight for independence but Japan. However, from 1902 to 1922 Japan had been an ally of India's coloniser, and, even after the abolition of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, it showed little interest in participating in or even leading anti-colonial national liberation movements because it had itself become an imperial power. Bose's explicit Japanophilism therefore damaged his position within the Indian independence movement. As Bose had to learn, it was difficult to be pro-Japanese and anti-imperialist at the same time. This balancing act became almost impossible after the war when Japan's imperialism triggered anti-Japanese movements and violent suppressions in Korea (the March First Movement, 1919) and China (the May Fourth Movement, 1919, the May Thirtieth Incident, 1925). But criticism of Japanese conceptions of Pan-Asianism did not preclude affirmations of the concept itself. For example, Li Dazhao (1889–1927), a well-known Marxist thinker and co-founder of the Chinese Communist Party who had studied in Japan between 1913 and 1916, harshly criticised Japanese 'Greater Asianism' as a 'different name for Greater Japanism' and as a principle of invasion and Japanese militarism (Matten 2011). Initially, however, Li embraced Asianism as an instrument to overcome rival nationalisms. Yet for Li it was no contradiction to reject Japanese nationalism while advancing the revival of Chinese nationalism as the core message of Chinese Pan-Asianism. According to Li, Chinese nationalism should first free and unite China, then proceed to unite East Asia, and later unify the world. In this sense, Li's 'New Asianism' was as nationalistic and self-centred as Japanese proposals for an Asian Monroe Doctrine. The important difference, of course, was that the realisation of such China-centred interpretations of Asianism were – at that time, at least – unrealistic given China's internal state and international status, whereas Japan-centred visions had already begun to be implemented as imperialist policies.

Although originating from a very different position – that of a nationalist statesman, not a Marxist activist – the most famous Chinese contribution to Asianism discourse by the 'Father of the Chinese Republic', Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), resembles Li's 'New Asianism'. The basic line for Sun, too, was

anti-colonialism, at least as far as China's emancipation from the colonial powers was concerned. While Sun harshly criticised the West for its racism and imperialism, his stance towards Japan was more ambivalent. On the one hand he portrayed modern Japan as a model for China and other Asian nations, while on the other hand he criticised Japan's lack of commitment to the traditional Asian value of benevolent rule (Jap. *Ōdō*, Ch. *wangdao*). Reportedly, Sun ended his famous speech on pan-Asianism, delivered in the Japanese port city of Kobe in November 1924, with the following statement: 'Japan today has become acquainted with the Western civilization of the rule of Might, but retains the characteristics of the Oriental civilization of the rule of Right. Now the question remains whether Japan will be the hawk of the Western civilization of the rule of Might, or the tower of strength of the Orient. This is the choice which lies before the people of Japan' (Brown 2011: 85). The terms 'rule of Might' and 'rule of Right' refer to the Confucian concepts *wangdao* (lit. Kingly Way: benevolent rule) and *badao* (lit. Despotic Way: hegemonic rule). Transferred to the political context of the late 19th to mid-20th centuries, they may also be understood as representing anti-imperialism and imperialism, respectively. Sun's final question to Japan addresses the co-existence of imperialist and anti-imperialist conceptions of Asianism. But his conceptual choice and his euphemistic portrayal of China's own previous imperialist-like tributary relations with other parts of Asia leave little doubt about the Sinocentrism inherent in his conception of Asianism (Duara 2001). In other words, for many Asianists, including also Chinese, Asianism's anti-imperialist dimension went only so far as to criticise the imperialism of others while conveniently making use of the concept to disguise one's own hegemonic agenda (e.g. cultural dominance in the region or ethnic hegemony within one country).

The Pan-Asian conferences held in Nagasaki in 1926 and in Shanghai in 1927 were the last notable efforts 'from below' to divorce Japanese imperialism from Japanese-driven Asianism (on the conferences see Weber 2015). Convened by a Chinese and a Japanese Asianist organisation, the conferences brought together Asian-minded activists, including Rash Bihari Bose and the Hindu revolutionary Mahandra Pratap.

However, Chinese suspicions of Japanese proposals, for example for the building of an Asian railway and the planning of an Asian Development Bank, and the Japanese delegates' hesitant stance towards condemning Japan's imperialist policies, obstructed any fruitful debate. Given the obstructive circumstances, however, the convening of these conferences alone may be regarded as proof of Pan-Asianism's appeal to thinkers and activists in Asia during the mid-1920s.

Any discussions of Pan-Asianist alternatives to imperialism or nationalism became obsolete when the Japanese military and government began to adopt the concept to propagate its policies in its new colonies. Most notoriously, Pan-Asianist notions were instrumentalised when Japan created the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932 (Young 1998). According to Japanese propaganda, Manchukuo represented the realisation of a Pan-Asianist ideal state in which different Asian nations could co-exist peacefully and in harmony. The founding of Manchukuo also inspired new Asianist organisations, which often had prominent political or military leaders as patrons. One of the key figures behind the activities of the Greater Asia Association (Dai Ajia Kyōkai, 1933–45; see Weber 2011a), for example, was General Matsui Iwane (1878–1948), who was later executed as a class A war criminal for his role in the military campaign in Central China and in the infamous Nanking Massacre committed by Japanese soldiers in the Chinese capital in 1937–38. The Greater Asia Association used Japan's military advance to set up branches in occupied areas that were instructed to spread Pan-Asianist propaganda to gain local collaboration. In Japan itself reports about and by the Association's Asia network implied that Japan-sponsored Pan-Asianism was the key to Japan's assumed successes and popularity throughout Asia. With the Japanese declaration of the 'Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere' in 1940 (Saaler 2011) Pan-Asianism completely degenerated into an ideology for empire. In addition, following ever stricter censorship regulations and the establishment of a nationwide 'thought police' in 1928 (Tipton 1990), controversial discussions and anti-government activism had become close to impossible even before the mobilisation for total war from 1941 onwards. The most prominent use of non-Japanese conceptions of Pan-Asianism during that period

was the attempt by Wang Jingwei's collaborationist Nanjing regime to link Japanese hegemonism to Sun Yat-sen's pan-Asianism (Weber 2011b). Wang's outspoken focus on Sun's Sinocentric Asianism was tolerated by the Japanese to a large degree because the Japanese government itself had started to use Sun as an instrument for the promotion of 'Sino-Japanese friendship' under Japanese guidance.

The Bandung conference of 1955 (see Dennehy 2011) is often interpreted as an early revival of political Pan-Asianism, although the joint African-Asian dimension may qualify the movement more correctly as an expression of non-regionalist anti-colonialism and a stepping stone towards the Non-Aligned Movement. In its regional, cultural, and ideological heterogeneity it shared little of the elements of Pan-Asianism during the first half of the 20th century. Pan-Asianist notions, at best, informed one stream of thought within the Bandung movement.

### Pan-Asianism in the 21st century

Towards the end of the 20th century, with the breakdown of the Soviet Bloc and the economic rise of many Asian countries, new affirmations of Asia emerged that revived some of the themes of historical Pan-Asianism (Jenco 2013). Initially, the main proponents of such ideas were neither Japanese nor Chinese, but included the former prime ministers of Singapore, Lee Kwan Yew (born 1923), and Malaysia, Mohamad Mahathir (born 1925). Both used Pan-Asianist notions to justify the authoritarian and patriarchic rule in their countries, which – in their view – corresponded better to Asian socio-political traditions than Western democracy. Lee in 1994 proposed a cultural Asianism through which East Asian people were allegedly connected by tradition and fate. According to Lee they shared a belief in the superiority of groupism over individualism and 'core values' such as 'thrift, hard work, filial piety, and loyalty in the extended family' (quoted in Jenco 2013: 250). Similarly, Mahathir (2000) denounced the promotion of human rights and democracy by Western governments as a new quasi-imperialist method to continue their domination over Asia. Instead he encouraged Asians to 'have pride in their values and culture and their ways of managing their countries and their problems. The

attempts by the West to force their values and ideologies on Asians must be resisted.'

In the context of regional integration and attempts at historical reconciliation, Pan-Asianist visions have also re-emerged in contemporary political discourse in China, Japan, and Korea. While in official statements by politicians from these countries Pan-Asianism once again appears to have become a tool for reaffirming or claiming one country's centrality and leadership position in (East) Asia (Weber 2011c), initiatives from below appeal to notions of commonality for the purpose of fostering exchange, mutual interest and understanding, and historical reconciliation. Many of the intellectuals and activists in such transnational networks, including the Chinese Sun Ge, the Taiwanese Chen Kuan-hsing, and the Korean Baik Yong-seo, take inspiration from Takeuchi Yoshimi's pro-Asianist writings. Their discovery of Takeuchi and their promotion of East Asian reconciliation have triggered a boom in the study of Takeuchi since the early 2000s (Sun 2007; Chen 2010; Baik 2002). Linked to this focus on non-hegemonic visions of Asia is the re-emergence of Asianism as a critique of regionalism that is solely driven by capitalist interests. Against the tendency to conceive of Asia as merely a market obeying neoliberal mechanisms, many Asianist-inclined thinkers and activists have warned of an 'Asia for the rich' (Duara 2010: 983). In opposition to this capitalist vision of Asia the Japanese historian Wada Haruki and the Korean-born scholar Kang Sang-jung, among others, have proposed a people-centred approach to Asia that could lead to the creation of a Common House of North East Asia (Selden and Selden 2011). In these ways pro-Asianist civil society networks and scholarly communities are once again forming a transnational opposition to top-down projects that promote state-centred, neoliberal, or other hegemonic visions of Asia.

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## Postcolonial Social Movements

To look at the global South in 2014 is to look at 'a world of protest; a whirlwind of creative activity' (Prashad 2012: 9). Across the regions of Latin America, Asia, and Africa a wide array of subaltern groups – peasants and landless workers, women, informal sector workers, slumdwellers, indigenous peoples, and marginalised youth – have come together in social movements that in a myriad of ways challenge dispossession and disenfranchisement and raise alternatives to a neo-liberal world order that is increasingly mired in crisis (Cox and Nilsen 2014; Motta and Nilsen 2011a).

This world of protest has a long historical lineage. In fact, properly understood, its origins can be traced to the postcolonial development project's unravelling (in the sense of protracted decay), and beyond to the anti-colonial movements that brought this project into being by vindicating the demand for national sovereignty and social justice against a world system in which populations, territories, and resources had been subjugated to Western imperial rule since the late 1700s (Prashad 2007; Silver and Slater 1999).

And it is for this reason that is useful to think of popular resistance in the global South in terms of postcolonial social movements. In the following essay, I delineate the two main axes of this unravelling: on the one hand, the emergence of new social movements and a resurgent Third World radicalism in the 1960s and 1970s; on the other hand, the eruption of popular resistance to neo-liberal restructuring in the 1980s. I then move on to discuss how these two axes of protest are fused in the collective oppositional projects of contemporary social movements in the global South.



## Decolonisation and the postcolonial development project

During the interwar years (1918–40) the politics of anti-colonial nationalism in Asia and Africa underwent an important transformation. Initially, demands for national self-determination had been articulated by native elites who ‘made little attempt to mobilise the mass of the population into the nationalist struggle’ (Silver and Slater 1999: 200). This changed in the wake of the revolutionary upheavals in Mexico and Russia as nationalist leaders geared their efforts to mobilising peasants and workers into large-scale popular movements, and increasingly co-ordinated their political projects between countries and regions (Motta and Nilsen 2011b; Prashad 2007). As the scope of mobilisation broadened, so too did the substantive content of anti-colonialism: the imperative of national liberation was wedded to ideals of social justice and an end to poverty. Anti-colonial movements, then, came to vindicate not just ‘the liberty and equality of peoples’, but also ‘liberty and equality among the people’ (Wallerstein 1990: 31).

As colonial rule came to give way to national independence for the Third World in the post-war era – first in South- and South-East Asia, and then in Africa – anti-colonial nationalism was also transformed from a collective oppositional project to a nation-building project in which development emerged as the central ambition of newly independent states (Desai 2004; Patel and McMichael 2004). ‘Every step in the government’s power, both internally and in its external relations’, declared Kwame Nkrumah, ‘will be taken to further the development of the nation’s resources for the common good’. And it is this endeavour that can be referred to as the postcolonial development project.

The postcolonial development project centred on strategies of ‘national capitalist development’ (Desai 2004: 171) in which agriculture and industry were to be modernised through the initiatives and leadership of ‘the developmental state’ (see Kiely 2007: 49–57). In order to provide a social undergirding for the postcolonial development project, the erstwhile leaders of anti-colonial movements sought to forge a network of horizontal alliances between dominant agrarian and industrial interests, and vertical alliances between these dominant groups and the subaltern

masses that had rallied to the cause of anti-colonial nationalism (Walton and Seddon 1995). Within the parameters of such ‘developmentalist alliances’ (Cardoso and Faletto 1979), industrial and agrarian elites retained their property rights and privileged access to the levers of political power, while subaltern groups were offered greater access to expanded public employment and public services, as well as a minimal ‘social wage guarantee’ through various forms of subsidised consumption (Walton and Seddon 1995).

As Walton and Seddon (1995) have argued, this was a constellation of compromises and concessions that won acquiescence and consent from below to nation-building projects that were ultimately elite-led. However, it was also the unravelling of these projects that signalled the emergence of the long wave of popular resistance that can be designated as postcolonial social movements.

## The year 1968 and its aftermath in the global South

In 1968, the world erupted in a global revolt that ‘cut across the tripartite division of the world system at the time – the West, the Communist bloc, and the Third World’ (Wallerstein 2006: 6). The Southern moment of this global revolt was a profoundly multifaceted one, in which subaltern groups and popular classes came together in a multitude of anti-systemic movements that challenged both the contradictions of the postcolonial development project and the continued subordination of Third-World countries in the capitalist world system (Berger 2004; Prashad 2007; Watts 2001).

One significant facet of the 1968 revolt in the global South was the emergence of popular movements that targeted ‘the nationalism and institutionalized elite politics ... of the first generation of independent third-world states’ (Watts 2001: 172). For example, in India – one of the leading ‘first-generation Bandung regimes’ (Berger 2004: 11) – the late 1960s witnessed the eruption of guerrilla warfare against the state in the form of the Naxalite movement that emerged in West Bengal to mobilise landless peasants against the semi-feudal rule of landed elites and the power of a state that was deemed to be a bridgehead of neo-imperial power in the country (see Banerjee 1984; Roy 2012). Despite its brutal repression – ironically, at

the hands of a state government run by the parliamentary left – the Naxalite movement constituted a political watershed in independent India. In its wake emerged a swathe of new social movements that mobilised social groups that had often been at the very margins of the postcolonial development project – for example, Adivasis, women, Dalits, and workers in the informal sector – and outside the domain of electoral politics. These groups challenged the ways in which this project centralised political power in an elite-dominated state apparatus which advanced a form of development that had dispossessed marginal peasants and subsistence producers, and had failed to curtail the gendered and caste-based violence to which women and Dalits were still subjected (see Omvedt 1993).

The Indian trajectory is only one of many instances from across the global South of how the late 1960s and the decade of the 1970s were an era in which subaltern groups struggled to develop new forms of collective action through which to challenge their adverse incorporation into the political economy of the postcolonial development project. Despite the fact that these movements were often met with fierce repression from above – most egregiously in the form of the state terrorism unleashed by Latin American dictatorships with US backing in the 1970s – their critiques of dispossession and disenfranchisement still echo in the politics of more recent popular mobilisations across the three regions of the South (see e.g. Nilsen 2010).

Another key facet of the Southern revolt of 1968 is the emergence of what Mark Berger (2004: 19) has called ‘second-generation Bandung regimes’ and the resultant radicalisation of Third Worldism. As a category, ‘second-generation Bandung regimes’ refers to an arc of regimes that ultimately stretches from Ahmed Ben Bella’s Algeria (1962–65) to Sandinista rule in Nicaragua (1979–90). Other significant examples of this new generation of Third-World regimes would be Chile under Salvador Allende (1970–73), Samora Machel’s Mozambique (1975–86), and Jamaica under Michael Manley (1972–80). And what these regimes had in common was ‘a more radical, more unambiguously socialist, Third Worldism than the first-generation Bandung regimes. Many of these regimes had emerged through protracted and particularly violent struggles against colonial domination

– Algeria and Mozambique being cases in point (19–23).

The appearance on the world stage of these regimes coincided with a radicalisation of the Third-World project that had first crystallised at the Afro-Asian people’s conference in Bandung in 1955. The first manifestation of this was the Tricontinental Conference that brought together national leaders and the representatives of liberation movements from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East (see Prashad 2007: ch. 8). The tenor of the conference was marked by the militancy of the second-generation regimes: this was evident not only in the increased support for armed struggle as an anti-imperialist strategy against the backdrop of the ongoing war in Vietnam, but also in the various ways that these regimes ‘attempted to radicalise state-mediated national development efforts in various ways in the name of socialism and national liberation’ (Berger 2004: 21). Resurgent Third Worldism was also manifest in the global arena in the form of the call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) that was put before the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1974, in which the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) called for a radical restructuring of the international economy in order to enable the countries of the global South to break free from their subordinate and dependent position in the world system (see Prashad 2012: 24–34).

The resurgence of a radicalised Third Worldism eventually foundered – in part due to the intransigence of the global North, in part due to the erosion of internal solidarity among the states of the global South, and in part due to the onset of the international debt crisis in the early 1980s (see below). However, the indictment that the second-generation Bandung regimes levelled against the persistence of unequal power relations in the global political economy in many important ways foreshadowed the critiques of neo-liberal inequality that have been articulated more recently by social movements across the global South.

### Neo-liberalism and its discontents

If the emergence of new social movements and radicalised Third Worldism during the late 1960s and 1970s constitute one axis of the lineage of postcolonial social movements in the global South, another equally significant

axis can be identified in the eruption of popular resistance to neo-liberal restructuring in the 1980s.

During the 1970s, regimes across the global South sought to counter economic stagnation by borrowing large sums of money from an international banking system that was flooded with excess dollars. Whereas these loans allowed Southern states to offset stagnation in the short run, this was nevertheless a strategy that created significant long-term vulnerabilities. This became clear when, in 1979, the US Federal Reserve implemented a significant hike in interest rates as part of a strategy to lift the country out of recession. The combination of significantly increased interest rates on loans with a downturn in demand and terms of trade for products from the global South in world markets rendered debt-servicing an impossibility. And as credit in global financial markets evaporated, further borrowing was out of the question (see McMichael 2004).

The response to the international debt crisis came in the form of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) administered by the IMF and the World Bank. In return for fresh loans and debt rescheduling, countries in the global South had to carry out a number of reforms geared towards a profound alteration of their political economies: currencies were devaluated; public expenditure was downsized; prices and commodity markets were deregulated; public-sector companies and utilities were privatised and sold off, often to foreign investors (Walton and Seddon 1995). In short, the outbreak of the international debt crisis heralded the coming of neo-liberalism in the global South, and with it the unravelling of the postcolonial development project (Kiely 2007).

Neo-liberal restructuring through SAPs 'eroded national economic management, and, by extension, the social contract that development states had with their citizens' (McMichael 2004: 140). As I showed above, the postcolonial development project had been based on an alliance of social forces in which the consent of subaltern groups was gained by extending access to public-sector employment and various forms of subsidised consumption that came to constitute a social wage guarantee for these groups. Under the aegis of neo-liberalism, states in the global South withdrew from these arrangements, and – as is evidenced by the escalation of

poverty and declining trends in social development that plagued Latin America and Africa in particular in the 1980s and early 1990s – this withdrawal in turn impacted adversely on subaltern livelihoods and living standards (George 1991).

The response to neo-liberal restructuring from below came in a form of popular resistance that has been referred to as 'IMF riots' or 'austerity protests', which Walton and Seddon (1995: 39) define as 'large-scale collective actions including political demonstrations, general strikes, and riots, which are animated by grievances over state policies of economic liberalization implemented in response to the debt crisis and market reforms urged by international agencies'. As many as 146 cases of austerity protests occurred across the global South from the middle of the 1970s to the early 1990s. These protests, which were an overwhelmingly urban phenomenon, rallied the urban poor, the working classes, and at times also segments of the middle classes in opposition to the distributional outcomes of SAPs (39–44).

At the heart of popular resistance to neo-liberalism was a 'moral economy of the urban poor' that had been forged in and through the postcolonial development project (Walton and Seddon 1994: 48). The social wage guarantees provided by postcolonial states had come to be seen by subaltern groups in the urban centres of the global South as a legitimate bundle of rights that was owed to them in exchange for their active or passive consent to the elite-led postcolonial development project (48). Thus, when states, as part of the implementation of SAPs, phased out price subsidies and public services and cut back on public-sector employment, the urban poor experienced this as a violation of their rightful expectations: 'Protestors demanded that the state meet its responsibilities to the people who, during the decades of patron–client politics, had upheld their end of the bargain' (Walton and Seddon 1994: 50).

The politics of the IMF riots were essentially defensive. In contrast to the new social movements of the 1970s, which had targeted the centralisation of political power in the developmental state, austerity protests were geared towards upholding facets of the state–society relations of the postcolonial development project that accommodated the needs and interests of subaltern groups (Motta and Nilsen 2011b: 14). However, this should

not lead us to conclude that popular resistance to neo-liberal restructuring was simply a backward-looking form of protest. Rather, what austerity protests in fact articulated was an incipient opposition to the forms of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey 2005) that have been at the heart of the neo-liberal project and central to the systematic transfer of social wealth 'from the mass of the population towards the upper classes [and] from vulnerable to richer countries' (Harvey 2007: 34). In doing so, austerity protests played a vital role in giving shape to the counter-hegemonic projects of the social movements that are currently asserting radical claims from below in the global South.

### **Postcolonial social movements in the contemporary global South**

If the unravelling of the postcolonial development project from the late 1960s onwards opened up a space in which novel resistances could be articulated, the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century witnessed the consolidation across much of the global South of social movements that fuse and develop key aspects of these resistances in new oppositional projects.

One of the most significant manifestations of this development was the outbreak of the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico in 1994. The politics of the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional* was multi-layered in that it brought together a rejection of the political economy of developmentalism – a political economy in which indigenous peoples in Mexico had been dispossessed in the name of national progress – with a trenchant critique of the structural inequalities – both national and global – that are intrinsic to neo-liberal globalisation (see Collier 2005; Harvey 1998; Morton 2011: ch. 7). Indeed, such twin indictments of both developmentalism and neo-liberalism are not unique to the Zapatistas – they have figured centrally, for example, in resistance to dispossession in India's Narmada Valley (Nilsen 2010) and indeed in the popular protests that have recently shaken the Arab world (Dabashi 2012) – and they draw their significance from the ways in which they bring together the two axes along which the unravelling of the postcolonial development project have been traced above. There are three particularly important manifestations

of this tendency in contemporary social movements in the global South.

First, current mobilisation from below in the global South has continued to criticise the exclusionary and centralising tendencies of political decision making in postcolonial states. Furthermore, many movements have worked consistently to develop strategies that foster the emergence of more participatory forms of politics either in and through their activism – for example, by enabling subaltern communities to take control of local political arenas, whether through urban neighbourhood assemblies or by participating in local electoral processes – or by championing various forms of devolution of political power. Beyond the national level, social movements from the global South have been intensely vocal in articulating a critique of the plutocracy that reigns in transnational institutions like the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, and the G7.

Second, resistance to dispossession has increasingly come to the forefront of the politics of social movements in the global South, both in rural contexts where natural resources are increasingly subject to commodification and in urban locales where financial crises have wreaked havoc on industrial manufacturing. However, rather than appealing for a return of the developmental state, social movements have increasingly turned towards developing alternative forms of community-based collective ownership; for example, when the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra* in Brazil organise agricultural production through democratic co-operatives, or the *Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados* in Argentina occupy disbanded factories and operate them through systems of workers' management.

Third, the hierarchies of political and economic power that structure the capitalist world system are still a target of critique in and through the collective agency of Southern social movements. This is particularly manifest in the way that the politics of these social movements link the exigencies of localised struggles to the dynamics of global power structures and mobilise to achieve progressive changes across spatial scales. For example, the emergence of networks of transnational agrarian movements have been integral in linking the disparate struggles of rural communities across the South in opposition to a global 'corporate food regime' and

in defence of the notion of 'food sovereignty' as an alternative to neo-liberal agricultural policies.

Ultimately, this raises the question of how to locate contemporary social movements in the global South in relation to the postcolonial development project. Some scholars – most notably, perhaps, Arturo Escobar – tend to see subaltern resistance as a form of collective agency that rejects development – understood as a discursive formation that enables the North to discipline and control social change in the South – altogether. On this reading, social movements in the global South are portrayed as the harbingers of a 'post-development era' (Escobar 1995). However, there is much evidence that suggests that this interpretation is problematic. Studies of social movements in the global South often uncover a more complex reality, in which the imaginaries and practices that are forged through the collective action of subaltern groups mobilise and draw upon idioms that were central to the postcolonial development project and at the same time – through this mobilisation – expand and transform their meanings (see e.g. Nilsen 2010; Rangan 2002). Thus, what these social movements contest is not so much development in and of itself as the direction and meaning that has been given to developmental trajectories and discourses through the exercise of power from above. And, in extension of this, what might emerge from their resistance is a reinvention of development as a genuinely emancipatory project of social change.

Alf Gunvald Nilsen

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## Sanctuary Movement, United States, 1981–1992

### Origins

The Sanctuary Movement arose in response to the millions of refugees who fled the civil wars that gripped Central America during the 1980s. The overwhelming majority of those who made it across the border into the US were denied asylum. At best, the US authorities dumped the refugees back across the border into Mexico and, at worst, deported them back to their home countries, where they faced further persecution. This was in contrast to the welcome offered to those fleeing communist regimes in Eastern Europe and Cuba. The US government faced a contradiction between, on the one hand, supporting, funding, and arming the right-wing governments in El Salvador and Guatemala and, on the other hand, having to accept the testimony of the refugees from those countries alleging persecution, torture and killings by those governments.

The Sanctuary Movement was initiated by Quakers and Christians in Tucson, Arizona. They had first-hand experience of witnessing

the plight of these refugees as they crossed the border. After exhausting all the legal routes to gaining asylum for the refugees, the activists in the Sanctuary Movement began to deliberately evade the law by assisting them in various ways. At first this mainly involved hosting refugees in their homes, providing them with donations of food and clothes, and assisting the refugees to cross the border without being detected by the Border Patrol. In response to the swelling numbers of refugee arrivals and threats from the authorities to prosecute the activists for illegally transporting and sheltering aliens, activists began to rehabilitate the ancient notion of sanctuary. This involved declaring churches to be spaces in which refugees could seek shelter from persecution, and also from the secular authorities wishing to deport them. One leading figure in the Sanctuary Movement declared: '[The Church's] reasoning was based on Christian hospitality. We decided that we had always helped people before on the basis of human need, and that we'd never asked anyone for their IDs, or green cards' (quoted in Bibler Coutin 1993: 29).

On 24 March 1982, the second anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero in San Salvador, the first public declaration of sanctuary was made by the Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson. Slogans hung on banners outside Southside Church declared: *La Migra No Profana El Santuario* (INS, Don't Profane the Sanctuary) and *Este es El Santuario de Dios Para Los Oprimidos de Centro America* (This is a Sanctuary of God for the Oppressed of Central America). On the same day a further five churches in the Bay Area around San Francisco declared themselves as sanctuaries. The Bay Area churches had earlier been part of a sanctuary movement during the Vietnam War. They had provided sanctuary to draft-resisters and others who refused to fight and who were evading arrest by the government for their refusal. Indeed, there are a number of continuities between the anti-Vietnam War movement and the Sanctuary Movement, both in terms of the people involved and the concern with peace, and resistance to US imperialist intervention. The decision to go public was based partly, at least, on the potential to raise public awareness of the plight of the refugees and to force the government to acknowledge the veracity of their claims for asylum. As such,

the Sanctuary Movement made a decisive turn from Christian charity and humanitarianism towards political agitation. Arguably, the judgement of a government undercover agent who attended the public declaration in Tucson was accurate when he reported: 'It seems that this movement is more political than religious' (quoted in Cunningham 1995: 33–34).

### Growth of the movement

During the first year alone, Southside Church provided sanctuary for over 1,600 refugees (Smith, 1996: 68) The movement quickly spread. By the end of 1982, 15 churches had declared sanctuary, with another 150 churches supporting refugees in various ways, such as raising money, and providing food and clothes for them (Crittenden 1988: 100). In addition to the public declarations, an 'underground railroad' developed linking together churches, private homes, and other spaces all the way from the Mexico/Guatemala border north across the US/Mexico border and onwards throughout the US and up into Canada. By the end of 1982, the Sanctuary Movement remained 'by any measure ... tiny. But it was beginning to irritate the colossal United States government' (*ibid.*) At the end of February 1983, less than a year after the public declaration, the Tucson Ecumenical Council (TEC), an official body comprising local churches and synagogues, agreed that its employees could engage in actively assisting refugees to reach sanctuary churches. In effect, the Tucson churches were endorsing and paying for refugees to be smuggled illegally across the border.

By the autumn of 1982 the numbers of refugees arriving across the border had increased exponentially, and the existing sanctuary activists struggled to cope. So they approached the Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America (CRTFCA) for help. The CRTFCA had been founded in January 1981 by a group of political activists based in a variety of local churches in response to the rape and murder of four US nuns by right-wing paramilitaries in El Salvador. CRTFCA's goals were to raise awareness of the conditions that war and dictatorship were imposing on the people of Central America, mobilise opposition to the US government's support for repressive regimes in the region, and build solidarity for Central Americans both in their own countries and with those who

had fled as refugees to the US. The CRTFCA helped set up a national network of sanctuaries across the US and 'refined the concept of public sanctuary' by developing the practice of getting the refugees to give public testimony in churches and to the press about what was going on in Central America, and the experiences that had led to their flight (Crittenden, 1988: 90) This emphasis on getting refugees to speak publicly gave them a voice and created a human story that allowed others to identify with them. It was also deemed necessary to educate the US public about their government's involvement in wars that were being little reported in the media at the time.

By 1984 there were some 3,000 linked sanctuaries across the US, including, as well as churches, private homes, monasteries, Native American reservations, farms in Iowa, and synagogues. (Golden and McConnell, 1986: 52–53). All the major Protestant denominations had endorsed sanctuary nationally, except for the Evangelicals, and many Catholic bishops had also endorsed it (Davidson 1988: 84). The Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Confederation of American Rabbis supported the movement (Lorentzen 1991: 29). At its peak a total of over 70,000 activists took part in the Sanctuary Movement, and its network extended into 34 states (Golden and McConnell 1986: 3; Lorentzen 1991: 14). About two-thirds of the movement were women, with many of the key activists 'housewives and nuns' (Lorentzen 1991: 3).

### Prosecution

On 10 January 1985 a Federal Grand Jury indicted many of the leading Sanctuary Movement activists on charges of illegally transporting and harbouring aliens. When the case came to trial the judge prohibited defences based on international law, necessity, or religious or moral belief. Further, the question of whether the people helped by the defendants were refugees, or not, was deemed to be irrelevant. Instead the defendants were depicted as 'coyotes', slang for people smugglers. A further set of rulings banned the use of certain words, including describing the people being given sanctuary as 'refugees', along with terms such as 'tortured' or 'killed' when describing their experiences (Crittenden, 1988: 271; Davidson 1988: 123) In May 1986, all but one of the defendants

were found guilty, although they only received suspended sentences.

After the trial, one of the defendants and a founder of the movement, Jim Corbett, said: ‘We’ll stand trial as often as we have to. It’ll continue as it has because the refugees and their needs actually set the agenda’ (quoted in Guzder 2011: 115). Following the trial, the Sanctuary Movement was more or less left alone by the government, in spite of continuing sanctuary activities. The Border Patrol even pledged not to enter places of worship to make arrests. On a number of occasions a ‘hot pursuit’ of refugees by INS agents was terminated once they entered a church (Corbett 1992: 177).

### Splits and decline

However, the trial represented a turning point for the Sanctuary Movement in a number of respects. The profile of the movement was significantly raised through sustained media coverage of the trial. Over \$1 million was raised to support the defendants, and over the course of the trial the number of publicly declared sanctuaries doubled. Yet it also proved to be the high-water mark of the movement. The decline can be attributed to two related developments: a split, and by a turn towards a much more legalistic approach by those activists working along the border. The movement divided between what became known as the ‘Tucson’ and ‘Chicago’ wings. ‘Tucson’ wanted the Sanctuary Movement to be guided by humanitarian aims based on the legal definition of the refugee. They prioritised helping the refugees, irrespective of their politics, or of the politics that caused their flight. One controversial aspect of this, in practice, was that the Tucson activists assisted refugees who had previously been members of death squads and parties supportive of the right-wing governments in El Salvador and Guatemala, as well as *campesinos* and other victims of the governments and the death squads.

‘Chicago’ framed sanctuary within a wider movement dedicated to political solidarity with the oppressed in Central America and to resisting US imperialism in the region. The CRTFCA’s Statement of Faith was clear in staking out their position: ‘The sanctuary movement seeks to uncover and name the connections between the US government and the Salvadoran death squads, and the

connection between US business interests and the denial of human and economic rights of the vast majority of people. We believe that to stop short of this is to betray the Central American people and the refugees we now harbor’ (quoted in Allitt 2003: 177–178).

A further result of the trial was that those involved in bringing the refugees across the border, mainly those in the ‘Tucson’ faction, adopted an increasingly legalistic approach. ‘[T]hose returning from the [Sanctuary] trial had been profoundly influenced by court arguments and wished to implement procedures that would underscore the “legality” of Sanctuary work. Among these was the adoption of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) guidelines regarding refugee determination’ (Cunningham 1995: 168). A theory of ‘civil initiative’ was developed in contrast to that of ‘civil disobedience’. Whereas the latter involved breaking unjust laws, Corbett, speaking at Harvard in 1987, explained that: ‘As civil initiative, sanctuary extends the rule of law by instituting a way for our society to comply with human rights and humanitarian laws when the government violates them’ (quoted in Crittenden 1988: 345). In practice, this meant that members of the Sanctuary Movement would routinely screen those seeking help at the Mexican border, and if they failed to meet the strict definition of refugee according to international law then they were refused help in crossing the border. This led to a further split within the ‘Tucson’ group, with some believing that this corrupted the original, more open approach to sanctuary. One of the activists critical of this legalistic approach felt that the experience of the trial – ‘trial trauma’ – was responsible for this (Cunningham 1995: 169). It was also, perhaps, a result of these particular activists ignoring the political aspects of sanctuary.

Another problem identified by some commentators cut across the Chicago/Tucson divide. The refugees, it has been argued, were often perceived by the North American activists as “objects” rather than empowered “subjects” of Sanctuary’, or as subjects of ‘pastoral’ care rather than fellow activists engaged in a political struggle (Cunningham, 1995, 141–142; Lippert 2005). Even leading participants within the movement have claimed that refugee communities in urban centres took in many more refugees and provided far more sustenance than the Sanctuary



Movement itself did (Golden and McConnell 1986: 61). During one sanctuary conference, the refugees demanded that the primary aim of the movement should be stopping US involvement in Central America. A Salvadoran refugee declared: 'We want to go back home. We want El Salvador and Guatemala to be sanctuaries' (quoted in Golden and McConnell 1986: 165). Although there were organisations of Central American refugees that worked closely with the Sanctuary Movement, it was the case that: 'Sanctuary itself ... remained a movement about, rather than of, Central Americans' (Bibler Coutin 1993: 11).

### Legacy

In the early 1990s the Sanctuary Movement began to wind down. Peace agreements were reached in El Salvador and Guatemala, which greatly reduced the numbers of refugees. Some legal victories were won giving greater rights to the refugees to seek asylum in the US. Many of them were allowed to have their cases heard again by newly trained officers, and they were allowed to work whilst their case was pending. The 1990 Immigration Act put in place a statutory basis for 'temporary protected status', which allowed more than 200,000 Salvadorans and Guatemalans to remain within the US. In the view of many of its activists, this meant that the Sanctuary Movement had effectively won.

The Sanctuary Movement spawned a more long-lasting legacy in the form of 'sanctuary cities'. Over 50 cities in the US have passed 'sanctuary city' legislation that prohibits any municipal resources or employees from being utilised to enforce federal immigration laws. Some have gone even further by barring all municipal employees from enquiring as to someone's citizenship status. And inspired by the US Sanctuary Movement, churches in Canada, Great Britain, Norway, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, and West Germany began giving sanctuary to asylum seekers from the mid-1980s onwards. The movement inspired the agitation for regularisation of undocumented migrants in the US beginning in 2007, with the creation of the New Sanctuary Movement. Today, many of the activists based in Arizona have moved on to providing assistance and help to the many irregular migrants crossing the US/Mexico border

in organisations such as No More Deaths and Humane Borders.

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## Sendero Luminoso

Sendero Luminoso, or Shining Path, emerged in 1980 as a guerrilla organisation in the south-central highland department of Ayacucho, Peru. Espousing a radical Maoist ideological line of people's war from a part of the country that was both quite isolated and largely rural and indigenous seemed at the time to be quixotic in the extreme, given the larger national context at that very moment of an unprecedented democratic transition. Yet over the course of the next decade or so, political violence in Peru delivered death and destruction to large swathes of the country and brought central government virtually to its knees. Just when it appeared that Sendero was poised for victory,

however, the tables abruptly turned with the September 1992 capture of the group's founder and 'maximum leader' Abimael Guzmán Reynoso. Within months, government forces had regained the advantage, and, by the mid-1990s the guerrillas were a spent force.

Although no longer a threat to the state, scattered armed cadre remnants remained which, beginning in 2006, gradually regenerated a modest operational capacity in coca growing and cocaine-producing enclaves of the Upper Huallaga and Apurímac river valleys. Some Sendero sympathisers also retained influence within the national teachers union, while others established a popular-front-type political wing based in Lima in an effort to influence national politics. While it is unlikely that what remains of Shining Path in its most recent manifestations will become a significant guerrilla or political force in the future, its violent past continues to affect Peru in multiple ways.

### **Explaining the origins and rise of Sendero Luminoso**

Guerrilla movements usually emerge in response to some combination of repressive dictatorship, systematic exploitation, and sustained economic crisis. The case of Peru and Shining Path, however, was in a number of ways the product of a somewhat different and more complex set of forces. The military regime in power there between 1968 and 1980 was authoritarian, to be sure, but at the same time was arguably, also, the most reformist government in Peru's post-independence history. This self-titled 'Revolutionary Military Government' carried out a major agrarian reform, nationalised the country's most important mining companies, began the reorganisation of private industry into worker-managed enterprises, and became a leader in the international non-aligned movement. The stated goal of the military leaders was, at root, focused on national security. They wanted to reduce or even eliminate the possibility of a guerrilla insurgency by overcoming extreme poverty and exploitation through a 'revolution from above' under their direction for the benefit of peasants and workers.

However, for a variety of reasons, the military in power gradually lost its reformist momentum. First, it was unable to generate from the domestic economy the large quantity of new resources needed to finance its

ambitious initiatives, so it turned to short-term foreign loans. Second, the expected revenues from exports of significant oil deposits discovered in 1972 were delayed for several critical years by problems in developing the infrastructure which would bring them to market. Third, the regime lost its most ardent reformer with the illness, replacement, and death of head of state (1968–75) General Juan Velasco Alvarado. Fourth, an economic crisis which included stagnation in economic growth, rising inflation, and significant arrears in repayment of the ballooning foreign debt gripped Peru in 1977 and 1978.

In addition, the implementation of the agrarian reform in the highlands, or sierra, turned out to be ill suited to the dominant pattern there of large numbers of indigenous communities and few prosperous private estates subject to expropriation. As a result, the heightened expectations generated by the official rhetoric of 'land to the tiller' were dashed with the implementation of the agrarian reform, as the already modest pre-reform livelihoods of most highland peasants deteriorated even further.

In combination, then, a significant, unintended, and totally counter-productive consequence of the military's multiple initiatives to change the structure of economic, social, and political power in Peru was the gradual fostering of a reality that was more rather than less favourable for guerrilla activity, particularly in parts of the Peruvian sierra.

Other factors, both historical and contemporary, also help to explain the emergence of Sendero Luminoso as a guerrilla force in the sierra more generally and in Ayacucho in particular. One relates to the Spanish conquest of the Inca Empire, centred in the Andean highlands, and almost 300 years of Spanish administrative control of the region under a viceroyalty from its capital, Lima, on the coast. This introduced a centuries-long period of coastal domination of the largely indigenous sierra, a pattern of centralised control which continued for almost 200 more years, from independence in the 1820s all the way through the 20th century. As a result, government resources as well as economic activity were concentrated in Lima and the coast, leaving most of the sierra population poor and marginalised, and progressively reinforcing over time an ethnic cleavage as well as the profound natural geographic cleavage between the two regions.

A more contemporary factor specific to Ayacucho was the refounding of the colonial university there in 1959, some 80 years after its closure due to Peru's economic collapse with its loss to Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879–83). The National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga (UNSCH) was reopened with the lofty goal, unique at the time, of serving as an incubator and promoter of local development and of providing an opportunity for first-generation Spanish speakers from the indigenous communities predominating in the region to receive a university education. During its first few years, with an ample budget and a unique vision among Peruvian universities of the day, it attracted some of the country's leading scholars with a diversity of ideological perspectives, along with a few recent graduates of other institutions, including, in mid-1962, Abimael Guzmán Reynoso.

Although no-one could have predicted it at the time, Guzmán turned out to be another critical factor in laying a foundation for the armed struggle in Peru; the key figure any potential revolutionary movement must have to organise, inspire, and lead a guerrilla campaign against established authority. Originally appointed as a professor of philosophy in the Education Programme, he had soon revitalised the Communist Party of Ayacucho and established himself as a leading Marxist at UNSCH as well. A charismatic teacher, strategist, and organiser, he attracted many students and a number of fellow professors as well with his Marxist-Leninist and then Maoist rhetoric after the 1962–63 Sino-Soviet split. He became the head of the teacher-training school, where he helped to prepare a generation of elementary school teachers, many of whom returned to the primary schools in their home indigenous communities of rural Ayacucho. After his supporters won university-wide elections in 1968, he was named UNSCH secretary-general, with control over most appointments. Over time, he became a dominant figure in the Maoist movement and then its undisputed leader by the early 1970s. In the name of ideological purity, he gradually undermined the early academic diversity of the university and turned its original regional development role into a vehicle for expanding a Maoist world view throughout the Ayacucho hinterlands.

With the financial support of the Beijing government, Guzmán made at least three

extended trips to China for training between 1965 and 1976, along with most of the other members of his party's central committee, which was drawn largely from former UNSCH students and faculty. Their trips coincided with the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–76). Over time, the Peruvian contingent progressively identified with the Cultural Revolution's most radical faction, led by Madame Mao as the head of the so-called Gang of Four, which advocated permanent revolution in the name of ideological purity. When this faction eventually lost out within China to the more moderate elements led by Deng Xiaoping, Chinese support for Guzmán and Peru's Maoists ended and they were left to fend for themselves.

This unanticipated event marked a historical turning point in the development of Sendero Luminoso over the next four years. Guzmán's analysis of successful Communist revolutions, including those in the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, concluded that all had betrayed the Marxist, Leninist, and Maoist ideological principles upon which they had been founded. As a result, he believed, the only way to sweep away the forces of capitalism as well as the now corrupted socialist states was through a new world Communist revolution which would lead in time to the establishment of more pure 'New Democracies'. Given such a betrayal, it would be necessary, Guzmán believed, to begin anew with a true revolution that would start in Peru under his leadership.

Having been cast aside by China, his erstwhile outside mentor and supporter, Guzmán was determined to build a revolutionary force with resources drawn totally from within the country. He would lead the guerrilla struggle with the group that he had been slowly building for more than a decade. He considered it to be the only truly revolutionary communist party, which he insisted in calling the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) even though those outside the movement continued to label it Sendero Luminoso or Shining Path. With the foundations of local organisation and support already well established under his guidance in Ayacucho, Guzmán concluded that the Maoist people's war would begin there. Since this region remained quite isolated from the rest of the country both geographically and administratively, the preparation of armed cadres and organisational capacity took place over time mostly

unperceived by central government. As the military regime lost momentum and legitimacy in the late 1970s and began the transition to national elections and civilian government, Guzmán decided that this was the right moment to launch the people's war, a decision ratified in an April 1980 PCP assembly.

The initial action took place on 17 May 1980 in Chuschi, a small district capital in Ayacucho, with the burning of ballot boxes which had been readied for the next day's national elections, Peru's first since 1963. There was no way of knowing at the time that this act would presage years of guerrilla war and military response and produce close to 70,000 deaths and the destruction of over \$20 billion in property and infrastructure, along with some 650,000 internal refugees and more than 1 million emigrants. Although the department of Ayacucho bore the brunt of the violence, over the course of the next dozen years political violence and physical destruction spread to almost every part of the country, and for a time threatened the very foundations of the Peruvian state.

### Explaining Sendero Luminoso guerrilla advances

Several factors help to explain why Sendero Luminoso's people's war advanced as far as it did. They include both the nature of the Peruvian state's response and the way the Shining Path pursued the armed struggle. As far as the role of the state was concerned, an important consideration was the initial reluctance of the newly elected civilian government to take the group seriously and to respond when it was still a small, weak, and localised guerrilla force. Ayacucho was remote and far removed from the capital in Lima, and the early actions of Sendero were seen as nothing more than those of local cattle rustlers and their ilk. In addition, newly elected president Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1963–68 and 1980–85) had been removed from office by a military coup during his first term. As a result, he was very sensitive to any initiative he might take at the outset of his second term, which would expand the role of the armed forces and quite possibly put his presidency at risk once again.

President Belaúnde delayed issuing a presidential order to commit the military to engage Sendero in Ayacucho and the surrounding area until December 1982, more

than a year-and-a-half after the first guerrilla actions. As a result, the insurgents had time to grow and to establish a presence in much of rural Ayacucho as well as in the neighbouring sierra departments of Huancavelica and Apurímac. They attacked the small police stations scattered throughout the provincial capitals, seizing the weapons and ammunition stored there and forcing the virtually complete withdrawal of their personnel to the department capital. With the countryside then bereft of government presence, Sendero cadres and sympathisers were able to gain control of scores of indigenous communities in the region. The one action Belaúnde *did* take, in 1981, was a disaster. He ordered a specialised contingent of police, called Sinchi, to Ayacucho, but when their actions included pillage, rape, and drunken brawls, he was forced to remove them in disgrace.

Under the Peruvian Constitution of 1979, provinces under significant natural or man-made threat could be declared Emergency Zones, which included suspension of constitutional guarantees and the supplanting of civilian authority with military control. President Belaúnde finally invoked this provision in seven provinces of Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica at the end of 1982. Over the course of the following decade as political violence spread, about one-third of Peru's 185 provinces, containing over half the national population, became subject to military authority.

Unfortunately, throughout the 1980s, central government's response to the expanding threat of Shining Path was almost exclusively military in nature, and as such, it actually made the situation worse by often indiscriminate killings and repression of local populations, more often than not indigenous ones. The first two years of major military operations to deal with the guerrillas, 1983 and 1984, were also among those marked by the highest numbers of civilian casualties (well over 4,000 each year) during the entire conflict. There was a lack of awareness or understanding of sierra mores and customs, made even worse by central military authority's unwillingness to send troops from the area to their regions of origin. Such levels of violence against citizens by forces ostensibly sent to protect them from Sendero wound up pushing many into the arms of the very group the state was trying to eliminate.

By the end of the decade, Shining Path was in effective control of large areas of rural

Ayacucho, where its operatives had established between 700 and 800 'generated organisations' at the community level. There was an approximate total of 1,100 such building blocks sierra-wide in what was to become the group's 'New Democracy'. With a central committee headed by Guzmán and six regional committees under his guidance but with operational autonomy, guerrilla violence spread throughout most of the sierra. Annihilation squads targeted local figures for elimination, focusing primarily on elected officials and judges, which dissuaded many others from running for office. In the 1988 local elections, hundreds of districts lacked candidates and turnout was dramatically reduced. At about the same time, Guzmán, believing the moment had arrived to 'encircle the cities', began a campaign to cut off Lima's access to food, water, and electricity from the sierra and to take the guerrilla war to the capital. With access to new sources of revenue after 1987 in the coca-producing Upper Huallaga Valley in the north central highland department of San Martín (from 'taxes' levied on the cocaine paste carried by planes flying out of the valley to Colombia), Shining Path was becoming an even more formidable adversary. By the end of a decade of 'people's war', Sendero was estimated to have between 7,000 and 10,000 armed cadres operating in all but one of Peru's 24 departments, and between 200,000 and 300,000 supporters and sympathisers nationwide.

At the same time, the so-called 'heterodox' economic policies pursued by the elected government of Alan García Pérez (1985–90) were producing rapidly increasing inflation and negative growth which generated a significant erosion of central government capacity and popular support. With hyperinflation gripping Peru and Lima facing greater and greater shortages provoked by a combination of foreign debt default and Sendero's urban campaign, hundreds of thousands of Peruvians fled the country. As the 1990 national elections approached, Peru's situation appeared to be increasingly dire. Given the successive failures of two successive traditional parties to govern effectively in office (Belaúnde's Acción Popular, AP; and García's Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, APRA), it is not surprising that an increasingly desperate electorate turned to an outsider with no prior political experience or the backing of an organised political party, Alberto Fujimori (1990–2000).

In the short run, the situation worsened. Inflation peaked in 1990 at 7,650 per cent, an economic shock programme created even greater hardships among an already beleaguered population, and government institutions verged on collapse. Guzmán declared the guerrilla war at a stage of 'strategic equilibrium' in its battle against government forces and began to predict victory in the very near future. President Fujimori appeared to play into Sendero hands in April 1992 when he suspended congress, the judiciary, and constitutional guarantees in an *autogolpe* or self-coup that ended democratic process. In the months that followed, Guzmán and his Central Committee drew up plans for a 'final offensive' scheduled to begin in October and culminate with a guerrilla triumph in December, the month of Mao's birthday.

### Explaining Sendero Luminoso's failure

Yet just when Sendero appeared to be on the verge of a stunning triumph, Guzmán and several key subordinates were captured, along with the guerrilla organisation's master files, blows from which it never recovered. The explanation for such a dramatic and apparently sudden turnaround relates to a number of factors involving both government and the guerrillas.

Beginning in 1989, the armed forces, belatedly recognising the failure of their long-standing approach to fighting Sendero which focused almost exclusively on military actions, conducted a comprehensive review that produced a new counter-insurgency doctrine. Core tactics now began to emphasise civic action, human rights training, the use of military personnel from the localities of operations, and, for the first time, the training and equipping of community civil defence groups (*rondas campesinas*) as the first line of defence against guerrilla attacks. At about the same time, the Interior Ministry, responsible for the national police, established a small autonomous unit with the task of locating and tracking Sendero leadership. Both of these significant initiatives, begun near the end of the García Administration, were continued and reinforced by President Fujimori.

In 1991 and 1992, the Fujimori Government also established several micro-development organisations explicitly designed to provide small-scale assistance to the poorest districts

in Peru, almost all of which were rural and were affected by political violence. Communities chose the projects, which included potable water, electrification, roads, schools, irrigation, soil conservation, and reforestation. They provided the labour and the oversight, while the organisations, each comprising no more than 300 well-qualified professionals with substantial regional autonomy, gave materials and technical assistance. Between 1992 and 1998, these small micro-development programmes, though averaging about \$2,000 each, in combination delivered over \$1 billion in projects to poor districts and contributed to a reduction in extreme poverty of more than 50 per cent.

A more controversial initiative, but one born of necessity, was the establishment of 'faceless' judges to protect officials from threats and assassination while they oversaw trials of captured guerrillas. Since between 1988 and 1992 Shining Path cadres had killed over 100 judges and had threatened hundreds of others, this appeared at the time to be the only way to protect judicial-system personnel while fostering greater efficiency and effectiveness. Though later declared void by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), thereby requiring new trials in the early 2000s, the unorthodox judicial procedures helped to re-establish a semblance of the rule of law and governmental capacity in the eyes of the Peruvian public.

Another measure, instituted after the capture and trial of Guzmán and the rounding-up of hundreds of upper and middle-level guerrillas, was a government-decreed repentance law. It was designed to encourage Shining Path members and sympathisers to turn themselves in with whatever weapons and information they possessed, in exchange for government-sponsored rehabilitation, job training, and a stipend, followed by their return to their home communities. During the two years the law was in effect, over 5,000 availed themselves of this opportunity, effectively draining Sendero of much of its remaining support.

While this array of government initiatives, however belated, contributed in various ways to help overcome the very real threat that Shining Path posed to the continued existence of the state, other factors relating to the guerrilla organisation itself also played a significant role in its demise.

One of the most important was the remarkably hydrocephalic structure of Sendero. Abimael Guzmán Reynoso was not only the founder, but also the key interpreter of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology as well as the organiser and strategist. From his earliest years at the University of Huamanga in the 1960s through the 12 years of 'people's war', Guzmán embraced a cult of personality towards himself far beyond that of any previous successful revolutionary leaders elsewhere during the course of their guerrilla struggles. Given his overwhelmingly dominant role, then, his capture effectively cut off the head of the movement, left no legitimate successor, and dealt a devastating psychological blow from which Sendero never recovered. 'The capture of the century', as Peruvian media called it, was the definitive turning point in the guerrilla war; besides vindicating official counter-insurgency strategy, it also gave government the public support it so desperately needed at that critical juncture in its struggle to survive.

Another key factor was Guzmán's obsession with ideological purity in his quest for a true revolution that would not fall into revisionism once successful, as he believed had occurred in the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, among others. His writings are replete with laboured analyses of the ideology of leading Marxists in his search for ideological correctness. Such an obsession led him to totally misinterpret the actual reality of Peru as he prepared for and then led his guerrilla war – the military's reforms, however incomplete, had ended any vestiges of feudalism and landlord domination in the countryside, while hundreds of centuries-old indigenous communities retained their presence throughout the sierra. Peru in the 1980s bore little resemblance to China of the 1930s in spite of Guzmán's insistence that they were at similar stages of pre-capitalist and capitalist development.

He also failed to follow Mao's dictum that the rural-based guerrilla movement must be like 'fish in the water' during the struggle and respond to peasant priorities to gain their support. Instead, he insisted on ending ubiquitous indigenous markets because they were capitalist manifestations and also imposed a new structure of ideologically correct 'generated organisms' in communities where indigenous structures of *ayllu* and *varyoc* had prevailed for centuries. As a result of the local resistance created by such initiatives in areas

under Sendero influence, guerrilla cadres resorted to increasingly repressive measures to retain control. When the government finally changed its counter-insurgency approach, beginning in 1989–90, local populations increased their efforts to take on Shining Path forces with community-based *rondas*, and progressively abandoned guerrilla control as government presence increased across the sierra.

Another significant factor in Sendero's demise was Guzmán's decision to apply Maoist tactics of 'surrounding the cities from the countryside,' specifically Lima, beginning in 1988. This campaign experienced initial successes by cutting off two of the three major electrical transmission lines from the sierra into Lima, as well as sabotaging the most important aqueduct, the railway line, and the one paved highway from the highlands to the capital. In addition, the urban campaign included targeted assassinations of some key popular neighbourhood leaders, along with regular bombings of banks, commercial establishments, and even apartment buildings in middle-class neighbourhoods. As the guerrilla campaign began to seriously affect the daily lives of the capital city's 8 million people for the first time, the realisation grew that this struggle was not limited to remote areas of the highlands, and public pressure grew for central government to take effective action. Such pressure contributed to the major review of official approaches to the insurgency in 1989 and 1990 and to the significant adjustments that occurred as a result. These played major roles in defeating Shining Path in the early 1990s.

In addition to provoking the large urban population, the decision to take the guerrilla war to Lima as a prelude to the 'final offensive' had the unintended consequence of giving Peru's intelligence services an advantage they had not had in the sierra. They were much more familiar with the urban setting and had a much stronger presence in the capital. As a result, government intelligence operatives were better equipped to track down guerrillas there, and had a number of successes even before locating and capturing Sendero's supreme leader in the Lima suburb of Surco in September 1992. This operation was a model of urban counter-insurgency, which included several weeks of placing police intelligence personnel in key locations around Guzmán's 'safe' house and disguising them as neighbours, vendors, and

rubbish collectors. When one of the guerrilla leader's subordinates went out to buy wine and cigarettes at the corner store, they followed her back into the house and, without firing a shot, captured Guzmán, four other members of the Central Committee, and the master plans for the 'final offensive'.

## Conclusion

Although it took some time for the political violence to subside, the blow to Sendero caused by the dramatic capture of its leader signalled that the government's victory over the guerrillas was all but inevitable. In combination with economic recovery and the restoration of sustained growth without inflation, as well as the re-establishment of democratic procedures under pressure from the Organisation of American States (OAS), Peru gradually regained its equilibrium. Although President Fujimori was removed from office by congress in 2000 for pursuing an increasingly corrupt and authoritarian political agenda, a combination of elected presidents and economic growth since then have gradually helped to consolidate democracy in Peru. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission produced a comprehensive study of the conflict in 2004 which documented abuses by both Shining Path and the military and made recommendations for reparations to the most affected communities and individuals, overwhelmingly concentrated in Ayacucho and surrounding districts. After long delays, remuneration for some 1,500 communities was provided in 2011, and for more than 17,000 individuals by late 2013.

Remnants of Shining Path re-emerged in the Apurímac and Upper Huallaga river valleys after 2006, both financed by coca and cocaine production, but, after some years of official missteps, were significantly weakened by police (2012, Upper Huallaga) and combined military-police (2013, Apurímac) responses and represent no threat to the state. A political group based in Lima, the Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Human Rights (MOVADef) is sympathetic to a variation of Sendero ideology but espouses protest rather than violence and tried unsuccessfully to register as a political party for either the 2011 national or the 2014 local elections. Guzmán remains in jail, serving a life sentence, and now asserts that this is not a moment to pursue revolutionary violence in Peru.

While the effects of the 1980–1992 ‘people’s war’ linger, especially in those parts of the sierra which experienced most of the violence, the nation was able to overcome the most serious internal threat ever faced in its history as an independent republic.

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## The Turkish Left and Anti-Imperialism in the 1970s

This essay examines the many factors in the deep polarisation within the socialist movement in Turkey in the 1970s on the axis of the Polemics in the international socialist movement. However, to understand the ‘localisation’ causality of these Polemics, the essay analyses the need to focus on the anti-imperialist movement/historical legacy in the political history of Turkey. The movement in the 1960s mainly had an anti-imperialist character and it is thus possible to observe an evolution from a Kemalist version of anti-imperialism to the international Marxist-Leninist approach of anti-imperialism. In this essay, the effects of the Sino-Soviet dispute (the Polemics) and anti-imperialism over the polarisation within the anti-imperialist and left-wing movement in Turkey during the 1970s will be briefly analysed, important actors will be introduced, and the historical legacy of the alignment with Maoism or the USSR and its relation with the anti-imperialist movement in the context of the political struggle in Turkey will be debated.

### Introduction

The 1970s were marked by the rise of the left-wing and anti-imperialist movement in Turkey. This was the Turkish revolutionary movement’s strongest period in its history, during which the Turkish left in general was able to engage with extensive popular segments. While left-wing and anti-imperialist groups were mobilising millions, the mainstream Republican People’s Party (CHP)



adopted a leftist, social-democrat position in the 1970s with the change of its leadership from Inonu to Ecevit in 1972. It became the first party in the 1973 general election with 33 per cent of the vote, and it received 41 per cent of the vote in the 1977 general election. This period witnessed the flourishing of many parties and democratic organisations. The labour movement, student movement, peasant movement, women's movement along with illegal or semi-legal armed groups and resistance organisations acted throughout the country. On 12 September 1980, this period came to an end with the military coup d'état and subsequent dictatorship of General Kenan Evren. This crushed all organisations and suppressed the movement.

Despite the existence of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) since 1920, the socialist movement consisted of a small group of intellectuals and workers that permanently faced state repression until the 1970s. Following the rise of the people's movement in the 1960s, the youth movement radicalised, Marxist publications attracted the interest of intellectuals, and strong labour confederations and student organisations were formed. Many revolutionary parties and organisations emerged at the dawn of the 1970s. Despite the 1971 military memorandum and the elimination of the revolutionary movement's leaders through a series of political murders in 1972 and 1973, the socialist movement was able to strengthen between 1975 and 1980. On 12 March 1971, a military memorandum was signed by the Turkish generals and given to the president. It demanded that the Turkish government should resign, which it duly did for fear of a coup d'état. The military accused the elected government of failing to overcome the social and economic unrest. This was the second successful military intervention in the Republican period after the 1960 coup (Ersan 2013). The left-wing movement not only organised large mobilisations of masses for political, economic, and social purposes, and organised campaigns, but also tried to counter the state oppression, political murders, and paramilitary-fascist terror that began to turn into a civil war in the late 1970s. Turkey was a highly polarised society during this decade.

This polarisation was not just on the left-right axis. There was also a strong polarisation within the revolutionary movement of Turkey. This polarisation was a result of the

international dispute and consequent struggle within the international socialist movement led by the confrontation between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Revolutionary/socialist parties and organisations in Turkey determined their position within this conflict and began to struggle with each other, mainly in the form of political and theoretical debates and not without some forms of violent clashes. A weak socialist tradition along with intense state oppression coincided with the Polemics within the international socialist movement, and despite the rising mass support for the revolutionary movement, it could not succeed in uniting to counter the fascist terror and the military junta.

Apart from the ideological debates between the CPC and CPSU, anti-imperialist thought also contributed to how the revolutionary organisations positioned themselves. There was continuity between the 1970s movement and the 1960s anti-imperialist movement. The anti-imperialist consciousness that developed in the 1960s influenced the revolutionaries of the 1970s. In addition, the historical confrontation between the Turkish and Russian states, in view of the latter's historical imperialist ambitions, should be taken into consideration. In the context of the USSR's superpower position and Turkey's affiliation with NATO in the post-war period, this anti-imperialist historical consciousness had an impact on the Turkish left, especially with regard to the acceptance of the Maoist 'social-imperialism' theory and its adoption in the contemporary politics of the 1970s.

This essay argues that the domination of the critique of the 'modern revisionism of the USSR' and the influence of the Maoist approach in the 1970s was the consequence of the strong anti-imperialist movement.

## The left in the 1970s and positions towards the 'Polemics'

### Brief historical background

The TKP was formed in 1920 at Baku by the unification of three socialist groups under the leadership of Mustafa Suphi, who had been a prisoner of war (POW) during the First World War. One of these socialist groups was formed by former Turkish POWs who had been held by the Tsarist Russian army and met with

socialist ideas during the October Revolution. The other group was established by Marxist students who were politically active during their university lives in Germany (Turkish Spartakists) and France, and who aimed to wage the revolutionary struggle in their own country. The third group belonged to the local revolutionaries and socialists organising in Istanbul and other Anatolian cities, participating in the local resistance groups against occupying forces after the surrender of the Ottoman Empire (Ağcabay, 2009).

Mustafa Suphi and his comrades formed the Turkish Red Militias, a nucleus of the Turkish Red Army formed by former POWs. Their strategy was to join the resistance movement led in Ankara by the Government of Mustapha Kemal. By forming a well-functioning party and an organised armed group, they aimed to form a United Front with the Kemalist Government for the independence of the country against the British, French, and Italian imperialist interventions and the Greek occupation. This proposal was accepted by the Kemalist Government. However, on the way to Ankara from Baku, Mustafa Suphi and his 14 comrades (members of the Central Committee) were murdered in Trabzon in 1921. There are claims, but not any certain evidence, that link this massacre with the Kemalist Government. Later, the Turkish Red Militias were mobilised for the Bolshevik victory in Caucasia and could not return to Turkey as an organised group (Ağcabay 2009).

The period from the 1930s to the 1950s was marked by the continuous attempts of the TKP cadres to organise and reorganise against the unending government pressure. The secretary general Dr Şefik (Şefik) Hüsnü, Dr Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, and the world-famous poet Nazım Hikmet spent decades of their life in prisons. TKP aimed to organise workers and students; they formed the first examples of trade unions and labour associations in the Republican period. There had been labour organisations in the 19th century in the main industrial and commercial cities of the Ottoman Empire such as Istanbul, Salonika, Izmir, and some Macedonian towns. However, as a result of the Ottoman Empire's collapse, the emergence of new independent states in the Balkans, mass migrations, and deportations during the Balkan Wars and the First World War, these labour organisations, formed by workers of

various nationalities, were dissolved. TKP was operating illegally, but tried to form legal socialist parties and labour organisations and to publish legal magazines, but these were not permitted by the Kemalist Government. There was also a TKP radio station, based in Bulgaria. Until the end of the Second World War, TKP had a relatively positive approach to the Kemalist Government despite the ongoing pressure which the latter applied to them. TKP defined the new system as a bourgeois state against feudalism and reactionary forces, backed its modern reforms in superstructure, and supported armed suppression of the Kurdish rebellions, which it analysed as reactionary responses of the feudal forces. TKP strictly followed the official directives of the USSR and the Comintern (Ağcabay 2009).

In the 1960s, TKP benefited politically and organisationally from the rising, anti-imperialist, youth movement and also contributed to the anti-imperialist movement. TKP cadres were active in forming the first legal trade unions in the 1950s, and they were one of the main forces in organising the split from the central labour confederation (Türk-İ's., The Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions formed in 1950) and establishing DISK (Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey) in 1967. As an illegal party, TKP also supported the legal Workers Party of Turkey (TIP), which had been founded in 1961 by a group of trade unionists (Babalık 2005). TIP was the first socialist party in Turkey to win representation in the parliament. In the 1965 general election it got 3 per cent of the vote and won 15 seats in the parliament. The activities of the socialist members of parliament earned the sympathy and support of the rising anti-imperialist student movement as well as the labour and peasant movements. TIP was banned after the 1971 military memorandum and re-established in 1974. It was banned once again by the 1980 military junta.

Another main left-wing approach was defending the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) theory. This was a left-Kemalist theory defended by a periodical (YON) and some former TKP cadres such as Mihri Belli. Mihri Belli was the son of a commander during the War of Liberation in the Thrace Region. He studied in the US at Mississippi University where he was introduced to Marxism, and joined the labour and student movement in organising black peasants. When he returned to Turkey, he joined TKP in 1940. During the Greek Civil

War, he participated as a guerrilla in 1946 and became a commander, known as 'Kapetan Kemal'. Until his death in 2011, he was an active leader within the socialist movement. The National Democratic Revolution theory advocated the alliance of progressive army officers and intellectuals in seizing power via a kind of leftist coup d'état. Its adherents proposed a planned economy with state control aimed at rapid development and industrialisation (Kaypakkaya 2013). Anti-imperialism was the focal point of this theory, mainly criticising the US dominance over Turkish politics, and the NATO affiliation.

These two main approaches benefited from, and contributed to, the anti-imperialist student movement of the 1960s. This campaigned against the European Common Market ('they are common, we are market') and demanded the nationalisation of petroleum. The student movement also campaigned against Turkish-based US bases and attacked US soldiers. On 16 February 1969, students protested against the Sixth Fleet of the US Navy visiting Istanbul, and two students were killed after a provocative fascist attack against the students. There were demonstrations to support Vietnamese revolutionaries and anti-colonial struggles against imperialist states. In 1968, students in the Middle Eastern Technical University burned the automobile of US ambassador Kommer who was known as the 'Vietnam butcher' (Behram 2005; Karadeniz 2006).

### The 1970s

The anti-imperialist movement of the 1960s radicalised and shifted towards Marxism during the first years of the 1970s. From an anti-imperialist opposition, it began to focus on the power relations and searched for ways to achieve an independent and socialist system via revolution. The leaders of the 1970s had been active in the movement of the 1960s. So at this conjuncture, they found themselves in a position to understand the Polemics within the international socialist movement and to choose 'the real Marxist-truly revolutionary' way to continue the struggle in Turkey (Müftüoğlu 1990).

### Political actors

There are three important revolutionary leaders who had great impact over the next

generations, and who were killed by the state very early, shortly after their establishment of organisations.

Deniz Gezmiş is considered to be the most popular Turkish leader of that period, and his appeal may be compared with that of Che Guevara. He was the founder leader of THKO (Peoples Liberation Army of Turkey). After the military memorandum in 1971, along with his comrades, he initiated a rural guerrilla struggle, but was captured by the army after a short while. He was executed on 6 May 1972 together with his two comrades, Hüseyin İnan and Yusuf Aslan. He had a pioneer position within the anti-imperialist youth movement. He joined the Palestinian resistance and had an armed training at Palestinian camps. He was a member of TIP and he was defending the NDR theory in the 1960s. Thus, he found the Kemalist revolution to be a progressive development. He aimed at fulfilling this progress by an anti-imperialist revolution against the ruling class, which had taken power by a counter-revolution and aligned Turkey with the US imperialism. Many organisations have claimed to be successors to his cause. For instance, one of the most important was called 'People's Liberation' in the 1970s, 'Revolutionary Communist Party of Turkey (TDKP)' in the 1980s, and the legal 'Labour Party' (EMEP) from the 1990s to today. These parties generally positioned themselves with Maoism in the 1970s and then aligned with Enver Hoxha, the leader of the Albanian socialists (Behram 2005; Ersan 2013).

Mahir Çayan (Chayan) was the founder leader of THKP-C (People's Liberation Party of Turkey-Front). He initiated urban guerrilla warfare and then shifted to rural guerrilla fighting. After kidnapping three technicians (two British and one Canadian) from a NATO base in order to liberate Deniz Gezmiş and his comrades from execution, he was killed on 30 March 1972 together with ten of his comrades. He also defended the NDR in the 1960s and then, after studying Marxism, rejected the positive role of the military given by that theory and advocated the necessity for armed propaganda for an anti-imperialist, democratic revolution. He was influenced by the Chinese and Cuban revolutions (Çayan 2008).

There have also been many organisations claiming to be successors of Mahir Çayan. The two main ones are Dev-Yol (Revolutionary Way), which has been one of the strongest organisations from the 1970s and until today,

and has mainly adopted legal ways of struggle. The other was Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left) in the 1970s and 1980s, which changed its name to Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C) in the 1990s and has mainly followed illegal and armed means of struggle (Ersan, 2013).

The successors of Çayan did not align themselves with any of the sides of the Polemics within the socialist movement and criticised both parties, but their position was closer to Maoism. They accepted the main arguments of the Communist Party of China (CPC), accusing the USSR for being modern revisionists, but also criticised it as following narrow nationalist policies which prioritised their state interests while engaging in ideological debates. They also rejected the social imperialism theory proposed by the CPC as far as the USSR's character was concerned. They defended that even though the leadership of the USSR was modern revisionist, claiming it to be a result of the socialist economy and socialist superstructure. They argued that there was an ongoing struggle among Marxists and revisionists and it was not possible for a socialist state to be imperialist just after revisionists had captured power (Devrimci Gençlik 1978; Müftüoğlu 1990).

Ibrahim Kaypakkaya was the founder of the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist, Worker's Peasant's Liberation Army of Turkey. Kaypakkaya was captured by the army while he was waging rural armed struggle in 1973. After almost four months of torture, he was killed on 18 May 1973 without giving any information about his party. This organisation is still active with the same name, operating illegally and mainly through armed rural guerrilla groups following Mao's strategy of People's War. It has clearly been a Maoist party since its establishment, defending Maoist principles and struggling for the NDR, which is anti-imperialist in essence. The NDR theory of Mao demonstrated the way to achieve socialism for the semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries. This requires a democratic transition period (Kaypakkaya, 2013).

Another organisation defending policies of the CPC was led by Doğu Perinçek, who has remained active in politics since the 1960s. He founded the Revolutionary Worker Peasant Party of Turkey (TIKP-İllegal) in the early 1970s, and he then founded legal parties, successively the Worker Peasant Party of Turkey (TIKP) in the late 1970s (one of the strongest

in that decade), the Socialist Party in the 1980s, and the Worker Party (IP) in the 1990s. He followed the official policies of the CPC in both Mao's period and post-Mao. He defends Kemalist principles and uses Kemalist and Maoist terminology together by focusing on anti-imperialism (Perinçek, 2011).

Within the pro-Soviet parties, the main and strongest one was TKP. TKP was a small party until the 1970s, but as a result of a campaigning period which is known as the '1971 Leap' in TKP's history, it became a strong organisation. TKP was following the policies of the USSR, demanding reforms for progress from the government. It was in the leadership of the leftist trade union confederation, DISK. TKP was against the NDR theory of the 1960s, and actively debated against Maoism in the 1970s. Maoist organisations accused TKP members of being 'social fascists' and agents of the social imperialism. After the dissolution of the USSR, TKP also dissolved itself and its cadres played active roles in the formation of various legal socialist parties during the 1990s (Babalık 2005). One of these groups of former TKP cadres re-established TKP as a legal party in 2012.

### **Anti-imperialism and the Polemics: Anti-imperialism and its historical legacy**

In Turkey, there is a strong anti-imperialist tradition. This was mainly rooted in the National Liberation War after the First World War between 1919 and 1922 under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha. The Kemalist Government in Ankara succeeded in becoming recognised by the Great Powers, and declared independence in 1923. According to the official historical narrative and the Kemalist ideology, this was an anti-imperialist war and Turkey earned its independence against the occupational forces. This argument is also accepted in official histories, giving inspiration to all other oppressed nations in colonies and encouraging them to initiate their independence wars as well.

The left in general agreed with these main arguments but criticised some aspects of the official historical narrative. In general, the National Liberation War was considered as a progressive and anti-imperialist war. Additionally, the left in general hailed and stressed the importance of Soviet aid during that war, which helped the Kemalist Government to organise the resistance

movement against the occupation forces in its first phase. Lenin supported the Kemalist Government to maintain peace on the Caucasian border in order that he could focus on the civil war at home. In addition, the Soviet Government recognised the Kemalist Government as an ally against the imperialist interests of Britain (Avcıoğlu, 1998).

However there are different approaches towards Kemalism in the post-Liberation War era. The TKP and the pro-Soviet left defended it as a progressive bourgeois movement until the end of the Second World War. Turkey's shift to the US camp in the first phase of the Cold War, under the Democrat Party Government, Turkey's participation in the Korean War and affiliation to NATO were considered as a break from the authentic Kemalist policy making which had been given importance to friendly relations with the USSR (Babalık 2005).

Deniz Gezmiş supported Kemalism as a progressive force and called for the Second Liberation War to achieve socialism; but, according to Mahir Çayan, Kemalism was a movement of the radical petty bourgeoisie, had a limited progressive role, and positioned itself within the capitalist world after independence. Perinçek also credited an anti-imperialist role to Kemalism and called for the fulfilment of the Kemalist revolution. These opinions converge in addressing Kemalism and the War of Independence as anti-imperialist progressive developments, and claim that a kind of counter-revolution occurred at the beginning of the Cold War when Turkey became a semi-colony of US imperialism. Due to the latter, they argue in favour of another anti-imperialist struggle for an independent socialist system.

Ibrahim Kaypakkaya had a different position on Kemalism. Kaypakkaya found a limited anti-imperialist factor in the War of Independence. He claimed that while the Kemalist Government was resisting the occupation, it aimed to reach an agreement with the imperialist powers even in unequal conditions, and by accepting the semi-colony status from the first days of the Republic, the Kemalist Government moved towards imperialist interests (Kaypakkaya 2013). However, this analysis did not receive much support from the mainstream left movement.

Therefore the official historical narrative and the mainstream left agree on the importance of anti-imperialism for the foundation of the

new regime after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. All reactionary, semi-colonial, pre-modern characteristics began to be symbolised by the Ottoman Empire; modern, progressive, and anti-imperialist ideas were associated favourably with the Republican period.

The Leftist historical assessment was also influenced by the student movement of the 1960s against the US bases and fleet, Turkey's affiliation to NATO and the European Common Market, and protests/attacks against US soldiers visiting the cities. Almost all left-wing leaders and intellectuals of the 1970s had been part of the 1960s movement, sharing strong nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiments, and demanding full independence from imperialist domination. This period was also one of transition from a leftist version of Kemalism to an understanding and application of Marxist ideology and concepts to the concrete conditions of Turkey.

It is also necessary to mention the historical anti-Russian sentiments within Turkish society that had an impact on the left in how it adopted the theory of social-imperialism. In the official historical narrative, only the first phase of the Soviet Revolution under the leadership of Lenin is analysed in a positive sense, while both the histories of Tsarist Russia history that preceded it and the Stalin/post-Stalin USSR that followed have a negative image. From the 16th century to the end of the First World War, in four centuries, the Ottoman Empire waged 14 wars against Tsarist Russia. Russia is considered to be an imperialist state, claiming rights in the Balkans, Caucasia and Bosphorus and aiming to reach the Mediterranean. Therefore, during the Second World War, when Stalin demanded Turkey should join the war against Germany, and after the Second World War, when Stalin put forward proposals for a new regime for the Bosphorus by claiming more rights for the USSR and surrounding Turkey from the Balkans in the West to Caucasia in the East, once again the historical concerns about the expansionism of the Russian state emerged. The signs of this consciousness may be seen in the famous slogan of the pro-China groups accusing TKP and other pro-Soviet associations: 'TKP wants US to go and Russia to come'. Also these groups tend to use 'Russia' instead of 'the Soviet Union' in order to separate the Leninist and Stalinist period from the rest, and to recall traditional anti-Russian sentiments.

The anti-imperialist youth movement, influenced by the official Kemalist ideology as well as traditional historical consciousness, led many socialist/revolutionary organisations and intellectuals to adopt the social imperialism theory in the course of the Cold War in the 1970s. Sympathy towards Maoism and the Chinese Revolution may be seen as stemming from both the characteristics of the Chinese Revolution and the contemporary national liberation/anti-colonial movements of the 1970s in Asia and Africa, mainly symbolised by the Vietnamese anti-colonialism. However, the historical reasons should be taken account as well.

### **Effects of the Chinese Revolution and the Vietnam War**

The left in Turkey found many common characteristics between the Chinese Revolution and its own struggles. It was characterised by anti-imperialism, influenced by the official Kemalist ideology, and just beginning to learn about Marxism and socialist struggles worldwide.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the teachings and experiences of Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution were studied and debated carefully. It was generally considered to have been the revolution of an industrialised, imperialist/capitalist state which succeeded through an uprising in city centres and then moved towards the rural areas. However, the socio-economic characteristics of Turkey were generally analysed as semi-colonial, and for many organisations Turkey was considered to be semi-feudal. In this sense, it was considered closer to the Chinese conditions than to Russian ones. Turkey was a peasant country and industry was not yet developed. During the course of the 1970s, as a result of the Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI) policies, rapid development of capitalist enterprises, massive migration from rural areas to city centres, and formation of strong labour confederations were observed. Many organisations therefore shifted from their analysis of Turkey as semi-feudal to re-determine it as a dependent capitalist country.

However, in the early 1970s, the majority of leftist organisations and intellectuals had drawn parallels between the Chinese Revolution and the revolutionary programme and goals of the revolution in Turkey. The peasant's movement in Turkey and land

occupations of the landless peasants in many parts of the country in the late 1960s in a peasant-dominated country influenced revolutionaries' decision to initiate a similar struggle in Turkey as well. An anti-imperialist struggle with armed peasants under the leadership of revolutionary youth leaders was an attractive idea for revolutionaries. It mobilised three revolutionary leaders of that period (namely Gezmiş, Çayan, and Kaypakaya) to leave the cities to form armed groups in rural areas after the military memorandum of 1971. The Chinese Revolution was inspiring for young revolutionaries of that time, and Mao's writings on the People's War were very popular.

Yet there were other similar examples. Apart from the Chinese Revolution, the revolutionary movement in Turkey was greatly influenced by the Cuban Revolution, where young revolutionaries had mobilised peasants, swept away the US collaborators, and liberated their countries. Another inspiration was Palestine, and many young revolutionaries, including Deniz Gezmiş, directly participated in the Palestinian resistance, trained in Palestinian camps, and fought against the Israeli Army. They would learn the guerrilla struggle in practice and also witness the Chinese support for such struggles (Bulut 2000).

Socio-economic conditions and direct observation of the anti-imperialist struggles therefore brought the revolutionary movement in Turkey closer to the Chinese experience. Additionally, the Chinese Revolution was an anti-imperialist struggle both against the Japanese occupation during the Second World War and against the Kuomintang Government, perceived as lackeys of imperialism. Secondly, the NDR theory of Mao that emphasised the necessity of a democratic transition period to socialism for semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries was an attractive political programme for the revolutionaries in Turkey in comparison to the Russian experience of the Revolution. A left Kemalist theory of the NDR, which defended a 'left junta' by an alliance of progressive army officers and intellectuals, was very popular in the 1960s within the student movement, and the NDR theory as a Marxist approach was attractive for those who were beginning to learn and apply Marxist politics in the search for concrete solutions to the concrete conditions of Turkey.

For the revolutionary youth of Turkey, the great struggles of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, the 1922 National Liberation War, and the 1949 Chinese Revolution were studied and debated carefully in order to shape the future of their own country. The Cuban Revolution and its resistance to US imperialism was also a contemporary struggle that had an impact on them. However, the deepest effect for the revolutionary movement that demonstrated the possibility of defeating imperialist powers under Cold War conditions was the Vietnamese Revolution. As in other parts of the world, the Vietnam War was an important agenda of the anti-imperialist movement of Turkey. For instance, the car of the so-called 'Vietnam Butcher' Robert William Kommer was burned by revolutionary students during his visit to the Middle East Technical University in 1969. 'More Vietnam, Salutation to the Ho Chi Min' was an important slogan for youth of the day (Karadeniz 2006). The Vietnamese Revolution was conceived of as another confirmation of Mao's People's War theory, which was supposed to be the unchallengeable war theory of the proletarian revolutionaries against imperialists and their lackeys.

## Conclusion

Many factors contributed to the deep polarisation within the socialist movement in Turkey in the 1970s on the axis of the Polemics in the international socialist movement. However in understanding the reasons behind 'nationalisation' of these Polemics, there is a need to focus on the anti-imperialist movement and the historical legacy in the political history of Turkey.

The official historical narrative and Turkish Republic's Kemalist ideology had a great influence on the left movement. In the 1960s, it mainly had an anti-imperialist character and it is possible to observe an evolution from the Kemalist version of anti-imperialism to the international Leninist approach of anti-imperialism. Apart from the Marxist-Leninist literature, the contemporary struggles in the 1960s and 1970s were also concrete practices and perceived as consequences of the Marxist revolutionary theory. Therefore, for the anti-imperialist youth of Turkey, there were both national and international experiences and the historical legacy of revolutions that could guide them in the course of the liberation of their country from the imperialist exploitation.

At this period, the Chinese Revolution and Mao's teachings were attractive for the anti-imperialist movement in Turkey. Many common characteristics towards the programme and prospects of the Revolutions in both countries were found and this coincided with Turkey's foreign relations with the USSR and the historical sentiments towards Russian expansionism. Therefore many organisations in Turkey tend to accept the social imperialism theory without seeing much need to focus on the details of this theory.

It is possible to observe such debates and splits in all parts of the world within the socialist movement according to the Polemics, but without understanding the political and historical context of Turkey, it may not be easy to analyse the deep effects of this polarisation within the left-wing movement there.

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## Third Worldism and Marxism

### Introduction

In broad terms, Third Worldism is a trend in Marxism that uses many traditional Marxist

categories while examining global structural disparities, thereby amending many of the key conclusions expressed by popular Marxist analysis.

Rather than defining the world as principally divided between a working-class proletariat and capital-owning bourgeoisie, Third Worldism looks at prominent political divisions within the working class created through the history of national oppression and modern wage scaling. It highlights how these divisions are not simply the result of 'false consciousness' but are based on the development of a centre-periphery relationship inherent to the capitalist-imperialist world-system, and stresses that revolution against global structural inequalities is a prerequisite component of any socialist revolution. Though elements of Third Worldism can be found in the writing of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 put the ideas of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and Third Worldism in the spotlight for the first time. In broad form, Third Worldism was a major theme of the 20th-century revolutionary movements which peaked in the 1960s. Beginning in the 1970s, influenced by the wave of anti-colonial movements, radical intellectuals began picking up and exploring the major themes of Third Worldism, looking further into the history, political economy, and cultural qualities of capitalist-imperialism. Finally, into the 21st century, Third Worldism has taken on an increasingly interventionist role in presenting itself as modern Marxism while critiquing left-wing politics that deny the existence of a significant vertical split in the working class.

### Key concepts and terms

While using many of the key concepts laid out by Karl Marx (such as proletariat, bourgeoisie, class struggle, etc.), Third Worldism has throughout its history employed additional language and terms to advance concepts related to the stratification of labour, the transfer of surplus value, qualitative developments of capitalism as a mode of production, and strategies for social change.

Among the foremost terms employed by Third Worldists are 'First World' and 'Third World'. While many additional terms are used in their place, some more technical and some more literary, the basic concept remains the same, reflecting a relationship in which

'the [preferential] conditions of life for the working class in the countries of the Global North are predicated upon the immiseration, national oppression, and exploitation of the workers and farmers of the Global South' (Cope 2012: iv). Additionally, Third Worldism tends to place stress on the national dimensions by which the proletariat is cast in the modern world, using terms like 'oppressed' and 'oppressor' nations. (Lenin 1976/1916; Sakai 1989) At the heart of Third Worldism is the tendency to look at how divisions imposed by capitalist-imperialism affect structures of class relations in modern society.

Imperialism is a central category of Third Worldist analysis, as it underpins the basic relationship between the First and Third Worlds. As Lenin notes, imperialism is 'the monopoly stage of capitalism' (1974a/1916: 265). More recently, Samir Amin described capitalism as 'inseparable from imperialist exploitation of its dominated peripheries by its dominant centers' (2012: 83). In both cases, exploitation increasingly takes the form of imperialist rent (profits derived from monopoly power) accumulated by multinational corporations at the expense of dependent sections of an integrated world-economy. Also central to Third Worldist analysis is wage scaling; that is, the different rates of income and life expectancies that different groups of workers can reasonably hope to achieve and work toward under the present system. Terms like super-exploitation, (Lenin 1979/1919: 15) super-profits, and super-wages are employed with qualitative regard to labour, reflecting contrasting general relationships of labour to global capital accumulation (Edwards 1978: 20; Emmanuel 1972b: 110–120). Third Worldists also use terms such as 'neo-colonialism' to describe the political characteristics of modern class rule and terms such as 'comprador' and 'labour aristocracy' as archetypal political and economic subsets to the bourgeoisie and working classes, respectively.

A major theme of Third Worldism is the strategic significance of the relations imposed by capitalist-imperialism. Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, for example, explained in his 1967 'Message to the Tri-Continental':

Let us sum up our hopes for victory: total destruction of imperialism by eliminating its firmest bulwark: the oppression exercised by the United States of America. To carry out, as a tactical method, the



peoples' gradual liberation, one by one or in groups: driving the enemy into a difficult fight away from its own territory; dismantling all its sustenance bases, that is, its dependent territories. (1967)

Similar convictions on the need for an international united front and global people's war against imperialism were expressed in the same period by Lin Biao, a leading leftist during the early half of China's 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' (1967: 42–58). In the same period or soon after, groups like the Revolutionary Action Movement and May 19th Communist Organization in the United States took up similar political lines, adding that groups within imperialist centres could act in unity with a global anti-imperialist revolutionary movement.

In more recent times, Third Worldists have looked more closely at how global contradictions might affect any global socialist revolution. The Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons ('FAQ') describes a 'Joint Dictatorship of the Proletariat of the Oppressed Nations' over imperialist countries as the first major step toward communism. Samir Amin (2006) has described the immediate task as twofold: defeating the US's military hegemony over the world and overcoming the 'economic liberalism' imposed by the various institutions of 'collective imperialism'. The Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement (2013 ['12 Point Program']) has described the necessity of a global new democratic revolution, in which global political and economic power are redistributed on an egalitarian basis, as the first step of socialism.

Additionally, Third Worldists have occasionally used modifications of words and phrases to reflect political meaning, or used indigenous names of locations instead of their common ones. Examples of this include 'united States' instead of 'the United States of America', thus denoting the oppressive and illegitimate qualities of the subject, or Boricua instead of Puerto Rico and Azania instead of South Africa. This, Third Worldists claim, is part of challenging the cultural hegemony of imperialism (Maoist Internationalist Movement 1999).

### Differences with other Marxisms

Three World's Theory, the governing ideology of China's foreign policy in the late 1970s

and 1980s, uses similar language as Third Worldism to offer dissimilar analyses of the categorisation of countries.

Third Worldism differentiates the world based on economic relationships of capital accumulation. Prototypical Third World countries are, for Third Worldists, countries that export surplus value, while First World countries are importers of surplus value (Amin 2010: 89). The Three Worlds Theory used First, Second, and Third World to characterise the international political power of various sovereign states. For the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) beginning in the 1970s, the First World was the US and Soviet Union, the Second World included perceived 'middle elements' such as Canada, Western Europe, and Japan, while the Third World included states with little or no power in the world-system, including China (Mao Zedong 1974).

In its polemical form, Third Worldism often counter-poses itself to opportunism, social chauvinism, and First Worldism, which are all seen by Third Worldists as having a material basis in the existence of a large labour aristocracy (Lenin 1979/1916: 5). Recently, Zak Cope defined First Worldism as: 'The governing ideology of the rule of entirely parasitic nations over the whole of the dependent Third World. First Worldism is the sense of entitlement to a standard of living predicated on superexploitation as felt by the vast majority in the advanced industrial countries' (2012: 119). Third Worldists claim First Worldism ignores historical structural divides among the working class, the effect this has on working-class solidarity, and mistakenly pursues strategies based on the interest and consciousness of middle classes, including an elite section of the global workforce (299).

Historically, Third Worldism has been more associated with Maoism than Trotskyism. For example, as early as 1952, Chen Boda, who would later be a prominent leftist during China's Cultural Revolution, declared that 'Mao Tse Tung Thought' – and more specifically the policies of people's war and the united front – had universal significance for 'the entire world struggle' (1953/1952: 86). However, a recent essay published by the Trotskyist Socialist Economic Bulletin (Burke 2014) examines imperialism as a material factor for shaping public opinion in the First World.

While much of contemporary Third Worldism shares many ideas with Immanuel

Wallerstein's treatise on world-systems analysis (2004), many Third Worldists take a more classically Leninist approach to strategies for social change, stressing the necessity of a vanguard party that organises a popular movement in order to seize power and institute a centrally planned economy with new social relations.

### Differences from other critiques of imperialism

As a radical ideology rooted in Marxism, Third Worldism goes beyond many other critiques of imperialism. These include: liberal populist strands of anti-imperialism as represented by the short-lived Anti-Imperialist League, founded in 1898 as a response to the US annexation of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico following the Spanish-America War, and modern strands of the same ideas usually found in libertarianism; analyses of the cultural aspects of imperialism, such as those expressed by Edward Said (1979; 1994); and modern critical expositions on the crimes of imperialism such as those written by Ward Churchill (2003), William Blum (2000), Jean-Bertrand Aristide (2002), and John Perkins (2004). Third Worldism is more thoroughgoing, examining imperialism as a system of social relationships of production that manifest in historical economic disparities and cultural qualities (Cope 2012: 41–136), while highlighting the features of imperialism as being significant for the potentialities of revolutionary struggles (Amin 2010: 127–130).

Within Marxism, Third Worldism entails more than support for the economic and political agendas of nominally independent Third-World social democracies, such as India in the 1950s or Venezuela today, but rather includes support for popular national struggles led by communists against rule by imperialism (Amin 2012: 124; Lin Biao 1966: 19).

### History of Third Worldism in Marxism

The first examples of a Third Worldist trend within Marxism emerged from Marx and Engels themselves.

Engels, writing to Marx in 1858, noted that:

The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat *alongside* the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable. (quoted in Lenin 1979/1916): 12)

Speaking on imperialism and the working class, Engels explained:

The truth is this: during the period of England's industrial monopoly the English working-class have, to a certain extent, shared in the benefits of the monopoly. These benefits were very unequally parceled out amongst them; the privileged minority pocketed most, but even the great mass had, at least, a temporary share now and then. And that is the reason why, since the dying-out of Owenism, there has been no Socialism in England. With the breakdown of that monopoly, the English working-class will lose that privileged position. (1977/1844)

And, writing to Engels in 1869, Marx commented:

For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working class ascendancy. I always expressed this point of view in the *New York Tribune*. Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will *never accomplish anything* before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland. That is why the Irish question is so important for the social movement in general. (1988/1869)

These statements contain the kernel concepts within Third Worldism regarding the effect of imperialism on working-class unity and the necessity for a 'lever' of struggle to be applied among the nations oppressed by imperialism.

These ideas would also become themes in Lenin's later writing. Writing in 1918 about various strands of reformism in Europe and the US, he noted:

[I]n all the civilized, advanced countries, the bourgeoisie rob – either by colonial oppression or by financially extracting

'gain' from formally independent weak countries – they rob a population many times larger than that of 'their own' country. This is the economic factor that enables the imperialist bourgeoisie to obtain super profits, part of which is used to bribe the top section of the proletariat and convert it into a reformist, opportunist petty bourgeoisie that fears revolution. (1974c/1918: 433)

Lenin's tone was often polemical, including in his writings about imperialism and the labour aristocracy that developed within it a class subset he believed was a basis of opportunism within the working-class movement (1966b/1920: 193). This polemical characteristic would continue to be a lingering trait of Third Worldism, and Lenin himself would take an increasingly Third Worldist stance in the latter part of his life. In 1923, months before his death, he remarked:

In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured. (1973/1923: 500)

Lenin's view was shaped by the fact that socialist revolution failed to occur in Western Europe and the US during the First World War. Instead, many social-democratic parties with which he had previously aligned took positions in favour of their own countries' war efforts. To make matters worse, the victorious Western imperialist countries experienced a period of post-war economic growth and social stability, in part, Lenin believed, due to a 'labour aristocracy' which had seized the reigns of working-class movements (1966a/1920: 230). Thus, in its first years, the Comintern sought to combat the influence of the labour aristocracy over the workers' movement, declaring in 1921:

Those who promote the interests of the labour aristocracy, either counterpoising

or simply ignoring the interests of the unemployed, destroy the unity of the working classes and are pursuing a policy that has counter-revolutionary consequences. The Communist Party as the representative of the interests of the working class as a whole, cannot merely recognize these common interests verbally and argue for them in its propaganda. It can only effectively represent these interests if it disregards the opposition of the labour aristocracy and, when opportunities arise, leads the most oppressed and downtrodden workers into action. (Communist International 1983/1921: 287–288)

With the growth and success of anti-colonial movements following the Second World War, the impact and influence of Third Worldism grew as well. A landmark in this early revival of Third Worldism was the 1949 victory of China's New Democratic Revolution led by Mao Zedong and the CCP.

In synthesising Marxism with the conditions of China at the onset of the Japanese occupation, Mao outlined successive aims for popular revolutionary movements in 'semi-feudal, semi-colonial' countries that encompassed most of the Third World:

The first step is to change the colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal form of society into an independent, democratic society. The second is to carry the revolution forward and build a socialist society. (Mao Zedong 1955/1940: 110)

Mao's theory and practice of new democratic revolution were connected to his theory and practice of protracted people's war, described by CCP leftist Chen Boda as a concrete development of Marxism-Leninism directly applicable to the 'East' and of 'universal significance' to the 'entire world struggle as a whole' (1953: 85–86). Ten years later, in 1963, the CCP began openly criticising the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for its failure to strategically support and defend the right of oppressed peoples to engage in struggles against imperialism (Communist Party of China, Central Committee 1963).

Inspired by the success and development of anti-colonial revolutionary movements, the Bandung Movement took shape in the mid-1950s, launching the first Afro-Asian

Conference in 1955. The conference, sponsored by the governments of India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Burma (modern Myanmar), and Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka), was attended by representatives of 24 other countries, and sought to discuss matters of co-operation between the formerly colonised peoples. Decades later, Samir Amin remarked on its origins that:

Bandung did not originate in the heads of the nationalist leaders (Nehru and Sukarno particularly, Nasser rather less) as is implied by contemporary writers. It was the product of a radical left-wing critique that was at the time conducted within the communist parties. The common conclusion of these groups of reflection could be summed up in one sentence: the fight against imperialism brings together, at the world level, the social and political forces whose victories are decisive in opening up the possible socialist advances in the contemporary world. (2010: 123)

While the African-Asian Solidarity Conferences of 1955, 1957, and 1961 brought together states, the Organisation for the Solidarity of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, founded after the Tri-Continental Conference in Havana in 1966, assembled organisations and parties from 82 countries, a majority of whom jointly supported a mutual cause of anti-imperialist struggle (Hsinhua Correspondent 1966: 19–25).

The 1960s itself was a decade of intense struggle around the world. Revolutionary figures such as Dipa Aidat (1964), Kwame Nkrumah (1965), Amílcar Cabral (1966), and Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara (1967) put forward various theses on the nature and significance of the ongoing struggles in the global South. Franz Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth* (1963), which examined the condition of the colonised, has since become part of the academic canon on anti-colonial resistance.

In the tumultuous 1960s, the influence of Third Worldism was even felt in the US. In 1965, the US sent ground troops to Vietnam, setting off student protests led by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), which three years previously had begun exploring more radical positions and rejecting a hegemonic anti-communist Cold War narrative (in its ‘Port Huron Statement’). By 1968, SDS had upwards of 100,000 active members, and different factions had

developed within the organisation (Rudd n.d.). The principal factions advocated two dissimilar strategies, one based on developing a ‘worker-student alliance’ and another on building a ‘revolutionary youth movement’ in unity with the struggles of oppressed nations. In the 1968 document ‘You Don’t Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows’ (Weathermen 1968) the leaders of the latter trend explained, in an implicit retort to the former: ‘any conception of “socialist revolution” simply in terms of the working people of the United States, failing to recognize the full scope of interests of the most oppressed peoples of the world, is a conception of a fight for a particular privileged interest, and is a very dangerous ideology’. The same document went on to note: ‘Virtually all of the white working class also has short-range privileges from imperialism, which are not false privileges but very real ones which give them an edge of vested interest and tie them to a certain extent to the imperialists, especially when the latter are in a relatively prosperous phase’.

Following the 1968 split between the two principal trends inside SDS, members of the latter went on to form the Weather Underground Organization in the 1970s (which had Third Worldist leanings) and the May 19th Communist Organization in the 1980s (which was more Third Worldist).

Third Worldism also appeared in the radical movements spearheaded by African Americans during the same period. The Revolutionary Action Movement, which was founded in 1962 and heavily influenced by Malcolm X and Robert F. Williams, published its own 1966 manifesto, *World Black Revolution*, which advocated for a black insurgency within the US as part of a larger world revolution against ‘white’ imperialism (Ahmad 2007: 95–165). As its founder, Muhammad Ahmad (then known as Maxwell Stanford Jr), recounted decades later, RAM was an ‘anti imperialist, anti-capitalist, anti-colonial, and anti-racist’ ‘revolutionary Black nationalist organization’ which believed the ‘major contradiction in the world was between western imperialism and the revolutionary people of color, the Bandung World’ (Stanford 1989: 145).

Explaining RAM ideology, Ahmad goes on:

The US was hopelessly corrupt and racist. Reform was impossible [...] Black people

in the US were part of the Bandung world which is [sic] made up of all people of color from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Central America, the Caribbean, North America, the Indian sub-continent, and the Pacific Islands. The Bandung world's historical relationship to the West was based on the exploitation of people for the labour and the raw materials the colony could export to the metropolitan country. Bandung people shared the same enemy. (ibid.)

In the immediate wake of the Bandung period (and emboldened by the existing challenge to Marxist orthodoxy as represented by the Sino-Soviet split), another strand of Third Worldism began to emerge. Rather than being founded in political activism and movement building, independent Marxist economists began to challenge existing understandings of the development of capitalism by placing a greater emphasis on imperialism in shaping the contemporary world. While this new trend was hardly homogeneous, it contained a common belief that imperialist countries were enriching themselves at the expense of the masses of Third World countries. Less concerned with directing political movements, instead this group focused on a rigorous analysis of imperialism as a set of social relations and economic processes, thus examining imperialism as a historically developed system.

In the US, the growth of such academic Third Worldism owed a great deal to *Monthly Review*, founded in 1949 in New York City as an independent socialist magazine, and its editors Paul Sweezy, Leo Huberman, and, beginning in 1969, Harry Magdoff, a public acquaintance of Che Guevara and author of the 1969 book *The Age of Imperialism*.

The positions put forward by various authors in this academic Third Worldist trend were typically nuanced and well developed. For example, in the introduction to his *Imperialism and Unequal Development*, Samir Amin takes issue with crude Third Worldism, positing it as a Western response to dominant social-democratic ideology:

It is not surprising that the repercussions of this situation are causing the extreme left in the West to react by executing 180-degree turns. Social-imperialist collusion gives way to Third Worldist outbursts.

For Third Worldism is a strictly European phenomenon. Its proponents seize on literary expressions, such as 'the East wind will prevail over the West wind' or 'the storm centers,' to illustrate the impossibility of struggle for socialism in the West, rather than grasping the fact that the necessary struggle for socialism passes, in the West, also by way of anti-imperialist struggle in Western society itself. They sway between extremes without understanding the crux of the matter – the significance of imperialist hegemony. (Amin 1977: 11)

Nonetheless, paragraphs later, Amin also reasserts some of the main notions behind Third Worldism while offering his own take on revolutionary strategy in the form of 'de-linking':

The current crisis reminds us forcefully of the chief characteristics of the capitalist system in its imperialist phases – the transfer of the contradictions of the capitalist mode of production from its dominant imperialist centers to its dominated periphery; the revolutionary and socialist potential of the struggle for national liberation; the social-democratic ideological domination of the working classes in the centers. This is not a question of prophecy, but merely of an analysis of forces that have been operative for almost a century. The detachment of the periphery from the capitalist system, to be sure, would alter the conditions of class struggle in the center. It is not excluded that if the current crisis should deepen and lead to new revolutions in the periphery, the weight of the contradictions of capitalism would have an impact on the metropolitan laboring classes such as to radically alter the pattern of the socialist transformation of the world. (14)

Underpinning this new academic Third Worldist analysis was a challenge to normative accounting of the Third World as merely 'underdeveloped' or lagging behind 'advanced capitalist countries' (Amin 2010: 90). As Andre Gunder Frank explains in *The Development of Underdevelopment* (1966) and Walter Rodney in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1981), 'underdevelopment' in the global South is the result of centuries of participation in world capitalist development.

In order to better illustrate how imperialism structures local economies in the Third World, academic Third Worldists such as Samir Amin have used the term 'lumpen-' and 'mal-development' (Amin 2013: 47).

Going further than many other academic Third Worldists, Arghiri Emmanuel (1972a) questioned the existence of a material basis for working-class solidarity across the 'north-south division':

While all the working classes were subjected to exploitation, no matter how disparate its degree, even when one was 90% exploited and the other 10%, they had an interest in uniting and fighting arm-in-arm, and together expropriating their exploiters, despite the fact that this expropriation improved the situation for some considerably more than for others. But from the moment the workers of certain countries ceased to be the suppliers of surplus-value (no matter how little) and became recipients, the situation was reversed and the positions of the working classes became antagonistic to one another.

It might be maintained that this comparison in terms of dollars or surplus-value rates is too abstract and illusory. I will suggest another, in physical terms. Today, the citizen of America consumes an extraordinary amount of basic raw materials. Were all the inhabitants of this planet to follow his example and consume the same amount per person, all known deposits of iron ore would be exhausted in forty years, copper deposits in eight years, tin deposits in six years, and petroleum in five and a half years! [...]

It follows from this that apart from all other considerations and all other antagonisms, under today's objective natural and technological conditions, and in the foreseeable future, the people of today's rich countries can consume all the things that make up their material well-being and which they seem to value, only because others use them either very little or not at all. They can reprocess their wastes simply because others have nothing much to reprocess. Otherwise, the ecological balance would be fatally imperiled. This is what makes the antagonism between the center and the periphery irresolvable and

transforms the entire working class of certain countries into the worker aristocracy of the earth.

While Emmanuel's line of thinking may have been unfamiliar to traditional Marxism, the same could be said for many in the academic Third Worldist trend. Paul Baran (2012), for example, reintroduced the notion of 'economic surplus' (as distinct from surplus-value) as a means of analysing and understanding existing and emergent economic processes and social structures in the world economy. In Baran's view, economic surplus (i.e. the portion of the economic product above the material requirements of the labouring classes) made up not just profit and surplus-value but also part or all of the income for some sections of the working class (43).

Lastly, academic Third Worldists stressed the role of trade in the functioning of imperialism, thus giving rise to theories on 'unequal exchange' as a means of imperialist exploitation. In this sense, the academic Third Worldism which emerged primarily in the 1960s implicitly challenged Lenin's notion that imperialism amounted to the export of capital, instead understanding it more as the import of surplus-value owing to the unequal exchange of commodities embodying different quantities of value (Emmanuel 1972b: 187).

Following and developing separately from the Third Worldist academic trend (though to some degree influenced by it), a contemporary interventionist trend of Third Worldism emerged. This latter contemporary trend, more polemical in nature, challenges what it sees as chauvinism within left-leaning ideologies while claiming that a correct analysis of modern political-economy and class structure is of central importance for Marxism.

This trend was spurred on by the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM), an organisation which existed between 1984 and 2005 in the US (Maoist International Movement 1994; 2005). MIM saw the 'North American white working class' as 'primarily a non-revolutionary worker elite' (1992). Throughout its existence, MIM would devote a large proportion of its efforts toward debating this matter with other members of the left in the US. MIM's stance regarding the 'white working class' was greatly influenced in the late 1980s by Settlers, *the Mythology of the White Proletariat*

by J. Sakai (1989), and *Labour Aristocracy, Mass Base of Social Democracy* by H.W. Edwards (1978). The former title, a damning look at US history and critique of the American left, is still popular among Third Worldist and other sections of the radical left.

Following MIM's 2005 dissolution, the interventionist Third Worldist trend continued via different independent efforts. The Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons (MIMP), an organisational descendent of MIM, today describes itself as 'a cell of revolutionaries serving the oppressed masses inside U.S. prisons' (n.d.). Explaining its focus on prisoners in terms of Third Worldism, MIMP states:

Since we live within an imperialist country, there is no real proletariat – the class of economically exploited workers. Yet there is a significant class excluded from the economic relations of production under modern imperialism that we call the lumpen. Within the United States, a massive prison system has developed to manage large populations, primarily from oppressed nations and many of whom come from the lumpen class. (ibid.)

As part of MIMP's strategic practice, it sees 'prisoners in [the US] as being at the forefront of any anti-imperialist and revolutionary movement' (ibid.).

Separately from MIMP, the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement (RAIM) is 'a collective of revolutionary communist organizers, activists, artists, and technical workers based mainly in the imperialist countries' (n.d. ['What is RAIM?']). Echoing Emmanuel, RAIM believes:

The masses of the First World are typically net-exploiters whose incomes are above the value they create. This is accomplished primarily through global wage scaling and imperialist exploitation of Third World peoples. 'Super-wages' for a minority of the global workforce has the economic function of saturating wealth in First World core-zone economies and an ideological function of transforming the masses in these economies into agents of global oppression and capitalist-imperialism. (Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement 2013)

For RAIM, this creates the historical necessity of a 'global new democratic revolution':

'the hemming in and wide-ranging defeat of imperialism by an international proletarian-led coalition of progressive classes, and the building of the requisite productive forces, class alliances, and consciousness to continue the struggle for socialism and communism' (Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement n.d. ['What is Maoism']: 3).

Additionally, RAIM has been openly critical of a pervasive influence of 'First Worldism' within the international communist movement, describing it as 'a trademark of reformism, revisionism, and chauvinism' (Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement 2014: 64).

Zak Cope's academic work also fits into the interventionist trend of Third Worldism. In his 2012 book *Divided World, Divided Class: Global Political Economy and the Stratification of Labour*, he describes 'First Worldist left-populism' as 'distinguishable from its right-wing variant only by its less openly racist appeal and its greater approval of public spending', elaborating that, 'In neglecting the reality of superexploitation, imperialist-country parties and organizations calling themselves "socialist" are socialist only in the sense that Goebbels and the Strasser brothers were – that is, in advocating a larger share of superprofits, whether in relative or absolute terms, for their own nation's workers' (2012: 296, 297). More recently, in 'Global Wage Scaling and Left Ideology' (2013), Cope responds to an academic dismissal of the labour aristocracy featured in the Marxian journal *Historical Materialism*.

### Contemporary trends in Third Worldism

Relative to Third Worldism as an analysis of global productive relationships order via imperialism along with the basic implications this has for the Marxist conception of revolution, emergent trends within Third Worldism have begun examining shifts in the social composition of privilege and changes to the very nature of the world-economy.

While maintaining the First and Third Worlds as central categories of analysis, Cope notes the political significance of changes in the contemporary labour aristocracy: a growing proportion of 'unproductive labour' it performs and its predominance in tertiary sectors of the economy (2012: 130).

Still writing with lucidity and creativity in 2010, Samir Amin articulates in *The Law of Worldwide Value* a tendency in which, owing to a high productiveness of labour, no more than a tiny fraction of the labour force is set in motion for the creation of the social product. Under such a situation, class rule is principally expressed in an unequal distribution of the total income. Moreover, the maintenance of the existing hierarchies through physical coercion and imposed ideologies of consent would supplant the expansion of capital (i.e. the exploitation of labour) as the governing principle of the world-economy. Such a system, Amin contends, would no longer be capitalist, but better described as 'neo-tributary'. Not only is such a system possible, Amin maintains, but it is being built right now, expressed by growing socio-economic polarisation characterised as 'apartheid on a global scale' (2010: 52–53). Implied in such a concept of 'neo-tributary' political economy is a shift from a capitalist-imperialism driven by the quest for profit toward a wholly reactionary imperialism chiefly devoted to maintaining and expanding the extant social features of class rule. Due to their recent introduction, no apparent consensus or general view on these topics exists among Third Worldists.

## Conclusion

Rather than being confined to a single worldview or interpretation of Marxism, Third Worldism encompasses a historical trend within Marxism centred on the significance of imperialism. Rather than being marginal or ineffective, Third Worldism has been a persistent element in the revolutionary history of Marxism.

Marx and Engels set the fundamental foundations of Third Worldism in place, noting the embourgeoisement of a minority of the working class (made possible by imperialist super-exploitation of a broader section of workers) and also realising its significance as a relevant countervailing tendency to their normal pronouncements on working-class solidarity. The Third Worldist trend took further historical shape in the struggles waged by V.I. Lenin, the leader of the first major socialist revolution, against the opportunism of the social-democratic parties. Lenin's latter views on the revolutionary potential of the 'East' turned out to be correct. Third World countries became the major sites of revolutionary

struggles, and Third Worldism became a prominent theme of Marxism during the Bandung period. In the wake of these anti-colonial upheavals, intellectuals carried the trend forward, examined additional features of capitalist-imperialism as a predominant mode of production, and often added to or amended orthodox Marxist verdicts. Finally, as a trend, Third Worldism has most recently developed in an interventionist manner which seeks to more directly challenge the influence of 'First Worldism' within Marxism.

Given its penchant for creatively adapting to existing situations and its sense of urgency in relating to questions of economic structure and political super-structure, Third Worldism will assuredly continue to develop, especially as the subjects of its focus – capitalist-imperialism and class struggle – take further shape. Conversely, while class struggle will continue for some time in accordance with the ongoing relationships characterising capitalist-imperialism, the revolutionary quality of such struggles (i.e. their long-term progressive impacts) will depend in part upon the degree to which oppositional forces accurately come to grips with the same questions historically driving Third Worldism forward. Though not homogenous in time and space, the Third Worldist trend of Marxism is broadly implicative, suggesting not simply who will make revolution but, perhaps more importantly, what revolution will substantively look like. In this manner, Third Worldist Marxism is at once comprehensive and concise, incisive and critical, and firmly rooted in the internationalist trend which has broadly characterized revolutionary Marxism throughout history.

Dustin Lewis

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## Women's Movements, Indian Anti-Colonial Struggle

The themes of nationalist consciousness and the birth of the nation have been major concerns for scholars of Indian history since the end of the British Raj and the attainment of independence by India and Pakistan in 1947. Several historiographical perspectives have investigated these topics over time. The Cambridge school described Indian nationalism as an ideology shaped by elite groups to mobilise the masses around their own narrow needs, which finally bargained successfully with the foreign rulers for power. On the other side, Indian nationalist historians have since the colonial period highlighted the mass, idealistic, and libertarian character of the nationalist movement, depicting it as a struggle aimed at freedom from colonial exploitation. This view has often overshadowed class and caste (not to mention gender) contradictions at work within Indian society, as well as the class perspective of the nationalist movement itself. Class became instead, from the early 1980s, the major analytical tool of the Subaltern Studies project. Research carried forward in this framework rejected a reading of the colonial era through the binary opposition between imperialism and the Indian people, rather focusing on the conflicts between elite groups (indigenous and foreign) and subalterns (Chandra et al. 1989: 13–23).

The gender dimension remained marginal in the work of these schools of thought, until the emergence of feminist studies that have provided gender-conscious accounts of nationalist ideology and the anti-imperialist venture. These works have engaged in a critique of previous

narratives, complicating the picture of women's involvement in agitational politics, as well as addressing the effects of Gandhian ideology on women's roles. Aparna Basu, one of the first to deal with such critiques, has hinted at how reassuring the Gandhian message sounded to the male guardians of women, something which led husbands and fathers to allow (or even encourage) the participation of their womenfolk in the movement (Basu 1976: 37).

Elaborating further on the nature of Gandhian ideology on women, several other scholars have come to define it as a complex set of discourses with contradictory implications. If, on the one hand, it recognised women's subordination and preached their equality and opportunities for self-realisation, on the other it never stepped out of the safe arena of a traditional, religious, and patriarchal sense of the world. Narrating women as unsexed beings, who embodied faith and 'by nature' could endure sacrifice and suffering (like the mythical Sita), Gandhi claimed that they would play a key part in organised passive resistance and non-co-operation (Jayawardena 1986: 95–97). At the time of the non-co-operation movement (1920–22) Gandhi urged elite women in public speeches to adhere to the *swadeshi* programme, boycotting foreign goods and devoting some time a day to spinning, thus acting as role models for the women of the lower strata. (Taneja 2005: 53).

While this call did receive a response from some elite women, the size and quality of their participation would increase dramatically only in the following decade, during the civil disobedience campaign. Although Gandhi had refused to include women in the 240-mile march from Ahmedabad to Dandi to manufacture salt that inaugurated the movement in March 1930, soon after it he fully incorporated them in the campaign, putting them in charge of the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor shops. Scholars agree on the fact that women responded to Gandhi's call *en masse*, and many studies have detailed the facts and figures of such participation both at the national and regional level (Kasturi and Mazumdar 1994; Menon 2003; Saxena 1988: 2–10; Thapar-Bjorkert 1998: 583–615), producing in some cases enthusiastic descriptions of these 'hordes of women pouring out of their homes ... to give proof of their will, courage and forbearance' (Rao 1994: 38).

However, the so-called 'myth of participation' has universalised women's involvement in nationalist agitations, projecting it as homogeneous (Pearson 1979: 80). Such narrative has overshadowed the variety of experiences of those women, considering them as a collectivity rather than as a sum of individuals grouped according to a number of different criteria. The tendency to describe women participants as a homogeneous group is a legacy of the nationalist movement itself, which – in the attempt to become a mass movement and gain cohesiveness – utilised the category of 'woman' as the undifferentiated label it was in public consciousness, 'the sole universal category which cut through divisions and could mean all things to all persons' (Pearson 1981). Such a tendency has brought some historiographical accounts to overlook divisions of class, caste, origin (urban/rural), level of education, religion, and age, to name but a few. Equally neglected has often been the distinction between the women belonging to pre-existing women's organisations and the less educated women who could not boast previous forms of activism or political awareness.

In fact, under the umbrella-category of 'women' stood a number of different motivations to join nationalist agitations, experiences within the movement, practices, and expectations. Although often overshadowed by the Gandhian movement's popularity, other forms of agitations were present on the Indian public scene, and women joined them, too. During the partition of Bengal, in 1905, middle-class Hindu women joined the boycott campaigns at a time when *Bharat Mata* (Mother India) was a powerful symbol within Bengali nationalist rhetoric. (For an analysis of how the mother's body and the map of India came to overlap within nationalist cartography, see Ramaswami 2010.) Many were also the women and girls who later on, having grown dissatisfied with Gandhian politics, decided to side with the revolutionary movement – what the colonial state, some revolutionaries themselves, and much historiography have termed 'terrorism' (on the revolutionaries' self-definition as 'terrorists' and the lack of any negative connotation, see Ghosh 2006: 273). Mostly active in the states of Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Punjab, the revolutionary movements drew upon socialist and Marxist theories for the construction of their ideologies, were influenced by the Russian and Irish revolutions, and

inspired by anti-imperialist as well as anti-capitalist feelings, reflecting a wide range of local and transnational activities and philosophies (Maclean and Elam 2013: 113–123).

Among the leaders of the revolutionary movement outside India was a woman, Madame Cama, who settled in Paris from the early 1900s and 'became the focus of Indian revolutionary activity in Europe', influencing a number of young Parsi women in Bombay, from where she came (Jayawardena 1986: 103–104). However, it was only from the late 1920s that women joined revolutionary societies in significant numbers. Although such groups had been active in Bengal and north India since the early 20th century, for several years their underground activities had been carried out by small cells of men, who took a vow of chastity and were expected to be unquestionably loyal to their leader. Later on, many newly formed groups were eager to include women among their militants, and treated them as equals to men.

It is indeed in the definition of women's role in the anti-colonial struggle that – according to Geraldine Forbes – lies the difference between the Gandhian movement and the revolutionary societies. While the former envisioned a precise role and specific activities for women within the anti-colonial struggle, the latter believed that women revolutionaries could help the cause not only by playing subsidiary roles, but also by carrying out the same tasks as their male comrades, such as killing, sabotaging, or leading the cells' activities (Forbes 1997: 113–115, 127; see also Chatterji 2001: 39–47).

The two movements, however, had two major traits in common. Firstly, they were similar in the way they represented the activist woman, as both constructed their narrative around the same myth of female sacrifice. As a natural predisposition to endurance and self-sacrifice would make women the best *satyagrahis*, the same virtue would lead women revolutionaries to offer their own body and life to the nation. Secondly, both movements drew upon mythical and religious discourses to recruit members and explain their activities to the less educated. Gandhi's *Sitas* were the revolutionaries' *Kalis* and *Shaktis*, and each regarded these figures as symbols of the motherland; though projecting very different models of femininity, these images were powerful and very effective in mobilising women (Thapar-Bjorkert 2006: 128–129).

The homogeneity of women participating in the nationalist movement, though, was not threatened only by the presence of different ideological subgroups on the Indian political scene, as even within the same group women made for a very heterogeneous lot. Female participants in the Gandhian movement ranged from the respectable 'few brave women' (Forbes 1997: 63) adhering to non-co-operation and the Khilafat movement in the early 1920s, to Tamil prostitutes (Lakshmi 1984: 8); from national leaders like Sarojini Naidu, who had taken part in Congress activities since 1904, to women who set up organisations specifically for the purpose of co-ordinating processions, picketing and spinning activities; from those who had been mobilising for women's rights since the start of the century (and wished to see the social, legal, and political status of their lot improved, after their involvement in and support for nationalist agitations), to those 'who responded to their "dual duty" – to their beloved Gandhi ... and to their guardians ... [and who] generally followed men' (Forbes 1997: 83).

Yet, women participating in Gandhian agitations were not only those who joined the 'public' activities envisioned for them. Indeed, as highlighted by the work of Suruchi Thapar-Bjorkert and pointed out by Vina Mazumdar and Leela Kasturi one decade earlier, there were a number of women who could not access the world outside their homes, either 'women from the peasantry and the working class ... or the thousands of housewives – mostly mothers and wives – who provided indirect support by shouldering family responsibilities when their men went to jail or got killed' (Kasturi and Mazumdar 1994: xxvi). Drawing upon oral interviews and women's autobiographies, Thapar-Bjorkert found that the lives of women who did not cross the domestic threshold during nationalist agitations were no less impacted by political changes than those of their more visible sisters. Although some of them were constrained by segregating social customs, 'they were more interested in what they did despite such constraints, and for these women the domestic sphere emerged a site of both contestation and subordination', as well as of political practices. These ranged from taking responsibilities for the family's elders when their husbands were imprisoned, to earning a livelihood, from taking independent

decisions about their children, to dealing with food shortages; 'the awareness that they had to survive without inhibiting their husbands' commitment to the nationalist cause – the author concluded – helped in the development of their own political consciousness' (Thapar-Bjorkert 2006: 209–210).

Among the protagonists in female involvement with Gandhian and Congress-led nationalist politics, women belonging to the organised women's movement deserve special attention. Although during the 19th century a number of women's groups and associations led by women had emerged in various parts of the subcontinent (mainly in Bengal and Maharashtra), it was only in the early 1900s that women's all-India organisations started to be set up by and for women of the urban elites – the first being the Bharat Stri Mahamandal, founded in 1901 by Saraladevi Chaudhurani. Such first experiment proved short-lived, but a few years later a new association was born which would gain greater recognition. It was 1917 when Irish feminists Margaret Cousins and Dorothy Jinarajadasa, and the British Annie Besant – all closely connected to the Theosophical Society – started the Women's Indian Association (WIA) in Madras, with branches all over India. The WIA welcomed members of both Indian and European origins, and engaged from the beginning in the fields of philanthropy, religion, politics, and education, the latter the area to which the association devoted most of its efforts. In 1918 the WIA started editing its mouthpiece, *Stri Dharma*, a monthly journal featuring contributions in English, Tamil, Telugu and – from the late 1920s – Hindi. International in its character, this publication mirrored the advocacy journals edited by British feminists in the late 19th century, and soon became 'a strong voice in the international feminist movement, supporting claims that women shared certain concerns as women that transcended all other differences' (Tusan 2003: 625). Although *Stri Dharma* and the WIA in general acted within a clearly anti-imperialist framework, their main concern was with international feminist politics: they imagined the women of the world as 'sisters in a great family' (*Stri Dharma* 1918: 2), and believed in gender solidarity as a unifying force.

An international aspiration also lay at the core of another all-India organisation, the National Council of Women in India (NCWI),

established in 1925 as the Indian branch of the International Council of Women. Counting among its members women belonging to some of India's wealthiest industrial and royal families, like Mehribai Tata and the Maharani of Baroda, the Council engaged in philanthropy and other activities that, modelled on those of upper-class British women, would seem 'enlightened' to British officials and policy-makers. Elitist in character, close to the British, and socially conservative, the Council never went beyond petition politics aimed mainly at making India reach the internationally accepted standards for health and welfare – an interest shared also by Indian and British men in power (Forbes 2004: 75–78).

Ten years after the WIA, the third pan-Indian organisation was born. The All-India Women's Conference (AIWC) held its first meeting in Pune in 1927, thanks to the efforts of Margaret Cousins and responding to the call of the director of Public Instruction in Bengal, Mr Oaten, who had urged women to raise a unanimous voice and tell the government what kind of education they deemed suitable for Indian girls. The stated focus of the AIWC was thus on female education, although the Conference at the time did not imagine it as a mass phenomenon, nor as equal to the education received by men. From 1928 the Conference widened its scope to include social issues related to women and girls (like child marriage and *pardā*), a focus that would be extended in the following years to labour, rural reconstruction, textbooks, and indigenous industries (80).

From 1930, when civil disobedience broke out, two of these organisations that consistently contributed to create the Indian women's movement, drawing together the country's most active and engaged women, started to face important changes. While the NCWI, due to its social composition and alliances with the British establishment, never joined the struggle for independence, the WIA and the AIWC were more inclined to get closer to the nationalist movement. The AIWC initially chose to remain apolitical, but by the mid-1930s it could no longer ignore that its work was leading towards two directions, for which different and conflicting strategies needed to be put in place. On the one hand, its work for women's rights and equality required co-operation with the British; on the other, its growing

commitment to the welfare of the nation and to Gandhian programme of reconstruction involved work at the grass-roots level. Furthermore, the AIWC found it increasingly difficult to counter critiques such as Nehru's, according to whom the association's programme was superficial and did not enquire into 'root causes' – that is, did not (yet) see women's uplift as part of a wider plan for the nation's uplift. The AIWC's priorities were deemed to change, as Margaret Cousins made clear during her presidential address in 1936, urging her audience to 'work first for political liberty, for liberation from subjection both internal and external, and side by side with that supreme task work for all our already expressed ideals and reforms' (81).

The WIA had stated its anti-imperialist feelings since its inception, but these became even clearer in the 1930s in response to the political events agitating the country, and thanks to the presence of Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy as *Stri Dharma's* editor. Elected in 1927 as first woman member of the Madras Legislative Council, Reddy resigned in 1930 in protest over Gandhi's arrest, and dedicated herself to the nationalist cause. Slowly but surely, the journal's commitment to Gandhian politics started to grow, while the internationalist agenda of the previous years gradually faded away. 'Western' versus 'indigenous' leadership of the women's movement became an issue, as did 'Indian' versus 'universalised liberal female' subjectivity; along these lines political as well as personal conflicts among women activists started to emerge and the WIA, unable to deal with these concerns, finally closed the journal in 1936. In her analysis of *Stri Dharma*, Tusan concluded that the journal's story 'embodied the fragile relationship between Western and non-Western women during the beginning of the decolonization movement' (Tusan 2003: 630–632, 642), thus ascribing the WIA's putting aside its aspirations to 'global sisterhood' (in favour of nationalist politics) to issues among Indian and European women, rather than among Indian women/feminists and Indian men/nationalists.

Previous studies, on the contrary, insisted upon the nationalist movement's interest in maintaining the patriarchal order, and on the incapability of women themselves to 'use the occasion to raise issues that affected them as women' (Jayawardena 1986: 108). Maria Mies claimed that, while the movement

could not but include women in the struggle for tactical reasons, it did not envision change in the social order. Having accepted their limited function, women made for excellent instruments in the struggle, but 'did not work out a strategy for their own liberation struggle for their own interests. By subordinating these goals to the national cause they conformed to the traditional *pativrata* or *sati* ideal of the self-sacrificing woman' (Mies 1980: 121). Despite the apparent radicalism of the Gandhian nationalist movement, Vina Mazumdar added, under its surface lay an essential conservatism aimed at maintaining women's roles within the family and society unaltered, or even further emphasising them (Mazumdar 1976: 76).

Younger scholars found such readings, concentrated exclusively on the coercive role of patriarchy, culpable for shadowing women's conscious agency. As claimed by Charu Gupta, accounts like Partha Chatterji's, according to whom the women's question was 'resolved' by the nationalists and co-opted to the larger project of national liberation, do not necessarily hold true for every context (Chatterji 1990; 1994). Not only was this not the case in several regions outside Bengal, but the various limitations inscribed in the reform and nationalist movement did not prevent many women from 'carv[ing] out spaces for themselves and pav[ing] ways for social and political activism, both in public and private domains, implicitly and explicitly ... . Reforms and nationalism did signal new opportunities for women, however limited they proved to be' (Gupta 2010: 11; see also Gupta 2005).

Gupta highlighted several ways in which initiatives originally planned to control women were appropriated by women themselves, and transformed into instruments of assertion. In the minds of reformers and early nationalists, for instance, female education was meant to instruct a multitude of wives and mothers who would be up to the expectations of their 'modern' husbands, as well as to those of a nation in need of new generations of nationalist citizens. However, once educated, women became difficult to control – what they read, and how they made use of their education went beyond their mentors' expectations, making them similar conscious agents (see Nihajwan 2012). Similarly, debates on issue like *sati*, *pardā*, infant marriages, and widow remarriage, though being more concerned with granting India a place among the 'modern'

nations than with women's actual well-being and rights, had unpredicted outcomes, and women gradually became both the subjects and the objects of social reform (on the Sarda Act and women's involvement in debates around it, see Sinha 2006: 152–196; see also Sinha 2000).

Padma Anagol argued that the historical quest for an understanding of patriarchal mechanisms and their effects on women's lives is an indispensable as much as an essentially incomplete project, for it 'obscures the ways in which women resist patriarchy, construct their identities, assert their rights and contest the hierarchical arrangement of societal relationships between the sexes' (Anagol 2005: 7). According to her, the theme of the 'creation and recreation of patriarchy' crossing much feminist historiography has prevented the recovery of women's agency, and of its twin aspects of assertion and resistance (14). The task of recovering women's voice and consciousness can be achieved – Anagol argued in her study on Maharashtra – by turning away from the most investigated regions, like Bengal (from where the image of the passive Indian woman has come), in search of different women's experiences and historical paradigms, as well as by concentrating on sources in the local languages.

Even more substantial for the recovery of women's agency is, according to Anagol, the adoption of a new chronology by historians dealing with the gender and women's history of modern India. The dominant 'imperialism-nationalism' frame of thinking has led scholars to privilege the first four decades of the 20th century; in such readings, women's participation has often been described as a sudden phenomenon, whose credit is to be given primarily to Gandhi. This tendency has led to the obfuscation of continuities between 'the fiery women nationalists' of the early 20th century, and an earlier period of women's assertion, whose legacy women of the next generation must have inherited, or benefited from (Anagol 2008a: 606).

The real nature of female involvement in nationalist politics could be better retrieved – as Anagol suggested – if the 19th century were treated in its own right as the apex of the colonial period, a time during which India faced important changes at the social, economic, juridical, and educational levels. It is back to the social and religious movements of the 19th century, according to this author,

that the origins of Indian women's activism can be traced. Several scholars analysed this period of reformist zeal through the prism of post-structuralism, showing that behind the efforts for the amelioration of women's conditions lay the needs and contradictions of the newly formed Hindu middle class. Caught between their desire for modernisation (a necessary step towards self-government) and their wish to project Indian culture as an example of morality (in opposition to Western materialism), 19th-century reformers were not as concerned about women's status as they were about nationalism and political power (on *satī* see Mani 1999; on conjugality see Sarkar 2008; 2010).

Anagol instead suggested that, far from being silent 'grounds' on which male actors constructed discourses and enacted laws, women took significant and often radical stands during the social-reform era (Anagol 2008b). Such stands were not about nascent nationalism or imperialism, but rather marked the beginning of women's politicisation and mobilisation for their own cause (Anagol 2008a: 621).

## Conclusions

The theme of women's participation in the Indian nationalist movement, though having been debated extensively over the last few decades, still draws historians' attention and calls for continuing revision and rethinking. Despite the magnificent efforts of recent gender historiography, the complex relationship between (the diverse segments of) Indian women and the several wings of the anti-imperialist movement requires further investigation. Women's contribution to the nationalist cause cannot be denied; their efforts in both Gandhian and revolutionary agitations, and in less visible roles as supporters of the males of their families, were essential in securing India's independence. Moreover, women as a category provided the symbolic imagery backing the anti-imperialist organisations, coming to embody various aspects of nationalist theoretical thinking: from an essentialised and pure 'Indianness' in the minds of early nationalists, to non-violence and passive resistance in Gandhian philosophy, to extreme sacrifice in revolutionary rhetoric.

However, many facets – which call into question an analysis of female agency, and

require that women be studied as conscious subjects in their own right – still remain vague. Among these aspects are the roots of women's involvement in political life; the relationship of feminist organisations with the leadership of Congress-led movements, and the gains and losses that joining the mainstream movement entailed for such women; the strategic (rather than merely sentimental or patriotic) motivations behind such participation; and the changes that it brought about (or did not) in women's everyday lives, as well as in their self-perception.

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# **POLITICAL ECONOMY**

# Conservation as Economic Imperialism

## Introduction

Protected areas (PAs) have historically been viewed as a desirable (and sometimes the only) way to engage in conservation of forests and biodiversity. In 2010, the World Database on Protected Areas recorded nationally designated PAs of 17 million km<sup>2</sup> (or 12.7%) of the world's terrestrial area, excluding Antarctica (including inland waters) around the world. A higher proportion of total area of the 'developing' world (13.3%), is classified as PAs than the 'developed' region (11.6%), with the Latin American region offering the highest level of 'protection' (20.4%) (Bertzky et al. 2012). Popular perception holds that PAs act as bulwark against over-extraction by capitalists as well as the local populace.

Since European colonialism, however, the colonised and residents of dominated states, on the one hand, have been fighting against capitalist over-extraction (although this is not to suggest that they have not been incorporated into a consumer society). On the other hand, they have been resisting the imposition of conservation. Forest conservation is viewed as yet another way to control nature and the labour of the dominated population. While conservation is desirable from an ecological perspective, the specific form and nature of conservation require attention because they can mask imperialist aspirations. Conservation under these circumstances would either provide a source of capital accumulation or safeguard imperialist interests, but lead to what David Harvey refers to as accumulation-by-dispossession (Harvey 2003). The incorporation of conservation into the imperialist project forms the basis of resistance against conservation by regulation as well as conservation through market forms. In the interests of brevity, the discussion will focus on the incorporation of forest conservation into imperialism.

## Fortress conservation

Early colonialism was characterised by ecological imperialism (Crosby 1993) and highly intensive extraction of valuable minerals and biological matter (e.g. Clark and Foster 2009) to profit the colonisers. This effected

a change in land use across vast swathes of forestland to agricultural and mining purposes. With increasing scarcity of raw materials affecting capitalist production, colonial governments adopted 'scientific' management of forests that dictated land use and land management practices. In the US, while scientific management was adopted with a view to stemming unbridled laissez faire capitalism in the interests of enhanced efficiency (Guha and Gadgil, 1989), scientific management in the colonies maintained its efficiency objective but, without a thriving capitalist sector, directed its ire toward the 'natives'. Thus, indigenous (and in British India non-indigenous but local) populations, with their seemingly bewildering and overlapping usufruct rights and incomprehensible use of forest land, were viewed as anathema to advancing planned use and were often removed through the threat or actual use of violence. Thus, the dominant policy was to engage in fortress conservation and the forcible expropriation of the forest commons from its inhabitants.

For instance, the British in India enforced state monopoly by nationalising forests in the late 1800s. The main objective of the Indian Forest Act, 1865 and its subsequent amendment in 1878 was to establish PAs to secure a steady increase in timber production and silvicultural improvement. Forests were categorised according to their commercial value, and the degree to which local communities were excluded was determined accordingly. Images of severe scarcity, famine and environmental annihilation were invoked by colonial foresters to justify the severe social and political costs of expropriating the commons. Indian teak was used in building ships employed by the military in the Anglo-French wars in the early 19th century (ibid.). Also, timber extraction for railway sleepers, required to build an extensive rail network in India, exhausted large swathes of forests in the country. The rail network transported raw materials needed by capitalists and the British state especially during the two world wars. Forests were thus transformed into instruments of state power that allowed the imperialists to discipline the local populations, and at the same time incorporate nature into the capitalist project and aid in war efforts.

The actions of the imperial state were consistent with seeking to resolve the crisis of capitalism. The resolution was through a piece of legislation but enforcement was

assumed through means of violence and conflict. However, 'conservation' was undertaken not as a result of a crisis of over-accumulation, but a crisis in the availability of raw materials to fulfil the needs of the imperial state (Magdoff 2003). Colonial policies formed the basis of post-Independence neo-Malthusian forest conservation policies in Asia and Africa (e.g. Fairhead and Leach 2005).

### Markets and forests

While post-Independence states were free of direct control, imperialist interests continue to influence their economic and forest policies. This influence was accentuated with the debt crises of the 1980s and 1990s. Due to the subsequent structural adjustment programmes imposed by the IMF and World Bank, many economies (willingly or by force) liberalised their trade and investment regimes. Conservation policies were not immune to the tremendous impact of neo-liberalisation consequent to the intervention of the international economic regime. There has been a change in economic ideology, and discourses of the state and local communities. Despite the alleged progressive agenda of community participation and a 'bottom-up' approach, the associated focus on decentralisation has opened the field for market-based forest conservation (McCarthy 2005), and allowed international development and conservation agencies direct access to their intended audience. In many countries, PAs are heavily financially dependent on international organisations. In 2003, only 3 per cent of funds for PAs in Bolivia were supplied by the Bolivian state (La Prensa 2005 cited in Boillat, et al. 2008). Furthermore, in many countries PAs are administered directly by international conservation NGOs (Boillat et al. 2008). This has not diminished the role of the state, which, with its monopoly on legalised violence and significant control on instruments of ideology, facilitates accumulation by dispossession.

### Debt-for-nature swaps

The debt crises led to significant intervention by the Paris Club, a group of 19 creditor countries formed to resolve and manage international debt. The Paris Club includes debt swaps, including debt-for-nature swaps (DNSs), in its arsenal of debt management

instruments. DNSs usually involve an international agency that buys the debt of a 'developing' country in the secondary market. It then sells the discounted debt back to the debtor country for local currency. This money is used by a local government agency or environmental group for use in an environmental programme agreed on by the agency buying the debt and the debtor country. In addition, swap agreements may also include the bank holding the debt. While the Paris Club has been forced to engage in debt forgiveness in some cases, its interventions have proved to be a boon for surplus capital (Harvey 2003). In 1987, the first DNS was agreed on between Conservation International, a US conservation group, and Bolivia. In exchange for the debt, Bolivia agreed to expand the 334,000 acre Beni Biosphere Reserve by 3.7 million acres. By 1993, conservation groups had raised \$128 million at a cost of \$47 million for 31 environmental projects primarily in Latin America and Africa (World Bank 1993 cited in Didia 2001).

DNS has been made possible by multiple actors – environmental NGOs, development agencies, and governments of the creditor and debtor countries. It has also allowed for a reorganisation of internal social relations to accommodate the needs of international capital looking for a spatio-temporal fix (Harvey 2003). For instance, the Canada/Costa Rica DNS investment was signed in 1995 and the conservation was to be overseen by the Costa Rican National Institute for Biodiversity (INBio), a Costa Rican NGO, and the Canadian Worldwide Wildlife Fund (WWF-C). It led to the creation of the Arenal project over an area of 250,561 hectares, of which 116,690 hectares were declared as PA; local inhabitants from 108 communities were expelled (Isla 2001). Conservation of trees on this land is sold as pollution credits to countries including Canada. Local inhabitants, previously engaged in subsistence production, are employed by INBio under the direction of the World Bank and are 'service providers'. The employed inhabitants produce inventories of local species which are used in bioprospecting for new pharmaceutical and agricultural products (ibid.). The Arenal project also promotes micro-enterprises aimed at women's participation in small-scale marketing of biodiversity financed by international funds at an interest rate of 20–30 per cent (ibid.).

As part of the Paris Club, the US has also played a significant role. The US Congress authorised three channels through which DNS was put into practice: (a) in 1989, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID; a federal government agency that disburses and administers foreign aid, and which reportedly has close ties to the CIA) was permitted to purchase commercial debt of foreign countries as part of a DNS agreement; (b) DNS transactions were included as part of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative (EAI), which promoted free-market reform (Bush 1990), which restructured or sold Latin American debt equivalent to nearly \$1 billion (of the total \$1.8 billion) and generated \$178 million in local currency for expenditure on environmental and developmental projects (Sheikh 2006); (c) an expansion of the EAI model resulted in the Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA) to include tropical forests around the world, not just Latin America. Since 1998, this has led to the restructuring of loan worth \$82.6 million and is expected to raise \$136 million in local currency for tropical forest conservation in the next 12–26 years (*ibid.*). Eligibility for DNS transactions under EAI and TFCA include multiple criteria including co-operation with the US on drug control. Eligible countries are also required to undertake a structural adjustment loan or its equivalent from the IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) or IDA (International Development Association), or an agreement with the IMF and to implement economic reforms to ensure an open investment regime (*ibid.*).

As a debt-reduction instrument, DNS has not lived up to its promise (Didia 2001; Sheikh 2006). Nevertheless, advocates argue that it stimulates economic growth, international trade, and foreign investment in erstwhile low-income countries. On the issue of conservation, advocates argue that it generates significant conservation funds, though there has not been much evidence to show that this actually reduces over-extraction or increases forest conservation (Sheikh 2006). DNS agreements have resulted in conflict in some cases, especially due to the role of international agencies. In the Beni Biosphere Reserve, for instance, one result of the DNS was the formation of the Central de Pueblos Indígenas del Bolivia. This organisation accused the DNS of contravening the claims

of the indigenous people who had lived on the land for centuries. The DNS deal collapsed in 1990 after negotiations between the indigenous Chicame people and the Bolivian government (Hobbs 2012). It was later revealed that government agencies involved in the negotiation received significant funding from concessionaire logging companies that would have potentially been affected by the Reserve (*ibid.*). It nevertheless does not detract from the fact that indigenous communities would also have been subject to the exclusionary policy.

### **PES, REDD+ and carbon sequestration**

Following the failure of the Kyoto Protocol, consecutive rounds of the Conference of Parties (COP) negotiations under the UN Framework Climate Change Convention have failed to arrive at any agreement on the limits on carbon emissions for individual countries. However, there is considerable excitement at the prospect of creating carbon offsets that can be traded in the market. One mechanism through which carbon offsets could be produced is carbon sequestration, presently referred to as REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation). It combines offsets with payment for environmental services (PES), which compensates those individuals who contribute labour to the provision of environmental services (WWF 2006). It is expected that providing a market for carbon offsets will compensate forest communities for conserving forests and thus provide an incentive to maintain or restore them (UN-REDD Programme 2010).

The conservation organisation WWF has recently undertaken to experiment with REDD+ projects by creating protected areas (PAs) in 15.5 million hectares of land spread across three key tropical forest regions. These include the Maï-Ndombe region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Kutai Barat District of East Kalimantan Province in Indonesia, and the Madre de Dios region of Peru; these constitute three of the five largest rainforest countries in the world. WWF's report claims the use of participatory planning, recognition of customary rights, and community participation in decision making (WWF 2013). Including funds from recipient countries and the US (in the case of Indonesia), financing is expected through the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, a World Bank programme created specially

to facilitate REDD+-type projects; and Forest Investment Program of the Climate Investment Funds, of which the World Bank is a Trustee and has fiduciary responsibilities. Funds from the Forest Investment Program are disbursed through multilateral development banks such as the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank, and International Finance Corporation. The WWF report does not mention the amount of carbon credits or certified emissions reductions, possibly because currently there is no fully developed and stable carbon market.

Despite the enthusiasm for REDD+, not everyone is convinced of its desirability. Peru, one of the countries in which WWF has undertaken the project, had received \$350 million between 2008 and 2011 to implement REDD+ projects (Llanos and Feather 2011). A group of indigenous organisations affected by these projects released an analysis of REDD+ mechanism. One of the leaders of these organisations stated:

We live here in the Peruvian Amazon where there is a new boom, a new fever just like for rubber and oil but this time for carbon and REDD. The companies, NGOs and brokers are breeding, desperate for that magic thing, the signature of the village chief on the piece of paper about carbon credits, something that the community doesn't understand well but in doing so the middle-man hopes to earn huge profits on the back of our forests and our ways of life but providing few benefits for communities. We denounce this 'carbon piracy' that is one side of the reality of REDD in the Peruvian Amazon. The other side is the big programs of the environmental NGOs, the World Bank, the IDB and the government who promise to act with transparency and respect our collective rights but will this include the respect of our ancestral territories and self determination? The safeguards and guidelines of the big projects always say that they will respect our rights but the reality is always different. (Alberto Pizango Chota, President of the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Amazon (AIDSESP) in Llanos and Feather 2011)

The report notes that more than 10 million hectares have been handed out to various

timber, tourism, REDD+ and conservation projects to the detriment of indigenous communities. Notwithstanding criticism of the implementation of REDD+ projects and carbon offsets, the report also discusses the pressure put on indigenous communities to waive their rights to land on highly unfavourable terms; contracts are complex and rendered in English to an illiterate, Spanish-speaking audience. Thus, the situation is set up to facilitate land grabs. The report further claims that REDD+ proponents have been manipulating the representation of costs and benefits, and that there is usually either no community consultation or that they are held only after the projects have been put in place (*ibid.*). Many REDD+ and REDD+-type projects have experienced land grabs, violent expropriation, human rights violations and militarisation; for instance, Papua New Guinea's indigenous leader was reportedly forced to abdicate carbon rights of his tribe's forest at gunpoint (Bond 2012).

Payment for environmental services, which forms the basis of REDD+ projects, requires monetising the value of nature and commodifying it for market exchange. The benefits of these projects to global capital are manifold. The imposition and rationalisation of property rights, whether vested in the individual or community, provides a lien on the extraction of further surplus value. It could be used as collateral to incur debt (Mandel et al. 2009; Sullivan 2013) and it could lead to real-estate appreciation. Similar conservation projects around the world could potentially absorb surplus capital and hence represent capitalised surplus value, which would be incorporated into the reproduction of global capitalism (see Harvey 2003; Kemp, 1967). According to a WWF report, while REDD+ projects only amassed \$7.2 billion in actual or pledged funds by 2010, forest conservation could potentially tap into a \$100 trillion bond market (Cranford et al. 2011). The actual impacts on sustaining nature and poverty alleviation, the stated objectives of REDD+, may be beside the point.

This explains the enthusiasm for REDD+ even though climate negotiations have been a failure (*ibid.*). The World Bank has consequently taken the lead in its implementation well before a global agreement about its use and framework has been reached. In addition, unlike previous fortress conservation projects, it is expected that there will be less

opposition to conservation efforts even if it is not always clear what the benefits are for the local populace. In cases when local communities are resistant to such projects, the state steps in and uses a combination of physical or psychological violence, regulation, or dangles the possibility of higher market income.

### Conservation as imperialism

Control of raw materials has been cited as one of the motivating factors propelling the control of distant territories (Luxemburg, 1913/2003; Magdoff 2003). In contemporary times, however, imperialism has been manifested not through direct control of territories but through indirect control, influence of economic policies, and international relations. Capitalist businesses inherently attempt to manage risks through the control of raw materials among other factors, to influence not only the profit rate but also manage capital investment and competitive pressures (Magdoff 2003). This increases monopoly power that serves as a barrier to entry, and controls costs. Given capitalism's penchant for continuous expansion and growth, O'Connor (1998) argues in a Luxemburgian vein that capitalist expansion necessarily requires the degradation of the very conditions necessary for its survival, and that conservation would be viewed merely as costs for capitalism. While important in highlighting the limits to unfettered capitalist growth, O'Connor's analysis falls short in understanding the dynamic nature of capitalism.

Capitalism benefits not only from the current extraction of raw materials from nature, but also requires its maintenance for future extraction. Further, under incomplete substitutability between human-made goods and services and those provided by nature, capitalist production depends on what the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) refers to as the provisioning services of nature. O'Connor's (1998) analysis ignores the profit-making possibilities of environmental degradation (see Burkett 2005). Rather than be constrained by environmental degradation, the economic system has developed a number of solutions to the environmental problem such as free-market environmentalism evident in the rise of 'green' products in the market; cut-and-run environmental frontier approach, which is made possible due to high spatial displacement of capital and an approach often associated with

international mining companies; regulation of consumption of nature and environment; and co-opting community management in market endeavours; or some combination of the above. These responses are rooted within the fundamentals of imperialism, though the form of these responses is influenced by historical, geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural factors; thus necessitating the combination of solutions to tackle the problem, and at the same time sharpening contradictions' (Biel 2012). These contradictions lie beyond the scope of this essay.

Harvey (2003) argues that if global capital is in surplus and seeks to be valorised, owing to uneven development, it can undertake geographical expansion, spatial reorganisation, and temporal displacement. This, he argues, explains the absorption of surplus capital into physical infrastructure that has use value and may also lead to appreciation of land value. The same argument could also be employed to explain the increasing attraction of forest conservation projects to finance capital (see Sullivan 2013). The most valuable forests have significant present and future use value. These long-term conservation projects also constitute temporal displacement as the value is realised for profit in the future through the employment of financial instruments. Further, these forests tend to be located in areas of low economic development and are often inhabited by indigenous people or the most marginalised section of society. Due to the current and future productive and consumptive possibilities, these forest conservation projects, whether voluntary or established by force, thus also become sites of asymmetric power and wealth, and unequal exchange.

While the imperial strategy has involved the use of some force in setting up and implementing forest conservation projects, this is not always necessary. The state may participate in the setting-up of institutions and the crafting of domestic and international regulation and treaties, as in the case of climate change agreements (or non-agreements). It may use the threat of economic fallouts and sanctions, as in the case of DNS. This draws our attention to institutions that govern the global circuit of capital, and the unequal exchange that displaces the burden of environmental contamination as well as environmental conservation to the Third World (Clark and Bellamy-Foster 2009; Sutcliffe

1999). For instance, poorer countries are the recipients of both e-waste and funds to reduce carbon and conserve forests (Bond 2012). This is not a contradiction for, as Sutcliffe (1999) argues, despite the existence of ecological limits, the 'privileged can afford to overpollute because the underprivileged are underpolluting'. Conserving forests in poorer countries using 'innovative' mechanisms such as PES and REDD+ displaces the burden of consumption reduction on those who are already underconsuming, so that industrial and post-industrial countries need only marginally deviate from their high consumption path.

The intervention of imperialist states and international development and conservation agencies in forest conservation is reminiscent of a desire for reintroducing what Max Booth, an editor of the *Wall Street Journal* and an advocate of US imperialism against terrorism, described as 'enlightened foreign administration once provided by self-confident Englishmen in jodhpurs and pith helmets' (Max Booth quoted in Harvey 2003). If and when a global agreement on the combination of state intervention and market instruments to tackle the problem of environmental conservation is reached, control of nature is likely to lead to monopolies. It would then be appropriate to invoke Lenin:

Production becomes social, but appropriation remains private. The social means of production remain the private property of a few. The general framework of formally recognised free competition remains, and the yoke of a few monopolists on the rest of the population becomes a hundred times heavier, more burdensome and intolerable. (Lenin 1916/1963: 205)

Resistance against certain forms of nature conservation as well as opposition against environmental degradation thus assume relevance; they become sites of anti-imperialist struggle.

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## Debt Crisis in Africa and Imperialism

### Introduction

George (2000) criticises imperialism and the debt crisis with regard to Africa's increasing poverty and misery. The impact is felt in all aspects of people's lives, from health to environmental degradation. This essay starts from the premise that the concept of imperialism encompasses different meanings to the extent that one needs to clarify it before using it in a discussion. It argues that not only does the term 'imperialism' have a long history, but there are various conceptualisations of what it entails, including its impact on Africa (Abu-Lughod 2000).

The discussion will also show that there are contesting views about the nature and impact of the debt crisis in Africa and how to reduce it. In this context, 'debt crisis' will be used as a general term for the proliferation of massive public debt relative to tax revenues. It has been mostly used in reference to Latin American countries during the 1980s, and the US and European Union since the mid-2000s (Farah and Masongo 2011; Kang 2000).

Concerning different views of imperialism, some relate it to a process of capital export from developed capitalist economies to the developing regions, including Africa. Others address it in the context of the economic dominance by the world's capitalist centres in North America and Western Europe of the world's post-colonial regions. This involves the exploitative effects of transnational corporations, their technological dominance of developing regions, and unequal exchange in trade (Aglietta 1982; George 2000). In the context of this conceptualization, inequities between states, and within the interstate system, create opportunities for these centres

of world capitalism to exploit peripheral regions. Ravenhill (2001) looks at imperialism as the predominance of the US and Western European countries, including their militarised threats towards the developing regions of the world since 1945. These hegemonic processes and mechanisms characterising imperialism could be categorised as 'expansive', on the side of the dominant powers, and a state of 'dependency' for the developing regions.

In this essay, imperialism is viewed as the stage, mechanisms, and processes of international capitalism characterised by monopoly corporations and the compulsion to export capital abroad, especially to the developing regions of the world (including Africa) for higher profits. These transnational corporations are supported and protected by their respective governments. The essay uses an analysis of secondary sources to interrogate imperialism and the debt crisis in Africa, which is one of the regions in the world most affected by them.

### **Imperialism and Africa's contemporary global political economy**

Some scholars such as Asher (2001), George (2003), and Hussain and Oshikoya (2002) have argued that in order to show the relevance of imperialism to Africa's contemporary global situation, especially its debt crisis, one has to examine imperialism beyond the categories outlined above; that is, contemporary imperialism should be looked at as an integral part of the global political economy of capitalism. Ruppert and Smith (2002) summarise the characteristics of contemporary imperialism as the:

- relentless expansion of capitalism as a socioeconomic system on a global scale;
- undoubtedly competitive, expansionist, and warlike character of the developed capitalist states (US and other Western powers);
- unequal nature of capitalist expansion, and the reproduction on a global scale of socioeconomic inequalities and poverty;
- creation on a global scale of structures of inequality of power and wealth not only in the economic sphere, but also the social, political, legal, and cultural ones;

- generation, through the very process of capitalist expansion, of movements of resistance, of anti-imperialism.

In addition to the above features of contemporary imperialism, the transplanted structures of imperialism through its various forms, including colonialism, have created their own seedlings in Africa to perpetuate exploitation through a rapidly growing, and often rapacious, economic and political elite characterised by greed and graft (George 2000).

In his discussion of the new forms of accumulation within the context of Africa and the global political economy, Simon (2000) indicates that using the conceptualisation of imperialism as discussed above does not reduce Africa to a passive recipient of global capitalist intervention. New forms of accumulation emerge within Africa, products of social relations in specific places and their articulation to broader networks of trade and production. There are also complexities to the interplay between state power and private economic power, an interplay that is changing its patterns in response to both external forces and popular movements (Randriamarao 2003). Meanwhile, external forces are themselves in a state of flux as there is a complex set of relations between the imperialist states and their transnational corporations. Furthermore, the financial flows into Africa promote investment by 'home' companies which themselves become sites of contestation as new forms of accumulation are infused with new forms of inequality and social differentiation (George 2003).

### **Africa and the debt crisis**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicated that the cash-strapped Zimbabwe could only get new financial aid if its old debts were serviced. The country is faced with a debt amounting to over US\$10 billion and has US\$142 million in arrears. Zimbabwe is seeking the cancellation of debt from its international creditors in order to relieve itself of the burden of servicing loans so that the money may be used for economic recovery and development. Foreign investment in Zimbabwe had more than halved in 2010, and its industries were either operating below capacity or shutting down (Woods 2012).

Mistry (1988) states that, a century ago, Africa was conquered and plundered by

European powers because they had far superior technology. However, to date the continent is still being exploited by the same Western powers because they possess not only advanced weapons but financial capital. Robin (2008) defines financial imperialism as the system and process through which international capital dominated by Western powers exercises authoritarian control over the economies of the developing world, including Africa. Matthews (2004) reveals a paradoxical situation whereby Africa is spectacularly rich, yet the natural resources benefit other regions of the world. Cline (2002) indicates that the Western capitalist powers use debt as a tool for exploiting Africa and the rest of the developing world. The use of debt to exploit Africa ensures that funds generated in these poor countries are diverted from their developmental investment strategies towards interest payments into imperialist banks.

The Western powers use financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to put African economies, governments, companies, and households into debt, by sucking their incomes as debt interest payments. Indebting African governments allows creditors an instrument with which to take ownership and control of land, public infrastructure, and other property in the public domain. Edwards (2003) looks at the nature of debt historically by arguing that although the concept and practice of debt have been there for centuries, the contemporary debt crisis in Africa is controlled by a dictatorship of international private capital led by a consortium of imperialist banks in pursuit of profit without care for human suffering (George 2003).

However, Hussain and Oshikoya (2002) argue that debt is not the only way in which the capitalist countries keep Africa and other poor regions of the world underdeveloped and deindustrialised. The main weapon financial imperialism uses is the promotion of neo-liberal economic policies through Western institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, as well as through African puppet neo-liberal political parties and elites.

### **Neo-liberalism and Africa's underdevelopment**

Hill (2002) considers neo-liberalism to be the greatest cancer spreading across the African continent. Neo-liberalism is the promotion

of a combination of counter-developmental economic policies (such as privatisation, austerity, and structural adjustment) that put the interests of foreign capital over local labour and the African masses.

Through debt and neo-liberalism, the IMF and World Bank exert de-facto control over the African economies, determining macro-economic policies and national budgets. The indebted African state is thus left with only its judicial functions; that is, the maintenance of internal public order (Isard 2005).

Farah and Masongo (2011) indicate that financial imperialism ensures Africa cheaply exports raw materials such as minerals, and cash crops such as coffee, sisal, oil, tea, and so forth, and buys them back expensively as industrial products. This situation creates a great problem for Africa, but an opportunity as well. It is a problem because those capitalist countries and their transnational corporations constitute power without responsibility, and for the suffering African masses it means exploitation without justice. It creates an opportunity for Africa by creating awareness of the necessity not only to control its raw materials but also to build the processing capacity of these raw resources which would allow them to be exported as finished products with additional value (George 2000). The following section looks at some of the causes of the debt crisis in Africa.

### **The causes of debt in Africa**

George (2003) demonstrates that with the loss of their African colonial territories after the Second World War, the Western European powers' direct military administration and control of these territories was replaced with economic control and domination, which was greater in effect than it had been in the past. The nascent capitalist class in the ex-colonial countries was far too weak to develop the economies of their countries without profound dependence on the rich imperialist states and transnational corporations. For instance, in 1960, the former colonial powers imposed a sum of US\$59 billion in external public debt on the newly independent states with an interest rate of 14 per cent. This was designed to maintain these newly liberated states in perpetual poverty and debt, and keep them servile to their former colonial masters among the industrialist Western capitalist countries.

Imperialism merely changed its exploitative tactics. In 2006, the developing countries, including those of Africa, paid almost £540 million interest on their debt every day to the Western banks, governments and financial institutions. This puts the poor developing countries, especially those in Africa, at the mercy of the imperialist powers. The poor masses in these countries stay in a perpetual state of poverty, and remain a massive reserve of cheap resources and labour for imperialist exploitation (Robin 2008).

The energy crisis in the 1970s and subsequent rise in inflation levels led many Western capitalist institutions to lend increasing amounts of money to the poorer ex-colonial countries. However, that money, which was to be used for economic development and the improvement of living standards, was generally spent on arms. There was massive corruption and generally large sums ended up in the Swiss bank accounts of Western-supported dictators such as Mobutu of the then Zaire. Interest rates rose sharply in the 1980s, resulting in more and more money being spent to pay off interest on loan repayments rather than the principal amount. For example, the money borrowed by Nigeria under President Obasanjo of Nigeria in the 1980s was around \$5 billion. The country paid about \$16 billion and yet it owed the Western financial institutions around \$28 billion due to foreign creditors' interest rates.

The indebted ex-colonial countries have to repay these loans in hard currency, such as Euros, US dollars, or the Japanese Yen, which do not fluctuate much in value. Debt crises often occur because of the devaluation of a given developing country's currency; that is, the amount needed to be paid back rises. The indebted countries must generate the foreign exchange in hard currency, which is generally done through exports whose value keep on falling in the world market dominated by the same Western imperialist countries and their financial institutions. Therefore, to pay interest on their debts, the African countries have to export more. Most of them depend on just two or three export crops; that is, minerals or agricultural products whose prices keep on falling in the world market (Farah and Masongo 2011).

Falling export prices for these raw materials means that it becomes increasingly difficult for indebted countries to pay off the interest on the loans, let alone the principal

sums. As a result, more and more countries refinance their loans by taking out new loans to cover the old ones, and sink further and further into debt.

In her discussion on the impact of drought on the debt crisis in Africa, George (2003) indicates that the situation was worsened by a prolonged and devastating drought in the 1980s which severely impaired Africa's agricultural production and exports, hence the financial structure of the continent's fragile economies. Furthermore, protectionism in the world's markets for agricultural products and low-technology manufactures makes it difficult for African countries to diversify and increase exports to hard currency markets. This also limits their ability to escape the debt trap.

Edwards (2003) reveals that in the 1990s the Western imperialist countries and their financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF set up the Heavily In-Debt Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative to assist the most indebted countries handle their increasing debt payments. The debt of the HIPC countries was, on average, more than four times their annual export earnings, and 120 per cent of GNP.

In order to force the African countries to pay back their debts to the imperialist banks, the World Bank and the IMF imposed so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) on African countries. These SAPs involved cutting welfare expenditure, privatisation, and increasing exports to cover debt servicing. The exports are mostly primary commodities such as mineral and agricultural products whose prices have been falling since the 1980s, whilst the cost of imports has continued to rise. This has caused a sharp decline in Africa's terms of trade, as the purchasing power of Africa's exports has been falling since the early 1980s. This is in spite of an increase in the volume of exports. For instance, the collapse of the International Coffee Agreement in 1989 meant that cocoa prices continued to fall, costing Africa substantial amounts of money for development (Woods 2001).

Matthews (2004) elaborates that when a country is in danger of defaulting on its debt, the IMF usually intervenes with these SAPs. The packages are not meant to cancel the debt of these countries, or even significantly reduce it. They are designed to ease debt figures down to a level where they will be 'sustainable'. This means severe cuts to social spending, so that more money can

be spent on debt repayment. This type of financial arrangement does not assist the indebted country. It only helps the capitalist countries and their financial institutions by ensuring that they receive payments on their loans. Africa's debt in 2006 amounted to about US\$600 billion. This was equivalent to almost three times its annual export earnings. Africa's debt has become one of the most crucial factors constraining the continent's socioeconomic development (African Development Report 2006).

### **The impact of debt on Africa**

An analysis of literature sources shows that the debt crisis has had devastating effects on Africa's development as will be discussed below.

#### **Unsustainable sacrifice**

Substantial resources flow out of Africa as the continent struggles to service debt ratios averaging more than 40 per cent. Despite the principal loan amount being smaller than those of other regions such as Latin America, Africa has a severe lack of foreign exchange resources for its developmental needs. The outflow is financed by drastic cuts in imports, in some cases amounting to more than 50 per cent (Isard 2005). This strangles imports which are so crucial for African economies.

This essay contends that Africa's attempt to service the debt and meet repayment schedules amounts to a sacrifice which most African countries are unable to sustain because directly or indirectly it can lead to a reversal in the decline of mortality rates. The United Nations Children's Fund (2005) blames the debt crisis for an increase in deaths of hundreds of thousands of children in some African countries. Average incomes have fallen by more than a quarter since the 1970s. The number of people living below the poverty line rose from 220 million to over 400 million in 2008 (Woods 2012).

#### **Wasted expertise**

This essay agrees with the view that the continuous monitoring of the debt situation, including negotiations and so forth, takes up a lot of time for the few African experts available in their respective countries. These same experts are also expected to handle economic and financial matters for development policies and programmes. While it is difficult to quantify the loss these countries are incurring

through having their experts 'tied down' to the debt crisis and related matters, the loss is substantial (Ndegwa 1990).

#### **Divided not collective responses**

Cline (2002) shows that the case-by-case approach followed by Western creditor institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund undermines Africa's co-operative efforts against financial imperialism. The African countries are compelled by the Western capitalist countries and their financial institutions to develop policies and programmes in the context of individual national economies. The approach provides no opportunities for the indebted African countries to plan new recovery and development initiatives together. This co-operation could, through collective self-reliance in areas such as food security, minimise Africa's dependence of foreign sources.

#### **Loss of independence**

The detailed and continuous negotiations with creditors, involving close scrutiny of individual African countries' economic and social policies, undermines those countries' independence. The debt crisis is used by some creditors to impose their political and economic influence on Africa as a continent. Loss of that independence in deciding on their own economic, political, and social policies amounts to a recolonisation, with all its undesirable implications and consequences (George 2003).

#### **Economic performance**

This essay notes that although there are other factors contributing to the poor performance of African economies (including adverse weather conditions, collapse of export earnings, social/political conflicts, economic mismanagement, etc.), the debt problem is also a direct and indirect contributing factor. This is related to the reduction in the volume of imports in order to service the debt. The number of African countries recording GDP growth rates below 3 per cent (i.e. a rate below the average population growth rate of 3.2%) has been increasing since the 1980s (Matthews 2004).

Randriamarao (2003) indicates that there is a strong association between debt crisis accelerating urban unemployment in Africa. In most African countries, the industrial and commercial activities are located in urban areas. Therefore, when these countries

implement the stringent financial measures dictated by imperialist financial institutions (involving reduction of food subsidies, bank credit, public expenditure, and in some cases laying-off civil servants), the adverse effects on urban employment are substantial. Furthermore, the scarcity of foreign exchange also constrains economic expansion through shortages of raw materials and spare parts, thereby leading to job losses for workers in the private sector. When such developments are accompanied by consumer price increases, they create social and political tensions which further undermine investment. Real wages have fallen in most African countries by 60 per cent since the 1980s. However, this essay argues that the high levels of unemployment become counter-productive because they result in fewer taxpayers contributing to government revenue.

### Health

The poor health of most Africans is staggering. Infant mortality rates are 50 times higher than in the imperialist nations. An estimated 6 million children under the age of five die from malnutrition each year. Another 30 million are underweight. About 20 per cent of the population is anaemic. African women are 50 times more likely to die during childbirth than women in imperialist nations. In the 1990s, two-thirds of African governments were spending less on health per capita than they were in the 1980s. In Zimbabwe, spending per head on healthcare has fallen by a third since the 1990s when the Structural Adjustment Programme was introduced. In Uganda, US\$4 per person is spent on healthcare (2014), compared with US\$14 per person on debt repayment (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa 2012). Diseases considered to be eradicated (including yellow fever, yaws, etc.) are emerging again in some African countries due to a decline of treatment and vaccination coverage. West Africa is currently struggling with the Ebola epidemic and depends on Western powers and their financial institutions to deal with the crisis.

### Education

African people's education is also affected by the debt crisis. For instance, the Jubilee Debt Campaign in 2007 showed that primary-school enrolment in some heavily indebted

African countries fell from an average of 78 per cent in the 1970s to below 50 per cent in the 2000s. Less than a third of all children attend secondary education. For example, the situation in Tanzania – which was hailed for its universal primary education in the 1970s – has changed since the introduction of school fees in the 1980s as part of the Structural Adjustment Programme. Primary and secondary-school enrolment in the country has dropped significantly. Fewer parents can afford to send their children to school.

### Food self-sufficiency

One of the major effects of the debt crisis is that as Africa has become less and less self-sufficient in food, it has become a dumping ground for heavily subsidised European Union (EU) and US agricultural exports. For example, in Burkina Faso, EU grain is sold for \$60 a ton, about a third lower than locally produced equivalents; this low price being guaranteed by a Common Agricultural Policy subsidy of \$100 per ton. Likewise, the EU exported 54,000 tons of subsidised maize to Zimbabwe, which then had to sell its own stockpile under World Bank advice at a huge loss, leaving it without any strategic food supplies when it was hit by the 1992 drought. Whilst the EU and the US spend over \$20bn annually on subsidising agricultural over-production and export subsidies, the net effect on Africa is to undermine local agriculture, increase unemployment and increase dependence on food imports. Meanwhile, the environment becomes ever more degraded, mainly because of the increasing use of cash crops as a means of generating export income. Fragile grasslands and forests have been turned over to the growth of timber and cocoa, forcing nomadic herders onto poorer grasslands which have suffered intensified erosion. The result is increasing desertification, further reducing any chance of agricultural self-sufficiency (George 2003).

### The way forward

There are divergent views on solving the debt situation in Africa. Some argue that the debt should be cancelled and then everything would be fine; African countries would be able to lift themselves out of poverty and misery (Aglietta 1982). Asher (2001), on the other hand, argues that cancelling the debt would

solve the situation as the problem for Africa is not just about how much debt is cancelled, or the percentage this debt would represent in terms of total world debt. On the contrary, even though these countries might then be able to spend more money on health, education, and other social programmes, they would again sink into debt. The African ruling elites are far too weak to develop their countries on their own. Most of the companies that operate in Africa or from whom African countries buy products for their various developmental needs (health, education, agriculture, mining, etc.) are from the imperialist countries. The profits created in Africa do not remain there but return to the banks of the imperialist countries (George 2000).

George (2003) adds that it is also in the interests of the imperialist financial institutions to continue this parasitic relationship and keep the ex-colonial world in perpetual debt. They lend the money and, in return, in the form of interest payments, make billions on their investment. Moreover, cancelling the debt is not going to cause capitalism to collapse, or cause it to seriously reform itself. The developing world's debt is essential for the continuation of international capitalism. It provides the imperialists with cheap resources and labour. The debt crisis also demonstrates that one cannot tinker with capitalism because as long as the means of production remain in the private hands of the capitalists, there will always be poverty and the ex-colonies will remain impoverished and indebted (Aglietta 1982). Others argue that not only must the debt of the developing world be annulled, but the major financial institutions of these countries must be nationalised and put under the democratic control of the working class, creating a harmonious plan of production (Callinicos and Rogers 1980).

However, this essay subscribes to the view that in considering future policy, African countries need to concentrate on those areas of critical importance where concrete action can be achieved. They should keep in mind that their situation in dealing with the imperialist financial creditors is different from that of Latin American debtor countries. The latter have bigger debts which enable them to get the attention of the creditors. They cannot be ignored because default on their part could have serious consequences for the imperialist financial institutions. Latin America is also a major market for some of the Western

imperialist countries such as the US. It is this weaker position of African countries which, we agree, demands that they adopt collective action and approaches if they are to exert any meaningful influence in negotiations with their international creditors (Raffer 2001; Ravenhill 2001).

This essay also argues that in spite of its political and social consequences, the debt crisis in Africa is basically financial, arising from African countries' lack of foreign exchange resources to meet their developmental needs. They desperately require foreign exchange for debt service, imports of the necessary items not locally produced, and for further investment. It therefore follows that for as long as they cannot get debt relief from their creditors, they have the responsibility and capacity to reduce the outflow of foreign exchange resources.

Ndegwa (1990) provides three examples of such outflows where African countries could act to great benefit. They are dealt with separately below.

### **Cutting imports which could be produced at home**

African countries, through collective self-reliance, could reduce the import of those goods which Africa can produce internally, especially foodstuffs such as grains and vegetable oils. Paradoxically, some African countries used to export the food items they are now importing. Food production is an area of critical importance for the continent's development and maintenance of its political independence and not just for alleviating the debt problem. African countries need to agree on the collective production and trade arrangements needed. As Haddad (1997) indicates, the problem is not technical so much as political, and the African Union (AU) is currently taking this issue seriously (Jemaneh 2012).

Murison (2003) shows that the debt crisis has resulted in reduction of intra-trade within Africa rather than inducing a sustained effort to promote it. This is due to the fact that in cutting down imports to service debts, African countries have reduced imports from each other more drastically than imports from the industrialised countries. Therefore, without harmonisation, co-operation, and co-ordination in the 'adjustment' policies and programmes, there will be further reductions of intra-African trade as each country cuts

down its imports and hopes to promote its exports to others.

### Reducing military imports

Foreign exchange outflow could also be reduced through cutting down on military imports. In Africa these account for more than 10 per cent of all imports. In some countries, military imports are more than 20 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Okigbo and Eribo (2004) elaborate that in the 1980s some African countries spent more on military imports than on education and health.

### Lowering capital flight

As well as dis-investment by foreign investors, capital flight due to economic, social, and political factors is another area of concern in Africa. It is estimated that the continent loses more than US\$3 billion a year this way through various forms and mechanisms (e.g. over-invoicing of imports, under-invoicing of exports, smuggling of foreign currencies) undertaken by both foreigners and residents. It is suggested that capital flight can only be minimised through sound economic, social, and political management (Labonate 2004).

This is an area for which African governments should collectively accept that only they themselves are responsible and capable of finding solutions. In this case, realism, courage, and determination are crucial and necessary. The objective should be not only to prevent capital flight, but also to create a stable and conducive investment climate for both external and domestic capital. It is argued that attempts to deal with the problem of capital flight through more laws and exchange-control regulations will not succeed. Indeed, in some cases, a reduction in the number of such controls and regulations could be a significant factor in reducing capital flight and establishing a more favourable environment for inflow of foreign capital (Almounsor 2007).

### Conclusion

This essay has shown that just as there are different conceptualisations of the term 'imperialism', so there are also divergent views on the nature and impact of Africa's debt crisis and how to solve it. The discussion has revealed that imperialism and the associated debt crisis are great burdens during Africa's

developmental efforts. They affect all sectors of society, bring poverty to the masses, and result in environmental degradation. In spite of the argument that Africa will continue to depend on external assistance for its developmental requirements in the same way that the industrialised countries have done during their process of development, adequate relief measures for Africa's debt crisis are a matter of urgency. This essay propagates the view that in considering future responses, African countries need to concentrate on those areas of critical importance where concrete action can be achieved. In doing so they must realise that solving the existing debt crisis should not be regarded as the final objective but one of the necessary enabling conditions for the continent's economic recovery and sustainable development. The discussion has highlighted the continent's limitations in a world dominated by imperialist financial institutions which are driven by profit and pose grave danger to Africa's socioeconomic and political independence. The essay also argues that despite its political and social ramifications, as in the rest of the developing world, Africa's debt crisis is basically financial, arising from its countries' lack of foreign exchange resources to meet their developmental needs.

However, while they cannot get debt relief from their creditors, African countries and their respective governments have the responsibility and capacity to reduce the outflow of foreign exchange resources which occurs at significant levels in some areas. Through collective self-reliance, they should reduce importing those goods they can produce internally; cut down on unproductive military imports; and show courage and determination in lessening capital flight from the continent and establishing a stable and conducive investment climate for both external and domestic capital.

This essay has also emphasised the necessity for African countries to co-operate and co-ordinate their recovery and developmental efforts. This is based on the argument that by continuing to pursue such efforts individually countries will perpetuate their vulnerability to imperialism and underdevelopment.

Hassan Omari Kaya

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## Dollar Standard and Imperialism

Capital exports played a key role in Lenin's analysis of imperialism at the turn of the 20th century. In a curious breach of Lenin's formulation, the dominant imperialist power in the contemporary global economy, the US, is a major importer of capital. The growing debt of the US is, however, not a reflection of a decline in imperialist hegemony but rather of its strength. The puzzle of an imperialist country that holds the bulk of the global balance of payments deficits can be explained by the privileged position of the dollar globally as the dominant key currency. The dollar is the main currency used to denominate and settle international transactions. The fact that the rest of the globe uses dollars for its international dealings places the US in a unique position to exercise an 'exorbitant privilege' over the rest of the world. The US can finance its external debt and deficits by issuing its own monetary liabilities, thus enjoying an elastic credit line that is not available to most other countries.

Dominance in the international financial system has allowed the US an easy access to global savings and has given rise to the growing global imbalances that emerged in the first decade of the 21st century. The emergence and persistence of global imbalances is a reflection of the international hegemony of the dollar and the central role that the US has come to play in sustaining global demand. In 2007, when the subprime market was unwinding, the dollar entered on one side of about 88 per cent of all foreign exchange transactions, while its closest competitor, the euro, entered on one side of 36 per cent of foreign exchange transactions. At the same time about 61 per cent of foreign exchange reserves were held in dollars, while the euro share of foreign exchange reserves was about 26 per cent in 2007.

The crisis triggered by the collapse of the sub-prime market in the US brought the hegemonic role of the dollar into sharp focus. Far from setting off a run on the dollar, the complete seizure of financial markets, after the fall of Lehman in 2008, precipitated a global flight to the dollar safe haven. There was a surge in the global demand for US treasury bills and the US Federal Reserve had to extend dollar swap lines to overseas central banks that sought dollar liquidity. The crisis reflected the contradictions of an international monetary system hinged on the dollar standard (Vasudevan 2009a). The key question is whether it also presages the end of the dominance of the dollar or the decline of the US imperial power.

This chapter explores the implications of the dollar's international role for the working of imperialism. Drawing on Vasudevan (2008), it traces the history of the emergence and evolution of the dollar standard after the Second World War and discusses some of the different analytical approaches to understanding the pivotal role of the international dollar standard in the mechanisms of contemporary imperialism.

### The historical evolution of the dollar standard

The International Gold Standard that prevailed before the First World War hinged around the dominance of Britain and the pound sterling in the international financial system. Britain emerged after the Second World War with its dominant international position significantly eroded. The US, on the other held substantial reserves of gold and was now the leading creditor in the international arena. The world capitalist economy, in the wake of two world wars confronted the emergence of a new balance of forces globally. This changing balance of power paved the way for the establishment of the dollar standard.

### The Bretton Woods System and the launch of dollar hegemony

The establishment of an international dollar standard required that the critical problem of a global dollar shortage be solved. In particular, the urgent need was to find means of financing the post-war reconstruction of Europe and Japan (Eichengreen 1996).

The Bretton Woods negotiations reflected the tensions of forging a new international monetary order under the hegemony of the dollar. Keynes's Plan for an International Clearing Union sought to ease the credit restraints facing deficit countries through the aegis of a supranational authority that extended the principle of banking to the international sphere, while transcending the narrow political constraints of a system based on the fiduciary issue of a hegemonic country (Keynes 1980). But the actual outcome of the negotiations cemented the dominance of the US and established a *de facto* dollar standard. The Bretton Woods arrangements involved fixing the dollar's price with respect to gold, while all other currencies were pegged to the dollar.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), which had initially been conceived by Keynes and White as an institutional mechanism to enable member countries to overcome temporary liquidity problems and balance-of-payments crises, played only a marginal role in the immediate post-war transition; in large part because of its limited resources, US resistance to any increase in IMF quotas, and the increasing stringency of the conditions for drawing on IMF funds. Even when special drawing rights (SDRs) were created as an alternative source of liquidity in 1969, the stringent provisions for drawing and repaying SDR loans meant that SDR arrangements played only a limited role and did not undermine the dollar's international role.

Instead of depending on the mechanisms of the IMF, the US government launched the Marshall and Dodge Plans for the post-war reconstruction of Europe and Japan, as the means by which the dollar shortage would be alleviated. The US state was also trying to ensure that closer integration with the US economy would circumvent the possibility that these countries would shut out US capital. After the lapse of the Marshall and Dodge Plans, the US began a programme of military and economic aid. These mechanisms of offsetting capital flows enforced the asymmetric dependence of the international monetary system on the dollar for expanding liquidity, and helped solidify the role of the dollar as an international reserve currency. Thus, recipients of Marshall aid could not turn to the IMF for additional funds.

The desirability of dollar-denominated capital flows would fuel the resort to private

foreign capital flows to meet the dollar gap, and sections of the US regime actively promoted the expansion of private dollar investment as an alternative to official channels when faced by the problem of international liquidity (Helleiner 1994).

Establishing the international role of the dollar required, in addition, pre-empting any possibility that Britain would reassert the dominant role of pound sterling. The terms of the Anglo-American Loan negotiated after the end of the war targeted the system of Imperial Preference (while pursuing the agenda of a liberal trade regime) and the blocked sterling balances of British colonies. The premature launch of convertibility of the pound, as part of this agreement, led to a wholesale conversion of the sterling balances of the colonies into dollars, precipitating the sterling crisis of 1947. Apart from prying open former British colonies to US exports, the vulnerable payments position of Britain also meant that the pound had been effectively set up as a lightning rod for international speculative pressures, providing a measure of insulation to the dollar from the strains that the international monetary system faced (Block 1977).

The Suez Crisis and the ensuing collapse of the pound in 1956 was an important milestone in the effective eclipse of the pound's international role. It marked a shift in Washington's attitude towards the IMF. The IMF was drafted into the rescue of the pound from speculative attacks, in what could be considered its first 'bail-out' operation. The US was also able to use the promise of an IMF bail-out to oust the British from Egypt, while making a minimal contribution to the rescue. With the reinstatement of capital controls following the Suez Crisis, British financiers began to resort to offering dollar loans against their dollar deposits in an attempt to evade these controls. This paved the way for the growth of the euro-dollar market (dollar denominated bank deposit liabilities held in foreign banks or foreign branches of US banks). British banks began to substitute an international financial business based on dollars for one based on sterling, as a way of preserving the role of the City of London as a financial centre in the face of the erosion of sterling's importance.

The dollar's position at the apex of the international monetary system was well established by the end of the 1950s. However,

as Europe and Japan emerged as strong competitors to US industries, the US current account balances began deteriorating through the 1960s and the problem of a dollar shortage transformed into a dollar glut. With the large overhang of short-term dollar liabilities overseas, the possibility of a speculative run on the dollar posed a threat to the international payments mechanism. The rapid growth of unregulated international financial flows, through the eurodollar markets, also came into conflict with the constraints of the Bretton Woods system, precipitating the dollar crisis of the 1960s. However, the US external deficit and debt also reflected the burden borne by the US as the provider of international liquidity (Kindleberger et al. 1966).

A variety of measures were adopted to contain the dollar crisis. The prevailing financial arrangements of offsetting finance and the system of unilateral capital controls failed to prevent speculative flight from the US to Western Europe and fuelled inflation in these countries. The persistent deficits eroded the willingness of foreign central banks to hold dollar liabilities. The growing speculative pressure on gold prices and the demands of financing the war in Vietnam and the Great Society programme in the US brought the crisis a head. Finally, the US government suspended gold convertibility in August 1971.

### **The consolidation of dollar hegemony under a floating dollar standard**

The closing of the gold window and the subsequent 'float' did not result in the dollar losing its privileged position in the international monetary system. Rather, the dismantling of the Bretton Woods arrangements paved the way for the evolution of a floating dollar standard (Serrano 2003) – an international monetary system based not on a commodity like gold, but on the monetary liability of the leading country. Crucial to this role is the willingness of central banks and private investors to hold dollar liabilities.

With European central banks (Germany and France in particular) displaying increasing reluctance to support the US's exorbitant privilege, the US state drew the growing surpluses of the OPEC countries after the oil price shock of 1973 into the service of financing its deficits. US political and economic power ensured that these surpluses were recycled through the private channels of the eurodollar markets so that the funds were routed

through American banks. The US vetoed proposals to channel these surpluses through multilateral channels like the IMF (Spiro 1999). Initiatives directed at controlling the offshore Euromarket – including the introduction of reserve requirements and limiting central bank borrowings in the Euromarkets – were also blocked. There was a shift in focus to promoting private capital flows as the critical means to finance the US deficit and promote dollar dominance.

Capital controls were lifted in 1974 and in 1980 the Deregulation and Monetary Control Act was enacted in US. The sharp hike of interest rates enforced by the Federal Reserve head, Volcker, in 1979 was directed at battling inflation and stabilising the dollar after the 1978–79 dollar crisis. The Volcker shock was also a defining moment in the launch of the neo-liberal phase.

Internationally, too, the US pushed for a 'liberal financial order' promoting liberalisation of not only trade in goods and services but also flows of capital (Helleiner, 1994). Oil surpluses that had been channelled into the eurodollar markets were then recycled to the emerging markets, in particular in Latin America, through syndicated loans in the 1970s. This bonanza of cheap credit came to an end with the debt crisis of the 1980s. This debt crisis was used to give a further impetus to liberalisation of financial markets in emerging markets. The Bretton Woods institutions were also refashioned under the so called 'Washington Consensus' into a means of imposing deflationary policies of fiscal austerity and monetary stringency on indebted developing countries.

There was a revival of capital flows in the 1990s along with a proliferation of new financial instruments including derivative contracts. Unlike the previous wave, the capital flowed increasingly to private entities rather than sovereigns. Apart from Latin America, South-East and East Asia become important recipients of private capital flows in the 1990s. The continued surge of US deficits throughout this decade propelled international liquidity and capital flows to emerging markets and reinforced the pivotal role of the dollar internationally.

While the surge of private capital flows had helped preserve and expand the role of the dollar, the persistent current account deficits and the gross overvaluation of the dollar in the 1980s would pose a challenge. The

US government brokered the Plaza Accord in 1985 that committed the central banks of G5 countries to adjust their monetary and fiscal policies in order to effect an orderly depreciation of the dollar. Two years later, in 1987, US policymakers engineered a new agreement, the Louvre Accord to put a floor on further depreciation of the dollar. Foreign Central Banks were thus drawn into the defence of the dollar and official purchases of dollars. Official holdings of US treasury bills have also played an important role in the multilateral clearing mechanisms of the 'floating-dollar regime'. In fact, the Revived Bretton Woods thesis ascribes the stability of the global adjustment mechanisms primarily to the reserve holdings of current account surplus countries (Dooley et al. 2004). Japan was the principal creditor country through the 1990s with the largest holdings of US reserves. Since 2000, China has emerged as a major holder of dollar reserves. The experience of the Asian crisis in 1997–98 also triggered a pattern of increasing reserve accumulation by developing countries in order to insulate their economies from the debilitating impact of capital flight.

There are thus two dimensions to the process of refashioning the dollar standard after the collapse of the Bretton Woods system. It was based, on one hand, on the concerted advocacy of liberalisation of international private financial flows in the interests of preserving dollar dominance. The pivotal role of the US in global financial markets reinforces the privileged status of the dollar, enabling the US to generate international liquidity by running up its trade deficits and external debt. On the other hand, its stable functioning also drew on the interventions of official investors and central banks to buttress the dollar. The official demand for US treasury bills serves as the basis for the profusion of private financial flows. The dollar is the monetary liability of the US state, but the international dollar standard is constituted by the global private dealer system and its interface with the hierarchy of central banks (Mehrling 2013).

### Theorising imperialism in the context of the dollar standard

The dollar standard is a critical element in the institutional edifice of US imperialism. The precise character of US imperial power exercised through its privileged key currency

status involves the interactions and interlinkages of states and private capitalist institutions in the global economy.

### Characterising contemporary imperialism

There are (at least) three broad characterisations of contemporary imperialism hinged around the dollar standard: first, the domination of other states by the US state in pursuit of its own geo-political objectives (Hudson 2003); second, the deployment of US structural power in the wider interests of expanding and managing capitalist accumulation globally (Panitch and Gindin 2012); third, the global hegemony of the US and US-dominated finance in the restoration of capitalist accumulation in the neo-liberal period (Duménil and Levy 2004; 2010).

In Hudson's (2003) view, the dollar-debt standard that emerged after the collapse of the Bretton Woods system signifies a new form of imperialism in which the US state exploits and exercises power over other nations while pursuing strategic advantages and agendas, independent of the profit motives of private corporate capital. The US's dominant status in the international arena was not undermined by the transformation from creditor to debtor status since the establishment of the dollar-debt standard meant that balance-of-payments deficits and rising public debt no longer imposed a constraint on US policy. Hudson relates the transformation of the US from a creditor to a debtor to US military interventions in Korea and the dollar crisis of the 1960s to the demands of the war in Vietnam. The military adventures of the Cold War were the primary impetus to the subsequent growth of US deficits and debt in Hudson's account. The key role of the dollar-debt standard and this 'deficit strategy' was to enable the US to prosecute its military imperatives while running up debt without necessitating domestic adjustment. He characterises the dollar-debt standard as 'super-imperialism' since the privilege of unrestrained deficits is exercised only by a single state, the US. Super-imperialism entailed the siphoning of surpluses by the US state from the rest of the world through the interventions of central banks and multilateral institutions like the IMF and World Bank, rather than by the actions of corporations.

In contrast to Hudson (2003), Panitch and Gindin (2012) do not envisage contemporary imperialism as primarily a conflict between

the US state and other states. The privileges of the reserve status of the dollar and the related economic and financial hegemony that the US enjoys have not, in their view, been directed to drawing surpluses to the US state or even to exclusively promoting US capital. Rather, the strategic objectives of the US state are directed towards superintending global capitalist accumulation of capital and widening markets for capital in general. As the dominant imperial state, the US has taken on the responsibility for ensuring the smooth reproduction and expansion of capitalism and has overseen the restructuring of global capitalist relations to fashion an integrated global capitalist system by promoting liberalisation. At the intersection of the US state and international finance, the US treasury and Federal Reserve have played a key role in promoting global capital mobility and free trade, and also in containing and managing capitalist crisis. It serves as the ultimate guarantor of capitalist interests. This role is also central to the successful containment of inter-imperial rivalry in their analysis, as the US state acts not in the interests of US capital alone, but of global capitalist system more generally.

While Panitch and Gindin (2012) argue that the US state has promoted neo-liberalism to further the interests of a global capitalist class rather than the specific interests of American capital, Duménil and Lévy (2004; 2010) link the rise of neo-liberalism to the resurgence of the hegemony of US finance (defined as the upper fraction of capitalists and their financial institutions). The euro-dollar market was the terrain where finance launched its revival in the 1970s. The coup of finance that was launched following the hike of interest rates in 1979 paved the way for this revival. With the coup of finance, the neo-liberal model was also pushed globally as a means of sustaining the dollar's international role within a world of floating exchange rates. The dollar's key international role provided the US with a greater degree of freedom in pursuing its broader policy imperatives, and with a measure of insulation against the impact of crisis that other nation states did not enjoy. More important, the US economy can grow and accumulate capital unfettered by its external imbalances. US imperialism is characterised by the US private corporate capital pumping surpluses from the rest of the world in the form of net flows of financial income from abroad. That the US has been earning

more income on its foreign asset holdings compared to what it pays out on its liabilities to the rest of the world is a manifestation of imperial mechanisms in their account.

Contemporary imperialism entails the complex and contradictory process of the integration, under the hegemony of the dollar standard, of the interconnected hierarchy of nation states that constitutes the world capitalist economy. The exercise of imperial power by the US state is embedded in the structure of the financial system. The dollar standard has played a pivotal role in relaxing the external constraint on the US economy and the US state as argued by Hudson (2003) and Duménil and Lévy (2004; 2010).

Hudson's (2003) argument that these gains are garnered exclusively by the US state misses the role US imperial power has played in the smooth coordination of global capitalist accumulation system stressed by Panitch and Gindin (2012). The analysis of Panitch and Gindin (2012), on the other hand, underplays the dominance of US financial and corporate capital over other capitals and the asymmetric gains that US financial and corporate capital has reaped with the neo-liberal backlash and the emergence of a floating dollar standard. It also underplays the extent to which the 1970s crisis constituted a structural break both in the manner in which the US exercised its imperial hegemony and the global regime of capitalist accumulation.

Imperial power and the dollar standard played a crucial role the restoration of profitability after the stagflationary crisis of the 1970s that is central to the analysis of Duménil and Lévy (2004; 2010). The collapse of the Bretton Woods system did signal a fundamental structural transformation of capitalist relations globally in response to this structural crisis. Arrighi (1999) also sees the resurgence of finance and the collapse of the Bretton Woods system as the outcome of the crisis of the 1970s, which he characterises as an over-accumulation crisis. The subsequent expansion of finance signalled, in Arrighi's historical world view, the closing moments of American hegemony. Parboni (1985) also saw the floating of the dollar as a reaction to the relative decline of the US economy with respect to Western Europe and Japan. However, the post-war period actually witnessed a restructuring of imperial relations and a consolidation of US imperial power under the floating dollar standard as outlined

by Panitch and Gindin (2012) and Duménil and Levy (2004; 2010).

Panitch and Gindin's (2012) elaboration of the manner in which the US deployed its imperial power in the post-war period to mitigate inter-imperial rivalries throws light on an important dimension of imperialism. In particular, the imbrication of rival nation states in international financial markets centred on the US has been a major means through which this cohesion was welded. The integrated global order is thus not simply an outcome of the spontaneous workings of capitalist expansionist tendencies, but has been forged through the concerted actions of states – in particular the US state.

### Integrating the periphery

Contemporary imperialism involves a hierarchy of state power; not just domination of rival imperialist nation states by the US, but also that of the periphery by imperialist countries. The integration of nation states in the periphery into the global circuit of capital under US hegemony entails the articulation of corporate and financial capital from the advanced capitalist countries with changing class configurations within these countries. The trajectory of development in the periphery is fundamentally altered by its absorption into the circuit of capital's global circuit.

Hudson's (2003) account stresses the use of debt as a crucial lever for the exercise of power. Debt enables the US state to pressure foreign governments to align their policies to the imperatives of US policy. The Washington consensus, in his view, encapsulated the strategic objectives of the US and was imposed on debtor countries as part of the conditionalities associated with IMF bailouts and World Bank loans that enforced the dependence of the debtor countries in the periphery on global finance. At the same time, the dollar-debt standard obliged the central banks of surplus countries of Europe and Asia to extend short-term loans to the US in the form of holdings of US treasury bills.

Panitch and Gindin (2012) emphasise the crucial role that the US Treasury and the Federal Reserve play in enforcing the US's geo-political agenda to shape and govern global capitalism. In their perceptive account, the structural power that the US state wields over its informal empire does not depend on wars and military occupation or the interventions of

the Pentagon, but more fundamentally on the inter-penetration of elements of the US state in the international financial system. US imperialism has forged a new international division of labour that has embedded domestic capitalist classes in the periphery more deeply in the process of global capitalist accumulation. In a departure from most accounts of imperialism, they argue that nation states in the rest of the capitalist world economy have been absorbed into the informal American empire not solely through US pressure or the actions of multilateral institutions, but also significantly through the active initiatives of the ruling elites in these nation states who in a sense 'invited' integration within the US informal empire as a strategy for furthering capitalist accumulation and relations. They place short-term capital in US financial markets, not necessarily because of military threat or diplomatic pressure, but because of the unrivalled attractiveness of the dollar.

The dollar standard and the dominant position of US financial markets in the pyramid of global capital markets have, however, also helped preserve the structural vulnerability of the periphery and the fundamental asymmetry of the imperial hierarchy. The coup of finance, launched with the 'Volcker shock', marked an important juncture in US imperial relations in Duménil and Levy's (2004; 2010) analysis, and brought countries of the periphery deeper into the embrace of the US finance-dominated dollar empire. The integration of the periphery through the ne-liberal phase also helped resolve the crisis of the 1970s.

Apart from restoring profitability and providing a market stimulus, the periphery plays an essential role in ensuring the stability of the capitalist accumulation in the core imperial countries. In Patnaik's (2008) formulation, countries in the periphery perform the functions of being both a market on tap and a shock absorber, imparting stability to the dollar standard. This stability rests on the existence and perpetuation of a reserve army of labour both within core countries and in the pre-periphery. The persistence of unorganised and informal producers within the pre-capitalist sectors in the periphery weakens the bargaining power of workers in the capitalist sectors in both the core and the periphery. This pauperised populace in pre-capitalist sectors serves an essential function in stabilising the dollar standard by securing

favourable terms of trade for the goods produced in the periphery and also by putting a lid on the wage claims of workers in the core. Patnaik (2008) argues that US imperialism under the dollar standard has a dual character, furthering both retrogression in terms of perpetuating the pre-capitalist relation in the periphery on one hand; and on the other hand, enabling a limited diffusion of capitalist relations by providing access to markets in the core countries through its growing deficit.

Apart from stabilising the dollar standard by curbing wages, Patnaik argues that the periphery also helps sustain the growing deficits of the US through triangular patterns of offsetting balances, whereby its surpluses with primary goods exporting semi-capitalist peripheral countries balances deficits with other capitalist countries. This offsetting role is more important, in his view, than the role of the periphery in providing a stimulus to investment. He sees the pressure placed on surplus countries in the periphery to appreciate their currencies as a reflection of the growing strains on these offsetting mechanisms.

But the unfolding forms and strategies of Western imperialism cannot be understood solely on the premise of the continued existence of pre-capitalist regions. Patnaik's account of the role of the periphery in stabilising the dollar standard does not address the implications of financialisation for the functioning of the dollar standard. Financialisation is, however, central to Lapavistas's (2013) account of the dollar standard. He argues that the US state fostered the 'subordinate financialization' of developing countries in the periphery through the 1990s and promoted private financial mechanisms based on the capital market as the means of integrating these countries into the US imperial system. As primary commodities prices and export of manufactures grew, there was a big surge in the reserve holdings of developing countries. Lapavistas (2013) sees this stockpiling of reserves by countries in the periphery as a manifestation of their subordinate status; the imperatives of 'self-insurance' from capital flight and of maintaining favourable exchange rates in order to promote exports. It is not a sign of a fundamental reordering of their place in the imperial hierarchy but an integral dimension of their subordinate financialisation. Since the

bulk of these reserves are held as US treasuries, the accumulation of reserves boosted the demand for dollar holdings by foreign central banks. Subordinate financialisation induced uneven development and imposed a significant burden on the periphery in terms of rising interest rate spreads between countries in the periphery and the US and the cost of sterilisation of these excessive reserves. The reverse flows of capital from the periphery to the core, which stem from interactions between states rather than private capital, are characterised by Lapavistas as an informal tribute extracted by the US state. This tribute is deployed, in Lapavistas's framework, not solely to benefit the US state but also private capital more generally.

Vasudevan (2008; 2009a) elaborates on the triangular patterns of adjustment that characterised core-periphery relations in both the floating dollar standard and during the pre-1914 International Gold Standard. The mechanism of recycling surpluses and the export of fragility to Latin America through the unregulated euro-dollar market during the 1970s and early 1980s paved the way for the neo-liberal impetus to liberalisation in international capital markets at the end of the century. The essence of these mechanisms of triangular adjustment is not so much that they provide offsetting finance, as Patnaik (2008) stresses, but that they underwrite the capacity of the US to draw on the surpluses of creditors and continue to incur debt despite growing deficits, and recycle these to other debtor countries in the periphery. These capital flows are instrumental in sustaining the US deficits and the ability of the US to act as a banker to the world. The debtors in the periphery bear the brunt of the burden of deflationary adjustment in the form of recurrent currency crises and serve as a safety valve against speculative attacks on the dollar. The export of financial fragility to the peripheral countries in this framework is an integral component of the triangular adjustment mechanisms that mediate adjustment and liquidity creation and help preserve stability in the centre. This pattern of recycling surpluses that underlies the generation of international dollar liquidity engendered and depended on the tremendous growth of private international capital flows and not just the actions of states, and has been fuelled by the ability of the US to 'borrow' internationally from both official and private investors. These borrowings



were then recycled to buttress global demand and restructure the international production system with the relocation of production from the advanced core to developing countries. The US is not merely the banker to the world, it is also the prime engine of global demand.

### **Finance, world money and the dollar standard**

The analyses of Patnaik (2008), Vasudevan (2009b), and Lapavistas (2013) approach the working of the dollar standard through the prism of Marx's elaboration of world money. In Marx's analysis, world money evolves as the ultimate material embodiment of power internationally, once the money-form 'breaks through the barriers of home circulation to assume the part of a universal equivalent in the world of commodities'. World money serves as 'the universal means of payment, as the universal means of purchase, and as the absolute social materialization of wealth as such' (Marx 1976 [1867], 242). It is the means by which wealth is redistributed across nations. The distribution of reserves is thus also a measure of power between nations (De Brunhoff, 1976).

The international monetary system that Marx was investigating was in essence a commodity standard and bullion was the prevalent form of world money. The actual historical development of the international monetary system has witnessed the evolution of a key currency system, with the dollar currently performing the role of world money among a hierarchy of currencies.

Patnaik (2008) characterises Marx's conception of money as 'propertyist', in that the value of money is determined outside the demand-and-supply fluctuations. Patnaik puts forward the argument that in a fiat money system, like the dollar standard, the stickiness of wages in the key currency country helps ensure the relative stability of the value of money. The pre-capitalist periphery where the pauperisation of large populations has created a price-taking reserve army of labour is essential to stabilising wages in the core. This conception of world money also provides a framework for analysing imperialism, seen here as primarily a relation between the capitalist centre and the pre-capitalist sectors in the periphery where stability is ensured from 'outside' through the preservation and recreation of this reserve army of labour. The leading key currency country is

the dominant imperialist power mediating the relationship between the advanced capitalist nations and the periphery. Its relation with the pre-capitalist periphery is integral to the confidence its currency enjoys among wealth-holders.

Patnaik (2008) also puts forward the argument that the floating dollar standard is still in essence a commodity standard. With the erosion of union power, increased capital mobility, and the erosion of the scope of traditional Keynesian demand management policies since the 1970s, rising wages have not been the primary threat to the stability of the dollar. Rather, he argues that the price of oil, as the critical primary commodity, has become the more pervasive threat to the value of the dollar. Patnaik (2008) characterises the floating dollar standard as an oil-dollar standard, not because oil transactions are denominated in oil or that the oil surpluses are denominated in dollars, but because of the significance of oil prices to price stability. He sees the imperative to control oil resources as a motive force for the US's military adventures in the Middle East.

Patnaik's crucial insight about the link between world money and the international division of labour forged by the exercise of imperial power does not go far enough in situating this division of labour in a hierarchy of international credit relations. The breakdown of the Bretton Woods system marked the severing of the connection between the dollar and gold. It also signalled the maturation of a state credit standard, through a process that was embedded in the rise to dominance of finance (Duménil and Lévy 2004; 2010) and financialisation (Lapavistas 2013). The dollar standard rests on the interplay of the actions of the state and central banks on one hand, and private financial institutions on the other, what Gowan (1999) has christened the Dollar-Wall Street regime.

McNally (2010) ascribes the spread of financialisation to the mutation that occurred in the form of world money after formal convertibility between the dollar and gold was abolished and world money became tethered to the dollar. He argues that the heightened volatility in currencies and the uncertainty in valuation of international transactions precipitated under the new floating dollar standard gave an impetus to trade in foreign exchange. In particular it led to a tremendous growth of trade in new financial instruments, such

as exchange-rate and interest-rate derivatives that were designed to hedge against volatility by commodifying risk. While intended to serve as efficient means of hedging risk and reallocating capital, this derivative trade was increasingly used for speculation and evading regulatory requirements, leading to the buildup of leverage and fragility in the financial system. Financialisation in McNally's framework is not only about the rising power of rentiers and financiers and the changing pattern of accumulation to financial channels, or even the pursuit of liberalisation and deregulation, but more fundamentally about the product of this metamorphosis of the money form to a fully fledged credit-money standard and the related transformation of financial intermediation to the riskier terrain of capital markets.

In Lapavitsas's (2013) framework, the monetary basis of contemporary financialisation ultimately also derives from the emergence of the dollar-US treasury bill as world money. The US treasury bill lies at the apex of global capital and money markets, and plays a central role in generating international liquidity. The dollar standard is a reflection of the use of the power of the US state to establish the dollar as key currency by transforming it into a secure financial asset that is perceived to be relatively free from the risk of default. Such a risk-free liquid asset is essential to the smooth functioning of the international financial system (Fields and Vernengo, 2013).

However, as Mehrling (2013) has argued, monetary systems are hybrid in that public and private liquidity is interlinked, and hierarchical in that monetary instruments are qualitatively distinct and organised around the dominant key currency – the dollar. Thus, financialisation and the growth since the 1990s of a private, global, shadow banking system has supported the official public dollar system, but its growth has also eroded the US Federal Reserve's ability to manage the monetary system.

Lapavitsas (2013) also argues that the dollar as a state-backed debt instrument combines elements of fiat and credit money but he treats it as essentially a form of 'valueless tender'. However, once money as a means of payment takes the form of a financial asset, it is not strictly 'value-less', though its valuation is subject to principles of valuation which are distinct from those of other produced commodities. Marx had put forward

his formulation of fictitious capital as a distinct basis for valuation of financial assets like public debt. The evolution of the floating dollar standard also implies the emergence of an international monetary system based on fictitious capital (de Brunhoff 1976; de Brunhoff and Foley 2007; Foley 2005; Vasudevan 2009b).

The valuation and management of state debt is thus a useful point of departure for comprehending the link between US imperialism and the dollar standard within the framework of Marx's theorisation of world money (de Brunhoff and Foley 2007; Foley 2005). The US treasury bill is not simply the link between the US state and private capital markets. As world money, the dollar is the link between the US state and a hierarchy of other nation states and private capital in the international sphere. The management of public debt and the development of finance are integral to the exercise of imperial power in the international dollar standard. These were also critical during the phase of British financial hegemony under the International Gold Standard (Vasudevan 2008; 2009b).

The working of the dollar standard requires the willingness of foreign investors to buy the debt instruments of the US state. The growing debt burden necessary to sustain this role would, however, tend to undermine the status of the dollar as world money as it faces the prospect of speculative outflows of capital. This is the crux of the contradictions in the use of a country's currency as international money – the 'Triffin dilemma' (Triffin 1960). The floating dollar standards resolved this dilemma by displacing the thrust of deflationary crisis to debtors in the periphery, while compelling creditors countries in Asia to share part of the burden of adjustment (Vasudevan 2008; 2009a; 2009b).

The privileged capacity to generate and sustain international liquidity and sustain global demand is both a reflection of and mechanism for the exercise of imperial dominance by the US. The ability of the central bank of the key currency country to calibrate capital inflows, without eroding confidence in its credit worthiness, does not depend simply on the magnitude of the debt burden but, more significantly, on the liquidity of the market for its public debt. This liquidity is contingent on the depth and breadth of the key currency country's financial markets and the position of the currency within the structure of international credit relations as the principle

means in which international transactions and wealth holding are denominated.

The dollar's role as internationally accepted money is thus the outcome of the historical evolution of the US as the financial centre of the global economy and as the dominant imperialist power. While the contemporary crisis does not necessarily herald the end of dollar hegemony, it does, however, signal a protracted period when the imperial relations fashioned under the US-led dollar standard are being restructured. The future trajectory of global capital accumulation and the evolution of the international monetary system will be shaped by the manner in which the current crisis and the contradictions of the imperial dollar standard are resolved.

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## Emmanuel, Arghiri and 'Unequal Exchange'

Arghiri Emmanuel was a Greek-French Marxian economist who came to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s for his theory of 'unequal exchange'. In the 1930s, Emmanuel received a degree from the high school of economics of the University of Athens and another from the faculty of law. In 1942, he volunteered for the Greek liberation forces in the Middle East, and he was active in the left-wing uprising of the Middle Eastern forces against the government-in-exile in Cairo in April 1944. Emmanuel would later find his way to the Belgian Congo, where his family was involved in the textile industry. His experiences there provided a microcosm of the capitalist world, revealing an economy with certain characteristics which inhibited investments in the downward phase of the business cycle, precisely when they would be needed.

In the 1970s Arghiri Emmanuel reformulated Marx's (1967) contribution to the transformation of value into prices of production as a means of explaining why the terms of trade for developing countries are consistently unfavourable. He coined the term 'unequal exchange' in his theoretical exposition of the trade relationship that existed between the 'core' and the 'periphery' (1972). In particular, this provides an explanation of the growing inequalities that have been observed in the terms of trade between developing countries and the advanced industrialised economies. In recognising the possibility that the rate of profit is to be equalised on the world scale, Emmanuel also understands that there are huge differences in both wages and rates of exploitation between advanced and developing countries. Because of the international mobility of capital, substantial gaps in profits

have seemingly been eliminated. Accordingly, Emmanuel claims that wages 'can vary enormously in space but very little in time' (1972: 120). For him, wage differentials between rich and poor countries explain why it is that commodities produced in the Third World are so cheap in comparison with those produced in the West. This, he argues, is a primary reason for the wide and growing gap in economic development between the two regions. In this regard unequal exchange acts as the basis for a process of unequal development on two separate fronts. First, capital is attracted to demand, so that the high incomes generated by unequal exchange attract further investment, and start a cumulative process of development. Second, high wages lead to the use of capital-intensive methods of production, which raise productivity and promote development. Emmanuel explains:

Even if we agree that unequal exchange is only one of the mechanisms whereby value is transferred from one group of countries to another, and that its direct effects account for only a part of the difference in standards of living, I think it is possible to state that unequal exchange is the elementary transfer mechanism and that, as such, it enables the advanced countries to begin and regularly give new emphasis to that unevenness of development that sets in motion all the other mechanisms of exploitation and fully explains the way that wealth is distributed. (1972: 265)

Continued prosperity in rich countries increases the speed of their overall economic development. This, according to Emmanuel, allows for additional raises in wages, while the narrowness of the internal market of poorer countries means that accumulation is retarded, allowing for unemployment increases and decline in wages. As this gap widens, the consequences of unequal exchange grow dire for those underdeveloped areas. Most importantly, Emmanuel attacks any notion of international working-class solidarity, claiming that any class struggle must be understood within the conflict between rich and poor countries and the central divide in world capitalism. He identifies workers in the advanced countries as the chief beneficiaries of unequal exchange and as no longer having a common interest with those in developing areas, whose continued

exploitation provides for their high standard of living. Such loyalty to nation, according to Emmanuel, transcends class interests, and 'national integration has been made possible in the big industrial countries at the expense of the international disintegration of the proletariat'; he goes on to suggest that in the coming global revolution, workers in the West are likely to be on the wrong side (1972: 339–340).

At its core, Emmanuel's contribution can be viewed as a rejection of Ricardo's theory of comparative costs and international division of labour because of its assumption that capital was immobile and wages could be equalised in a full-employment economy. According to Emmanuel, the rate of profit was equalised because of the mobility of capital, thus contributing to Marx's Labour Theory of Value in its understanding that wages may not always be determined by biological factors, but must recognise the impact of sociological and factors as well. For example, Emmanuel highlights trade unionism as an essential factor in determining higher wages in developed countries. Consequentially, in developing countries the product of their labour will have lower value in international trade in comparison to the amount of labour in a developed country. Emmanuel contextualises imperialism as a means of exploitation and inequality rather than political or military domination of one country over another. Such a view underlines an essential feature of imperialism, whether colonial or not, which is that it is mercantile in character. While this is not a direct intention of Emmanuel it does serve as a by-product of his analysis (Bernal 1980; Brewer 2012).

In terms of development, Emmanuel cites unequal exchange as a mechanism that permits relatively high wages in one country without a corresponding relative depression of profits. He argues that the 'organic composition of capital' occurs when capitalists try to minimise costs by substituting means of production for labour when wages are high. By exploiting the means of production produced in low-wage countries they can avoid price increases occurring from high-wage labour (Brewer 2012). The consequence for the high-wage country is a reduction of employment in much the same way as that effected by substitution of lower-priced for higher-priced products, and a reduction in the attraction of capital to the production of non-traded goods

in high-wage areas. Emmanuel argues that the cause of development and underdevelopment is the transfer of value involved in international trade. There is a transfer of value from underdeveloped countries to developed countries which is sufficiently large to cause development in the recipient countries and underdevelopment in the countries from which value is drained. Simply put, relatively high wages preceded and are the cause of economic development, and low wages cause underdevelopment (Emmanuel 1972: 103). Emmanuel argues that once wage disparities exist, a 'cumulative' process of interaction between economic development and wage levels results. The mechanism which operationalises and sustains this process is unequal exchange, through which value is transferred from the underdeveloped countries, thus retarding accumulation, to the developed countries to fuel accumulation. Herein, 'the impoverishment of one country becomes an increasing function of the enrichment of another ... super-profit from unequal exchange ensures a faster rate of growth' (Emmanuel 1972: 130).

Through the integration of 'unequal exchange and the theory of international value into the general theory of value' (1972: 266) Emmanuel demonstrates that exploitation of underdeveloped countries by developed countries takes place through international trade. Draining value from underdeveloped countries severely handicaps the ability to accumulate capital and therefore prevents economic development. Developed countries offer high wages, high organic composition of capital, continual technological improvement, and high productivity of labour. In contrast, developing countries have low wages, low organic composition of capital, a lack of technological improvement, and low productivity of labour. Such exploitation of developing countries through international trade was a product of manipulated exchange by mercantilist policies during colonialism before 1840. After 1870 unequal exchange continued under the guise of 'free trade' (Emmanuel 1972: 186–188).

Whereas raw materials and certain agricultural products have to be sought where they can be found, Emmanuel suggests that the movement of capital is not an increasing but a decreasing function of difference in incomes. Because of the limits to import-substituting industrialisation the advanced

countries are too rich to be able to absorb all the new capital that is formed in them, and the underdeveloped countries are too poor to offer attractive investment prospects to this same capital, apart from their few import-substitution industries. All this, in turn, keeps them poor, or makes them even poorer. Imperialism is not self-destructive: it is self-reproducing (Emmanuel 1974). It is possible, despite these general deficiencies, for certain marginal movements of capital to enable a developing country to cross the threshold of development. Such examples would include the ability of an individual to rise out of their social or economic class. The prospects, however, for underdeveloped countries becoming developed are so slight that there is no danger of capitalists losing a workforce to operate the factories, and it is perfectly reasonable to believe that those countries in the periphery will continue to follow the same path. In a separate analysis, Stephen Hymer (1979) refers to the enormous 'latent surplus-population' or reserve army of labour in both the backward areas of the developed economies and the underdeveloped countries, 'which could be broken down to form a constantly flowing surplus population to work at the bottom of the ladder'. Hymer reinforces Marx's understanding (1967) of the accumulation of capital as an increase of the proletariat. The vast 'external reserve army' in the Third World, supplementing the 'internal reserve army' within the developed capitalist countries, constituted the real material basis on which multinational capital was able to internationalise production – creating a continual movement of surplus population into the labour force, and weakening labour globally through a process of 'divide and rule' (Foster and McChesney 2012).

Consequently, Emmanuel concludes that in order for developing countries to push up wages at home and thus improve their trade position, they will have to resort to policies of economic diversification and protectionism rather than seeking to select and develop industries which have proved to be dynamic in the developed world. In recognising that no country can hope to improve its living standard without trade, Emmanuel argues that unequal exchange cannot be rectified simply by channelling additional funds into poor countries in the form of investment capital, foreign aid, expanded exports, or higher

commodity prices. These funds must also be transformed by one means or another into an increase in the general wage level in the country. Herein he identifies 'a link between the variations in wages and those of development ... based directly on the incentives to invest, on capital movements, and on the subsequent specialisation and techniques'. Thus it is not unequal exchange that determines development, but the very rise in wage itself (Emmanuel 1972: 54).

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## Finance, Finance Capital, Financialisation

The late 1800s and early 1900s witnessed a wave of colonial expansion and increasingly hostile rivalries among major capitalist countries, while at the same time significant transformations were taking place in these countries' economic structures. Capital concentration and centralisation were growing, integration between financial and industrial capital increased with finance seemingly having the upper hand, and cross-border capital movements expanded. Hobson (1902), a British left liberal, provided a first explanation that brought these two developments

together and a number of Marxists, including Hilferding (1910), Luxemburg (1913), Kautsky (1914), Bukharin (1917), and Lenin (1917) theorised the relationship between the rise of finance and imperialism. The broad argument was that the concentration and centralization of capital indicated a new era in capitalism and competition was giving way to monopolies. In order to sustain profitable accumulation, these monopolies had to constantly expand, not only to export products but also to export capital. In the meantime, finance capital acquired greater power and a dominant position, pushing the state towards imperialist expansion to secure its international investments and to acquire colonies.

The concept of *finance capital* was first used by Rudolf Hilferding, who analysed the rise of the financial capitalists in the context of Germany and Austria and focused on the relations between credit, banks and industrial capital in *Finance Capital: A Study of the Latest Phase of Capitalist Development*, published in German in 1910. Hilferding (1910) argued that under modern capitalism 'free competition' was replaced by a process of concentration and centralisation of capital that led to the creation of cartels and trusts. This process brought banks and industrial capitalists together as finance capital – a close integration of the financial capital of banks with industrial capital in which banks acquired a dominant position and representatives of banks started sitting on the boards of corporations in a reflection of not just economic leverage but direct control as well. Finance capital was created as large monopolistic corporations had to rely increasingly on banks to finance their investments. This new institution was not only economically important but it also impacted social and political power as finance capital pushed governments to implement policies that would protect it domestically while supporting it internationally in efforts towards global expansion. Hilferding (1910) wrote:

The demand for an expansionist policy revolutionizes the whole world view of the bourgeoisie, which ceases to be peace-loving and humanitarian. The old free traders believed in free trade not only as the best economic policy but also as the beginning of an era of peace. Finance capital abandoned this belief long ago. It has no faith in the harmony of capitalist interests, and knows well that competition is

becoming increasingly a political power struggle. The ideal of peace has lost its luster, and in place of the idea of humanity there emerges a glorification of the greatness and power of the state .... The ideal now is to secure for one's own nation the domination of the world. (335)

Hilferding thought that imperialism was a direct outcome of finance capital, but he did not regard imperialist wars as the inevitable outcome. Instead, he saw the dominance of finance capital over the state as a structure that could be taken over and used by the working class. Later, Bukharin (1917) defined imperialism as 'a policy of finance capital' in *Imperialism and World Economy*. Lenin (1917) took the core arguments of Hilferding and Bukharin and produced what would later become the classical Marxist theory of imperialism in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. He saw finance capital as directly related to imperialism since states attempt to gain power not only through trade but also through export of capital. The rise of finance capital resulted in the establishment of trade barriers, the export of capital, and a drive towards militarism and imperialism. Imperialist powers searched for colonies where finance capital could export its excess capital and surplus. Lenin particularly emphasised that imperialism was not a political choice but a necessity rooted in the modern capitalist system; the centralisation and concentration of capital both underlay finance capital but were also given added impetus by it. Therefore, finance capital was inseparable from imperialism:

[F]inance capital, literally, one might say, spreads its net over all countries of the world .... The capital exporting countries have divided the world among themselves in the figurative sense of the term. But finance capital has led to the actual division of the world. (66–67, emphasis in the original)

The characteristic feature of imperialism is not industrial but finance capital. It is not an accident that in France it was precisely the extraordinarily rapid development of *finance capital* and the weakening of industrial capital, that from the eighties onwards, gave rise to the extreme intensification of annexationist (colonial) policy. (91, emphasis in the original)

Hobson (1902) had argued that the principal driving force behind capital export was insufficient demand among lower-income groups of the core countries, and had suggested that the problem could be solved by a redistribution of income. Lenin (1917) did not see this as a possibility and argued that within the context of finance capital, since the world was already divided, further expansions would result in a struggle for a re-division and this would be the principal reason for imperialist wars. Hence, imperialist wars were a direct outcome of the dominance of finance capital.

At the time, this theory of imperialism was both new and sophisticated and seemed to provide an explanation for the events that were unfolding. The period from 1914–45 witnessed two world wars, one great depression and the emergence of the Soviet bloc. After 1945, the capitalist world entered a new era. The conflict among capitalist powers gave way to the Cold War, while a process of decolonisation changed the nature of the relationship between advanced capitalist countries and the rest of the world. As the uncontrolled expansion of finance was seen as one of the major causes of the Great Depression, the international financial system and domestic financial structures were strictly regulated and attention turned towards state-led economic growth. This led to a change in the focus of theories of imperialism, since in this new set-up the thesis of finance-driven imperialism seemed out of date. New theories of imperialism relied on concepts such as monopoly capital (Baran and Sweezy 1966) and dependency and unequal exchange (Amin 1974; Frank 1966; Emmanuel 1972; Wallerstein 1974) rather than finance capital. In fact, the finance capital thesis was criticised for representing more of a transitional phase that only applied to Germany but not the US or UK. Instead, the new focus was on management-controlled and largely self-financed corporations and it was argued that imperialism occurred mostly through trade, not so much through finance. In this view, surplus is transferred from the dependent periphery to the core, while excess surplus in the core is directed to wasteful expenditures such as military spending.

The multifaceted crisis of the 1970s, which included declining profitability and stagflation in leading economies and the collapse of state-led, import-substitution industrialisation strategies in less-developed countries,

paved the way for major changes. As all these countries opened their doors to neo-liberal policies in the 1980s, finance was once again ascendant, this time globally. The concept of financialisation was developed as a means of analysing this era. It refers to the increase in the size, importance, and power of financial markets, as well as transactions, institutions, motives, and financial elites in the functioning of the economy. Some describe the financialisation process as a shift from productive activities to financial activities, while others emphasise the dominance of finance in general over economic activities. Indicators of financialisation are abundant. For example, total global financial assets as a percentage of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) increased from 109 per cent in 1980 to 263 per cent in 1990, 310 per cent in 2000 and 355 per cent in 2007. Moreover, the size of the financial sector with respect to the GDP, financial incomes as a percentage of national incomes, financial corporations' profits with respect to non-financial corporations' profits, debt to GDP ratios, non-financial corporations' financial incomes, and financial payments have all shown sharp increases in the last three decades (Orhangazi 2008; 2011). Financialisation has also entailed an increase in cross-border capital movements in the forms of foreign direct investment and portfolio investment flows. In some regards, the era of financialisation bears similarities to that of Hilferding's and Lenin's theorisation: the world economy is dominated by large corporations (though these are more multinational today), capital export has substantially grown, the role and power of finance has substantially increased, and imperialism has reasserted itself. However, there are no trade barriers corresponding to territorial powers. Moreover, in the new era, finance is not limited to banks, not even to financial institutions, as large non-financial corporations now also run sizeable financial operations integrated with productive and commercial operations.

This new rise of finance led some scholars to argue that it has played a key role in securing the hegemony of the US as the leading imperialist power (Gowan 1999; Hudson 2003;). Some have interpreted financialisation as a 'sign of autumn' marking the decline of the US as an imperial power (Arrighi 1994). According to this approach, as rivalries among economic powers intensify, a financial expansion centred around the



hegemonic power in decline occurs and a new locus of power in the world economy begins to emerge. In this formulation, these financial expansions are repeated throughout capitalist history at times of imperial decline. The prime reason behind this is the over-accumulation of capital – reflected as an exhaustion of profitable investment opportunities in the real sector, preceded by increased competition in product markets. Profits grow relative to stagnant business opportunities and this gives rise to financial liquidity. The difference between the post-1980 period and the early 20th century is that the US, as the major imperialist power, now has greater potential than Britain did to preserve its declining hegemony through ‘exploitative domination’, which includes both taking advantage of financial flows into the US and the use of military power to secure resources (Arrighi and Silver 1999). However, financialisation undermines the hegemonic power’s imperial position at the same time, since it weakens the industrial sector as US firms turn to offshoring. The US economy becomes more and more a *rentier* economy with respect to the rest of the world, while domestically it shifts towards a service economy (Harvey 2003).

Leaving aside the debate about whether US hegemony is in fact facing a decline, the relationship between financialisation and imperialism is presented through the argument that financial mechanisms are managed by the imperialist power(s) and work in their interests. In particular, the US Federal Reserve, together with the US Treasury and Wall Street, sets the conditions for financialisation. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank support this set-up globally. The US Federal Reserve can largely determine the levels of international interest rates by moving its domestic interest rate targets. Washington decides the level of financial regulation and supervision through its (de)regulatory interventions. When faced with international financial crises, the US Treasury and the IMF intervene in the interests of the large financial corporations and investors of the core countries.

The US and other leading powers benefit from this set-up through the availability of low-cost funds from the rest of the world. This is ensured in the US case by the reserve role of the US dollar and in the UK case by the London-based banking system. While the role of the US dollar as a reserve currency was created before the era of financialisation, it

has been dramatically strengthened in recent decades (Vasudevan 2008). Moreover, the dollar holdings of developing countries in the form of reserve accumulation – mostly in US Treasury bonds – have become a seigniorage tax levied by the US on the rest of the world (Hudson 2003). However, in contrast to the earlier era of finance capital when Britain was a major capital exporter, the US is a large capital importer. In the late 2000s, the US economy received financial investments from the rest of the world equal to more than twice the amount of US financial investments abroad. However, there is an asymmetry here since the rates of return realised on US capital exports are about twice as high as the rate of returns obtained from capital exports to the US from the rest of the world. A main reason behind this is the composition of these investments. A significant portion of capital exports to the US goes into low-return treasury bills. While capital incomes coming from abroad now constitute a large and increasing portion of capital income in the US, other major powers – including the UK, Germany, and France – also acquire large flows of financial income from the rest of the world (Duménil and Lévy 2011). Furthermore, the financial centres located in core countries capture a share of the globally produced surplus value as they provide financial services, including loans, to the rest of the world; and in return, they receive large sums of interest and other financial payments, both from government and private enterprises. In addition, by financing the operations of the core’s large corporations either through bank financing or through the stock market, they enable concentration and centralisation of capital globally.

Furthermore, the increased cross-country mobility of financial capital together with frequent financial crises have been effective in imposing on countries in the periphery an increasingly deregulated and liberalised financial system that works in the interest of imperialist powers and a small group of elites in these countries. Financial crises have been occasions for furthering financial deregulation and liberalisation, while financial capital has used them for quick returns and transfers of ownership, and hence power in its favour. The crises in Latin American countries in the 1980s, the 1997 Asian crisis and the 2001 crisis in Turkey are all examples of this (Dufour and Orhangazi 2009; Wade and Veneroso 1998).

Increasing unemployment and impoverishment, as well as the loss of public services through privatisations after these crises, led to a shift in the tone of anti-imperialism as well.

In short, the nexus between finance and imperialism has been theorised since the early 1900s. Even though there is no definite fully fledged theory of the link between financialisation and imperialism, there is much interest in the issue. Clearly, there is still a need for more empirical work examining the propositions advanced in the literature. On the other hand, the 2007–08 US financial crisis and the ensuing global financial crisis and economic slowdown suggests that while the US and other leading powers might have benefited from being able to manage the process of financialisation, the future of financialisation and the position of the core within this set-up remains uncertain.

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## Free Trade Zones, Export Processing Zones, Special Economic Zones and Global Imperial Formations 200 BCE to 2015 CE

### Introduction: Imperialism old and new?

Export processing zones (EPZs) – historically often labelled Free Trade Zones (FTZs)

and, more recently, special economic zones (SEZs) – have been and continue to be one of the most striking phenomena in the global capitalist system. In the 1970s and 1980s it was common for social scientists to regard the rise of EPZs as a new pattern of Western imperialism. Imperialism was understood as, for example, ‘the system of military, political, economic, and cultural domination of the Third World by its former colonial masters’, and EPZs were portrayed as bastions facilitating the exploitation of the Third World by multinational corporations (MNCs) (Lim 1983: 73). Authors working with a different perspective on imperialism, one that considers complicity among Third-World bourgeois, explained the rise of EPZs by a fear of ‘growing internal pressures for change’ that drove such bourgeois to ‘initiate self-expanding capitalist development’ (Landsberg 1979: 50–63, 51).

During the 1970s, EPZ employment grew at a scale that an important macro-sociological theory saw them as drivers of a ‘new international division of labour’. This was particularly affecting the garment and the light-consumer electronics sector, where relocation created structural unemployment in industrially advanced countries and super-exploitation in the receiving regions of so-called newly industrialising countries (NICs) (Fröbel and Kreye 1981). EPZ factories employed mainly young women, whose labour was devalued by patriarchal discourses nurtured by MNC factory managers as much as by nationalist right-wing (often religious) groups and political movements which propagated a ‘myth of the male breadwinner’ that rendered women’s earnings irrelevant for the sustenance of the population (Safa 1995; see also Neveling 2015a; Ong 1987; Kim 1997). This way, super-exploitative wages were morally sanctioned although they were insufficient to reproduce labour power and therefore extended kin-groups ended up co-funding exploitation (Meillassoux 1981). These issues indicate that the nexus of imperialism and EPZs is more complex than an analysis positioning the West against the rest allows for. This essay therefore seeks to offer a definition of EPZs, and of their recent re-labelling as SEZs, that recognises their negative impact on all workers and the fact that capitalist elites in the First and Third Worlds alike have (had) an interest in increasing the number of zones since the beginning of the Cold War.

The following section provides a brief overview of existing definitions, mainly those of international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO). I argue that the very technical definitions offered and the – however important – statistical research on the global spread of EPZs rather ignores the question of their position in global capitalism. This essay’s third section presents an analysis of this positioning in historical terms. The concluding section offers a comprehensive definition that considers EPZs as patterns of imperialism and as pertinent, highly contested patterns of capitalist exploitation in the 21st century.

### **FTZs, EPZs, and SEZs from the vantage point of international organisations**

The above introduction illustrates the impact of the global spread of EPZs in the 1970s. Although relations between capital, state, and labour have been and continue to be a hotly debated issue in and around EPZs across the world, definitions coming out of the research departments of international organisations address technical issues mainly. An ILO working paper from 1995 defines an EPZ as ‘a delimited geographical area or an export-oriented manufacturing or service enterprise located in any part of the country, which benefits from special investment-promotion incentives, including exemptions from customs duties and preferential treatment with respect to various fiscal and financial regulations’ (Romero 1995: 1). Based on a similar definition, one recent survey by an ILO in-focus group counted more than 3,500 such zones in more than 130 countries employing more than 70 million workers worldwide (Boyenge 2007). A 2008 survey by FIAS, a ‘multi-donor investment climate advisory service’ under the auspices of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which is the World Bank’s public-private partnership wing, supports the ILO survey data but proposes ‘special economic zone (SEZ)’ as the new umbrella term for free-trade zones, export processing zones, free ports, enterprise zones, and single-factory EPZs (Akinci et al. 2008: 10–11).

The label ‘special’ implies that the zones are different, not just formally set apart from a ‘regular’ national economy. As I said, international organisations define such exceptionality

not by aggravated exploitation and a gendered, new international division of labour but in spatial and legal terms. Social scientists, instead, often regard the zones as exceptions because they are a main marker of 'graduated' national sovereignty that has emerged at the turn of the 21st century (Ong 2000). Sovereignty is said to be graduated in the zones because nation states abstain from basic (post-colonial) rights such as taxation and the collection of customs duties in an effort to attract foreign and local direct investment.

Taking into account the role that EPZs play in the establishment and maintenance of super-exploitation, we are left with incommensurable definitions. Such incommensurability is also evident on the policy level. In India, for example, SEZ legislation introduced in 2000 (replacing an existing EPZ scheme) has resulted in the large-scale dispossession of landowners, particularly smallholders, for the construction of new SEZs. Fierce protests leading to violent police crackdowns are often blamed on insufficient compensation, while the actual battle waged is over fundamental assumptions guiding the SEZ scheme. Pro-SEZ arguments in India resemble those of recent World Bank policies claiming that without SEZs there would be no growth in exports, hence no 'overall economic growth' (Anathanarayanan 2008: 44). So-called deregulation of labour laws is said to increase productivity. Tax breaks and deregulation of fiscal laws 'are needed in order to attract investment' (47). All this is framed by reference to global competition and claims that 'SEZs have succeeded in many countries in Asia, like China' (51; what is criticised here as new imperialism matches promotions in recent World Bank publications, e.g. Akinci et al. 2008; Farole 2011).

Statistics illustrating the global spread of EPZs seem to back these arguments. Table 1 reveals two strands of global EPZ/SEZ development. First, the great leap forward was between 1986 and 1997 when zone-employment grew from 1.3 million to 22.5 million. Second, this great leap forward is largely attributable to China; indeed is a development that is labelled as 'the rise of the Chinese model' (Baissac 2011: 36).

Confronted with the rise of EPZs, analysts and policymakers in international organisations have for long had an urge to define the zones' origins. A joint report by the International Labour Organisation and the

United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, for example, says that EPZs are modifications to 'an age-old concept, the free trade zone'. Such free ports have offered non-protectionist storage and trans-shipment of goods ever since the Roman Empire. The establishment in 1959 of the world's first EPZ in Shannon, Ireland, radically altered this principle to include tax and customs-free manufacturing (UNCTC and ILO 1988: 1–3). In the late 2000s, World Bank researchers abandoned this notion of rupture and now portray SEZs as permanent features of human sociability, tracing their positive impact back to 167 BC when a free port was established on the Greek island of Delos and the 'island's status as a trading platform improved greatly' (Baissac 2011: 31). The fact that the Roman Empire used the Delos free port to destroy the economy of an enemy, Rhodes, by undercutting transit duties, is deliberately ignored (see Reger 1994: 256). More strikingly, that World Bank publication knows nothing of failures in free-port establishment in the past 2,181 years.

The following shows that it is imperative to look at such failures to understand firstly the role of free ports in the history of the Roman Empire as well as in the history of 19th-century European imperialism; and, secondly, the leverage that populations have in their response to the establishment of FTZs and, later, EPZs/SEZs. I consider two examples: failure to establish a second Singapore in northern Australia in the 19th century and a succession of failed EPZs in Haiti in the late 20th and early 21st-first century.

In 1846, a certain George Windsor Earl published 'Enterprise in Tropical Australia'. This summed up several years of British failure to establish a port city on the Cobourg Peninsula. Still, *The Spectator* (1846), a London-based weekly, triumphantly reported that the presence of the mission had prevented a French expedition from claiming northern Australian shores and waters. This was as far as success went. Except for the French, no-one showed interest in Port Essington. Indian Ocean merchant communities that had had a good share in the rapid growth of Singapore, and even Macassan trepanners, who annually harvested the northern Australian shores working with coastal populations, avoided the British settlement. The free-port regime did not matter because the vast northern Australian

Table 1 The global spread of EPZs/SEZs since 1975

Year	1975 <sup>†</sup>	1978*	1984*	1986 <sup>†</sup>	1997 <sup>†</sup>	2002 <sup>†</sup>	2006 <sup>†</sup>
Number of countries with EPZs	25	28	35	47	93	116	130
Number of EPZs	79	N/A	N/A	176	845	3000	3500
Employment (millions)	0.725**	0.6945	0.8375	1.97 <sup>††</sup>	22.5	43	66
- of which PR China	-	-	0.015	0.07 <sup>††</sup>	18	30	40
- of which other countries with figures available	0.725**	0.6945	0.8225	1.9	4.5	13	26
Share of PR China in %	0	0	1.79	3.55	80	69.77	60.60

Note: These figures are pooled from sources with different definitions of what an EPZ is and should be understood as approximations.

Sources: <sup>†</sup> Boyenge (2007: 1); \* Currie (1985); \*\* Fröbel et al. (1981: 310); <sup>††</sup> UNCTC and ILO (1988: 163, figure for PR China 17).

coastline could not be controlled by the British in the same way as Singapore controlled access to the Strait of Malacca (for detailed summary and analysis, see Neveling 2002). Now, according to that recent, widely cited World Bank publication, Port Essington would go down in world history as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ), a failed one, but an SEZ nevertheless.

The brief assessments of the Delos free-port regime shows that imperial power in Mediterranean antiquity (as in other eras and regions) relied on the ability to control trade and turn this against enemies and defectors. The race between France and Britain in northern Australia underscores how highly this principle was contested in the 19th century and that European imperial powers had little leverage over significant parts of the global system, which allowed others to plainly ignore their efforts. In the 20th century, this has changed significantly. The miserable working conditions in EPZs founded since 1947, instead, could only emerge within captivated markets. Markets were captivated because workers in regions where EPZs were set up had little choice but to subject themselves to the new regimes. The following account of failure concerns Haiti and illustrates that international organisations are aware of the existence of captivated labour markets and sometimes use this knowledge in bold and cynical terms to promote EPZs.

Paul Collier declares himself a former anti-imperialist, as he was part of the 'Oxford

Revolutionary Socialist Students' group in 1968 (2007: xiii, ix, 205). That such a group was a *contradictio in adjecto* is best illustrated by his biography. Collier is a former World Bank economist whose most recent, widely cited work blames 50 'failed states' for the existence of the world's 'bottom billion' population. The only cure for these nations is to 'get a dynamic manufacturing sector' and there is no better way for this than EPZs, backed by preferential bilateral trade agreements granted by generous Western industrially advanced countries (167). Although Sumner (2010) has rebutted Collier's theses on empirical grounds (the bottom billion rather lives in middle-income countries), he has co-authored the 2009 edition of the influential *Industrial Development Report* (Collier and Page 2009). Also, his expertise was called upon to revive the Haitian economy after the most recent disasters. The creation of jobs on a massive scale is, of course, no secret ingredient to such cures and had been central to Haitian government development agendas for a long time. To the measures of the 2007-UN 'HOPE II' programme giving Haiti preferential access to the US market, Collier added recommendations to create EPZs, arguing that a 'few islands of excellence' were preferable to efforts 'to improve standards across the whole country'. The fact that this particular strategy has a long history in Haiti, where several waves of EPZ establishment have done more harm than good over recent decades, has nevertheless escaped Collier (Shamsie 2009).

Collier's approach of saving a country from economic and social mayhem by the single, grand stroke of a development scholar's genius has been central to the global spread of EPZs in the second half of the 20th century. Importantly, this motive runs counter to the recent World Bank effort to date the zones back to Antiquity. For the ideology informing such 'saviour-dom' is inextricable from capitalist development policies during the Cold War and its implementation in a number of post-colonial nation states. The following section considers this and shows, among other issues, how former colonial powers and international organisations have been instrumental in the global spread of EPZs.

### **The global spread of EPZs/SEZs – for real**

The ideological foundations of the linkage between developmentalist saviour-dom and EPZs are nowhere as evident as in the US dependency Puerto Rico, where the world's first EPZ-like structure emerged in 1947. That Caribbean island's trajectory from a 19th-century colonial economy to a 20th-century post-colonial economy is not necessarily prototypical for global developments but not dissimilar from many of the world's planation economies. At the turn of the 20th century, Puerto Rico changed from Spanish to US colonial rule. The Foraker Act of 1900 established the island as US territory but not as part of the US federal system, with the exception of its monetary system. A common tariff also became operational. US agricultural trusts turned Puerto Rico into 'a classical monocultural economy' (Dietz 1986: 98), giving a fast-forward lesson in the imperialist policies in other colonies (for British Mauritius, see Neveling 2013; for Indonesia, see Stoler 1985). That lesson was particular for the US because the Spanish colonies they had acquired were those of a declining imperial power and, hence, in rather derelict condition with few efforts having been made to replicate the establishment of industrial agriculture seen in other European colonies. In the 1930s there emerged an alliance between the local government and the mainland New Deal administration and policies seemed to change. Early efforts focused on the production of shoes, cement, and glass bottles in government-owned factories and plans for a government-owned sugar mill

that would free cane-growers from having to sell to the mills owned by US trusts had been drawn up.

But the Second World War drew Puerto Rico into the US economic machinery for winning the anti-fascist battle. After the war, the Puerto Rican Partido Popular called for independence. The US Tariff Commission responded with calculations stating that independence would increase economic hardship because Puerto Rico would lose its free access to the US markets. That report reversed the logic of the New Deal policies for the island. In an early version of the nowadays commonplace trickle-down argument, it was argued that mainland capital investment was for the benefit of the island as it created profitable investment and employment, and should therefore receive political and financial support from the local government.

Already in 1942, the consulting company Arthur D. Little Inc. (ADL) was hired to recommend on changing the Puerto Rican economy. ADL had been thriving in the Boston area that in those days had a Silicon Valley-style atmosphere nurtured by proximity to the Massachusetts Institute for Technology and Harvard University. This helped ADL become the world's leading consultancy firm in the 1960s. Following ADL recommendations, in 1947 the local government set up the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Corporation, established a development bank, sold off government-owned factories at low prices, and built new factories for leases to mainland investors. This brought Puerto Rico considerable increases in employment and export earnings and was also beneficial to US foreign policies. As more and more US mainland corporations set up shop on the island, Puerto Rican senators travelled around Latin America praising the benevolence of the US government and US corporations while US ministries invited any Third-World delegation that expressed interest to Puerto Rico to witness the benefits of export-oriented policies (see Neveling 20015b; 2015c).

Before moving on to sketch the global spread of EPZs from Puerto Rico, it is important to outline how policies there related to the global debate over development policies for Third-World nations in the 1950s and after.

Many post-colonial nations that emerged from the ashes of European imperialism in the decades after 1945 put similar emphasis

on import-substitution policies to boost industrialisation as the Puerto Rican New Deal did. Post-war policies were backed on scientific grounds by what would become known as the Prebisch-Singer thesis in the 1950s. Raúl Prebisch was director of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America in 1950 and would become the first secretary general of the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development in 1965. His thesis suggested changes in the global division of labour based on an analysis of commodity and capital flows in the global system. Imperialism, Prebisch stated, had turned many regions of the world into little more than suppliers of raw materials for manufacturing industries located in the wealthy countries of the world. The plight of former colonies and the continuing prosperity of former colonisers continued after decolonisation because the price that former colonial powers paid for imports of raw materials from former colonies did not reflect the gains that manufactured goods would fetch when sold to countries that produced the raw materials (see Bair 2009).

Now, the Puerto Rican scheme offered a rationale that was different and can be read as a preclusive response to Prebisch's work. Instead of closing off the economy by protective measures to generate 'native' industries, the door was opened wide for industrial relocations from the former colonisers' countries. Government money was channelled into the coffers of investors who enjoyed so-called 'tax and customs holidays', implying that paying taxes was hard work and a holiday was well deserved.

Importantly, the EPZ scheme emerged in the early days of the Cold War. In the coming decades, violent crackdowns and witch-hunts against communists and trade unionists would dominate the capitalist bloc's domestic and foreign policies. Central to early Cold War US foreign policies was a programme called 'Point Four'. This identified poverty and large-scale deprivation as the road to communism (Neveling 2015c). The Puerto Rican scheme under the populist label 'Operation Bootstrap' would become a crucial instrument within Point Four; making ten-year tax breaks and other incentives to invest in manufacturing operations would become a blueprint for capitalist development policies around the globe.

ADL was likewise of importance for the global spread of EPZs. The zone set up in

Shannon, for example, was inspired by visits from Irish officials to Puerto Rico and to Panama, where a similar zone became operational in the late 1940s. In the 1950s, ADL would advise on zone development in Egypt and Honduras under Point Four. But it was one of the company's employees who would remain a central figure in global EPZ development until the 2000s. Richard Bolin was acting head of ADL's Puerto Rican office from 1957–62. In the early 1960s, when tax breaks ended and other zones offered better deals, many US investors left the island and so did ADL. Bolin then advised the Mexican government on the Border Industrialisation Programme (BIP). Under the BIP-scheme, bonded factories, later infamous as *maquiladoras*, opened in Tijuana, Juarez, and other cities along the border with the US. As millions of Mexicans had to return from working in the US agricultural sector in 1965, when the so-called Bracero-Program ended, there was an abundance of labour. Not only US companies but also Japanese and South Korean companies tapped this vein to get an entry into the US market; a development that is so far under-represented in scholarly accounts of the rise of non-Western MNCs despite the fact that in places like Mauritius South-South capital flows made up more than 50 per cent of investment (for a 1970s exception see Watanabe 1974).

The Mexican EPZs emerging from the BIP are another good example of the negative impact that the zones have on workforces in industrially advanced and developing countries alike. Two US tariff legislations, clauses 806.30 and 807.00, implemented in 1930, provide positive sanctions such as custom-free export and import for the part-assembly of US products outside the mainland. This way, a US car manufacturer can have several production steps in EPZs in Mexico or elsewhere and still have the final product, the car, declared a US product without ever having paid duties for cross-border shipments in the assembly process. US tariff legislation then creates a global assembly line with commodities labelled 'Made in the US', although no US worker has been involved in labour-intensive production steps. It is no wonder that trade unions in the US have opposed these tariff regulations for many decades. One such protest led to a hearing of the Ways and Means Committee of the US Congress in 1976. Such hearings call all parties involved for interview,

from workers, labour activists, and industrialists in Mexico to US government officials and corporate pressure groups. In that 1976 hearing, former ADL employee Bolin showed up as director of a certain Flagstaff Institute that had written a report in favour of US business interests in Mexico. His arguments won the day (STCWM 1976).

Within the limits of this essay it is impossible to give a comprehensive account of the global spread of EPZs and what nowadays are labelled SEZs. So before concluding, I want to follow briefly the trail of Richard Bolin as this leads directly to the authors of the most recent World Bank studies promoting EPZs that I have discussed above.

Bolin and the Flagstaff Institute would take centre stage in the global promotion of EPZs from the 1970s onward. In the 1980s, they would have a big hand in spreading EPZs as the World Bank Structural Adjustment Programs declared the zones a universal cure for the Third-World Debt Crisis. In the 1990s, Bolin and his institute rushed to post-socialist Eastern Europe where EPZs opened on a massive scale.

Such activities were facilitated by an unlikely ally. That ally was the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, whose mandate derived from the rise of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the UN. Operating in the spirit of the Prebisch-Singer thesis (see above) and bolstered by the foundation of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNCTAD, with Prebisch as director, the NAM sought to strengthen national sovereignty over resources and over the operations of MNCs. In 1975, the NAM call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) was at its peak. But, based on cross-referencing the 77 states making up the NAM with the list of states operating EPZs in the appendix of Fröbel, Heinrichs and Kreye's seminal study (1981), it emerges that 27 NAM members had operational EPZs or were planning such zones in 1975.

The UN had for long operated a so-called Special Fund and at UNIDO this was extended to a measure called Special Industrial Services (SIS). SIS invited UN member states to donate money to UNIDO for a defined purpose. In a nutshell, this enabled governments of industrially advanced countries, not least the US and the Federal Republic of Germany, to direct funding towards that UNIDO working group promoting EPZs. Actually, that

UNIDO working group came up with the label EPZ following a global survey of export-oriented development schemes and free-port structures conducted in 1970 (for a detailed account of this study and the establishment of the EPZ label, see Neveling forthcoming). UNIDO set up an EPZ promotion programme with technical assistance missions, training workshops and fellowships. Initially, the EPZ in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, set up in 1965 as part of a new container harbour, was chosen as the hotspot for EPZ training. But when the People's Republic of China entered the UN system, UNIDO had to move its training centre to the Shannon Free Trade Zone. The management of the Shannon Free Airport Development Corporation (SFADCo) quickly realised the potential benefits from this collaboration. A UNIDO handbook outlining how to establish EPZs and including a blueprint for national EPZ law in the appendix came out of Shannon, as did a certain Peter Ryan who would further accelerate UNIDO's EPZ promotion activities in the 1970s and 1980s after taking over the Export Promotion Unit from Japanese William Tanaka. To my knowledge it was Ryan who initiated the establishment of a World Export Processing Zones Association (WEPZA) that was inaugurated during a meeting in the Philippines in 1978 (author's personal conversation with Ryan). From 1980, WEPZA was headed by Bolin and its headquarters merged with the Flagstaff Institute. Of the consultancy services that UNIDO bought for dozens, if not hundreds, of technical assistance missions to Bangladesh, Togo, or Vanuatu, for example, WEPZA and SFADCo staff held well above 25 per cent of contracts. Even communist China sent Jiang Zemin during his term as minister for electronic industries to Shannon for a training workshop (author's personal conversation with UNIDO staff members). Thus, it remains to be studied whether the 'rise of the Chinese model' was actually the rise of the Irish model.

WEPZA lost its grip on UNIDO contracts from the mid-1990s onward when Ryan retired and anti-EPZ campaigns by labour-rights organisations and international trade unions, particularly the International Conference of Free Trade Unions, successfully demolished the myth of EPZs as engines of growth and happiness (ICFTU 1996). To the contemporary historian's eye, the impact of the ICFTU campaign is easily



identifiable on the Internet pages of WEPZA, where a furious Bolin went as far as publishing a response that sought to contradict each and every single paragraph of the ICFTU report (WEPZA n.d.a).

### **A definition of EPZs/SEZs as guidance for a possibly unpleasant future**

In light of recent developments, the 1990s standoff emerges as a somewhat different turning point in the global spread of EPZs. After Bolin retired in the 2000s, WEPZA was renamed as the *World Economic Processing Zones Association*. A certain Claude Baissac is now acting secretary general, assisted by a certain Jean-Paul Gauthier (WEPZA n.d.b). Baissac and Gauthier feature prominently as authors in those recent World Bank studies I have discussed above. That chapter locating the origins of SEZs in Roman antiquity was authored by Baissac, who, according to his LinkedIn profile, started off with a two-year stint as research associate at WEPZA/The Flagstaff Institute in 1995 (Baissac n.d.). Now he runs Eunomix, a South African 'mining risk management company' that fiercely opposes any state involvement in mining and other resource-extractive business. Eunomix is active in several southern African states and its mission seems to be putting the blame for incidents such as the mass-killing of workers at the Lonmin/Marikana mills on political parties and labour movements (Candy 2012; Creamer 2012). While Gauthier, second in command at WEPZA, seems to be making good business with SEZ consultancies, many former ICFTU officials have taken up influential posts at the ILO in recent years. The successor of the ICFTU, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), continues to support workers' rights in EPZs, not least rights to collective bargaining, unionisation and fair wages (ITUC n.d.). The ILO, on the other hand, has been rather quiet about EPZs since that in-focus study was published in 2006 (see above), but might be forced by the recent mass-killings of workers in Bangladeshi EPZ/SEZ-style garment factories to take a stronger position on the renewed promotion of EPZs/SEZs.

Labour rights organisations, such as the Asia Monitor Resource Centre (AMRC) in Hong Kong, continue to support struggles

such as those of Indonesian EPZ workers against Samsung and other 21st-century MNCs, not least by providing excellent documentation and analysis of zone regimes and the harsh lives and times they create across Asia (AMRC 2012).

As the struggle over EPZs and SEZs continues in the 21st-century, it is important to offer a definition of the zones that goes beyond the prevailing legalistic and spatial approaches I have outlined above. Starting with the issue of imperialism, the global phenomenon of EPZs/SEZs makes a strong case for abandoning simplistic notions that juxtapose former colonial powers and former colonies. Alliances supporting the spread of EPZs cut across this divide, as do alliances opposing the zones. Obviously, the conflict of interests in EPZs and SEZs is one over strongly aggravated conditions of exploitation. From the early days, when in the late 1940s US capital abandoned mainland manufacturing locations whose workers had gained bargaining power and turned to non-unionised, low-cost labour in Puerto Rico, the zones have served to increase the bargaining power of capital. A similar development is evident in the relation between the state and capital in the zones. Although it may seem ironic, it is nation states that set up EPZs and thereby abdicate from basic revenues in taxes and customs, while at the same time spending highly on infrastructure for investors. This move is not necessary voluntary, as my earlier remarks about the role EPZs have played in World Bank SAPs since the 1980s have indicated. In many cases, however, EPZ companies are joint ventures between leading international manufacturers in certain sectors and local capital; often in close alliance with, if not owned by, the post-colonial political elites. EPZs and SEZs then are emblematic for a global class struggle by the bourgeoisie against the workforces in developing and industrially advanced countries alike.

Patrick Neveling

### **Acknowledgements**

This article was written during a visiting fellowship at the Institute for European Global Studies at the University of Basel. Research was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (Grants No.: 126642 and 140484). Eva Hartmann, Megan Campbell and Immanuel Ness have provided valuable

comments and encouragement. The usual disclaimers apply.

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## 'Global Labour Arbitrage' and the New Imperialism

We have yet to see a systematic theory of imperialism designed for a world in which all international relations are internal to capitalism and governed by capitalist imperatives. That, at least in part, is because a world of more or less universal capitalism ... is a very recent development. (Wood 2005/2003: 127)

### Introduction

The most significant transformation wrought by the past three decades of neo-liberal globalisation is the tremendous expansion of the southern proletariat, whose living labour contributes most of the value that is unequally shared between 'lead firms' headquartered in North America, Europe, Japan, and outsourced producers in the low-wage economies of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This is the principal form taken by the 'global labour arbitrage'-driven globalisation of production, in which cheap and flexible workers in low-wage countries replace relatively expensive workers in the imperialist countries. It signifies a new, qualitative stage in the globalisation of the capital-labour relation, a principal result of which is the greatly enhanced dependency of northern capitalists on the super-exploitation of southern living labour. This reality is obscured by supposedly objective statistical data which records value generated by low-wage workers in countries from China to Bangladesh to Mexico as 'value-added' by firms – multinational corporations (MNCs) and their numerous service-providers – in the countries where their products are consumed. Another result is the transformation of the global working class: three decades ago, half of the world's industrial workers lived in low-wage countries, now 80 per cent do. Neo-liberal globalisation has hurled the workers of the dominant nations and the workers of the global South together, in competition with each other and yet bound together in mutual interdependence, connected by globalised production processes, their labour power exploited by the

same banks and MNCs. But this new, qualitative stage in capitalism's evolution possesses a very specific quality: the globalisation of the capital-labour relation, in the context of and on the foundation of a pre-existing division of the world into oppressed and oppressor nations, entails the internalisation of this division. Neo-liberal globalisation is, therefore, the unfolding of the imperialist form of the capital relation. The division of the world into oppressed and oppressor nations, which Lenin emphasised was the essence of imperialism, lives on in the form of the racial and national hierarchy that makes up the so-called 'global labour market'. To put this another way, the globalisation and global shift of production signifies that the oppression of nations is now internal to the capital-labour relation, giving rise to a mutant, imperialist form of the law of value. This transformation of the essence of capitalism, of the capital-labour relation itself, was first proposed by Andy Higginbottom:

The wage labour relation is not only between capital and labour, but between northern capital and southern labour. In this sense, class exploitation and racial or national oppression are fused .... The working class of the oppressed nations/Third World/global South is systematically paid below the value of labour power of the working class of the oppressor nations/First World/global North. This is not because the southern working class produces less value, but because it is more oppressed and more exploited. (Higginbottom 2011: 284)

As a result, this latest stage of capitalist development has been leading not to convergence with the 'advanced' countries and the waning of the North-South divide but to global apartheid, in which the southern nations have become labour reserves for super-exploitation by northern capitalists. The suppression of the free international movement of labour is the linchpin of a vast system of racism, national oppression, cultural humiliation, militarism, and state violence that imperialism has imposed on the proletarianised peoples of the world. It is a weapon of class warfare, wielded in order to enforce the highest possible overall rate of economic exploitation and to wage political counter-revolution

– to divide and rule, to impede the emergence of the international working class as an independent political force fighting to establish its own supremacy.

This is imperialism on an entirely capitalist basis, in an advanced stage of its development, in which capitalism and its law of value has fully sublated the old colonial division of the world; in other words, it has discarded all that is inimical to it, and preserved and made its own all that is useful to its continued dominion. Just as Karl Marx could not have written *Capital* before its mature, fully evolved form had come into existence (with the rise of industrial capitalism in England), so it is unreasonable to expect to find, in the writings of Lenin and others writing at the time of its birth, a ready-made theory of imperialism capable of explaining its fully evolved modern form. This accords with a basic axiom of materialist dialectics: there cannot be a concrete theoretical concept of a system of interaction which is not itself fully concrete and developed. An urgent task is still before us: to understand the evolution of the capital–labour relation in the era of what Jyoti Ghosh calls 'imperialist globalisation', in which the relation between capital and labour has increasingly become a relation between imperialist capital and low-wage southern labour. In other words, the task is to develop a theory of the imperialist form of the law of value.

Central to this task is the development of a concrete concept of 'super-exploitation'. For present purposes, exploitation and super-exploitation can be simply defined. If the working day comprises two parts – necessary labour-time (the time a worker takes to create value equal to what he/she consumes) and surplus labour-time (the time spent producing surplus value for the capitalist) – the rate of exploitation is the ratio between them. Super-exploitation signifies a higher rate of exploitation than the prevailing average domestic rate of exploitation within the imperialist economies. It is argued here that international wage differentials provide a distorted reflection of international differences in the rate of exploitation; and that northern capitalists, in ways to be explored, can increase their profits by relocating production to nations where the rate of exploitation is higher than average; that is, where living labour can be super-exploited.

Imperialism and super-exploitation are brought together in the increased dependence

of northern capitalists on the proceeds of super-exploitation of low-wage workers in the global South, as captured in the term 'global labour arbitrage', which denotes the substitution of relatively highly paid domestic labour by low-wage southern labour. This can take the form of shifting production processes to low-wage countries or importing migrant labour from low-wage countries and super-exploiting them at home. The former, in the words of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), is 'the more important and faster-expanding channel, in large part because immigration remains very restricted in many countries' (IMF 2007: 180).

### **Global labour arbitrage: 'an increasingly urgent survival tactic'**

By uprooting hundreds of millions of workers and farmers in southern nations from their ties to the land or their jobs in protected national industries, neo-liberal capitalism has greatly stimulated the expansion of a vast pool of super-exploitable labour. Suppression of the free mobility of labour has interacted with this hugely increased supply to produce a dramatic widening of international wage differentials between 'industrialised' and 'developing' nations, vastly exceeding price differences in all other global markets. This steep wage gradient provides two different ways for northern capitalists to increase profits: through the emigration of production to low-wage countries, or the immigration of low-wage migrant workers. The IMF's *World Economic Outlook 2007* (IMF 2007), which included a special study of 'labour and globalisation', made the connection between outsourcing and migration quite precisely: 'The global pool of labour can be accessed by advanced economies through imports and immigration', significantly observing that '[t]rade is the more important and faster-expanding channel, in large part because immigration remains very restricted in many countries' (180). But not precisely enough: by the 'global pool of labour' they mean the global pool of low-wage labour.

What the IMF calls 'accessing the global labour pool' others have defined as 'global labour arbitrage' (sometimes 'global wage arbitrage'), whose essential feature, according to Stephen Roach, the economist most associated with this term, is the substitution of 'high-wage workers here with like-quality,

low-wage workers abroad' (Roach 2004). Roach argues that '[a] unique and powerful confluence of three mega-trends is driving the global arbitrage'. These are 'the maturation of offshore outsourcing platforms ... e-based connectivity... [and] the new imperatives of cost control' (Roach 2003: 6). Of these, 'cost control' is the most important, 'the catalyst that brings the global labour arbitrage to life'. The first two mega-trends, in other words, merely provide the necessary conditions for the third – reducing the cost of labour – to express itself. Expanding on this, Roach explains that:

In an era of excess supply, companies lack pricing leverage as never before. As such, businesses must be unrelenting in their search for new efficiencies. Not surprisingly, the primary focus of such efforts is labour, representing the bulk of production costs in the developed world; in the US, for example, worker compensation still makes up nearly 80% of total domestic corporate income. And that's the point: Wage rates in China and India range from 10% to 25% of those for comparable-quality workers in the US and the rest of the developed world. Consequently, *offshore outsourcing that extracts product from relatively low-wage workers in the developing world has become an increasingly urgent survival tactic for companies in the developed economies.* (ibid., my emphasis)

This is a much sharper and richer description of neo-liberal globalisation's driving force than the one offered by the IMF's technocrats – or indeed than is to be found anywhere in the radical, 'value chain' or Marxist literature. We might ask, though, why Roach says 'extracts product' instead of 'extracts value' – capitalists, after all, are not interested in the product of labour but in the value contained in it. We suspect that to say 'extracts value' would imply that these workers create more wealth than they receive in the form of wages – in other words that they are exploited, challenging the very foundations of modern economic theory, which categorically denies that capitalism is a system of exploitation, and opening the door to its Marxist critique, which calls the difference between the value generated by workers and what is paid to them *surplus value*, the source and substance of profit in all its forms. It is notable that, in

order to give the most concrete possible definition of this most important phenomenon, Roach felt obliged to dispense with the empty abstractions of mainstream economics and invoke Marxist concepts and, almost, Marxist terminology.

Despite being jargon, which can act as a code, giving access to those with the key while mystifying everyone else, there are two reasons why 'global labour arbitrage' is much more useful than any of the core concepts so far developed by value-chain analysts, proponents of global production networks, or neo-Marxist theorists of 'new imperialism' and 'transnational capitalism'. First, 'global labour arbitrage' foregrounds the labour-capital relation, spotlights the enormous international differences in the price of labour, and encompasses the two ways in which northern capitalists can profit from wage differentials: outsourcing and migration. Second, it focuses attention on the fragmented and hierarchically organised global labour market which gives rise to these arbitrage opportunities. 'Arbitrage', in the economists' lexicon, means profiting from imperfections in markets that are reflected in different prices for the same product. By communicating prices across segmented markets, arbitrage causes existing price differences to narrow, thereby improving the efficiency of markets and promoting their unification (in contrast, speculators bet on the future movement of prices, typically amplifying price swings) unless some artificial factor (in this case, immigration controls) intervenes to prevent price differences from being arbitrated away, in which case arbitrage becomes an opportunity for open-ended profiteering. In general, the bigger the market imperfections, the bigger are the price differences and the bigger the potential profits; and there's no market more imperfect than the global labour market. (For a useful discussion of the difference between arbitrage and speculation in modern financial theory, see Miyazaki 2007.)

That capitalist firms seek to boost profits by cutting wages is hardly a startling revelation. Their employees don't need Stephen Roach to tell them this. Indeed, Roach's advice is not intended to alert workers to the challenges they face but to advise capitalists what they need to do more of. Stephen Roach is not alone in according primacy to capitalists' voracious appetite for low-wage labour. Others include Charles Whalen, a prominent

labour economist, who has argued that '[t]he prime motivation behind offshoring is the desire to reduce labour costs ... a U.S.-based factory worker hired for \$21 an hour can be replaced by a Chinese factory worker who is paid 64 cents an hour' (Whalen 2005: 13–40, 35). David Levy is another international business scholar who explicitly recognises that what he calls the 'new wave of offshoring ... is a much more direct form of arbitrage in international labour markets, whereby firms are able to shift work to wherever wages are lower (Levy 2005: 685–693, 689). According to Levy, two things have unleashed this 'new wave': 'low-cost and instantaneous transmission of data that embed engineering, medical, legal, and accounting services' combined with 'the increasing organizational and technological capacity of companies, particularly multinational corporations, to separate and coordinate a network of contractors performing an intricate set of activities'. However, Levy considers 'increasing organizational and technological capacity' to be the 'core driver of the latest form of offshore sourcing', confusing the driving force (desire for cheap labour) with the means of harnessing this force.

Roach's views deserve the attention given to them here because when he expressed them he was not an academic viewing the world from an ivory tower but chief economist for Morgan Stanley, the leading investment bank, with particular responsibility for its very active Asian operations; and because he has gone further than most in analysing how and why wage arbitrage is the essence of outsourcing. Roach's emphasis on the 'extraction of product' from 'like quality' low-wage workers in India, China etc. by MNCs headquartered in 'developed economies' – and his plain speaking – contrasts with the general rule in academic and business literature, which is to obfuscate this most important point and treat labour as just one factor of production among others, making glancing, desultory references to wage differentials as one of a number of possible motives influencing outsourcing decisions. IBM CEO Samuel J. Palmisano gave a classic example of this in an article in *Foreign Affairs*:

'Until recently, companies generally chose to produce goods close to where they sold them .... Today... companies are investing more to change the way they supply the entire global market .... These decisions

are not simply a matter of offloading non-core activities, nor are they mere labour arbitrage. They are about actively managing different operations, expertise, and capabilities so as to open the enterprise up in multiple ways, allowing it to connect more intimately with partners, suppliers, and customers. (Palmisano 2006: 127–136, 129–31)

Anwar Shaikh points out that 'cheap labour is not the only source of attraction for foreign investment. Other things being equal, cheap raw materials, a good climate, and a good location ... are also important ... But these factors are specific to certain branches only; cheap wage-labour, on the other hand, is a general social characteristic of underdeveloped capitalist countries, one whose implications extend to all areas of production, even those yet to be created' (Shaikh 1980: 204–235, 228).

### Global labour arbitrage and the theory of 'comparative advantage'

A survey of outsourcing literature published by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Hong Kong-based Fung Global Institute (FGI) asks two questions which serve well as a starting point for this discussion: 'Why did firms in advanced economies find it profitable to increasingly offshore tasks or parts of the production process to developing economies? And does international trade theory need a new framework to study this phenomenon of global supply chains?' (Park et al. 2013: 29). Their answer to the first question – 'Vast absolute differences in unskilled labour wages between developed and developing economies, driven by differences in factor endowments, made cross-border production sharing profitable' – accords well with Stephen Roach's concept of global labour arbitrage, and – if we strike out 'driven by differences in factor endowments' – shares its qualities of clarity and directness. 'Differences in factor endowments' is a euphemistic reference to the vast unemployed and underemployed reserve army of labour, dehumanised and converted by the bourgeois mind into a 'factor of production', and the purpose of its inclusion is to justify the authors' affirmative answer to their second question, which is that no, 'international trade theory' does not need a new framework.

Production outsourcing to low-wage countries, the WTO-FGI researchers argue, 'stays true to the concept of comparative advantage, as defined by the Heckscher-Ohlin model of trade' in which each country 'use[s] its relatively abundant factor of production relatively intensively' (30).

Fleshing out their 'concept of comparative advantage', the WTO-FGI researchers predict that 'a relatively unskilled, labour abundant developing economy would complete and export the relatively unskilled labour intensive tasks .... Similarly, a relatively capital or skilled labour intensive country would export intermediate products, such as capital goods and design and research and development services' (29–30). This boils down to a banal assertion that each country will try to use its resources to its own benefit. The Heckscher-Ohlin [H-O, sometimes rendered as H-O-S-S with the addition of Wolfgang Stolper and Paul Samuelson] model turns this simplistic truism into a theoretical model by making three false and far-fetched assumptions. The first is that products for final sale cross borders but 'factors of production' do not – there is no place in the H-O model for foreign direct investment or indeed any international capital flows, and this also rules out structural trade imbalances, since the resulting accumulation by one country of claims on the wealth of another is tantamount to foreign investment. As for the immobility of labour, this is treated as a fact of nature that needs no explanation. The second assumption is that all 'factors of production' are fully utilised, a necessary condition for 'equilibrium'; that is, for supply and demand to be balanced and for the 'factors of production' to be rewarded to the full extent of their contribution to their firm's output. It assumes, in other words, the validity of 'Say's law', after the classical economist Jean-Baptiste Say, who more than 200 years ago argued that supply creates its own demand. Heterodox economists question whether the ideal state resulting from these two assumptions has any practical relevance. Marxists argue that this ideal state is itself absurd, pointing to the third and most important of the fallacious assumptions upon which 'modern trade theory' and indeed the entire edifice of economic theory is based: the conflation of value and price, or the presumption that the value generated in the production of a commodity is identical to the price received for it. This conflation is achieved by

making the production process invisible; the value of commodities is not only discovered but, in the world of marginalist economics, is determined by the confrontation in the marketplace between sovereign and equal individual buyers and sellers. As Marx said, the value of commodities 'seem[s] not just to be realised only in circulation but actually to arise from it' (Marx 1991/1894: 966). Modern trade theory, in essence, is constituted by substituting individual nations for individual property owners.

The WTO-FGI researchers contrast the H-O model of comparative advantage with what they call the 'Ricardian model': 'The Heckscher-Ohlin model of trade argues that technology is freely available across countries and hence comparative advantage is determined by relative factor endowments. In contrast, the Ricardian model of trade stresses differences in technology as the basis of international trade – countries tend to specialise in activities about which their inhabitants are especially knowledgeable' (Park et al. 2013: 30). The 'Ricardian model' is given its moniker because 'differences in technology' imply differences in the productivity of labour, and David Ricardo's original theory hinged on the difference in the productivity of weavers and winemakers in Portugal and England. Yet on closer inspection, this theory has much more in common with the H-O approach than with Ricardo's original theory. Ricardo, along with Karl Marx and Adam Smith, espoused the labour theory of value, according to which only one 'factor of production' – living labour – is value-producing; materials and machinery merely impart to the new commodities already-created value used up in the process of production (Bhagwati 1964: 1–84). Eli Heckscher and Bertil Ohlin replaced Ricardo's labour theory of value with a two-factor (labour and capital) model in which the relative abundance of each determines where the supply and demand curves intersect, which in turn determines the value of commodities and thus the productivity of the labour that produces them. The so-called Ricardian model does essentially the same thing with its two-factor production function; both are founded on a tautological identification of value and price and on the circular reasoning which springs from this. The difference between them is where in the circle they choose as their starting point.



### Outsourcing and migration – two forms of global labour arbitrage

The wildfire spread of outsourcing during the past three decades is the continuation of capital's eternal quest for new sources of cheaper, readily exploitable labour power. Nearly 150 years ago, Karl Marx gave prominent place, in his 1867 address to the Lausanne Congress of the International Workingmen's Association, to a prescient warning that 'in order to oppose their workers, the employers either bring in workers from abroad or else transfer manufacture to countries where there is a cheap labour force' (Marx 1867a). Intense rivalry between competing imperialist powers inhibited the development of this trend within Europe, but not so in North America, where, as Gary Gereffi's recounts, 'In the early 20th century in the United States, many industries ... began to move to the US south in search of abundant natural resources and cheaper labour, frequently in 'right to work' states that made it difficult to establish labour unions. The same forces behind the impetus to shift production to low-cost regions within the United States eventually led US manufacturers across national borders' (Gereffi 2005: 4). What began as a trickle in mid-19th-century Europe had become a steady stream in North America in the early 20th century, and by the end of that century and the beginning of the next was an enormous floodtide, 'a systematic pattern of firm restructuring that is moving jobs from union to non-union facilities within the country, as well as to non-union facilities in other countries' (Bronfenbrenner and Luce 2004: 37–38).

The three quotations cited in the above paragraph have a common theme: a central motive of capitalists' outsourcing impulse is, in Marx's words, 'to oppose their workers', to negate efforts by workers to organise themselves into unions and counter employers attempts to force workers into competition with each other. Unfortunately, trade unions in the imperialist countries did not heed Marx's warning and nor did they act upon the advice which immediately followed it: '[g]iven this state of affairs, if the working class wishes to continue its struggle with some chance of success, the national organisations must become international'.

Aviva Chomsky, in *Linked Labour Histories*, a multi-layered study of the coevolution of the labour movements in New England and

Colombia since the late 1900s, recounts how New England textile mills relocated first to North Carolina in the first decades of the 20th century, then, in the 1930s, to Puerto Rico, thereby becoming the true pioneers of international production outsourcing in the Americas, before moving to Colombia and beyond in the post-war period. Chomsky points out that 'most accounts place this phenomenon in the second half of the 20th century. I argue that the events of the late 20th century continue a pattern begun by the earliest industry in the country, the textile industry, a century earlier' (Chomsky 2008: 294). She calls this phenomenon 'employers' 'capital flight' away from strong trade unions and towards cheap labour', and makes an essential observation: 'most accounts treat immigration and capital flight separately. My approach insists that they are most fruitfully studied together, as aspects of the same phenomenon of economic restructuring'. She also persuasively argues that '[c]apital flight [i.e. outsourcing] was one of the main reasons the textile industry remained one of the least organised in the early to mid-20th-century, and it was one of the main reasons for the decline of unions in all industries at the end of the century'. Chomsky draws attention to another specific quality that immigration and outsourcing have in common: 'immigration and capital flight ... relieve employers of paying for the reproduction of their workforce' (3) by giving employers access to a ready-made workforce in southern nations, who are sustained in part by remittances from migrant workers in the imperialist economies, by foreign aid and public debt, and not least by unpaid labour performed in the family or informal economy. William Robinson (2008: 204) similarly argues: 'the use of immigrant labour allows employers in receiving countries to separate reproduction and maintenance of labour, and therefore to "externalise" the cost of social reproduction'.

Bangladesh provides a particularly vivid example of how, during the neo-liberal era, outsourcing and migration have become two aspects of the same wage-differential-driven transformation of global production. Speaking of 1980s and 1990s Bangladesh, Tasneem Siddiqui reported that 'the continuous outflow of people of working-age ... has played a major role in keeping the unemployment rate stable' (Siddiqui 2003: 2). According to the International Organisation

for Migration, 5.4 million Bangladeshis work overseas, more than half in India, with the rest spread between Western Europe, North America, Australasia and the Middle East, especially Saudi Arabia. Some \$14 billion of remittances flowed into households in Bangladesh in 2012, equivalent to 11 per cent of Bangladesh's GDP. In the same year, Bangladesh received \$19 billion for its garment exports (80 per cent of Bangladesh's total exports), but this includes the cost of imported cotton and other fabrics, typically 25 per cent of the production cost. In other words, net earnings from garment exports in 2012 approximately equalled total remittances from Bangladeshis working abroad. And while only a small fraction of export earnings are paid out in wages, all of the latter flows directly into poor households.

The World Bank reports that in 2013, each of Britain's 210,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers, the largest concentration of all imperialist countries, sent home an average of \$4,058, close to the average for other imperialist countries. In comparison, average wages following the 2013 increase in Bangladesh's textile industry were \$115 per month, or \$1,380 per year. Thus, each Bangladeshi working in Britain remits in one year what it would take his (most Bangladeshi migrant workers are male) wife, sister or daughter three years to earn working in a garment factory.

### Neo-Marxists and the 'global labour arbitrage'

Most of the scholars and analysts cited so far in our survey of 'global labour arbitrage' have been from mainstream or heterodox schools. This is because Marxist academics have, by and large, neglected this subject. This is epitomised by an anthology of essays published in 2005 by Marxist scholars entitled *Neo-liberalism: A Critical Reader* (Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005). Its front cover is a photograph of women working on a production line somewhere in Asia, yet – despite the many insightful articles it contains – not one of them discusses the super-exploitation of southern labour, male or female, or asks how capitalist firms in imperialist countries reap super profits from them, or recognises that this might be not just relevant to 'neo-liberalism' but its very essence.

What is so special about 'global labour arbitrage', apart from its great force, is that it takes place entirely within the orbit of the capital–labour relation. 'Global labour arbitrage', or the globalisation of capitalist production processes driven by the super-exploitation of low-wage southern labour by northern capital, is capitalist imperialism *par excellence*. Here, capitalism has evolved ways of extracting surplus value from the so-called 'emerging nations' which are proper to it, which are effected not by political-military coercion but by 'market forces' – what Ellen Wood in *Empire of Capital* calls the 'internationalization of capitalist imperatives' (2005/2003: 118).

As Wood recognises, the exercise of military power by states continues to play a central and very active role in constituting the imperialist world order, policing it and violently removing obstacles in its way, whether these be forests and forest dwellers, insubordinate despots, rebellious social movements or radical governments. But, in common with other neo-Marxist theorists of 'new imperialism' and 'global capitalism', her theoretical framework gives no place to the most important, most direct, most pernicious and most quotidian exercise of coercive violence by the state in the global political economy: the suppression of the international mobility of labour. Apart, that is, from one cursory mention, a brief and passing acknowledgement that '[n]ot the least important function of the nation state in globalisation is to ... manage the movements of labour by means of strict border controls and stringent immigration policies, in the interests of capital' (137). Yet she gives neither this nor the massive relocation of production processes to the global South any further attention, despite their obvious relevance to her stated aim of defining 'the essence of capitalist imperialism' (7).

### International differences in the rate of exploitation

Critics of dependency theory used to argue that, if there were differences in the rate of exploitation between imperialist and semi-colonial countries, the much higher productivity of labour in the former means that workers in imperialist nations may even be subject to a higher rate of exploitation than in the Third World, despite their much higher levels of consumption. Thus, in their 1979

exchange with Samir Amin, John Weeks and Elizabeth Dore argued that '[s]ince it is in the developed capitalist countries that labour productivity is higher, it is not obvious that a high standard of living of workers in such countries implies that the exchange value of the commodities making up that standard of living is also higher' (Weeks and Dore 1979: 62–87, 71). Nigel Harris put forward essentially the same argument: 'other things being equal, the higher the productivity of labour, the higher the income paid to the worker (since his or her reproduction costs are higher) and the more exploited he or she is – that is, the greater the proportion of the workers output [that] is appropriated by the employer.' (Harris 1986: 119–120).

The globalisation of production processes has fatally undermined this argument: the consumption goods consumed by workers in the North are no longer produced solely or mainly in the North. To an ever greater extent, they are produced by low-wage labour in the global South; what matters is their productivity, their wages. Nevertheless, these arguments continue to be advanced to the present day – Alex Callinicos argues that '[f]rom the perspective of Marx's value theory, the critical error [of 'theorists of unequal exchange such as of Arghiri Emmanuel and Samir Amin'] is not to take into account the significance of high levels of labour productivity in the advanced economies' (Callinicos 2009: 179–180); while Joseph Choonara believes that 'it is a misconception that workers in countries such as India or China are more exploited than those in countries such as the US or Britain. This is not necessarily the case. They probably [!] have worse pay and conditions, and face greater repression and degradation than workers in the most developed industrial countries. But it is also possible that workers in the US or Britain generate more surplus value for every pound that they are paid in wages' (Choonara 2009: 34).

Ernest Mandel uncomfortably straddled the dependency thesis and its 'Marxist' antithesis without achieving anything in the way of synthesis. This equivocation is evident in his major economic work *Late Capitalism* (1975/1972). In the chapter entitled 'The Structure of the World Market', he admits that 'the existence of a much lower price for labour-power in the dependent, semicolonial countries than in the imperialist countries undoubtedly allows a higher world average rate of profit' (Choonara 2009: 68), implying

that its value is also lower, that it endures a higher rate of exploitation. Later, in the chapter on unequal exchange, he appears to reiterate this, referring to 'vast international differences in the value and the price of the commodity labour-power' (Mandel 1975/1972: 353), but on the next page he argues the opposite, that there 'exists in underdeveloped countries ... a lower rate of surplus value', spending several pages developing a numerical example in which the oppressed-nation workers endure a lower rate of exploitation than in the imperialist countries – with no explanation or justification. Either way, neither the vast differences in the value nor the price of labour-power make it into the ten features defining 'the structure of the world market' that concludes his analysis.

### Wages, productivity ...

It is argued here that global wage differentials have driven and shaped the global shift of production. It is therefore important to remind ourselves just how wide these differentials are. Data on average wages, in both rich and poor countries but especially in the latter, are notoriously unreliable. Masking growing wage inequality, they include the wages of skilled workers and managers, they typically count only those in formal employment, and they take no account of widespread underpayment and of illegally low wages. Bearing this in mind, the US government's Bureau of Labour Statistics reports that, despite decades of wage stagnation in the US and years of above-inflation wage rises in China, average hourly 'labour compensation' (wages + benefits) of US manufacturing workers in 2010 was 20 times greater than in China (\$34.74/hr vs \$1.71/hr), or 14 times greater when Chinese wages are measured in PPP\$. This obscenely high ratio underestimates the global picture, since labour compensation in countries like Canada, Germany and Denmark is higher than in the US, while Indian, Sri Lankan, Indonesian and Vietnamese workers are even cheaper than Chinese workers. Bangladeshi wages are lowest of all: there, the minimum wage in the garment industry is just 31¢ per hour – and this after a 77 per cent increase wrested by hard-fought strikes in 2013. Wages elsewhere in Bangladesh's economy are even lower. Dhaka's *The Daily Star* reported in May 2013 that tea-pickers are paid 55 taka (\$0.71) for a

day's work ('Tea worker's daily wage only Tk 55', in *The Daily Star*, 25 May 2013).

Clearly, wages are profoundly affected by conditions in labour markets – like repression of unions, massive unemployment and underemployment – none of which have any direct bearing on the productivity of workers when at work. This is one reason to question the widespread belief of mainstream economists that differences in wages reflect differences in productivity and that low wages in 'emerging economies' merely reflect the low productivity of their workers. That Western firms are so keen to outsource production to the other side of the world is proof in itself that the low wages they find so attractive are not cancelled by low productivity. As Larudee and Koechlin found (2008: 228–236, 232), in the case of FDI into low-wage countries, multinational firms carry a considerable share of their productivity with them. Why is this important? Because, to the considerable extent that international wage differentials do not reflect differences in productivity, they must reflect international differences in the rate of exploitation. And a higher rate of exploitation implies that more of the wealth created by these workers is captured by capitalists and turned into profit. There is nothing more important in political economy than understanding how this happens, and how it is rendered invisible in standard interpretations of economic data.

A theoretical concept of 'productivity' is essential if we are to understand anything about global political economy. But productivity is especially complex because it can be measured in two mutually exclusive ways: by the quantity of useful objects created in a particular amount of time, or by the quantity of money that these useful objects can be sold for. The 'use value' and 'exchange value' definitions of productivity produce very different results. For example, if Bangladeshi garment workers increase production from ten shirts per hour to 20 shirts per hour, they are, according to the first measure, twice as productive as before; but if the multinational firm they are supplying imposes proportionate cuts in the price of each shirt, the 'exchange value' measure of their productivity will remain unchanged. These two definitions of productivity are contradictory, mutually exclusive, incompatible. To formal logicians and vulgar economists, they cannot both be true. But to dialecticians, these contradictory

definitions reflect a really existing contradiction inherent in commodities and therefore in the labour that produces commodities. While the mainstream concept of productivity attempts to solve this puzzle by abolishing the use-value definition, obliterating it; for Marxist political economy, 'productivity' is a contradictory unity, embodying what Marx counted among the greatest of his discoveries: 'the two-fold character of labour, according to whether it is expressed in use value or exchange value' (Marx 1867b: 407–408).

To mainstream economics and in the brain of the capitalist, 'productivity' always refers to the monetary value of the goods and services generated in a given period of time; in other words, value-added per worker. But this gives rise to a series of paradoxes, anomalies and absurdities; for example, those in Europe and North America who stack shelves with imported goods appear to add much more value (i.e. to be many times more productive) than those who produce these goods. Another example is that the outsourcing of labour-intensive production tasks boosts the productivity of the workers whose jobs are not outsourced – even if nothing about this work or the payment received for it changes in any way. Thus, Gene Grossman and Esteban Rossi-Hansberg contend that 'improvements in the feasibility of offshoring are economically equivalent to labour-augmenting technological progress' (Grossman and Rossi-Hansberg 2006: 15). A further example is provided by per capita GDP, which, leaving aside relatively minor variations in the proportion of a nation's population who are economically active, is synonymous with average productivity. On this measure, six of the eight most 'productive' nations on earth are tax havens, which by definition produce nothing of use; meanwhile, Bangladesh languishes in 192nd place out of 229 nations. Its garment workers produce large quantities of use values – but insufficient exchange value to allow their employers to run safe factories or pay a living wage.

### ... and the GDP illusion

Statistics on GDP, trade, and productivity suffer from much more severe defects than those afflicting wages. Here, the problems are conceptual, not technical. Bangladesh's garment-exporting industry – in the global spotlight since the death of 1,127 garment workers in

the collapsed Rana Plaza building in April 2013 – provides a glaring illustration of this. Few, apart from mainstream economists, would deny that Primark, Wal-Mart, H&M and other high-street retailers profit from the exploitation of Bangladeshi garment workers. A moment's thought reveals other beneficiaries: the commercial capitalists who own the buildings leased by these retailers, the myriad of companies providing advertising, security, and other services to them; and also governments, which tax their profits and their employees' wages and collect 20 per cent VAT from every sale. Yet, according to trade and financial data, not one penny of the profits reaped by US and European retail giants derives from the labour of the workers who made their goods. The huge mark-up on the costs of production, typically 60–80 per cent and often more, instead appears as 'value-added' in the UK and other consuming countries, expanding their GDP by far more than that of the country where these goods are actually produced.

However, by redefining 'value-added' as value captured, our perception of the global economy is transformed. It allows us to see that the lion's share of the value produced by low-wage workers in China, Bangladesh, and elsewhere is captured by corporations and governments in the imperialist countries. A closer look at this key mainstream concept makes clear why such a redefinition is necessary. Value-added, the fundamental constituent of both GDP and productivity, is the difference between the prices paid by a firm for all inputs and the prices received for all outputs. According to mainstream economic theory, this amount is automatically and exactly equal to the value generated in the firm's own production process, and cannot leak to other firms or be captured from them. The process of production is thus not only a black box, where all we know is the price paid for inputs and the price received for the outputs; it is also hermetically sealed from all other black boxes, in that no value can be transferred or redistributed between them. Marxist political economy rejects this absurdity and advances a radically different conception: 'value-added' is really value captured. It measures the share of total economy-wide value-added that is captured by a firm, and there is no direct correspondence between this amount and the value created by the living labour (or, if you prefer 'factors of production') employed within that firm.

Indeed, many firms supposedly generating value-added are engaged in non-production activities like finance and administration that produce no value at all.

If, within a national economy, value produced by one firm (i.e. in one production process) can condense in the prices paid for commodities produced in other firms, then it is irrefutable that, especially in the era of globalised production, this also occurs between firms in different countries. To the extent that it does, GDP departs ever further from being an objective, more-or-less accurate approximation of a nation's product, becoming instead a veil that conceals the increasingly exploitative relation between northern capitals and southern living labour; in other words, the imperialist character of the global capitalist economy.

Three important conclusions flow from this.

It is impossible to analyse the global economy without using data on GDP and trade, yet every time we uncritically cite this data we open the door to the core fallacies of neo-classical economics which these data project. To analyse the global economy we must decontaminate this data, or rather the concepts we use to interpret them.

Redefining 'value-added' as value captured reveals that the globalisation of production is driven not just by international wage differentials but by international differences in the rate of exploitation.

Redefining 'value-added' as value captured also reveals the heightened dependence of capitalists and capitalism in the imperialist countries on the proceeds of the higher rates of exploitation of living labour in the global South. The imperialist division of the world that was a precondition for capitalism is now internal to it. Far from marking a transition to a post-imperial world, neo-liberalism therefore signifies the emergence of the fully evolved imperialist form of capitalism.

## Conclusion

Armed with the concepts developed in this essay, the door is open to understanding how surplus value extracted from workers assembling Dell computers and Apple iPods in Foxconn's Chinese factories, and those producing clothing and footwear in Bangladesh and the Dominican Republic for Wal-Mart, H&M and so forth, massively contribute to

these firms' profits even though there is no trace of this in GDP, trade, or financial flow data. It allows us to see that a major part of the revenues and profits from the sale of the products of global value chains accruing to firms based in imperialist countries, their distributors, and their employees (and therefore appearing in the GDP of the consuming countries), and the very large cut which is taken by governments and used to pay for foreign wars, the social wage and so on, represents the unpaid labour of super-exploited Chinese and other low-wage workers. It allows us to understand why, according to standard interpretations of GDP and trade data, these massive transfers of wealth are invisible but no less real. And, finally, it allows us to see that profits, prosperity, and social peace in Europe, North America, and Japan are, more than at any time in capitalism's history, dependent upon the super-exploitation of low-wage labour in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Acknowledging this reality is to acknowledge that neo-liberal globalisation marks not the supersession of imperialism but the culmination of capitalism's imperialist trajectory.

Boosting profits through increasing relative surplus value is generally held by Marxists to be the pre-eminent driver of advanced capitalism. A modification of this view has long been required; comprehension of the global outsourcing phenomenon now demands it. In the era of neo-liberal globalisation, the rate of profit in the imperialist countries is sustained by not one but three ways to increase surplus value: increasing relative surplus value through the application of new technology in the classic manner intensively studied by Marx in *Capital*; increasing absolute surplus value by extending the working day, a major feature of capitalist exploitation in today's global South; and 'global labour arbitrage', the expanded super-exploitation of southern labour power made possible by the depression of its value to a small fraction of that obtaining in the imperialist countries. The trajectory of capitalist accumulation and crisis is determined by the complex interaction of all three elements. Of these three, 'global labour arbitrage' stands out as really new and specific to neo-liberal globalisation.

It is understandable why members and aspiring members of privileged social layers in imperialist countries might find it convenient to take statistics on GDP and labour productivity at their face value – by doing so they can

avoid confronting the disturbing and complacency-shattering consequences of recognising the relations of exploitation, imperialism, and parasitism that are intrinsic and fundamental to the contemporary capitalist world order and to their social position within it. On the other hand, for workers in the other imperialist nations, the globalisation of production means that nationalist-reformist attempts to protect workers' living standards and access to social services behind protectionist barriers, including border controls on the free movement of labour, are not only reactionary, they are also futile. If US and European workers do not wish to compete with their sisters and brothers in Mexico, China, and elsewhere, they must join with them in the struggle to abolish the racial hierarchy of nations and the tremendous disparities associated with it, and to achieve an authentic globalisation – a world without borders – in which no one has any more right to a job, an education, or a life than anyone else. The path to socialism goes through, not around, the eradication of the gigantic differences in living standards and life chances that violate the principle of equality between proletarians. As Malcolm X said, 'Freedom for everybody, or freedom for nobody'.

John Smith

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## Global Value Transfers and Imperialism

Whether you can observe a thing or not depends on the theory which you use. It

is the theory which decides what can be observed. (Albert Einstein 1926)

Imperialism is the unequal transfer of economic value across space, a form of super-exploitation by powerful states or firms in one location visited upon weaker states/peoples/firms in another place. I employ *global value transfer*, *surplus drain*, and *surplus transfer* as synonyms. Similar terms that appear in the literature include 'geographical transfer of value', 'economic drain', 'surplus extraction', 'capital drain' or 'transfer and unequal exchange' (Amin 1974; Emmanuel 1972; Kohler and Tausch 2002; Raffer 1987).

Because capitalism is characterised by commodification of everything, everywhere (Wallerstein 1983), the basic form of surplus extraction derives from the production and sale of commodities. Capitalists are compelled toward imperialism because the system is based on minimising costs of production in order to maximise profits. A distinguishing feature of surplus drain lies in the need for capitalists to widen the reach of the system in order to ensure the capture of lower costs. The cheapest costs are rarely near at hand, so commodified production stimulates an expanding territorial search. Consequently, global value transfer is a driving force that causes accumulation of wealth and power at the core and stagnation of the periphery (Amin 1974; Baran 1957; Frank 1969; Wallerstein 1974; 1983).

Without global surplus transfers, there can be no worldwide capitalism. The capitalist world-system is a 'hierarchy of core-periphery complexes, in which surplus is being transferred' (Frank 1969: 98). It is important to realise that 'peripheral does not mean marginal in the sense of dispensable: without peripheries, no core [and] no capitalist development' (Hopkins 1982: 13). Indeed, core and periphery are not geographical or national categories but relationships of imperialistic global surplus transfer. 'Such a relationship is that of coreness-peripherality ... . The losing zone [is] a periphery and the gaining zone a core.' All commodities culminate from production chains that generate its components. Often located in a peripheral territory, subordinate producers generate value that is embedded in the traded commodity, and that value is far beyond the costs of production plus profit for which they are paid. These lower costs of production, particularly to the disadvantage of labour, generate

high levels of value transfer to distant buyers and often superprofits for capitalists. Marx (1993: vol. 3) briefly explored superprofits (extra surplus value) as above-average profits derived from monopolistic control over resources or technologies, leading to land rents, mining rents, or technological rents. Lenin (1964: vol. 23, 105–120) explored the notion more fully. For recent discussions, see Amin (2010), Smith (2011) and Higginbottom (2013). Through global transfers, core citizens 'liv[e] off the surplus value produced by others' while peripheral residents are 'not retaining all of the surplus value they are producing'. As a result, a majority of the world's surplus capital accumulates at the core, 'making available disproportionate funds' that capitalists utilise 'to gain additional competitive advantages' (Wallerstein 1983: 31–32).

This essay will examine four conceptual themes that pinpoint the ways in which imperialism is structurally embedded in capitalism.

1. Expropriation of surpluses across space is an historical and increasing source of polarised wealth accumulation in the world. Such global transfers take many forms, their economic centrality varying over time. Probably the most basic of these forms is differential costs of labour.
2. The relentless pursuit of lower costs is a driving force of global imperialism, so capitalists seek to maximise profits by constructing long-term *degrees of monopoly* that disadvantage both labourers and capitalist competitors.
3. Imperialism structures hidden drains of surpluses not only from underpaid labour but also from unpaid labour and the externalisation of costs to ecosystems, communities, and households. I conceptualise this process as the expropriation of *dark value transfers*.
4. Core citizens benefit greatly from the consumer surpluses that derive from peripheral dark value drains, so they are not likely to support anti-imperialistic movements against this system of global value transfer.

### Global value transfers through differential labour costs

Karl Marx insisted that all history is the history of class conflict in which the subordinate



class resists the seizure by elites of the surpluses they produce (Marx and Engels 1848). In accord with Einstein's opening quotation, we will not be able to see global surplus transfers unless we widen Marx's theoretical lens. In this vein, we need to recognise that capitalism has exhibited a history of territorial conflict in which subordinate groups resist the seizure of their surpluses by external elites; that is surplus expropriation across space. In addition to the historic forms of plunder and tribute, global value transfer takes many forms; for example, production monopsonies, sales monopolies, politically manipulated trade, tariffs, loans, and exchange rates. The form that is examined here is that based on differential production costs.

### Theoretical foundations

Even though global value transfer is an extension of Marx's analysis, it is a fundamental problematic that he barely broached in the work he published. Moreover, surplus drain is an idea that has either been rejected or ignored by most Marxists and most other economic theorists (Amin 2012). While classic Marxist theorists of imperialism focused on monopoly capitalism as the driving force behind the new form of imperialism of their day, they largely ignored explicit analysis of surplus drain. Hobson (1902), Luxemburg (1951), Lenin (1964, vol.1), Bukharin (1972), and Hilferding (1981) did not focus on cheap labour or the problem of integrating a theory of monopoly capitalism with Marx's labour theory of value. Instead, they grounded their arguments in analysis of superprofits that derive from capital and commodity exports to the periphery.

Starting in the 1950s, some neo-Marxist theorists shifted the analytic focus from core exports of capital and commodities (Lenin 1964: vol. 1) to core foreign direct investment and commodity imports from the (semi) periphery. Extrapolating from Marx's (1993: vol.1, parts 3, 4, 5) theory of surplus value, Paul Baran (1957) introduced the concept of *economic surplus* (as distinct from surplus value) as key to economic growth, and he contended that loss of economic surplus blocks peripheral development. Frank (1969) expanded this by arguing that colonialism structured *development of underdevelopment* to ensure surplus transfers to the imperial core. However, Baran (1957) and Frank (1979) paid little

attention to the linkages between cheap labour and surplus drain, choosing instead to prioritise surplus transfers from international trade, taxation, and repatriation of investments. In making this conceptual choice, they moved away from the orthodox Marxist emphasis on the linkage between labour exploitation and surplus creation. It was not until Emmanuel's (1972) theory of *unequal exchange* that international wage differentials were recognised as major sources of surplus drain. Subsequently, Amin (1974) incorporated this notion into his analysis of 'accumulation on a world scale'. Concurrently, Wallerstein (1974) introduced world-systems analysis, a perspective in which a multi-state capitalist system is driven by surplus drain, particularly the value extracted from underpaid labour throughout the system. Recent extensions of global value transfer theory include Cope (2012) and Higginbottom (2013).

### The new international division of labour

The classical theories of imperialism (e.g. Lenin 1964: vol. 1) were responses to a restructuring of the world-economy as a result of declining profit rates. That restructuring included the massive export of capital, as loans, to the Third World. In the 1970s, a new imperialist structure of accumulation emerged, again in reaction to declining profit rates. Scholars analysed this continuing worldwide transformation as a *new international division of labour* (Frobel et al. 1980) to acknowledge the relocation of core manufacturing to semiperipheries. Analysis of this epochal change gave rise to a proliferation of concepts previously unknown, such as *deindustrialisation*, newly industrialising countries, export-led development, fragmentation of production, outsourcing, transnational corporations, commodity chains, global value chains, supply chains, global production networks (Dicken 2011). This phase of restructuring reflected an historical shift from the core export-oriented imperialism (capital and products) to import-oriented imperialism (peripheral commodities).

Frobel et al. (1980: 41) pointed to the most imperialistic aspect of this restructuring: 'the worldwide organized allocation of the elements of the production process to the cheapest labour force that could be found'. More broadly, the shift indicated an intensification of capital's normal search for unpaid costs, always a basic element of the global value transfer, and

it resulted in dramatic change in the world class system. The fuller capitalist incorporation of China, India, and Russia doubled the size of the world working class (Freeman 2008: 687). The newly integrated workers were cheap labour and disproportionately female (Pyle and Ward 2003), with a majority trapped in the informal sector (International Labour Office 2007). Concurrently, the size of the transnational capitalist class expanded, and the role of the *comprador bourgeoisie* (Amin 1974) and its associated professional/managerial cadres shifted from that of traders to overseers of production (Robinson 2004). Since this restructuring of the world economy followed the logic of unequal exchange, it integrated vast numbers of workers and subordinate capitalists as new exploited classes to supply cheap labour and services.

### Unequal exchange and the imperialism of free trade

Unequal exchange is a concept grounded in the logic of semi-permanent differential costs of production and the logic of trade between competitive capital and monopoly capital (for an overview of unequal exchange theories, see Raffer [1987]). It is reasonable that the theories should focus on the price of labour and international trade since these are areas in which spatial cost differentials are highest. Unequal exchange theorists contend that the primary mechanism of global value transfer is the *imperialism of free trade* rather than monopoly profits based on control of economic systems through military imperialism. Gallagher and Robinson (1954) coined the phrase ‘imperialism of free trade,’ arguing that ‘the main work of imperialism’ was the geographical expansion to new areas and the deepening of free trade mechanisms in areas that were already controlled. Basically, unequal exchange theories are attempts to place spatial value transfer from cheap labour at the heart of Marxist theory. In doing so, they emphasise the reality that free trade entails the exchange of cheap, low-profit peripheral exports for high-priced, high-profit core imports. These global value transfer chains accumulate surpluses disproportionately at the core through mechanisms of unequal exchange (Clelland 2013; 2014).

The imperialism of free trade is structured through global commodity chains in which the various components, starting with raw materials, are produced and combined. Such transnational chains were among the basic

features of historical capitalism (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1986). In recent decades, many core ‘lead firms’ have offshored a majority of their production to the (semi)periphery. Typically, the lead firm designs the product, establishes patent rights over its innovations, develops quality standards for component parts, organises and governs the supply chain, and controls the distribution and sales of the finished import (Gereffi et al. 2005).

A commodity chain is the most important mechanism for the extraction of surplus across space, and unequal exchanges are embedded in each of its transfer points. The relationship that exists between nodes in the commodity chain has the same basic form as the core/periphery relationship, and, in turn, the same form as the relations of production within each node of the chain. This abstract model assumes that all of these relationships are not usually between equals (as in the abstract model of neo-classical economics), but between unequals. At all levels, then, the relationship is one of surplus extraction (Clelland 2012).

### Imperialistic impacts of wage differentials

How has the new international division of labour exacerbated global wage differentials? Greater trade liberalisation increased the importance of the relative wages of the unskilled labourers who comprise a majority of the new industrial labour force in the Global South. On the one hand, there has been a ‘race to the bottom’ in wages, as labour’s share of the GDP continues to decline in most Southern countries (International Labour Organization 2010). On the other hand, transfer of industry has been accompanied by greater wage inequality between North and South, as well as greater wage inequality within peripheral and semiperipheral countries.

What, then, is the size of global value transfers that are derived from these wage differentials? Applying mean core–periphery manufacturing wage differentials to the adjusted total value of core imports from the periphery, Cope (2012) concluded that the global value transfer is approximately US\$2.8 trillion annually, or nearly one-third beyond what was paid for the imports. (For estimates of the global value transfer through differential production wages, see Amin (1974; 2010), Emmanuel [1972], Kohler and Tausch [2002].) This transfer equates to about 6 per cent of the core GDP. Clelland (2013; 2014)

offers an alternative method by comparing the consumer price consequences of different wage levels. For instance, the total payment to peripheral workers for the production of a pound of coffee is only 16 per cent of the price. If the cost of similarly skilled US workers at minimum wage levels were substituted for average US farm worker wages, the labour cost would nearly double the price to consumers. Similarly, the peripheral labour cost for the production of an Apple iPad is only 9 per cent of the consumer price. If the costs of similarly skilled US minimum-waged workers were substituted for the widely variant costs of lower-paid Asian labour in the production chain, the price of the iPad would nearly double.

Global surplus transfers that result from differential wages are a much larger proportion of the economy of the periphery than of the core. Indeed, the worst impact of these 'imperialistic rents' is that they remove about half of the potential profits of the Global South (Amin 2012: 4). Moreover, those transfers exceed the capital that is annually invested in expanded reproduction of those societies (Kohler and Tausch 2002). The impacts of these surplus transfers are not just measured in short-term livelihood disadvantages. The long-term loss to the (semi) periphery of this global transfer is significant, for the basis for investment in expanded economic and social development is reduced (Baran 1957; Frank 1969).

### Imperialism through degrees of monopoly

A fundamental assumption of classical Marxist and neo-classical economics is that capitalism is based on nearly pure competition over the long term, thus providing the laws or tendencies that drive the system. (Marx [1993: vols 1, 3] assumed nearly pure competition in his labour theory of value and his conceptualisation of the falling rate of profits.) In this view, neither price differentials nor monopoly persists in the long run. In sharp contrast to this scholarly assumption, Kalecki (1939: 252) contends that monopoly is 'deeply rooted in the nature of the capitalist system' and is 'the normal state of capitalist economics.' Similarly, Braudel (1981: vol. 2, 412–422) drew a sharp distinction between the competitive market facing most firms and the 'anti-market' sphere of 'real capitalism,' the realm of the monopolists who shape

and dominate the capitalist world-system. In short, the capitalist struggle for monopoly is an historical driving force of capitalism. To emphasise the gradational nature of monopoly, Kalecki (1954) coined the concept *degree of monopoly*: the relative ability to set prices in the distribution process, as opposed to the determination of prices by the competitive market. (Kalecki [1954]) also uses the synonymous terms *degree of market imperfection* and *degree of oligopoly*. Marx [1993: vol. 3, part 6], Amin [2012] and other Marxist theorists [e.g. Sau, 1982] use the terms *monopoly rents*, *imperialist rents*, and *superprofits* in ways that are parallel to my applications of Kalecki's *degree of monopoly*.)

Many discussions of monopoly point to: (a) collusion among potential competitors in setting high prices in order to collect high profits; and/or (b) state protection of selected capitalists. In contrast, the logic of imperialism that is built into capitalism is the search for lower costs to attain a more monopolistic position. In addition, degree of monopoly is commonly based on economies of scale, increased productivity through technology, barriers to entry, patent rights, advertising and marketing, as well as invention of a unique product or productive system. But the greatest of these is *barriers to imitation* through international policing of intellectual property rights. In other words, a capitalist constructs a degree of monopoly through the ability to lower costs or raise prices beyond what would be possible in a purely competitive economy.

### Dominance over subordinate capitalists through degrees of monopsony

Any national core economy may be described as a form of monopoly capitalism (Baran and Sweezy 1966; Hilferding 1981). However, the larger capitalist world-economy is a *degree of monopsony* system in which a few buyers dominate a context in which there are many sellers (Robinson 1993). Current imperialism is based less on obtaining superprofits through export of core finance and goods than on securing imperial rents by controlling the prices of peripheral imports (Amin 2012). The most powerful monopsonists are the firms that have established a high degree of monopoly by employing the mechanisms indicated above. Because of their large size and small number, these firms enjoy the privilege of unequal power in the negotiations with smaller, very numerous suppliers.

Indeed, this is the unequal trade at the heart of unequal exchange. Kalecki (1954) defined degree of monopoly as the ability to control the mark-up, the difference between total costs and revenue. In contrast, contemporary imperialism is largely the ability to control 'mark-downs'; that is, the power to force down the cost of production in the periphery. From the origins of capitalism, agricultural trade from the periphery took the form of production by a multitude of peasants who sold to a small number of traders, who in turn exported to a small number of core buyers (commission merchants), the original transnational capitalist class (Wallerstein 1974). Those core buyers used the competition among sellers to force down the costs of production, prices, and profit rates. Both small producers and compradors worked informally for monopsonistic core traders/wholesalers who obtained the bulk of profits. Setting aside the many boom periods of initial production, these profits are often termed imperial rents (Amin 2012), in recognition of the limited energy expended in trade as contrasted with the amount of labour required in the production process. These rents, sometimes termed *monopoly rents*, were largely *monopsony rents*. The heart of the current form of imperialism is an expanded, more organised, more rationalised version of the original system. It is a monopsonistic system of 'free trade' designed to expand global value transfer.

The new compradors are the peripheral capitalists who do the real work of providing or raising investment funds, constructing factories, purchasing supplies and equipment, hiring labour, and organising production. Having a low degree of monopoly, the peripheral capitalist struggles to cut costs but obtains little increased profit. In order to remain a competitive seller to the monopsonistic buyer, that subordinate capitalist must turn those lower costs into lower prices. This is an imperialistic system in which the monopsonistic final buyer becomes a rentier who obtains imperial rents by outsourcing production to subordinate competitive capitalists who must accept lower profits. Quite often, such firms are double rentiers since their high monopoly profit rates were already based on technology rent or design rent insured by legal barriers to imitation. Today, such capitalists hold a position similar to the hated landlords of Ricardo's (1817) time. They

obtain their share of the economic surplus from claims of property rights, leaving actual production to others.

### Degrees of monopoly through cheap labour exploitation

Of all the differential costs of production upon which the system of imperial monopsony is built, the most important are the highly divergent costs of labour. In the classic Marxist model, the capitalist who hires workers and organises the labour process obtains profit from the extraction of surplus value from those workers. How do contemporary subordinate peripheral capitalists extract surplus value from workers in order to drive down costs? Analysis of a core corporation that has outsourced production to Asia provides a good overview of the kinds of tactics that subordinate capitalists employ to slash labour costs. In 2010 and 2011, the vast majority of Apple's Chinese subcontractors engaged in a mix of the following practices: (a) below minimum wages that violated national and local laws; (b) excessive overtime hours at wage rates that did not meet legal requirements; (c) wage deductions to discipline workers; (d) gender discrimination in wage rates; (e) employment of lower-paid underage and foreign bonded labourers; (f) failure to implement safety measures; (g) structuring unpaid work time into the daily routine; and (h) deducting fees from wages for equipment and uniforms (Fair Labour Association 2012). All these strategies are efforts to increase absolute and relative surplus value, much of which is captured by the lead firm. To maximise cost-cutting strategies, peripheral subordinate capitalists employ cheap indigenous professional and managerial cadres. These 'hired-hand' capitalists are proficient at: (a) recruiting cheap waged workers; (b) effecting organisational efficiency and time management; (c) speeding up worker productivity; and (d) expropriating hidden unpaid labours from workers. Managerial personnel drive waged workers through Taylorist speed-ups, shift quotas and longer work weeks than are legally tolerated in the core. Like the workers they exploit, these overseers of production are the servants of monopoly capitalists.

The value transfer from subordinate to more monopolistic capitalists is clear in empirical analyses of surplus extraction. In the iPad commodity chain (Clelland 2014), the subordinate

capitalists who organise the production and supply chains are primarily transnational corporations headquartered in South Korea and Taiwan, but nearly all the production occurs in China. While these semiperipheral capitalists retain about 15 per cent of the total profits from iPad sales, 76 per cent is captured by Apple. The operating profit margin (OPM) for this core corporation is about 25 per cent of its revenues, but the OPM for the subordinate semiperipheral capitalists is quite narrow (only 7 per cent). Reflecting that there may be several tiers of subordinate capitalists in a production chain, the tightest OPM in the iPad chain occurs for those smaller Asian capitalists to whom the semiperipheral corporations subcontract parts of the supply chain. While most of the responsibility for cutting labour and other production costs is most heavily externalised to lower tiers of subordinate subcontractors, they capture very little of the surplus value and attain a slim operating margin that drives them to slash labour costs even more deeply.

A similar pattern of global value transfer occurs in the coffee commodity chain (Clelland 2013). The ability to capture surplus does not lie in the hands of those organising and supervising labour power, but in the hands of the transnational corporations that hold high degrees of monopoly. In the case of coffee, the total profits are about 17 per cent of the retail price, but only about 2 per cent of the price is retained by peripheral capitalists. While peripheral capitalists organise and control 86 per cent of the productive labour, they have little control over the capture of the surpluses that are generated by their efforts to keep costs of production low. The degree of monopsony possessed by a small number of wholesale coffee roasters and distributors allows them to usurp most of the surplus value generated by the large number of peripheral subordinate capitalists.

### Imperialism through global transfers of dark value

The global transfer of value occurs through two types of surplus drain. The first is *bright value transfer*; that is, the movement to the core of profits from sales in the periphery. These are monetarised and measured with transparent accounting techniques (Clelland 2012: 199–200). In contrast to these visible global surplus transfers, there is a second type of surplus drain that I term *dark value transfer*;

that is, the movement to the core of peripheral products containing large amounts of differential costs. For Marx (1993: vol. 1) the value of a commodity is based on the labour time involved in its production. However, there are important components of value that are more deeply hidden, for capitalism is ‘an economy of unpaid costs’ (Wallerstein 1999: ch. 5). The savings from under-compensated peripheral labour and inputs are such unpaid costs or dark value. Capitalists attempt to transform dark value into bright value (profits) simply by maintaining prices despite low costs. This transformation of nothing (non-payment) into something (monetarised bright value) is a form of value capture for accumulation (expanded reinvestment). Alternatively, the dark value costs may be used to cut output prices. In this case, the dark value is embedded in the product and captured as extra value for the buyer.

How, then, is this dark value produced and captured? The sources of dark value may be found in any of the factors of production (capital, labour, land, resources, energy, environment, knowledge) when a capitalist obtains a component of production at less than the average world-market price. The following sections examine how dark value is embodied in: (a) under-compensated waged labour; (b) under-compensated informal sector labour; (c) unpaid inputs from households; and (d) ecological externalities.

### Dark value from under-compensated waged and salaried workers

Much of the material basis for global value transfer lies in the exploitation of cheap export production workers in the (semi) periphery. Dark value is transferred from these workers because capitalists pay them at levels well below core averages. The dark value added (value for which no payment is made to labour) in periphery to core exports is worth 30–100 per cent beyond the market prices (Clelland 2013; 2014). If the unpaid differential costs of core versus periphery salary payments to cheap engineers and managers were taken into account, another 35 per cent would be added to the dark value of high-tech peripheral imports (Clelland 2014) and another 13 per cent for low-tech peripheral imports (Clelland 2013). In the case of the Apple iPad, the total dark value hidden in the services of low-paid Asian engineers and managers is worth more than five

times the bright value that appears in the accounts of its key suppliers (Clelland 2014).

### **Dark value from under-compensated informal sector workers**

The new international division of labour not only captures the cheapest waged workers possible but also devises deeper exploitation of forms of labour outside the formal sector. Dark value is drained from informal sector workers in two ways: (a) subcontracting with capitalists for production in export chains; and (b) support of under-paid waged labourers in these chains. Increasingly, transnational capitalists subcontract with subordinate peripheral capitalists who outsource at cheaper-than-wage rates to several forms of informal sector workers (Dedeoglu 2013), including industrial and agricultural subcontracting with households (United Nations 2011). For this reason, a majority of the world's new jobs are being created in the informal sector (International Labour Office 2007).

Rather than eliminate those informal forms, subordinate capitalists routinely integrate them into their production systems, as mechanisms to lower labour costs. The capitalist who lowers production costs most deeply through such strategies attains a greater degree of monopoly than a competitor who is unable to capture the same level of cheap informal labour. Through subcontracting of home-based production to women in their households, for instance, capitalists super-exploit labour by: (a) paying below subsistence remuneration for produced items; (b) integrating unpaid child labour into the production process and (c) by externalising costs of production, such as electricity and equipment, from capitalists to households (Pyle and Ward 2003).

In addition, informal sector workers subsidise the low incomes of formal sector waged labourers. Beyond each under-paid waged worker is a large support staff of food producers and informal service providers who contribute to the reproductive capacity of this worker. By supplying low-cost survival needs to the waged worker, these poorly remunerated labourers subsidise low capitalist wages. Because they help make cheap export production wages possible, they are part of the extended chain of global value transfer. The daily life of the under-compensated peripheral waged worker entails the unequal exchange of her labour time for more hours

of labour time from informal producers. For example, she may drain dark value from a lower-paid child care-giver who makes it possible for her to work for wages outside her household. This flow of dark value cheapens the reproduction costs of peripheral labour and, thus, the wage level that capitalists pay. If paid at the core minimum wage and rendered visible in costs of production, the informal-sector labour embodied in each iPad would add almost 30 per cent to its retail price. Even though most scholars would consider them to be outside the commodity chain, the savings from the underpaid services of the Chinese underclass contribute dark value that is nearly equivalent to Apple's gross profit margin for each iPad (Clelland 2014).

### **Dark value from unpaid reproductive and household labour**

The wages of paid labour are included in the commodity price, but what about the price of the basic commodity, the cost of reproducing labour? Like other components of any commodity, labour has a chain of suppliers, but they are unpaid. The vast dark energy used up in this production is excluded from the formal accounting of production costs and from prices. Though mainstream economists and most Marxists do not view such unpaid labour as producing surplus value, this household work is a crucial source of surplus value because it provides the capitalist with the basic component of production. While Marx (1993: vol. 1, 176) claimed 'the secret of profit making' lay in exploitation of waged labour that occurred in the hidden abode of the factory, we really need to enter the hidden abode of labour reproduction, the household, to find that secret. While many other costs of production are bought for prices that cover replacement, labour is provided without inclusion of its reproduction costs, so it is simply 'rented.'

Global outsourcing to capture dark value from cheap waged labour also captures dark value from household labour. Not only workers directly employed in export production, but also most of the peripheral population contributes a portion of their household and/or informal labour power to global transfer of value. Peripheral households and women absorb the costs of reproducing, maintaining, educating, and socialising the labour force (Dunaway 2012). Capitalists are able to drain

hidden surpluses from households because a majority of the world's workers earn only a portion of their livelihoods from waged labour. Indeed, these *semi-proletarianised households* pool the greater proportion of their resources from non-waged activities, inadvertently encouraging capitalists to pay 'the lowest possible wage' (Wallerstein 1983: 91). Concealed in profits and cheap consumer prices is the unpaid reproductive labour of millions of peripheral households. In addition, unpaid family members provide much of the support labour for male-dominated, household-based enterprises (Dedeoglu 2013; United Nations 2011). The dark value of uncosted household hours is embedded, not only in finished products, but also at every level of the production and distribution chains, until it reaches the core consumer at a price that does not reflect the value of all the embodied labour (Clelland 2013; 2014). How economically significant is unpaid household labour? If paid at the core minimum wage and rendered visible in costs of production, the unpaid reproductive labour embodied in each iPad would add almost 25 per cent to its retail price (Clelland 2014).

### Dark value from ecological externalities

A large share of the world's peripheral resources are either owned by core multinational corporations or are contracted out by states at low prices (Magdoff 2013). Had ownership been retained in peripheries, the continuing cost of resources would be much higher than it is today, in order to provide 'resource rents' to the owners. These flows are not just an unpleasant result of past imperialism, but follow on today as 'continuing dispossession' (Harvey 2003). In addition to the visible, documented drains of ecological surplus, there is the hidden problem of uncosted and plundered resources. The consequences of such drains have been studied in the flourishing research about 'ecological unequal exchange' (Jorgensen and Rice 2012).

In the case of natural resources, surplus is not just that which is available after the reproduction costs of the ecosystem have been met, for surplus is enhanced by the destruction of the system itself. Natural capital is withdrawn from the ecological world bank, without replacement. Consequently, realistic cost allocation would entail either a decline in capitalist accumulation or price increases. On the one hand, every commodity has an

environmental footprint; that is, the total ecological base needed for its production and distribution (Wackernagel et al. 2002). To the extent that the footprint is not fully costed, the capitalist absorbs dark value. On the other hand, commodity production leaves a large footprint in the form of threats to the survival of local communities and households. Peripheral areas absorb the side effects of the capitalist's unpaid ecological damage, reflected in public taxes for clean-up, health risks to residents, and loss of access to ecological resources that once supported local food security. Moreover, damage to world ecosystems (especially global climate change) is disproportionately borne by peripheral areas, reflecting another deeply hidden form of dark value drain. If ecological recovery were costed at core levels and rendered visible, the dark value savings to Apple from outsourcing some ecological externalities would add 38 per cent to the retail price of the iPad. Moreover, this ecological unequal exchange is nearly double Apple's operating profit margin (Clelland 2014).

### How do capitalists utilise dark value?

In a purely competitive system, all captures of dark value would quickly be matched by competitors, but this does not happen in real capitalism (Braudel 1981: vol. 2, 413–422). Thus, capitalists who capture significant levels of dark value can utilise it in three ways. First, the capitalist might monetarise some portion of the dark value in order to expand accumulation through reinvestment. Second, the capitalist can employ the dark value to attain protection from competitors through degrees of monopoly. Third, they can apply the hidden value to roll back prices in order to attract a greater volume of consumers than their competitors.

### Consumer surplus as deterrent to anti-imperialism

The commodity chain is the imperialistic globalised structure that is devised to ensure capital accumulation in the core. However, it is also a surplus extraction chain that is grounded in unequal transfers from lower- to higher-wage sectors. Thus, capitalism is not only imperialistic because it accumulates most of world surplus at the core, but also because it delivers cheap goods to a majority of core citizens by means of the expropriation

of dark value from peripheral workers. Expanded consumption in the core provides the opportunity for increased drain of value based on unequal production prices between core and periphery. Since core lead firms have a high degree of monopsony over peripheral capital and labour markets, these capitalists can extract massive savings through the dark value embodied in cheaper labour. Unlike core unionised workers, peripheral waged workers have been unable to drive the price of labour very much above the subsistence level. As a result, workers who do the same tasks with similar skills and equipment earn hourly wages that differ by as much as a ratio of 15:1 across regions of the world (for analysis of average wages by country, see Bureau of Labour Statistics [2013]).

It can be generalised from Clelland (2014) that the total value transfer approximates one-third of the core GDP. When dark value arrives in the core, it can be distributed three ways: as profits, as wage payments, or as consumer surplus. For example, core capitalists distribute the embedded dark value from a pound of coffee three ways. It can be estimated from (Clelland 2013: 84) that about one-fifth of dark value is transformed into profits while another 15 per cent is allocated to wages (about half to salaried workers). However, most of the embedded dark value is captured by customers because it is worth nearly 50 per cent more than the market value of the coffee (Clelland [2013; Table 4.1; 2014; Tables 1.5]). As we see in this example, most dark value collected by core firms is not transformed into profit but into lower consumer prices than would result from core production. The difference between the price of the commodity if it were produced in the core and the actual price that benefits from capture of peripheral labour is *consumer surplus*. This argument is a radical variant of the neo-classical economic concept of consumer surplus. My use of the concept differs from that by most other scholars, who focus on subjective utility, the difference between real price and what an individual would be willing to pay (see <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/consumer-surplus.html>). This methodology points toward the objective reality of the hidden value of unpaid costs to consumers.

At a minimum, the value transfer is worth about \$4,000 annually to the average core household. Surprisingly, the imperial project

invented and administered by the core transnational capitalist class benefits the core population more than the capitalists. The undercosted peripheral hours remain embedded in the purchased product. If dark value were fully costed, profits would be diminished and/or the prices of commodities would be increased. The vast majority of core citizens, including most of the working class, depend upon imperialism to acquire much of their affluence through the structural transmission of value from the periphery.

### **Global value transfer and the aristocracy of labour**

This is the story of the hidden surplus that capitalist imperialism drains from its peripheries to benefit its core capitalists and consumers. Since the beginning of capitalism, the essence of imperialism has been the capture of value and its transfer across space. Both logic and evidence point to the benefits of lower costs that are transmitted from the point of origin to the place of their realisation. This capture of surplus is grounded in transfers derived from the extraordinary differences in labour costs between periphery and core, and the transferred value is significant.

Most of this transfer would not occur in a world economy that was purely competitive. In such a system, the capitalist who captured the lower price of production would also capture the benefit in the form of higher profit. In reality, core buyers of peripheral products receive the captured value of cheap labour. This transfer of value is based on the monopsonistic power of a few core firms to push down the prices, wages and profits that can be attained by the many peripheral firms in a highly competitive context. In this monopsonistic relationship, those peripheral capitalists act as underpaid subordinates who slash export production costs, especially labour.

The core-periphery structure of global value transfer is the essence of imperialism. The differential wage component of global value transfer is based on the idea that two classes of labourers, working under similar conditions, produce commodities of equal market value. The difference in surplus value produced by the cheaper labour class may be considered as dark value derived from underpayment. Concealed in periphery to core



exports, this dark value approximates the bright value of trade prices. Since dark value is extra surplus expropriated through underpayment of labour costs, much of it is readily transformed into bright value of imperial rent.

However, cheap labour could not be as cheap without that deeper level of dark value expropriated from even cheaper workers who reproduce labour power through unpaid or ultra-cheap inputs from households and the informal sector. This hidden labour is embedded in the production of all surplus, and it is concealed in all commodities. When we take its value in labour time into account, the size of the global value transfer from periphery to core roughly doubles. Surprisingly, capitalists do not capture all the dark value obtained from the various forms of cheap peripheral labour involved in periphery to core exports. Most of the dark value is captured by core consumers because capitalists utilise it to reduce prices. This consumer surplus is value beyond price and it is part of the imperial rent. Its value is greater than that captured by core capitalists.

World capitalism is a system that delivers the goods to its core population at the expense of the world majority. Since capitalists transfer part of their dark value surpluses to them, most of the core working class becomes a consumerist aristocracy of labour (Brown 2013; Communist Working Group 1986). (This viewpoint is an expansion of the 'aristocracy of labour' thesis of Lenin [1964: vol. 23, 105–120] that is found in Amin [1974]. For overviews of the aristocracy of labour debates, see Post [2010] and Cope [2013].) Cheap goods consumerism is now the driving force of the world economy. In the core, what was once Lenin's (1964: vol. 23, 105–120) small 'bribed' section of the working class has been transformed into a broad aristocracy of labour comprised of ordinary citizens who have little reason to oppose the imperialistic system from which they obtain rewards. Objectively, the majority of the Global South population should resist surplus drains. However, most (semi)peripheral elites, state leaders, emerging professional/managerial classes and middle classes benefit from the expropriation and export of dark value embedded in the imperialistic value transfer system. The workers who most need to unite are those of the (semi)periphery. They have nothing to lose but their commodity chains of global value transfer.

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countries while directing their development toward benefiting core countries. This has been seen across the world, even though imperial power has been exercised to varying degrees and under a wide range of circumstances. India, for example, was formally a part of the British Empire, while other countries, such as Egypt, were subjected to more indirect forms of imperial influence. Industrialisation, or the lack thereof, under imperial rule has been examined by recent research employing empirical evidence, quantitative analyses, and theoretical advances. Bringing this work together allows for a more complete analysis of the complex interactions between industrialisation and imperialism. Imperial influences have often stunted local industrialisation in the periphery, while promoting industry only to the extent that it benefited the base of imperial power. These trends are seen across countries, whether they were subjected to direct or indirect imperial rule.

Marxist scholars have identified three main phases through which the relationship between the countries at the centre and the periphery of the global economy has passed (Sutcliffe, 1972). These phases are: (1) when wealth was extracted from peripheral countries while manufactured goods were exported there from the centre; (2) when monopoly capitalism developed and the contradictions of capitalism compelled capital to flow from the centre to the periphery; and (3) the post-colonial phase when the growth of peripheral countries was repressed in order to secure the lead of the advanced capitalist countries (172). Much of the dependency theory and world-systems research in the 1970s focused on this third category (e.g. see Amin, 1977; Wallerstein 1979). Yet in order to appreciate the developments that took place in recent history, it is useful to have an understanding of the ways that imperialism and industrialisation were connected in the more distant past. Recent research has tended to move away from the broader scope of older theories of imperialism. Instead, more narrowly focused empirical studies highlight the complexity of the history of industrialisation and the relationship of this process to the influences of imperial power.

Recent research on long-run economic growth is also relevant for an analysis of the connections between industrialisation and imperialism. Much of this literature stems

## Industrialisation and Imperialism

There are many cases where imperialism has hindered industrialisation in peripheral

from the work of Acemoglu et al. (2001), who focus on how institutions shape economic growth. These researchers find that the institutions established by colonial-era European settlers overseas shaped countries' long-run economic growth trajectories. These authors also note, however, that institutions can be improved to promote economic growth, as in 1960s South Korea or the Meiji Restoration in Japan.

In a subsequent paper, Acemoglu et al. (2002) take urbanisation in 1500 as a proxy measure of economic prosperity, and find a negative correlation between economic prosperity in 1500 and 1995. Again, institutions are the main focus of their analysis. They argue that strong private property laws promote investment and economic growth. Other researchers, such as Ferguson (2003), make similar arguments about the importance of the protection of private property for shaping a country's development. Part of the analysis in Acemoglu et al. (2002) looks at the connections between industrialisation and economic growth. It finds that institutions that were conducive to industrialisation (e.g. through securing property rights) 'played a central role in the long-run development of the former colonies' (p. 1236). This vein of the literature offers examples of how theories connecting institutions to industrialisation, and to economic growth more broadly, can be studied empirically. Yet this empirical economics research suffers from the lack of a more nuanced historical analysis of how imperialism affected industrialisation. To this end, it is useful to look beyond the economics literature and to incorporate the insights of other disciplines into a broad-based analysis of industrialisation and imperialism.

Brenner (2006) asks 'What is, and what is not, imperialism?' For the purpose of exploring the connections between industrialisation and imperialism, a starting point is his identification of 'the classical capitalist imperialism of the years 1884–1945, which witnessed states' construction of ever larger imperial units that aimed to restrict the economic advantages made possible by formal and informal empires to their own national capitals' (87). The history of industrialisation, however, antedates Brenner's timeframe, and a comprehensive analysis of imperialism and industrialisation would extend at least as far back as the late 18th century, when Britain's industrial revolution

began. Also, industrialisation (and de-industrialisation) remains an important issue in the post-colonial era. Still, the focus of this analysis is the late 18th century through the early 20th century, when the major developments in the industrialisation of peripheral countries were shaped by the influence of imperial powers.

The distinction between direct and indirect imperial rule offers an analytical framework through which to view the development, or lack thereof, of industries in peripheral countries. Austin (2003) highlights how different terms have been used in the literature to describe the various degrees of an imperial power's involvement in peripheral countries. Gallagher and Robinson (1953) use the terms 'formal' and 'informal' imperialism, while dependency theorists make the distinction between 'colonial' and 'neo-colonial' influences. Austin offers a general definition of imperialism as 'foreign control of assets and decisions, including where such control exists in fact but not in law' (2003: 145). Robinson (1972), while employing a similar definition of imperialism, develops it further to account for local agency and the non-European foundations of European imperialism. It is with this range of degrees of imperial influence in mind that the terms 'direct' and 'indirect' imperialism are employed herein to discuss a range of cases in which imperial power was imposed in varying levels of directness. However, this analysis demonstrates that it is not essential to make these distinctions when analysing industrialisation under imperial influence. Whether under direct or indirect imperial rule, peripheral countries had their industrial development shaped by imperial power.

Previous researchers, such as Gallagher and Robinson, have made the distinction between various degrees of directness of imperial rule in order to highlight the observation that imperial power was exercised in areas beyond the formal confines of a given empire. In the case of the British Empire, '[f]or purposes of economic analysis it would clearly be unreal to define imperial history exclusively as the history of those colonies coloured red on the map' (Gallagher and Robinson 1953: 1). This is an important insight, and it is useful to adopt this broader conception of imperialism when analysing how industrialisation did or did not develop in countries under a range of types of imperial

influence. It is significant to note that imperialism had similar effects on industrialisation in peripheral countries even as the directness with which imperial power was imposed varied by country. Thus, the distinctions that appear throughout the literature on imperialism between direct and indirect power are useful in this analysis insofar as they allow the framework to extend beyond countries that were formally under imperial rule. Yet the distinction between levels of directness of imperial rule does not lead to a conclusion that industrialisation was impacted differently depending on the degree of imperial power that was exercised. On the contrary, industrialisation was shaped by imperial power, whether that power was imposed directly or indirectly.

While distinguishing between direct and indirect imperial rule, it is useful to examine the causal mechanisms through which imperialism affected industrialisation in peripheral countries. Channels of influence through which core countries impacted the industrialisation of peripheral countries include the drain of surplus from the periphery, trade policy imposed on the periphery, and support for agriculture at the expense of industry in the periphery. India and Egypt serve as case studies of how these processes hindered the industrialisation of peripheral countries under imperial rule.

India offers an example of industrialisation in a peripheral country under direct imperial rule. British economic interests and imperial ambitions in India can be dated from 1600, when the East India Company was given a Royal Charter (Riddick 2006). The Company moved from having more narrow economic goals to actively administering large regions of India after Robert Clive's victory at Plassey in 1757 (Riddick, 2006). How the British presence in India affected industrialisation has been a subject of much debate. One vein of the literature argues that it resulted in de-industrialisation as local manufacturing was undermined by the new division of labour (e.g. see Bagchi 1976; Harnetty 1991; Perlin 1983). Similarly, others argue that India's industrialisation was undercut by a general de-skilling of local labour under imperial influence (Headrick 1988). But recent research calls aspects of these claims into question. Roy (2009), for example, finds that for the Indian iron industry, 19th-century knowledge transfers were adopted

successfully by technically skilled Indian blacksmiths, while other aspects of the iron production process, such as iron-smelting, were laden with high-cost activities that hampered the benefits that knowledge transfers potentially offered in India. Similarly, Roy (2000) argues that traditional Indian industry was not completely destroyed by British imperialism, but rather that it adapted and some sectors were able to compete with modern industry. Specifically, Roy argues that 'other than textiles, there are almost no examples of significant competition [from imported goods] and technological obsolescence' (1444). Roy is thus critical of nationalist adherents of the de-industrialisation school of thought who, he argues, extrapolate from the example of the textile industry to the economy at large in their attempt to make imperial rule appear to have been a universal disaster for the Indian economy.

Still, the textile industry makes for an instructive study of how imperialism negatively impacted Indian industry. Patnaik identifies this process as taking place mainly during the 'second phase' of the colonial destruction of the pre-capitalist Indian economy (1972: 212). The first wave of this destruction was a 'drain of wealth' process led by the East India Company, but after the Napoleonic wars the destruction occurred as imported textiles out-competed urban handloom production and rural weaving industries. In the face of such widespread economic disruption, Patnaik argues that '[i]t is hardly surprising in these conditions that Indian industrial capital did not grow' (213). He goes on to build a case for attributing the lack of industrial development in India to the power that the British had in that country. This is tied to the directness of British rule in India, which was powerful enough to hamper industrialisation through 'discriminatory interventionism' in favour of British capital, along with British control of the banks. This made for significant constraints binding the growth of Indian industrial capital (213). Despite these factors restricting India's industrialisation, it is important to emphasise that British rule in India did not result in the total obliteration of Indian industry. Roy's studies suggest a more nuanced interpretation of the effect that imperialism had on Indian industry. While some Indian industries, namely textiles, were indeed ruined by imperial trade policies, this should be

interpreted as part of the broader 'commercialisation' of India's economy (Roy 2000).

There is no way to answer with certainty the question of how India would have industrialised had the British not had so much control over India's politics and economy. Eventually the British did act to encourage the development of Indian industry (as seen in the 1920s when protectionist policies were enacted in favour of infant industries) but these policies were implemented only because of pressure imposed by Indian nationalists (Austin 2003). However, the overall outcome of Britain's direct imperial control in India is associated with the underdevelopment of Indian industry. Pomeranz suggests that '[t]he British probably did not frustrate an industrial breakthrough [in India] that was otherwise highly likely ... but nineteenth-century changes may have made such a breakthrough even more difficult than it would have been otherwise' (2000: 295). Still, Pomeranz blames British policies in India for the 'development of [Indian] underdevelopment' (*ibid.*). This process was influenced, at least in part, by the fact that 'each act of [industrial] investment became an isolated episode, no more than a shift of some processes in the manufacturing chain from England to India' (Patnaik, 1972: 213). The key aspect of this argument is based on British political control and the restriction of Indian capital. Patnaik (1972) argues that this deprived India of benefiting from the positive linkage effects that evolve in environments where capital is able to be invested freely. And since 'British firms in India were outposts of Britain' and there was no desire to invest in high levels of training for Indian workers, British-promoted industries in India did not yield the full potential of positive externalities for the Indian economy (Mukerjee 1972: 209). Taking a long-term view, up through the present day, leads to a characterisation of this process as being 'the transformation of traditional economies into modern underdeveloped ones' (Headrick 1988: 4).

India, as the 'Jewel in the Crown' of the British Empire, is a prominent example of how direct imperial rule shaped the path of industrialisation in a peripheral country. Areas subject to indirect imperial rule during the last quarter of the past millennium also had their industrialisation impacted by imperial powers. Egypt, for example, was occupied by the British, who proceeded to shape industrial policy there. China offers another

example of a country where imperial powers influenced political and economic developments even less directly. Several European countries, including the British in Hong Kong and the Portuguese in Macau, had coastal outposts in China, but only directly exercised their power inland during active military campaigns. Imperialism in these cases influenced the development trajectory that local industries followed, even though the imperial influence was less direct and lasted for a shorter period of time than in the Indian case.

The British presence in India lasted for nearly three-and-a-half centuries, but the British only entered Egypt in the late 19th century. This is not to say that there was no British presence in Egypt before then; European capital was so heavily invested in Egypt that when the Egyptian state became bankrupt and unstable in the early 1880s, the British felt compelled to invade it in order to secure their interests there (Davis 1983; Moon 1972). To safeguard their interests in Egypt, the British invaded in 1882 and began four decades of formal occupation. They soon found themselves in a position where they had to stay in Egypt to stabilise the country through managing its debts, and to prevent the Ottomans and French from regaining more influence there (Cain and Hopkins 2002; Davis 1983). To work toward paying down Egypt's debt, the British promoted the widespread cultivation of cotton for export. A contemporary observer noted that British occupation 'transformed the entire Nile Basin into a gigantic cotton plantation' (Salama Musa, quoted in Davis 1983: 45). This led to far-reaching changes in Egypt, which influenced the direction of its industrial development.

While the British occupation of Egypt was directed toward getting Egypt to pay down its debt, it also made Egypt a more attractive destination for foreign investment (Davis 1983). Most of this foreign investment went into agriculture (Beinen and Lockman 1987). This happened either directly or indirectly. 'Foreigners directly invested their capital in land companies, established mortgage and credit companies and banks, and gained control of the import and export trade. European banking houses also lent vast sums of money to the Egyptian state, which used most of it to develop the country's infrastructure – irrigation, railroads, port facilities – in order to facilitate the cultivation and export of

cotton' (Beinin and Lockman 1987: 8–9). While these developments directed the course of early industrial development in Egypt, they did not result in widespread industrialisation, as they were narrowly focused on the particular goal of promoting the cultivation of cotton for export. As in India, however, there is more to this story than a simple case of the complete hindering of industrialisation in Egypt. As Beinin and Lockman note, '[d]espite the contention of some proponents of dependency theory ... the subordination of Egypt's economy to the dictates of metropolitan capital did not permanently preclude industrial development' in Egypt (1987: 10). Egypt eventually developed a broader industrial base in the post-First World War era (Beinin and Lockman 1987; Radwan 1974).

The initial phase of industrial development in late 19th-century Egypt was based on cotton production. As the Egyptian countryside was positioned toward large-scale cotton cultivation for export, industrial development in Egypt also began to be shaped by these same forces. The development of large estates for producing cotton as a cash crop led to the increased mechanisation of agriculture and the promotion of industries related to preparing cotton for export (Alleaume 1999). Some of this development took the form of improved transportation and communications infrastructure (Davis 1983). Irrigation projects were another significant outcome of the increased cotton production, as pumping stations and irrigation and drainage networks had to be built to supply water for the cotton plantations. The Egyptian government and large landowners relied on British capital for these investments. By directing foreign capital toward developing the infrastructure needed for large-scale cotton production, these forces resulted in the Egyptian economy being centred on primary commodity production rather than manufacturing. Under the British occupation of Egypt it was argued that 'it was to the benefit of both Britain and Egypt that the former should engage in manufacturing while the latter confined itself to the production of agricultural raw materials' (Barbour 1972: 54). The development of this centre-periphery relationship suggests the stymying of Egyptian industrialisation under imperial rule. But, as mentioned above, this relationship does not describe the entire history of Egyptian industry, as local institutions such as Bank Misr promoted the broader industrialisation of

Egypt after the First World War (Beinin and Lockman 1987; Davis 1983). Nonetheless, imperial power initially promoted industry in Egypt to serve British interests, and this shaped the structure of industry in Egypt.

Egypt offers an example of how industrialisation was directed along a path to underdevelopment under less-than-direct imperial rule. Egypt was free from direct European rule for the first three-quarters of the 19th century, and then was under British occupation (without formally being part of the British Empire) from 1882 through the end of the First World War. Initially, industry failed to develop in Egypt, unless it was for the processing of cotton for export. Limited industrial development did occur in Egypt, then, along with the state bureaucracy that was needed to co-ordinate irrigation projects and improved means of communication to facilitate the expansion of cotton production. These changes to the Egyptian economy and state laid the foundation for the industrialisation that did eventually take place in Egypt (Davis 1983). Davis, following this line of reasoning, argues that 'foreign capital [in Egypt] established the prerequisite for native industrialization by providing capital accumulation for the large landowners, facilitating national integration among sectors of the upper class, creating a stratum of skilled managerial personnel and familiarizing certain landowning families with the techniques of capitalist enterprise' (1983: 195). In Egypt, as in India, imperialism directed industrialisation along a certain path; one that served the interests of the imperial power overseeing the running of these economies. Yet imperial rule also led to the development of state bureaucracies and capitalistic local elites, which proved to be important for later industrialisation in these peripheral countries.

Whether a country was directly or indirectly subjected to imperial rule, industrial development was still shaped to suit imperial interests. British manufacturing and financial interests in India and Egypt offer examples of these processes. In his broader study of economic imperialism, Austin reaches the same general conclusion: 'At an imperial level, colonies were expected to specialize in the production of primary commodities, and their administrations rarely did much to promote manufacturing' (2003: 151). Yet there were cases where industrial development did occur under imperial rule, and not just in the

settler colonies (for an analysis of the role that British capital played in the development of the US, Australian, and Canadian economies during the 'age of high imperialism', see Edelstein 1982).

To bring these exceptions from the trend of under-industrialisation into this analysis requires the study of other, non-British, imperial powers. North Vietnam, beginning in 1894, and the Dutch East Indies, starting in the 1930s, each saw limited industrialisation led by textile production. Protectionist policies were an important part of these developments, and it is also important to note that these industries were owned by outside powers: French in the Vietnamese case, and various European, Chinese, and US owners in the Dutch East Indies (Austin 2003). Industrialisation in Korea was also shaped by an imperial power, as Korea developed heavy industry while under Japanese rule (Kohli 1994). This process was shaped by the colonial institutions put in place by the Japanese in Korea, as well as by Japan's goal to develop Korea in order to support the military strength of the Japanese Empire. So industrialisation was not impossible to achieve for peripheral countries under imperial rule, but it only occurred in isolated cases and when it suited the interests of the imperial powers; whether to support imperial business owners in Vietnam and the Dutch East Indies, or to strengthen the military power of imperial Japan.

Imperialism affected industrialisation through myriad and complex channels. The main outcome of this relationship was the shaping of the industrialisation processes by imperial power. Whether in India, where the British presence influenced policies for centuries, or in Egypt, where the formal British occupation lasted for only four decades, industries were developed to serve the imperialists' interests. As under-developed countries today continue to suffer lower levels of economic performance than the former imperial powers, the impact of imperialism on industrialisation remains an important historical factor for understanding contemporary global inequality.

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#### Acknowledgements

I thank Carol Heim and participants at the 2013 New School—University of Massachusetts

Graduate Workshop in Economics for helpful comments. The usual disclaimer applies.

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## J. A. Hobson and Economic Imperialism

In 1902, John Atkinson Hobson (1858–1940), published *Imperialism: A Study*. In this, his most famous work, he argued that there was a systemic mal-distribution of income and of wealth in advanced capitalist societies that led, on the one side, to under-consumption by the masses; on the other, to over-saving by the few rich. He went on to claim that, unable to find profitable markets at home, this over-saving was translated into investments in overseas markets and had been, amongst other things, the primary motivation behind Britain's recent imperial expansion in Africa and Asia. This is undoubtedly Hobson's most famous anti-imperial argument but two cautions are necessary. In the first place, *Imperialism* offered far more than just a bald theory of economic imperialism and was actually a brilliant critique of many aspects of British imperial ideas and practice. Second, although the fullest and most compelling of his works on empire and imperialism, Hobson lived a long life and changed his mind on the subject on more than one occasion.

### Hobson's early writings

Hobson was the son of a provincial newspaper owner who supported the Liberal orthodoxy of free trade, low taxation, and a very limited role for government in the economy. Hobson did not initially think differently. After taking a disappointing degree at Oxford, he became a schoolmaster in Exeter. In the mid-1880s, he moved to London where he wrote a weekly column for his father's

paper on national and international affairs, and then began to contribute to the periodical press. In the late 1880s he approved of British 'free trade imperialism' in China as a means of encouraging exports: and when alerted by Charles Booth's survey of the London masses to the dire poverty of so many of them, his first reaction was to fear that their position would be made worse by the looming industrialisation of Asia under Western auspices; that inclined him to hint that protection was a solution (Hobson 1891). Also, when Joseph Chamberlain, a leading imperialist politician, suggested in 1896 the establishment of an imperial Zollverein which would put a tariff barrier around the white empire, Hobson was quite supportive of the idea.

However, by the mid-1890s, his views on the economy were changing swiftly. In 1889 he and A.F. Mummery produced *The Physiology of Industry* which challenged the orthodox notion that full employment was the norm towards which free markets were constantly tending. At first this theoretical revolution had little impact on Hobson's policy views: but, partly under the influence of radicals such as William Clarke, by 1896, in *The Problem of the Unemployed*, he was claiming that inequality was producing under-consumption and over-saving; and that they could only be corrected by redistribution of income and of wealth (for the development of Hobson's thinking, see Allett 1981). At the same time, Hobson's rather complacent approach to British imperialism was shaken by the financier Cecil Rhodes's failed attempt to overthrow the Afrikaner government in the Transvaal. That was widely seen on the left of politics in Britain as a prime example of an emergent 'financial imperialism'. But it was only in an article of 1898 that Hobson finally linked domestic economic imbalance with expansion of empire (Hobson 1898). On the strength of that article, Hobson was sent to South Africa by the *Manchester Guardian* to investigate the growing crisis there as Joseph Chamberlain tried to force the Afrikaner republics, whose gold wealth threatened to make them the dominant force in South Africa, to recognise British authority. That confrontation ended in the South African War of 1899–1902. His trip convinced Hobson that Rhodes and other gold magnates had used the British government for their own ends and that, through control of the press, had fooled the public, in South Africa and in

Britain, into believing that the war was fought for noble ends rather than to fill the pockets of mining millionaires. Much of his thinking on South Africa was published in *The War in South Africa* (1900) and *The Psychology of Jingoism* (1901). *Imperialism: A Study* went much further and was nothing less than an attempt to explain the nature of modern imperialism in general.

### Hobson and the radical tradition

Because Lenin found *Imperialism* useful in constructing his own interpretation of European expansion overseas, historians have often talked of a 'Hobson-Lenin' theory of imperialism. In fact, Hobson's approach owed nothing to Marxism but did reflect a long radical tradition of hostility to imperial expansion which can be traced back as far as Adam Smith and Tom Paine. Radicals were supportive of capitalism: what they objected to was privilege and monopoly; and, of course, they identified the landed interest as the chief example of that. Radicals such as Paine, Bentham, and James Mill also pointed to aristocratic control of the state across Europe and aristocrats' use of government to fight wars and grab colonial possessions with which they could enrich themselves and their allies in the military services and business. Richard Cobden and John Bright, two of Hobson's radical heroes, took up the fight in the mid-19th century, attacking land monopoly, demanding an end to protective duties on agriculture as a form of privilege, claiming that taxes were damaging industrial investment and that their proceeds were too often spent on wars and colonialism that produced jobs for the aristocracy's allies. Herbert Spencer, an enthusiastic Cobdenite whose work Hobson became familiar with, divided the world into 'militant' societies that were aristocratic, hierarchical, warlike, and imperialist; and 'industrial' societies that were based on voluntary co-operation, were economically progressive, and which forged peaceful links with other nations (for more detail on radicalism, see Cain 2002: 47–53).

Once radicalised, Hobson eagerly adopted the Cobden-Spencer line on imperial expansion but he made two great innovations to it. Firstly, he recognised that by 1900 the power of aristocracy had waned and he suggested that it had been superseded, as the chief force maintaining the status quo at home and

driving expansion abroad, by finance and foreign investment: 'militant' society still existed but it was now itself subject to the powers of 'parasitism', a complex of forces centred on the City of London but also now rampant on Wall Street in New York and on the Paris Bourse. Secondly, he linked this financial imperialism directly with his analysis of under-consumption, thus arguing forcefully that the remedies necessary to cure the latter ailment – such as more progressive taxation – would simultaneously remove the pressure for overseas expansion and thus solve the imperial problem that plagued all advanced capitalist societies.

### **Imperialism: Hobson's analysis**

In *Imperialism*, Hobson was right to identify London and the service sector of the South East of England as the area from which most foreign investment sprang, and in suggesting that it had a big economic stake in imperial expansion. His assumption that foreign investment was largely the concern of a small, wealthy elite also has historical credibility. However, Hobson's attempts to analyse the costs and benefits of imperialism statistically were severely flawed. To begin with, he over-estimated the costs of imperial expansion after 1870. He assumed that all increases in defence expenditure since that time could be debited to imperial expansion, whereas only a part of the army costs and a smaller fraction of the naval expenses were so attributable.

Nor did Hobson make a good job of proving his contention that finance gained far more in material terms than any other economic sector and that it was the only sector that gained more than it paid out in terms of the taxes needed to support imperial expansion. In pursuit of this objective, Hobson tried to prove that industry gained very little from the new markets of Africa and Asia. However, he reached this conclusion by using very contentious methods. When estimating the value of exports to the economy, he claimed that this value arose from the extra profit that was gained by selling abroad rather than at home. This 'net value' approach to foreign trade was even challenged by some sympathetic to his general position. Given that the costs of imperial expansion were lower than Hobson believed, those critics who had a rather more generous view of the importance of foreign trade to the economy could make

a reasonable case for saying that new territories were beneficial to industrial exports. Moreover, Hobson failed to engage seriously with the argument that the value of new territories to the economy would be much greater in the future once imperialist control had been fully established.

Hobson also assumed that the returns on foreign investment were much higher than those on foreign trade but, in doing so, he failed to compare like with like. As we have seen, he valued foreign trade in net terms but he then went on to compare that with the gross returns on foreign investment, ignoring the possibility that the capital could have found outlets at home, albeit at lower rates of return. Hobson, therefore failed to prove that the returns to investment from imperialism were higher than the returns on trade. In addition, it must be said that he compounded the difficulties of his position by failing to say anything precise about the distribution of British foreign investment. He produced figures which proved that more foreign capital went to areas such as the US and the white British colonies than to areas subject to recent imperial exploitation; but he said little to indicate, for example, which parts of Africa had received large amounts of capital and which had not. His argument that Cecil Rhodes and his financial associates were directly responsible for Britain's imperial aggression in South Africa was asserted rather than proved.

Hobson's other main line of argument was that finance, or rather financial elites in the City of London, controlled the political and military process of expansion. More specifically Hobson identified a cluster of mainly Jewish financiers, operating from the City of London and a number of lesser financial centres, as controllers of the main flows of international capital. In a famous passage he argued that the 'motor power' of imperial expansion was provided by soldiers, traders, missionaries, statesmen: but that finance was the 'governor of the imperial engine, directing its energy and determining its work' (Hobson 1988/1902: 59).

Elsewhere in *Imperialism*, however, Hobson unconsciously subverted his simple argument about the dominance of finance in different ways. He was trying to generalise about the whole Western world rather than just explain British imperialism; and when writing of the US, where the relations between finance and manufacturing were different to

those in Britain, he spoke of 'the great controllers of industry' as key players. When he was thinking about imperial expansion from a British point of view, Hobson was inclined to present it as the result of a conspiracy engineered by a small group of financiers who had an exceptional degree of power and influence: when considering the US, on the other hand, he was really attributing expansion to 'finance capitalism', a conjunction of industrial and financial interests described in terms that Veblen, Hilferding, or Lenin would have recognised.

He also developed another argument concerning the complicity of a congeries of propertied interests in British imperial expansion which, interesting though it was, undermined the argument that finance was 'the governor of the imperial engine'. At this point he claimed the following:

The city ground landlord, the country squire, the banker, the usurer, the financier, the brewer, the mine-owner, the iron-master, the shipbuilder, and the shipping trade, the great export manufacturers and merchants, the clergy of the State Church, the universities and the great public schools, the legal trade unions and the services have ... drawn together for common political resistance against attacks upon the power, the property and the privileges that they represent. (142)

Hobson was here describing what Gramsci later called an 'historical bloc' of forces that exercised cultural as well as economic 'hegemony' over the nation and which used imperialism as a means of maintaining the status quo at home. But it is noticeable that in Hobson's list of villains, the financier is accorded no special place.

Lastly, it is evident that Hobson believed the extraordinary influence of financial interests came partly from the fact that they encouraged imperial fervour and even presented expansion as a moral duty, while remaining immune from any emotional commitment to empire and clinically intent on pursuing their economic agenda. Financiers pursued rational economic goals: all other interests involved were irrational, uninformed, or deluded. Hobson's discussion of the wide variety of arguments used to justify imperialism and imperial expansion was often brilliant and arresting. He was also

extraordinarily sensitive to the ways that imperialists could cloak essentially materialist concerns – and the violence and exploitation that sometimes involved – in the language of morality, mission, liberty and destiny. Yet in the process he often showed that the financiers were also prisoners of imperial ideology, that they could be as much wedded to causes like 'the civilising mission', as much misled by heightened imperial rhetoric, as anyone else.

### Hobson on China and Africa

Much of the emotional force behind the arguments of Imperialism came from Hobson's involvement in South Africa. Yet when in 1898 he first discovered the connection between over-saving and imperialism, his immediate inspiration came from thinking about the growing battle for control of China between the European imperial powers. A careful reading of *Imperialism* reveals clearly what Norman Etherington (1984: chs 3–4) has argued: that Hobson thought of the South African crisis as an early stage in the unfolding drama of imperialism, a drama whose central scenes would be acted out in China, the place where the future course of civilisation would be determined. Like many of his contemporaries not only in Britain but also across Europe and the US, Hobson was sure that China's population and resources were so immense that the manner of their development would radically affect the political as well as the economic structures of the globe in the 20th century. Some British and American writers argued that the powers that controlled China and its market would be pre-eminent for the foreseeable future, and that that those who failed to establish themselves would be depressed into the second rank. Certainly, this fear of being left out of what was potentially the greatest market in the world was a potent force in Great Power diplomacy in China around 1900. But opinion in Britain and other imperial powers was also strongly influenced by a more complex vision of a 'Yellow Peril'. In his *National Life and Character*, first published in 1893, Charles Pearson predicted that China, like Japan, was rapidly learning the economic arts of the West, would soon industrialise itself on modern lines and then become a formidable military power. Western civilisation would be thrust back to its pre-imperialist borders. European powers would be impelled into greater

militarism to protect themselves, and into heavier tariffs to contain Chinese competition, stifling the dynamism that had driven Western civilisation for the previous four centuries, and inducing both economic and cultural stagnation and possibly outright decline.

As we have seen, Hobson had anticipated Pearson's predictions about industrial decline in Europe in 1891 though he believed that China could only industrialise under European control. In 1902, Hobson still did not think that China could achieve autonomous economic development: it would, he thought, become such a sink for foreign capital that no one country could command the resources necessary to the task. The outcome would be what Hobson called 'inter-imperialism' (1988/1902: 332), a combination of European, American, and Japanese capital resources which would ensure the exploitation of China over the coming generations without military conflict. Based on Western capital and on an abundance of cheap, highly submissive labour, the Chinese economy would be brutally transformed into the mightiest manufacturing nation in the world. As a result, industry in the West would be largely destroyed and its economies would become dependent on services and dominated by financial capitalism. True to his radical perspective, Hobson claimed that the decline of industry in the West would involve far more than simply a loss of economic resources: it would also mean the extinction of liberty, democracy, and progress in general; and Britain, like other Western nations, would become parasitic on the progress of Asia.

Despite the fierceness of his critique of expansion, Hobson shared some of the prejudices of the imperialists he criticised. The first was that no nation or community had the right to cut itself off from international trade and the progressive ideas that such trade brought with it. Secondly, he accepted the common Western assumption that the ancient civilisations of the East had ceased to progress and that they had needed an infusion of the West's energy to awaken them, though he felt that the stimulus given by trade and other informal contact was all that was now required to galvanise them. Besides that, Hobson was convinced that the 'mushroom civilisations of the West' (1988/1902: 326) had much they could learn from the East. Thirdly and in contrast, Hobson, like most of his contemporaries, failed to appreciate the richness of the

African past and talked of 'lower races' (see the heading of pt II, ch. 4 in *Imperialism*) who could only progress under direct Western leadership because otherwise the local populations would be exploited by European capitalism. But given his belief that current Western governments were in thrall to their business leaders, Hobson argued that, in an ideal world, leadership would be provided by some form of international authority rather than by particular European nations. It was in this context that he first became a vigorous supporter of the idea of international government, and of the League of Nations formed after the First World War, which established the idea, in theory at least, that European nations held their colonial dependencies as mandates granted by the League.

### ***Imperialism and Hobson's later writings***

In 1902, Hobson painted a black picture of the future partly because he wanted to shock his readers into realising where present policies might lead and to stimulate action against them. His own solution was simple and drastic. Progressive taxation and state welfare spending would eliminate over-saving and, therefore, the main source of foreign investment, and thus reduce the need for imperial expansion. Simultaneously, redistribution would give a boost to domestic demand and divert to the home market a large part of the produce previously destined for export. The implication of that analysis was that, under this new regime and despite free trade, he expected that the amount of international trade would decline. Economic development in the West would then proceed on lines dictated by local democracy rather than by an international financial oligarchy; and those countries like China that were subject to forced industrialisation under foreign control would be released to develop in ways that best suited their own genius. 'Industry', understood in the broad sense as all forms of productive activity, would triumph over 'parasitism'.

*Imperialism* is now a 'classic' text but it was not a great success when first published and even some radicals who were impressed by Hobson's domestic arguments thought of empire and imperial expansion as both economically necessary and morally defensible (see e.g. Samuel 1902: 301–325). Although the book was republished in 1905, this was

only made possible by a subsidy from a radical organisation. Indeed, from 1910–14, Hobson had drifted far from the arguments of *Imperialism* and was now writing of European expansion overseas as a phase in the extension of a benign, global capitalist network and one that would eventually lead to an economic convergence between the developed and underdeveloped worlds, to global peace and to some form of world government. This strain in Hobson's thinking is most evident in *The Economic Interpretation of Investment* (1911). After 1914, and in the face of world war and then acute economic depression, Hobson drew away from that pre-war optimism. His book *Democracy after the War* (1917) repeated many of the arguments of *Imperialism* and extended some of them. His inter-war writings on imperialism were a sometimes uneasy compromise between the stern denunciations of *Imperialism* and *Democracy after the War* and the rather Panglossian assumptions of 1910–14.

In 1938, aged 80, Hobson decided to republish *Imperialism*. By the late 1930s, middle-class public opinion in Britain was becoming much more critical of empire and imperialism. Under growing Marxist influence, there was also an increasing tendency to offer economic interpretations of imperial expansion and control, and writers such as John Strachey (1938: 85–89) and Leonard Barnes (1939: 195) began to think of Hobson's work as a precursor of Marxism. Encouraged by the new interest and convinced that the approaching war was about re-dividing the imperial spoils, Hobson decided that his ancient text was worth reprinting. But in republishing it, and despite adding a new long preface, he did not attempt to update the argument. Nor did he give any indication that he had ever held different views. His autobiography *Confessions of an Economic Heretic* (1938), published in the same year, suffered from the same degree of amnesia. However, in that autobiography Hobson did confess that he now thought that the stress laid on economic causation in *Imperialism* was overdone (Hobson 1938: 63–64); and he now admitted that economic gains should also be seen as a means of exercising power rather than simply as an end in themselves (especially in Hobson 1937: 13–14, 24). This line of thinking was probably influenced by his reading of Thorstein Veblen but it was not mentioned in the preface to the 1938 edition of *Imperialism*

and thus it fell out of view, along with most of the other ideas he had had on the subject before and after 1902.

### Hobson's significance

Hobson's analysis has often been found wanting by historians and economists both in general terms and in specific cases. Nonetheless, a recent analysis by Cain suggests that he still has a lot to offer historians interested in the economic elements of the scramble for territory and influence in Africa and Asia in his own time (2002: ch. 8). Speaking more generally, *Imperialism* remains a book worth reading because the questions it poses about the role of foreign investment in provoking imperial expansion remain on the agenda: for example, Hobson's ideas were important to Cain and Hopkins in helping them recently to reinterpret the evolution of British imperialism (Cain and Hopkins 2001). It is also true that books like Naomi Klein's *No Logo* (2000), which analyses modern US imperialism, approach their subject from a radical rather than a Marxist perspective and one that is recognisably Hobsonian though Klein might not be aware of it. *Imperialism* also has extremely interesting things to say about the politics, the psychology and even the theology that lay behind imperial expansion in its time, and its commentary on the ideological foundations of the so-called 'civilising mission' are extraordinarily acute. Indeed, some of Hobson's analysis could be applied to empires throughout history. He was, for example, aware – in a way most of his contemporaries, including other critics of empire were not – of just how easy it was for Britons to assume that the possession of military and economic power not only gave their nation the ability to possess empire but also the right to possess it because it was assumed that the material power was the result of a moral superiority. That was an insight that can be applied to empires from the Assyrian one to the current Chinese hold over Tibet.

If Part I of *Imperialism*, which deals with the economics of empire, is full of errors as well as inspirational ideas, Part II probably deserves a bigger audience from historians than it has so far received. *Imperialism; a Study* may have been published over a century ago but it is still a living text rather than just another item in the historiography of empires.

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## Labour, Imperialism, and Globalisation

I was in the East End of London (a working-class quarter) yesterday and attended

a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for ‘bread! bread!’ and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism .... My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists. (Cecil Rhodes, 1895, quoted in Lenin 1960/1916, 694)

This essay begins by introducing several influential theories of imperialism and examining how these relate to the segmentation and stratification of the working class. The second section looks at the new international division of labour to understand the growth and radicalisation of unequal exchange and capital export imperialism. The third section provides empirical estimates of international value transfer. The conclusion of the essay highlights some of the most salient political effects of imperialist class structuration and considers the prospects for anti-imperialist trends on the world scale. The essay aims to demonstrate that imperialism is not a matter of history, but a primary factor influencing the course of events in today’s world.

### Classical theories of imperialism and the labour aristocracy

The following section introduces the theory of imperialism and its relationship to the concept of the labour aristocracy, that section of the working class which benefits materially from imperialism and the super-exploitation of oppressed-nation workers (Cope 2012: 122). In particular, we outline the views of some of the most important writers on the subject, namely, Hobson, Lenin, Amin, and Emmanuel.

**Hobson**

Hobson was a British economist whose foundational experience was the Great Depression of the late 1800s. Proposing an explanation for the same, Hobson developed a theory of under-consumption that as capitalism developed there would be insufficient demand for its manufactures. Hobson’s views on

under-consumption were first set out in his *Physiology of Industry*, a work that won him the ostracism of the academic economists of his day. The second key experience in his career was the time he spent in South Africa as a correspondent during the Boer War. Hobson properly viewed that war as resulting from a tension between the mining interests of supporters of imperialism (like Cecil Rhodes) and the farming interests of Boer settlers (Hobson 1900: 197).

In light of these experiences, Hobson suggested that British capital (personified by Rhodes himself) was behind the drive for expansion of the British Empire. He concluded that imperialism was a characteristic of late capitalist development where capital was more productively invested outside of Britain:

It is open to imperialists to argue thus: 'We must have markets for our growing manufactures, we must have new outlets for the investment of our surplus capital and for the energies of the adventurous surplus of our population: such expansion is a necessity of life to a nation with our great and growing powers of production. An ever larger share of our population is devoted to the manufactures and commerce of towns, and is thus dependent for life and work upon food and raw materials from foreign lands. In order to buy and pay for these things we must sell our goods abroad'. (Hobson 2005: 70–71)

Rivalry with other imperial powers was one of the key economic facts that helped bring about this situation. For Hobson, the erosion of British industrial supremacy resulting from competition with Germany, the US and Belgium made it difficult to 'dispose of the full surplus of our manufactures at a profit' (71). In Hobson's view, a specific type of capitalist, investors, was behind the drive to imperialism. Hobson noted that '[large] savings are made which cannot find any profitable investment in this country; they must find employment elsewhere, and it is to the advantage of the nation that they should be employed as largely as possible in lands where they can be utilized in opening up markets for British trade and employment for British enterprise' (73).

Hobson believed that imperialism would result in a situation whereby entire regions of the world would become parasitic upon the labour and resources of colonial territories. Discussing the economic prospects liable to

result from the imperialist partitioning of China, Hobson writes:

The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the South of England, in the Riviera and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a larger body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods; all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa .... (314)

### Lenin

The principal motivation for Lenin to develop his analysis of imperialism was the outbreak of the First World War and the associated breakdown of international socialist solidarity.

In Lenin's theory there are five key components:

- (1) the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; (2) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation on the basis of this 'finance capital', of a financial oligarchy; (3) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; (4) the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves; and (5) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed. (Lenin 1960/1916, 700)

Lenin's theory of imperialism develops the idea of parasitism, denoting a situation whereby the imperialist countries are transformed into rentier states:

The export of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still more completely isolates the rentiers from production and sets the seal of



parasitism on the whole country that lives by exploiting the labour of several overseas countries and colonies. (ibid.)

For Lenin, investors export capital to obtain 'superprofits', higher profits than are available within their own countries due to lower wages (super-exploitation), cheap raw materials and the ability to secure a monopoly.

Lenin argued that the source of imperialism was investment rather than trade. Citing Hobson, Lenin noted that '[the] income of the rentiers is five times greater than the income obtained from the foreign trade of the biggest "trading" country in the world! This is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism' (ibid.). In its original form, Lenin's investment-focused theory of imperialism can be seen as being in tension with later theories of unequal exchange emphasising the role of trade.

In Lenin's theory, one of the most important consequences of imperialism was its impact on the class structure of the imperialist countries. Lenin argued that the benefits of imperialism would not be restricted to capitalists, but would instead be spread to other classes in imperialist societies, including the working class. There is contention within Marxist theory and ambiguity within Lenin's writings about the extent to which the working class are 'bribed', both in terms of the percentage of the working class thus endowed, and the sum of the subvention. However, Lenin settled upon a broad conception of the labour aristocracy as encompassing much of the working class of the imperialist countries:

Why does England's monopoly [industrial and colonial] explain the (temporary) victory of opportunism in England? Because monopoly yields superprofits [the] capitalists can devote a part (and not a small one, at that!) of these superprofits to bribe their own workers, to create something like an alliance between the workers of the given nation and their capitalists against the other countries. (ibid.)

Lenin's thinking on imperialism and the labour aristocracy rests on several pillars. First, he emphasises the role of monopoly capitalism, a theme that would later be carried forward by theorists such as Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy in the US. Secondly, he focuses on capital export to assure super-profits. Finally,

Lenin argues, imperialist states attempt to buy off the domestic workforce to avoid the possibility of revolutionary change. As will be seen in the subsequent discussion of unequal exchange, there are theories of imperialism that presume neither the existence of monopoly capital, the export of capital, nor of any conscious decision by capitalists to bribe the working class on their home soil.

### Amin

The majority of Amin's work has been about imperialism, unequal exchange, and what he calls the law of worldwide value. Amin's position is influenced by the tradition of Baran, Sweezy, and Magdoff in that the motive forces driving imperialism are monopolies (Brolin 2007: 243). It therefore contrasts with Emmanuel's perspective, which places the wages and living standards of imperialist-country workers front and centre of his theory of unequal exchange.

Amin's concept of imperialist rent – the above-average profits realised through imperialism – is central to understanding the ways wealthy countries extort value from the Third World. For Amin, the appropriation of imperialist rent defines capitalism from the moment of its inception (84). Capitalism has not homogenised the world's economic conditions over time, but has instead hardened and deepened the asymmetries between imperialist countries and the peripheries.

In the most recent edition of his *The Law of Worldwide Value*, Amin has been more open about the role of imperialist-country workers as beneficiaries of imperialism and the impact this has on workers' internationalism (Amin 2010: 91–93). While not using the term 'labour aristocracy', he is clear that the exploitation of the peripheries is the material basis upon which the consensus between imperialist capital and imperialist-country workers rests. For Amin, however, '[the] Southern nations by their victories would create conditions in the North that would once again challenge the consensus founded on profits deriving from imperialist rent. The advance posts of the Northern peoples are dependent on defeat of the imperialist states in their confrontation with the Southern nations' (111).

By contrast with Emmanuel, who was more forthright than most Marxists about class antagonism between imperialist-country workers and workers in the Third World,

Amin has typically been softer on this question. Brolin, for instance, suggests that '[the] popularity of Samir Amin ... is largely explained not only by his attempting to place unequal exchange in a perspective where productivity differences matter more, but also ... by the theoretical vagueness on this point, and by his drawing the politically correct conclusion' (Brolin 2007: 243).

### Emmanuel

Emmanuel's theory places trade at the centre of imperialism. The basic premise of Emmanuel's *Unequal Exchange* (1972) is that the relative mobility of capital and the relative immobility of labour are fundamental features of the world economy. As a result, the international rate of profit has a tendency to become equal, whereas wage levels in different countries remain unequal. For Emmanuel, differences in wages explain differences in commodity prices. With immobility of labour undergirding international wage and, therefore, price differentials, Emmanuel explains national wage levels as the product of a number of factors which are primarily institutional.

Emmanuel, following Marx, considered that the value of labour power went beyond the minimum costs of sustaining and reproducing the physiological capacity to work. Historically determined moral and cultural factors (most importantly, the power relationship between labour and capital as manifested, in particular, by the success of the trade union movement in securing gains for workers) establish national wage levels (116–123).

For Emmanuel, unequal exchange occurs through trade between high-wage countries and low-wage countries. As high wages are built into commodity prices in high-wage countries, the goods produced therein command a significantly higher number of goods from low-wage countries. Thus, high wage countries develop quickly and low-wage countries slowly. Wages, then, are the cause, rather than the effect, of economic development. Emmanuel's theory implies that solidarity between workers of high- and low-wage countries is unlikely with the material interests of each group of workers being diametrically opposed.

### Changes in global production and the global division of labour

Common to all of the above theories is their formulation in a world where the imperialist

countries were the centres of world industry. The international division of labour prior to decolonisation largely involved the production of raw materials in the periphery and the production of manufactured goods in the metropolitan countries. This no longer holds true in the 21st century. The well-documented decline of First-World manufacturing beginning in the 1980s has led to a situation today where most primary commodity production and manufacturing is done in the Third World. Most First-World workers are employed in 'services', primarily jobs in retail, hospitality, administration, and finance. Thus, the OECD (2011b: 168) reports that, 'on average, services now account for about 70% of OECD GDP'.

Both the unequal exchange (UE) and the capital export imperialism (CEI) paradigms can shed light on this new international division of labour. Complementing these are the theoretical innovations of imperialist rent and producer/consumer states.

### Contemporary theories of imperialism

A recent attempt to apply UE in a way that accounts for the post-industrial nature of First-World capitalism is in combination with the global commodity chain perspective (Heintz 2003). A simple summary of global commodity chains is that they 'explicate the interorganisational dynamics of global industries in order to understand where, how, and by whom value is created and distributed' (Appelbaum and Gereffi 1994: 42). Commodity chain analysis was developed by Hopkins and Wallerstein (1986: 159) as a means of explaining transfers of value between countries.

Heintz's (2003) main contribution is to use global commodity chain analysis as a way of bringing UE theory into line with contemporary conditions. In doing so, his analysis reconciles the Leninist approaches to imperialism based on investment by monopoly capital and the Emmanuelist approach based on a competitive global market generating unequal exchange. Thus, Heintz notes that 'one of the key features of global commodity chains is the differences in market power that are evident as we move along the chain. Subcontractors and direct producers face highly competitive conditions while brand name multinationals and large retailers enjoy a much higher degree of monopolistic influence' (11).

Following Amin, a number of theorists have attempted to advance the concept of imperialist rent and explore questions of international worker solidarity under conditions of 'globalisation'. Higginbottom (2013), for example, has applied the concept of imperialist rent to describe the way British firms extract value from South Africa through mining corporations and the importance this has in bolstering the British economy. Like Emmanuel and Amin, he continues a tradition of theorists who see problems for international workers' solidarity in light of this global division.

The most significant work in recent times on the issue of the labour aristocracy, however, has been Cope's *Divided World, Divided Class* (DWDC). The central argument in DWDC is that the ubiquitous white nationalism and cultural elitism of societies in the global North is not the result of false consciousness, misinformation, indoctrination, or ignorance to the extent assumed by much of the political left. Rather, these are ideological expressions of the shared economic interest of a variety of social strata in the First World in maintaining super-exploitation (Cope 2012: 11).

Critical to DWDC is the evidence base around unequal exchange and capital export imperialism. Specifically, Cope measures parasitism effected through the transfer of surplus labour internationally by means of analysing and correlating such economic and demographic variables as income distribution, wage levels, profit flows, trade and investment patterns, growth rates, price levels, industrial output, productivity, unit labour costs, working hours, the composition of imports and exports, occupational structure, and labour supply at national, regional, international, and global levels. Cope follows classical Marxist thinking in positing a clear distinction between prices, profits, and surplus value. For Cope, super-profits are not the result of higher profit rates in the Third World but, rather, of monopoly capitalist accumulation based upon higher rates of exploitation there.

### Producer and consumer states

The concepts of producer and consumer states were developed by Kerswell in order to explain a situation where a country's workforce moves from being a net producer of surplus value to being a net consumer of surplus value. States where the majority of workers are employed in productive labour (within

capitalist national accounting this is typically agriculture or industry, but some services may also be considered productive) are known as producer states. By contrast, those economies where the majority of the labour force is not employed in productive labour are consumer states. The definition of 'productive' becomes critical in determining the existence of parasitism in the contemporary global division of labour.

Following Marx, Shaikh and Tonak (1994: 20–21) conceived four forms of activity which every society must carry out, namely, production, circulation, distribution and reproduction of the social order. Shaikh (1980) developed a fifth concept of 'social and personal consumption' to distinguish between consumption that occurs in the course of production and consumption in general. Savran and Tonak (1999: 121–127) demonstrated that in a Marxist sense (where production is an activity which produces use values through the transformation of nature for the purpose of expanding capital), activities concerned with circulation, distribution, and reproduction of the social order and consumption are not productive activities. As such, they subtract from rather than add to the total social product.

Capitalist societies where most workers are not engaged in productive work can exist in one of two ways. First, unit labour costs in the domestic productive sector may be so low as to compensate for the unproductive work done in the rest of the economy (Kerswell 2012: 342). This may be due to the super-exploitation of a group of people within the same state; for example, slaves or those facing national oppression, racism, and/or discrimination because of their status as undocumented migrants (342–343). The second case is where an exploitative economic relationship exists between states leading to the transfer of value from producer states to consumer states. Under this model, the material basis of consumer states is value imported by means of imperialist rent or unequal exchange. Such states may also be conceptualised as rentier states (Beblawi 1990: 87–88). The main thrust of Kerswell's argument is to recognise the producers of the peripheries as the real creators of value (Kerswell 2012: 345).

### Empirical estimates of global value transfer

We propose herein to measure international value transfer resulting from CEI and

UE. Both of these theories are fundamentally based upon the labour theory of value and we do not consider them contradictory. However, rather than combine our respective estimates of surplus value transfer (1) by means of CEI (surplus value exported from capital-importing countries through the super-exploitation of their low-wage labour) and (2) by means of UE (surplus value transferred via the under-valuation of non-OECD goods and the overvaluation of OECD goods vis-à-vis average socially necessary labour), and thereby risk double-counting, we shall attempt to distinguish super-profits thus obtained. We propose to do so by weighting our estimates of super-profits obtained through capital export (whether through investment or loans) by the ratio between the nominal value of non-OECD production (industry and agriculture) and that of non-OECD merchandise exports. This should allow for a rough estimate of value generated by internal non-OECD sales and, hence, the sum of value entering OECD countries represented as money capital as opposed to that portion imported by means of undervalued commodities. We will then add both estimates of surplus value transfer and compare the combined dollar value with the sum of non-OECD labour hours required to produce it, comparing this total with total production labour hours in the OECD. We thereby demonstrate the reliance of the capitalist nations of the global North upon the uncompensated labour of the capitalist nations of the global South.

Estimates of global value transfer necessarily rely on data that measure the results of transactions in marketplaces, not value-generation in production processes. Specifically, GDP or value-added figures represent not the value that a particular firm, nation, or world region has added, but their share of the total value created by all firms competing within the global economy as a whole. For Smith (2012, 86), reliance on GDP as a measure of value creation results in 'a systematic under-estimation of the real contribution of low-wage workers in the global South to global wealth, and a corresponding exaggerated measure of the domestic product of the US and other imperialist countries' and the 'misrepresentation of value captured as value added'. As an economic measure, 'value added' is extraneous to the amount of actual 'domestic' production it purports to quantify. If GDP were an accurate measure of

a nation's product, employees in Bermuda, an offshore tax haven boasting the world's highest per capita GDP and producing virtually nothing, are amongst the most productive workers in the world. Unlike much left political economy, which is content to repeat only those conclusions provided for in capitalist accounting terms, we aim to present economic processes within the context of international class relations.

The much-vaunted superior 'productivity' of First World workers (value added per unit of labour, especially as measured in time as opposed to unit cost) is regularly used to justify the prevailing unequal global wage dispensation. For both liberals and Eurocentric Marxists, global wage differentials are the mechanical effect of productivity differentials resulting from differences in the level of countries' productive forces (these conceived as ineluctably national in origin). By contrast, we argue that although the uneven and dependent development of the productive forces in Third-World countries conditions the value of labour-power (Amin 1977: 194), as Marx (1977/1867: 53) argued, an hour of average socially necessary labour always yields an equal amount of value independently of variations in physical productivity, hence the tendency for labour-saving technological change to depress the rate of profit. Although increased productivity results in the creation of more use values per unit of time, only the intensified consumption of labour power can generate added (exchange) value. Since wages are not the price for the result of labour but the price for labour power, higher wages are not the consequence of (short-term) productivity gains accruing to capital. Rather, in a capitalist society, the product of machinery belongs to the capitalist and not the worker, just as in a feudal or tributary society part of the product of the soil belongs to the landlord, not the peasant (Engels 1995/1884). Nor is the difference between simple and compound (skilled and unskilled) labour at the root of global wage differentials. It is normal today for a completely unskilled and/or unproductive worker to be paid significantly more than a highly skilled and/or productive worker, or for a highly skilled worker in one sector to be paid significantly more than another in the same sector.

As Jedlicki (2007) argues, value-added figures already incorporate those wage and

capital differentials which Western socialists justify in the name of superior First-World productivity. In doing so, 'a demonstration is carried out by using as proof what constitutes, precisely, the object of demonstration' (ibid.). The present essay, by contrast, considers that the value of labour-power is a product of global market forces:

Wage goods which represent the real counterparts of the value of labour power are in fact also international goods with international value. If the labour-day is the same in countries A and B (eight hours, for example) and the real wage of the proletariat is 10 times higher in B (real wage in B equivalent to 10 kilograms of wheat per day as against only one kilogram in A), and world output of wheat (where wheat productivity is highest) is 10 kilograms in four hours, the rate of surplus value in B will be 100 percent (four hours of necessary labour and four hours of surplus labour) while it will be 1900 percent in A (twenty-four minutes of necessary labour and seven hours and thirty-six minutes of surplus labour). This reasoning does not call for a comparison between the productivities of the two capitalist productions in which A and B specialise; it is meaningless to do so. (Amin 1977: 187–188)

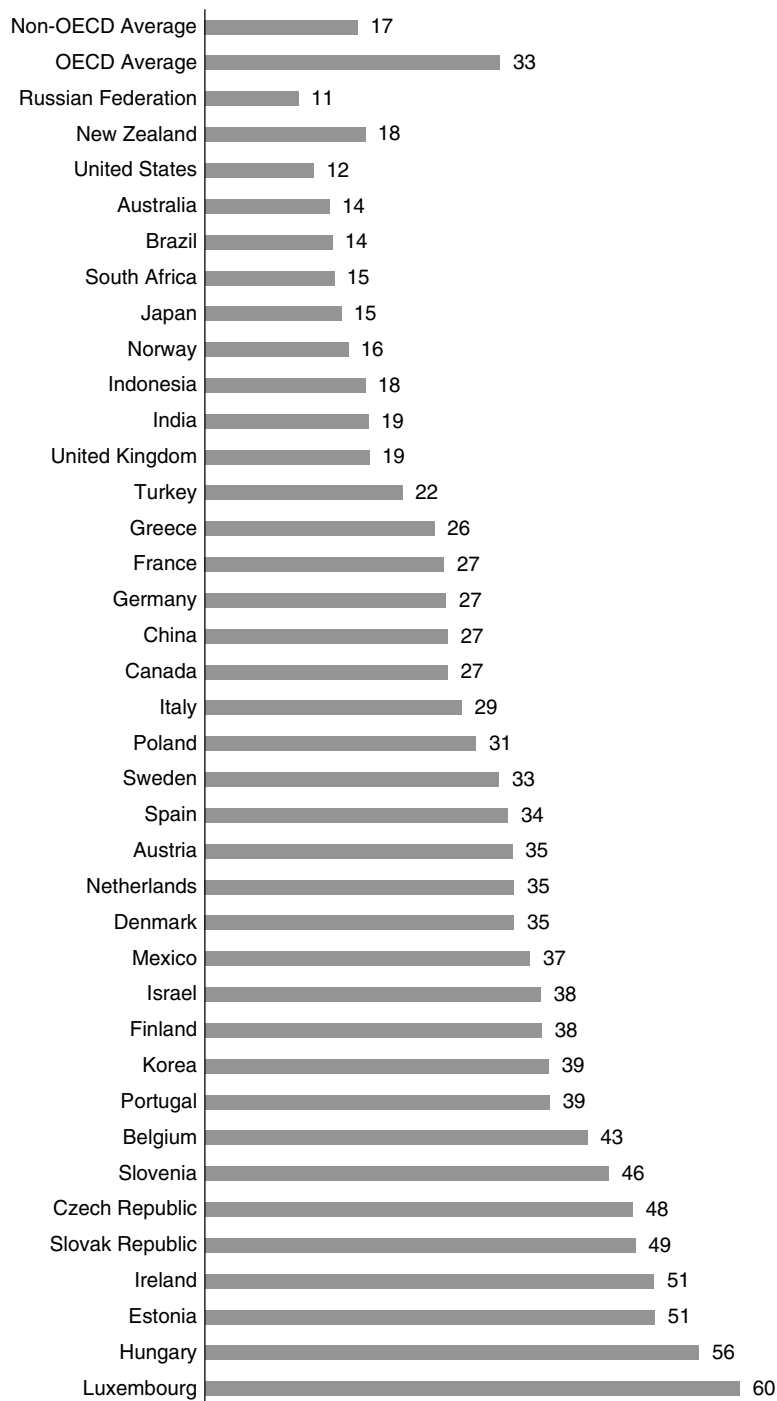
It is incorrect to say, as Emmanuel does, that the products exported by the periphery are specifically produced by the periphery. Rather, as Amin (1977: 209) notes: 'most of the Third World exports are raw materials produced both at the centre and at the periphery: crude oil is produced by the United States and the Arab countries, cotton in the United States and India, iron ore in Europe and Africa. Many of these raw materials are close substitutes for one another: tropical oilseeds and those from the temperate zones, natural fibres and rubber and their synthetic substitutes, tropical fruits and those of Europe'. Moreover, the techniques used to produce most of the exports from the Third World are the same as those used at the centre, in the same branches, particularly those dominated by the monopoly capital that controls the modern export industries of the Third World, including those producing for local markets. However, real wages are much lower in the periphery (211). Thus, Amin defines unequal exchange

as 'the exchange of products whose production involves wage differentials greater than those of productivity' (ibid.).

Bracketing the difficulties involved in using value-added figures on productivity to measure rates of exploitation and global surplus value transfer, however, we will placate social chauvinist apologies for global wage differentials and assume *ad arguendum* that productivity may be defined in purely price-based terms. Thus correcting for divergences in productivity, we find that divergences in wages exceed these such that there is a huge transfer of uncompensated value from the neo-colonial periphery to the imperialist centre of the world economy. Our intention throughout the following calculations is to reasonably correlate value-transfer estimates with estimates of the abstract universal labour (average socially necessary labour time) involved in production.

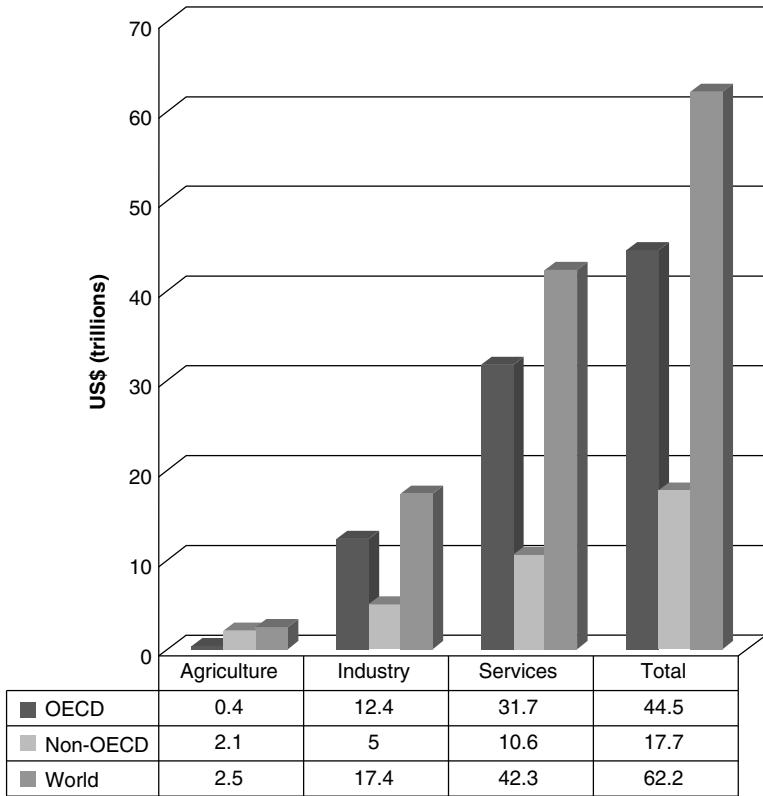
First, we obtained the total full-time equivalent global workforce in industry and agriculture by multiplying the economically active population (EAP) in each of 184 countries by the rate of full employment for its corresponding global income quintile and then by multiplying this total by the percentage of each country's workforce in industry and agriculture. The figure thus obtained was, finally, multiplied by 133 per cent, since we have defined 'under-employment' as being employed for only one-third of the hours of a full-time worker (CIA World Factbook 2012; ILO LABORSTA Database; Köhler, 2005).

In 2010, the OECD accounted for 16.5 per cent of the total full-time equivalent global workforce in industry and agriculture of approximately 1.15 billion, or 190 million workers, whilst the full-time equivalent non-OECD workforce in industry and agriculture accounted for 83.5 per cent of the total, or 960 million workers. Merchandise exports from the non-OECD to the OECD were nominally worth US\$5.2 trillion and merchandise exports from the OECD to the non-OECD were worth US\$2.5 trillion (see Figure 4). The 'import content of exports' measure provides an estimate of the value of imported intermediate goods and services subsequently embodied in exports. Changes in the same can reveal the evolution of domestic value added due to exporting activities. In 2005, the average import content of OECD exports was 33 per cent and the average import content of non-OECD exports was 17 per cent (see Figure 1). Weighing the nominal value of



**Figure 1** Import Content of Exports (%), 2005

Source: OECD 2011b



**Figure 2** Value Added by Activity in 2010 (US\$ Trillions)<sup>a</sup>

Source: *The Economist* 2010: 110–242

<sup>a</sup> For Regional GDP data based on United Nations estimates, (see <<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/dntransfer.asp?fID=2>>). Approximate sectoral GDP estimates calculated from a sample of 62 countries' value added by activity as percentage of national GDP (*The Economist* 2010, pp.: 110–242). The countries sampled were: (OECD) Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States; (non-OECD) Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. Agriculture includes farming, fishing, and forestry. Industry includes mining, manufacturing, energy production, and construction. Services cover government activities, communications, transportation, finance, and all other private economic activities that do not produce material goods.

goods exports by that portion that was added domestically, we can say that OECD to non-OECD goods exports were worth (US\$2.5 trillion \* .67) US\$1.68 trillion; and non-OECD to OECD goods exports were worth (US\$5.2 trillion \* .83) US\$4.32 trillion, or 13.1 per cent and 60.8 per cent of total value added in industry and agriculture of the OECD (US\$12.8 trillion) and non-OECD (US\$7.1 trillion), respectively. Therefore, we can say that the

domestic value-added export-weighted workforce of the non-OECD to OECD goods sector is (960 million \* .61) 585,600,000 workers, and the domestic value-added export-weighted workforce of the OECD to non-OECD goods sector is (190 million \* .13) 24,700,000 workers. Each non-OECD worker in the goods exports to the OECD sector generated domestic value-added worth (US\$4.32 trillion/585.6 million) US\$7,377; and each OECD worker

in the goods exports to the non-OECD sector generated domestic value-added worth (US\$1.68 trillion/24.7 million) US\$68,016. The productivity ratio between the OECD and non-OECD is, by this measure, (US\$68,016/US\$7,377) 9.2.

Meanwhile, OECD manufacturing workers were paid approximately 11 times more than their non-OECD counterparts in 2012 (see Figure 3). Thus, wage differentials exceeded productivity differentials by an approximate factor of 1.2 (11/9.2). Adjusted by this figure, which represents a coefficient for the real value of goods exports to the OECD from the non-OECD countries under conditions of equal exchange (equal international distribution of value added according to equivalent productivity) and where the overall price stays the same, non-OECD goods exports should have been worth approximately US\$6.24 trillion. Since only US\$5.2 trillion was paid for these goods, unrequited value worth over US\$1 trillion was transferred from the non-OECD goods exports sector by the OECD in 2012. If OECD goods exports to the non-OECD were overvalued by the same proportion, then OECD merchandise exports to the non-OECD should only have been worth around (US\$2.5 trillion/ 1.2) US\$2 trillion. Since US\$2.5 trillion was actually paid for these goods, unrequited value worth US\$500 billion was transferred from the non-OECD goods export sector by the OECD in 2012. In total, around US\$1.5 trillion of value was transferred from the non-OECD by means of unequal exchange in 2012.

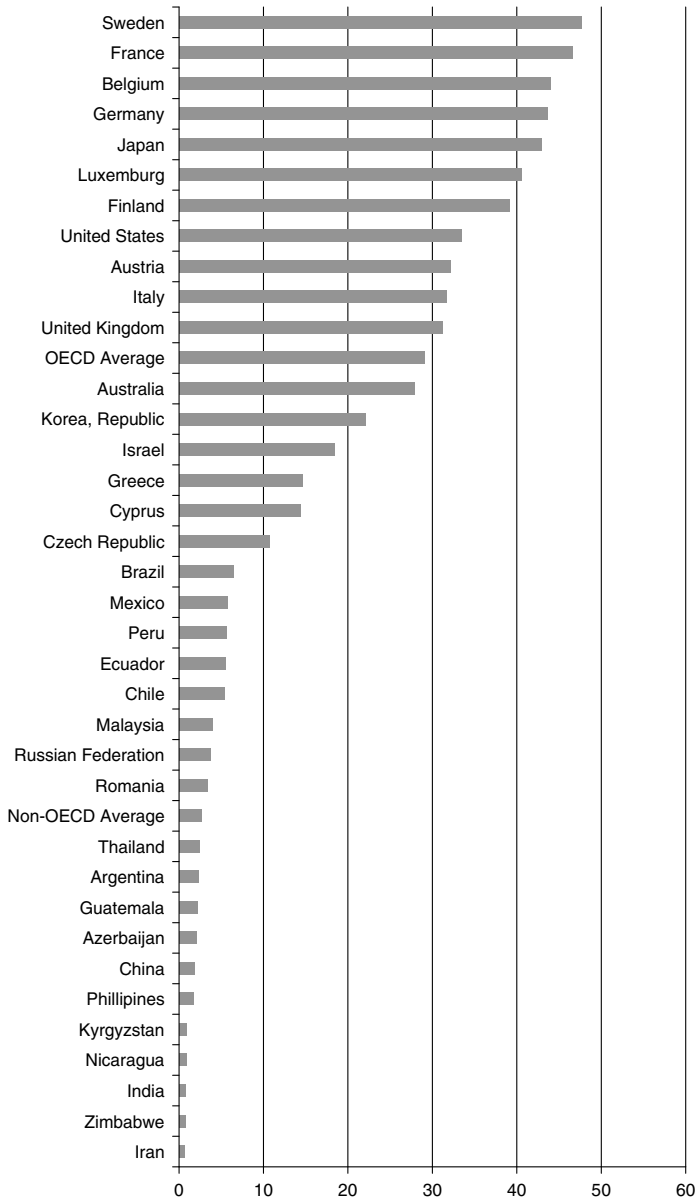
In 2002, the outward FDI stocks of OECD countries were valued at around 22 per cent of OECD GDP (Economic and Social Research Institute Japan 2006). Assuming rates of FDI have remained constant since then, OECD FDI stock was worth approximately US\$9.8 trillion in 2010. FDI in non-OECD countries by OECD countries was around 25 per cent of total outward FDI stock in 2002, and therefore worth approximately US\$2.45 trillion in 2010 (ibid). Using US Bureau of Economic Affairs data, Norwood (2011) has calculated that the average rate of return on US direct investments in Central and South America, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific was 12.5 per cent (compared to around 9.1 per cent for Europe) in 2009. (The rate of return is measured by dividing income in that year by the average of that year's and the previous year's stock of

investment (historical cost basis.) Therefore, repatriated profits from the exploitation of Third-World workers amounted to approximately US\$300 billion in 2010.

The difference between the nominal value of OECD profit repatriation and its value were the non-OECD workforce paid according to the median average value of labour-power between the two zones (the median wage pertaining between the average manufacturing wage in the OECD and that in the non-OECD) represents super-profits. In 2012, OECD hourly wages in manufacturing were a mean average US\$29.07 per hour, and non-OECD wages in manufacturing were a mean average US\$2.66 per hour. OECD manufacturing wages were approximately 11 times those in non-OECD manufacturing, with the median wage pertaining between the two regions being US\$15.87, six times the average value of non-OECD wages and 55 per cent of the value of OECD wages (see Figure 3). Multiplying the US\$300 billion in repatriated profits accruing to the OECD from the non-OECD in 2010 by the average wage factor thus calculated, we can estimate that (US\$300 billion \* 6 – US\$300 billion) US\$1.5 trillion of uncompensated value was transferred from the non-OECD to the OECD in 2010. However, in order to distinguish uncompensated value transfer from returns on imperialist capital export alone from that portion resulting from unequal exchange of commodities at equivalent productivity, we will weigh our estimate of super-profits from capital export imperialism by the share of total non-OECD value added in agriculture and industry (US\$7.1 trillion) that is greater than the value of non-OECD commodities exports to the OECD (US\$5.2 trillion), namely, 27 per cent. Accordingly, we estimate that approximately (US\$1.5 trillion \* .27) US\$405 billion of uncompensated value was transferred from the non-OECD to the OECD by means of capital export imperialism in 2012.

Combining these estimates of global value transfer due to unequal exchange and capital export imperialism, and ignoring value transferred by means of transfer pricing, royalties from intellectual property rights, and interest on loans (Babones et al. 2012:, pp. 199–200), we can say that approximately US\$1.9 trillion worth of value was transferred from the non-OECD to the OECD *sui gratia* in 2012. Weighing this total against the number of

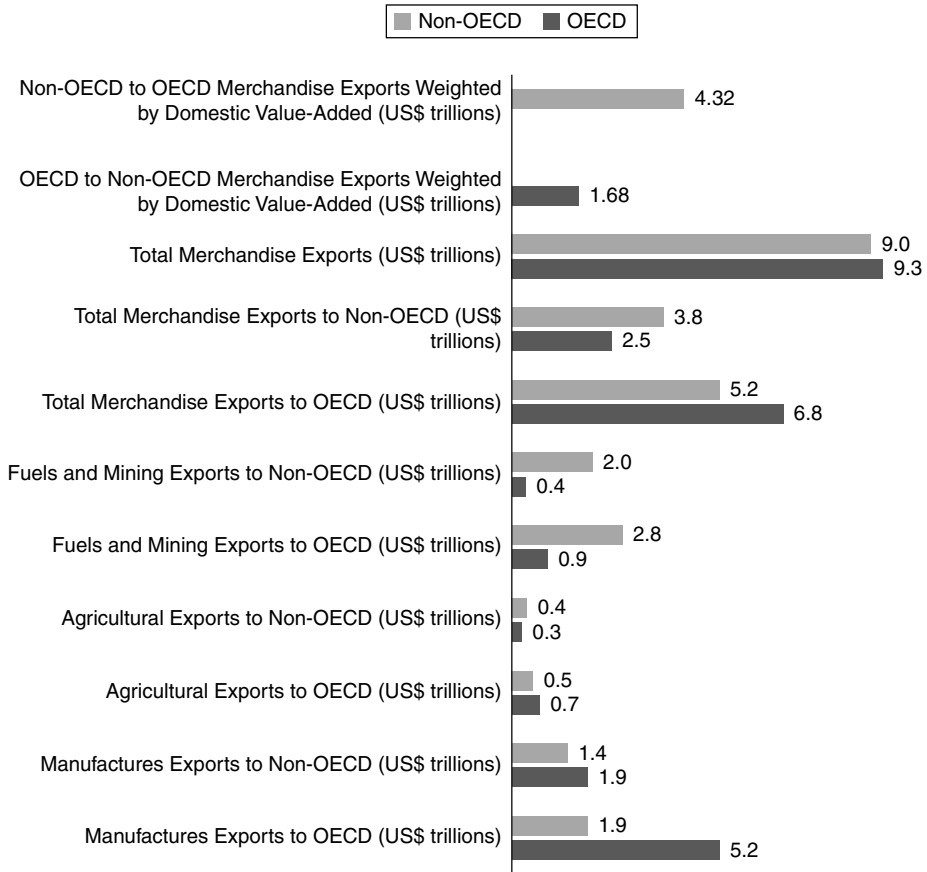




**Figure 3** Inflation-Adjusted Average Hourly Manufacturing Wages, 2012<sup>a</sup>

Source: International Labour Organisation (ILO) LABORSTA Database

<sup>a</sup> Hourly wage rates in national currencies for both OECD and non-OECD countries were divided by each region's average working hours in manufacturing; i.e. 39.7 and 42.2 hours per week, respectively. National currencies were converted into US dollars using [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), [www.coinmill.com](http://www.coinmill.com), and <http://finance.yahoo.com/currency-converter/>. Having converted the latest available wage data for each country into US dollars, these were then adjusted for inflation using The Inflation Calculator <http://www.westegg.com/inflation/>. This calculation does not account for changes in the value of a country's currency relative to the US dollar from the latest year for which data is available to 2012, nor the possibility of a country's wages having since increased more than inflation.



**Figure 4** Value of World Merchandise Trade, 2012<sup>a</sup>

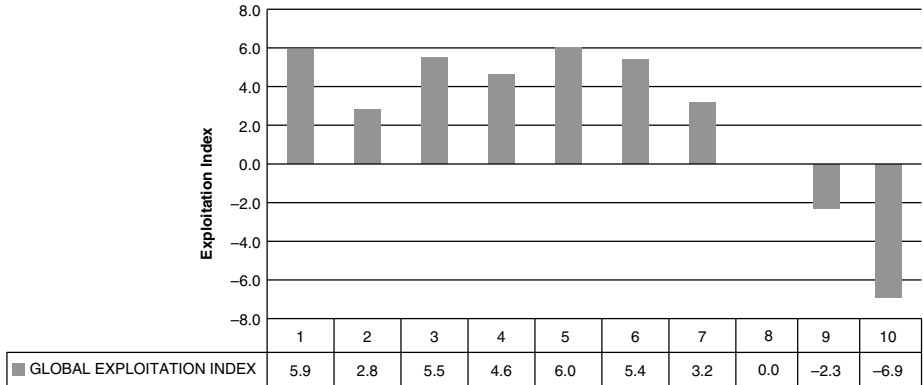
Source: OECD 2011a; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) 2013; World Trade Organisation 2007; 2011

<sup>a</sup> Figures for merchandise trade shares are approximate, based on 34.3% of North American merchandise exports and 20.4% of European merchandise exports going to South and Central America, the CIS countries (Commonwealth of Independent States, the former Soviet Union), Africa, the Middle East and Asia, respectively, and 42.6% of South and Central American, 58% of CIS, 52.9% of African, 20.9% of Middle Eastern and 34.3% of Asian merchandise exports going to North America and Europe, respectively.

full-time equivalent non-OECD workers in agriculture and industry required to produce it, we may estimate the total amount of value (as measured in average socially necessary labour time) that the OECD extracts from the non-OECD and, hence, the rate of surplus value pertaining in the OECD itself. Thus, 960 million full-time equivalent non-OECD workers in industry and agriculture created a nominal value added of US\$7.1 trillion in 2010. As such, we can say that if the uncompensated value transferred from the non-OECD to the OECD in 2012 amounted to 26.8 per cent of the total value of non-OECD industry and

agriculture, then this represents the surplus labour of (960 million \* .27) 259,200,000 workers. That means that for every one full-time equivalent worker employed in OECD industry and agriculture (190 million), there are 1.4 non-OECD workers in industry and agriculture working for free alongside her. By this estimate, the rate of surplus value or of exploitation (i.e., the ratio of surplus labour to necessary labour) is negative for the OECD countries.

This analysis is corroborated by a more straightforward comparison between the share in global consumption and the



**Figure 5** Global Exploitation Index, Production/Consumption Ratio for World Income Deciles

Sources: CIA World Factbook 2012; ILO LABORSTA Database; Köhler (2005); Piketty and Emmanuel (2004); United Nations Statistics Division

contribution to global production of each of the world's income deciles. In Figure 5 below, the EAP is defined as all persons who furnish the supply of labour for the production of goods and services. As such, the EAP includes hundreds of millions of persons engaged in private, so-called subsistence farming in the Third World. We have favoured Eurocentric assumptions that subsistence farmers contribute nothing to global production (even though most contribute money rent to capitalist landlords and supply goods for sale on the market), and have assumed that only wage-labour capable of generating surplus value is productive. Total global production is defined as the working hours of full-time equivalent production-sector wage-employment in all countries. As above, the total production workforce was obtained by multiplying the EAP in each country by the rate of full employment for its corresponding global income quintile and then by multiplying this total by the percentage of each country's workforce in industry and agriculture. The figure thus obtained was then multiplied by 133 per cent. To calculate capitalists' share of household income expenditure, Piketty and Saez's (2004) measure of the income share of the top echelons of the US income distribution (42 per cent) has been used as a global benchmark. Subtracting the share of wealth of the top 10 per cent of the population from total household consumption expenditure figures for each country allows a focused comparison of relations between the world's working and

middle classes (i.e. the bottom 90 per cent of the population).

In Figure 5, each of the world's working- and middle-class income decile's contribution to global production is divided by its share in global consumption to arrive at a rate of exploitation, a level beyond which households consume more than they produce. The illustration shows that the top 20 per cent of the world's population consumes an average 4.6 times more than it produces. Those countries where the bottom 90 per cent of the population consumes more than double their share in global production are, in descending order of magnitude: Hong Kong, Luxembourg, US, The Bahamas, Norway, Kuwait, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Australia, Denmark, Ireland, Israel, Canada, Netherlands, Kyrgyzstan, Belgium, France, Germany, United Arab Emirates, Japan, Italy, Singapore, Sweden, Austria, New Zealand, Finland, Iceland, Spain, Greece, Malta, Cyprus, Barbados, and the Republic of Korea. For a better understanding of national disparities between consumption and production it is, of course, necessary to determine the degree of inequality within the bottom 90 per cent of the population. Nonetheless, these figures make it clear that those working- and middle-class populations inhabiting countries in the top 30–20 per cent of the world by income are consuming almost exactly what they produce. The majority of the world's working class and middle class, in countries whose combined populations are at least 70 per cent of the world total, meanwhile, is

consuming significantly less than it produces, by an average factor of 4.8.

### The political results and prospects of mass embourgeoisement

The 'imperial endowment' (Alexander 1996: 59) enjoyed by the Western European world has provided it with inconceivably large subsidies for its nascent industry and subsequent productivity in the form of the:

- addition of nearly 10 million square miles to Western Europe's 2 million square miles of territory by 1900, and the ongoing occupation of a quarter of the earth's most productive land;
- theft of up to 20 million Africans and their subsequent enslavement;
- indentured servitude of millions of Asian workers;
- onerous taxation of millions of colonial peasants;
- plunder of hundreds of tons of gold and thousands of tons of silver from Latin America alone, without which Western capital markets would have been impossible;
- import of underpriced colonial foods, industrial materials, and medicines including cotton, maize, wheat, rice, potatoes, rubber, tea, tomatoes, turkeys and countless other products;
- deliberate destruction of colonial industries and the capture of guaranteed markets for Western manufactures;
- wholesale restructuring of colonial markets to serve Western interests;
- unrestrained use of land and natural resources as dumps for toxic waste and other noxious by-products of industry; and
- unequal trade and tariff regulations that negatively impact the profit margins of Third-World exporters (Alexander 1996: 59–70).

Propaganda by the corporate media and governments of the *haute bourgeoisie* augments and provides popular justification for the national, ethnic, and racial hierarchies established through job discrimination, segregation, and imperialism. In contemporary Western culture, reflex racist tropes concerning the religious fanaticism, patriarchal norms, lawlessness, and despotism of Third-World peoples prevail. The more backward aspects of social and political life

in the global South have become magnified, hypostatized and detached in people's minds from the historical legacies and current realities of economic dependence, exploitation by imperialist capital, and violent oppression maintained by the principal institutions of the former colonial powers and their American successor. Yet those forces of democracy championing the rights and interests of workers, women, ethnic minorities, and oppressed nationalities remain the principal enemies of the imperialists and their local supports. Insofar as imperialism is able to maintain conservative structures of class rule, so must all the forces of progress be set on the back foot especially, but not exclusively, in the poorer nations.

Whilst it is scarcely conceivable that a bourgeois working-class or labour aristocracy such as is described here should have the organisational wherewithal, the strategic vision, or the material interest to identify its short-term welfare with that of the majority working class in the global South, ultimately, no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations (Engels). The industrialisation of the Third World, especially following the restoration of capitalism in China, led to an explosion of foreign investment and the exponential growth of world trade. Under neo-liberalism, global labour arbitrage (Roach 2003) created the conditions for the commercialisation and financialisation of the imperialist economies, with all of the known consequences. In the wake of the Great Recession begun in 2008, the core imperialist powers are increasingly involved in a deadly military effort to shore up their hegemony. This has taken the form of: (1) the subjugation of hitherto sovereign Third-World states, particularly those with insufficiently 'open' economies and too independent leaderships; and (2) the encirclement of emergent imperialist rivals, principally Russia and China, in order to exclude them from strategic markets, particularly in arms and energy.

In the Third World, the demand for national self-determination is again coming to the fore as imperialism and capitalism have merged symbiotically. The rise of revolutionary national liberation movements and post-colonial states, changes and developments in the productive forces (information, communication, and transport technology) and monopoly capital's drive for new ways

to sustain profit rates after the oil crisis of the 1970s are coterminous with the semi-industrialisation of the Third World. Under the new globalised capitalism, producer and consumer states are bound together through the mechanisms of unequal exchange and finance imperialism. More than ever, for the exploited working class of the global South, the struggle for national sovereignty and the reclamation of the land to meet the needs of the people are indissolubly linked with the struggle against capitalism.

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## Luxemburg, Under-consumption, Capitalist Crisis, and Imperialism

For Rosa Luxemburg, imperialism was a necessary outcome of capitalism. In the years leading up to the First World War, the Polish/German communist theorist and activist worked tirelessly to convince her fellow European socialists and trade union activists that war would only benefit the bourgeoisie and that only international labour solidarity could counter the imperial mission. As an economist she engaged with the orthodox Marxian theory of capital accumulation to make an argument that seemed counter to the general Marxist project. Traditional Marxian narrative would argue that capitalism proceeds by exploiting the working class. Luxemburg argued that, though this is true, it also proceeds via intra-class conflict between rich capitalist countries in Europe and non-capitalist countries still emerging. As an activist, she was a prolific writer and speaker, and her international outlook set her apart from other, more nationalist, leftists.

Much of her economics argument related to a crisis of under-consumption, but she also believed that populations that live outside or on the margins of capitalism ought to be viewed as part of a global reserve army of labour. Some of her critics have suggested that: (a) under-consumption is not the inevitable cause of crisis, or, even if it were, then (b) imperialism would not be the only countervailing force. Despite these criticisms, she is well appreciated for putting the tendencies of capitalism in the context of 'non-capitalist strata and countries' (Luxemburg 1968: 348). Up to this point, Marxist theory had tended to ignore the countries of the

Third World, most of which had or continue to have experience of colonial binds and severe poverty. For her, it was of the utmost importance to emphasise the historical reality that primitive accumulation was an ongoing characteristic of capitalism, and not a one-time historical event roughly spanning the 17th century. Rather, the very viability of capitalism depends on internal and external pockets of available demand, therefore the imperialist nature of the capitalist countries is not a bourgeois vice but rather an historical necessity. The case for under-consumption depends on an interpretation of capitalist accumulation. Traditional Marxian analysis suggests that capitalism is an ongoing process of capital accumulation that creates more and more surplus value. Surplus value is created when labour is exploited into producing goods that have more value than what they are paid in wages. Interestingly, Marx essentially assumed that workers were paid what was necessary to reproduce themselves as workers i.e. a liveable wage. Put differently, workers are exploited into working more hours (surplus labour) than would be necessary to nurture themselves, and capitalists appropriate the exchange value of what is produced with that surplus labour. That value that is appropriated is surplus value. It is important that the surplus value be realised through sales so as to create the liquidity for more capital for the next cycle. In *Capital*, Marx (1967b/1885: vol. 2) lays out a relatively formal model of expanded reproduction whereby an initial outlay of capital is transformed into an ever larger amount of capital.

According to one school of thought, Marx's model does leave room for a paradox whereby the value of the production would exceed the effective demand, and hence leave some amount of surplus value unrealised (Foley 1986). In order for all the surplus value to be realised, the production must be sold and the difference between the total revenue and what is paid out in wages must be spent. For expanded reproduction, some level of the realised surplus value would be converted into new capital and the cycle would start again, on an expanded scale. In order, though, for all the production to be consumed (by either the workers or the capitalists) there must be enough new money to do so. In addition, there must be a match in the types of goods that are produced and those goods that people want to buy.

A basic form of the under-consumption argument suggests that because workers are paid less than the value of their production they necessarily cannot buy all the output. However, capitalists themselves also consume; they use some of their surplus value to purchase new means of production and some of it for their own consumption. The question still remains, though: If there was a certain amount of money to begin with, even though new products have been created, where will the new money to buy them come from? This interpretation concludes that there will always be a gap between that which is produced and that which is bought, which would leave inventories waiting. In this way, surplus value is created, but not realised because the production is not actually sold for money.

According to under-consumptionist theorists like Rosa Luxemburg, capitalists are relying on an ever-increasing market to buy up the ever-increasing production, but they do not have control over effective demand from the worker-consumer. Luxemburg suggests that capitalists work against this type of crisis by incorporating non-capitalist spheres into the accumulation process. Her idea was that primitive accumulation, the transformation of non-capitalist systems and communities into market-oriented institutions, was a regular and ongoing part of capitalism. Luxemburg's thesis was that the surplus value of the dynamic capitalist economy could only be realised by the interplay with non-capitalist spheres. Non-capitalist spheres were needed, she argued, to purchase the increased output of consumption and investment goods that become available as capital accumulation proceeds. It is here that she deviates from the traditional Marxian framework. Marx's mode of expanded reproduction assumed that capitalism was a complete mode of production across the globe. For the purposes of detailing the social relations of production between workers and capitalists, such a level of abstraction would be sufficient, she argued. Further, Marx analysed the process of primitive accumulation with the aim of explaining the historical events in Europe that marked the transition from feudalism to capitalism. The problem comes because '[a]s soon as he comes to analyze capitalism [as a] process of production and circulation he reaffirms the universal and exclusive domination of capitalist production' (Luxemburg 1968: 366).

According to Luxemburg, this level of abstraction ignored the concrete historical reality that capitalism had never been in a position of complete world dominance. Writing in the early 20th century, she certainly had plenty of evidence of non-market communities nestled in Europe and the US. In addition, of course, was the plethora of countries whose existence was wrapped up in various European colonial projects as well as indigenous communities in Latin and Central America, Asia, and Africa. It was (and still is) clear that frontiers to capitalism exist. In addition to geographical boundaries, there are more nuanced spheres that are outside or on the margins of the logic of capitalism. For example, even in market-economies, markets do not usually pervade cultural and gender-based systems that reproduce labour power within households. Also, subsistence agriculture occupied (and occupies) the time and effort of most of the world's farmers, many of whom live in countries outside the global agricultural industrial complex headquartered in the US and the European Union. Luxemburg firmly held that the relationships between the capitalist and the non-capitalist spheres played a necessary part in the capitalist production process, and she believed this was a form of ongoing primitive accumulation.

George Lee (1971) summarises Luxemburg's understanding of the imperialist strategy by which the capitalist countries assimilate the natural economy of the non-capitalist sectors. The overall plan has four stages: the appropriation of natural wealth; the coercion of the labour force into service; the introduction of a simple commodity economy where the majority of output is traded and not consumed; and the elimination of the rural industries which previously provided for the inhabitants. While this essentially describes traditional notions of 'primitive accumulation', for Luxemburg this is an ongoing phenomenon that characterises the relationship between capitalist and non-capitalist spheres, and imperialism itself.

Through this destabilising and often violent process, the capitalist nation states create new pockets of consumers for their output. They do this by the destruction of the existing economies, usually agrarian, thereby creating the need for consumer markets.

Capitalist production supplies consumer goods over and above its own requirements, the demand of its workers and capitalists,

which are bought by non-capitalist strata and countries. The English cotton industry, for instance, during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century ... [supplied] cotton textiles to the peasants and petty bourgeois townspeople of the European continent, and to the peasants of India, America, Africa and so on. (Luxemburg 1968: 352)

In addition to consumer goods, this process also creates markets for industrial goods designed and produced in the capitalist countries.

[C]apitalist production supplies means of production in excess of its own demand and finds buyers in non-capitalist countries. English industry, for instance, in the first half of the nineteenth century supplied materials for the construction of railroads in the American and Australian states [locations where capitalism was in its infancy]. Another example would be the German chemical industry which supplies means of production such as dyes in great quantities to Asiatic, African and other countries whose own production is non-capitalistic. (353)

In addition to appealing to a crisis in under-consumption, Luxemburg also argued that the lack of co-ordination in capitalism suggested that demand will usually not equal supply, and that supply-chain interruptions will break down the cycle. In non-capitalist systems, the co-ordination of the actual production and distribution of the goods is achieved either by domination (slavery, military dictatorship, etc.) or by some form of communal decision-making process (such as in egalitarian households or socialist democracies). Such co-ordination mechanisms for capitalist societies are non-existent. The invisible hand is guided by profits and prices, and firms and consumers are guided by these signals in a very decentralized way. By appealing to imperialism, it is possible to manufacture demand or supply to fill in where needed by compelling agreement with a non-capitalist country. This can be accomplished via militarism, indebtedness, or an appeal to colonial (or post-colonial) relations.

The process of accumulation, elastic and spasmodic, as it is, requires inevitably



free access to raw materials in case of need ...When the War of Secession interfered with the import of American cotton, causing the notorious 'cotton famine' [in England] new and immense cotton plantations sprang up in Egypt almost at once, as if by magic. Here it was Oriental despotism, combined with an ancient system of bondage, which had created a sphere of activity for European capital. Only capital with its technical resources can effect such a miraculous change in so short a time – but only on the pre-capitalist soil of more primitive social conditions can it develop the ascendance necessary to achieve such miracles. (358)

Critics of Luxemburg's view of imperialism as a vent for under-consumption either dismiss under-consumption from the beginning or they identify other pathways to vent the crisis. A key example of the former is Brewer (1982), who argued that under-consumption is not a problem. He suggests that if productivity, the real wage, and the profit rates increase at the same level and time, consumption will be sufficient as 'the whole system expands together' (66). In addition, he argues that it is likely that at any given time some capitalists will have temporarily stored levels of capital that will initiate the next level of capital accumulation even while the goods from the previous period are being bought.

Alternatively, Foley (1986) acknowledges that the crisis might prevail but that it is rather instantaneously resolved via credit markets. That is, while inventories accumulate, firms need to borrow money to finance the next level of capital accumulation, and this will eventually ease the purchase of the goods produced in the previous cycle. Indeed, Luxemburg herself recognised that the main way the non-capitalist spheres are able to play the role of global consumer of last resort is to indebt themselves to the capitalist sphere. Therefore, debt and financialisation are the key response to under-consumption, which may or may not include the global South.

Luxemburg also argues that militarism itself is a response to the under-consumption crisis, though she believes that capitalism leads to military action and industry for other reasons as well (1968: 454–467). She argued that the state, as consumer of military equipment, would contribute to solving the surplus value realisation problem in the

same way that 'non-capitalist strata' might, this time be funded by taxpayers. In addition, she suggests that because multiple capitalist countries need access to the same set of non-capitalist countries, they will engage in militaristic competition to acquire the natural and labour resources, and new markets. Hence, she believes that war, as a necessary arm of imperialism, is a logical extension of capitalism.

In addition to viewing the imperial process as an inevitable outgrowth of the crisis of under-consumption, Luxemburg also employed Marx's concept of the reserve army of labour. In *Capital*, Marx (1967a/1867: vol. 1) described the effect that the cycle of capitalist accumulation had on the labour force. During times of enhanced technological growth, labour was often made redundant while being replaced by constant capital; this would actually lead to a decrease in surplus value as a capitalist cannot exploit his means of production. In addition, there are people who live on the margins of the labour market due to social, cultural, or legal barriers to employment. Together, these workers comprise the reserve army of labour; a necessary body that swells and shrinks directly with the needs of capital. Luxemburg considers the population in non-capitalist countries to be key members of this reserve army. As technology changes, as profit rates fall, as methods of exploitation go out of fashion, it is necessary to have access to a pool of labour that can be easily enveloped into the labour market. Imperialism will ensure that the global reserve army will be available as capital's needs change.

In focusing her attention on the imperialist relationships between capitalist and non-capitalist spheres of influence, Luxemburg changed the basis of the accumulation process from one that drew its power from exploitation of the working class, to a system that drew its power from dominating the global South. Given this, the proletariat of the capitalist countries becomes complicit in the imperial project, which is a qualitatively different interpretation to the more orthodox Marxian vision. One of the implications of this deviation is that there would be no natural tendency toward (global) proletariat solidarity; southern workers were not allies in the working-class struggle for European workers, thus increasing the possibility for intra-class conflict.

Luxemburg's activism was oriented precisely around the point of fostering

international solidarity amongst workers and sympathy for those in countries subject to Europe's imperial project. She was personally distraught at the onset of the First World War. She, and many others, had worked tirelessly to mobilise socialists across Europe to agitate against war and she wanted them to live up to their calls for cross-border solidarity. Believing that war would only serve the bourgeois state in the ongoing rush of capital accumulation, they also knew that it would be the working class that would pay the dearest price. However, when the time came, socialist parties in Germany, France, and England joined in the call for war, and hopes of international labour solidarity were crushed. Luxemburg was jailed for most of the war by the German state, though she continued to write and publish.

In the prosaic atmosphere of pale day there sounds a different chorus – the hoarse cries of the vulture and the hyenas of the battlefield. Ten thousand tarpaulins guaranteed up to regulations! A hundred thousand kilos of bacon, cocoa powder, coffee-substitute – c.o.d., immediate delivery! Hand grenades, lathes, cartridge pouches, marriage bureaus for widows of the fallen, leather belts, jobbers for war orders – serious offers only! The cannon fodder loaded onto trains in August and September is moldering in the killing fields of Belgium, the Vosges, and Masurian Lakes where the profits are springing up like weeds. It's a question of getting the harvest into the barn quickly. Across the ocean stretch thousands of greedy hands to snatch it up. (Luxemburg 1915)

In November 1918 the war ended and Rosa Luxemburg was released from jail. She immediately headed for Berlin where she got back to work. By the end of December she and her long-time colleague in the Spartacist League Karl Leibnecht became part of the leadership of the new German Communist Party. A merger of several German socialist organisations, this group went on to become a major political force until the mid-1930s. In early January of 1919, the mis-named Spartacist Uprising (mis-named because the uprising was not initiated by Luxemburg and colleagues) swept Berlin. Upwards of 500,000 workers participated in a citywide strike. Eventually the social democratic government

put this down with the help of the Freikorps, a paramilitary group made up of right-wing German war veterans. In the days after the uprising was suppressed, Luxemburg was captured by the Freikorps, tortured, and executed. Her body was found in a canal a few days later.

In the early 1950s, *The Accumulation of Capital* was translated into English and published by the *Monthly Review*. This book was Luxemburg's primary attempt to lay out a theoretical explanation of her theory of imperialism. Joan Robinson, one of the most respected economists of the 20th century and a founding intellectual in the post-Keynesian tradition, has suggested that Marxists and non-Marxists unfairly neglected Luxemburg for her deviations from orthodoxy and her commitment to under-consumption. Robinson, with a warm touch, acknowledges the 'rich confusion in which the central core of the analysis is imbedded', referencing the difficult prose. But she concludes with utmost praise:

The argument streams along bearing a welter of historical examples in its flood, and ideas emerge and disappear again bewilderingly ... but something like [what Luxemburg intends to say] is now widely accepted as being true .... Few would deny that the extension of capitalism into new territories was the mainspring of what an academic economist has called the 'vast secular boom' of the last two hundred years and many academic economists account for the uneasy condition of capitalism in the twentieth century largely by the closing of the frontier all over the world. But the academic economists are being wise after the event. For all its confusions and exaggerations [Luxemburg] shows more prescience than any orthodox contemporary could claim. (Robinson 1968: 28)

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## Marx's Theory of International Price and Money: An Interpretation

### Introduction

As is well known, Marx's expressed intention when drafting his *magnum opus* on the workings of the capitalist system, *Capital*, was to include in it the functioning of the capitalist system at the level of the world economy. To do so, he planned separate books on international trade and the world market (see Nicolaus 1973; Rosdolsky 1977; Shaikh 1979). However, numerous factors, including failing health, combined to prevent him from realising this and other expressed literary intentions. In fact, as is also well known, Marx lived to see only volume 1 of *Capital* completed to his satisfaction, the other two volumes of *Capital* and his *Theories of Surplus Value* (often referred to as volume 4 of *Capital*) being completed long after his death; volumes 2 and 3 of *Capital* were compiled by Frederick Engels and published in 1885 and 1894, respectively, and *Theories of Surplus Value* was compiled by Karl Kautsky and published in 1905–10. Most importantly, aside from a few isolated passages, Marx left no real indication in these or any other of his published works and correspondence as to how he saw his general explanation of prices and money extended to the world economy level.

Although this gap in Marx's economic analysis has been generally acknowledged (see e.g. Carchedi 1991a, 1991b; Kühne 1979; Lapavistas 1996; Shaikh 1979), it has failed to attract much attention from even those sympathetic to his work, with the notable exceptions of Shaikh (1979, 1980) and Carchedi (1991a, 1991b), and to a certain extent in various contributions to the debate on unequal exchange initiated by the work of Emmanuel (1972). The reasons for this inattention are not difficult to discern. They stem from perceived intractable problems with Marx's general theories of price and money. As regards Marx's theory of price, the problem is argued to be his so-called transformation procedure: that he did not transform input values into prices of production (see especially Meek 1977 for an extensive account of this alleged problem, and Fine and Saad-Filho 2004: 126–134 for a summarised version of it). And as regards his theory of money, the problem is seen as the impossibility of extending his commodity theory of money to take into account the modern form of money: intrinsically valueless pieces of paper issued by the state (see Germer 2005 and Lavoie 1986 for arguments along these lines).

The present essay seeks to contribute to the development of this much-neglected area – the extension of Marx's explanation of prices and money to the international level. To do so I will begin with an outline of Marx's general explanation of prices and money (mostly drawing on *Capital* and *Theories of Surplus Value*), focusing in particular on those aspects of these theories which I consider to be fundamental in their extension to the international dimension, and dealing in passing with the two alleged problems with Marx's theories of price and money referred to above. I will then present what I consider to be the key elements of the extension of Marx's theories of price and money to the international dimension. And, lastly, I will use the resulting analysis to critically appraise Ricardo's theory of international price and money in the context of his doctrine of comparative advantage. The major aim of the critical appraisal of Ricardo's work will be to further highlight the specificity of the Marxist approach and draw out some of its implications for an understanding of the historic and contemporary problems of the so-called developing countries – implications which are in stark contrast to those emanating from Ricardo's comparative advantage doctrine.

## Marx's theory of price and money

The key elements of Marx's theories of price and money that require elaboration with a view to their extension to the international dimension are (a) the formation of prices and emergence of money and (b) the determination of the magnitudes of prices and value of money. I will begin with Marx's view of how prices are formed since it is foundational for understanding his explanation of the emergence of money as well as the determination of the magnitudes of prices and value of money.

### Formation of prices and emergence of money

Marx begins his analysis of prices in *Capital* by analysing prices in the context of the simple reproduction of commodities, that is, abstracting from their existence as capital. This analysis takes up the first three chapters of *Capital*, and is known to have been a major preoccupation of his (see Aumeeruddy and Tortajada 1979). He then uses this as a basis for their subsequent analysis in the context of the circulation of commodities (and money) as capital in the remainder of *Capital*. It would appear that his purpose for doing so was that he saw the essence of the circulation of commodities in capitalism as captured by their simple circulation, and the latter as historically prior to the former (for more details see Fine and Saad-Filho 2004; Nicolaus 1973; Rosdolsky 1977). When analysing the simple circulation of commodities Marx sees prices as coming into existence in general when the production of commodities is organised on the basis of a division of labour and this division of labour is mediated by exchange. That is to say, when commodities are produced regularly for exchange in the context of a division of labour they acquire a form which indicates they have a certain exchangeable worth with other commodities (or things) – the price form. The price form is in the first instance the bodily form of the other commodities that each commodity exchanges for, but gradually becomes the bodily form of the commodities most frequently traded (bags of corn, metal objects), and, eventually, the bodily form of a particular commodity, the money commodity, which is usually a metal because of its homogeneity, divisibility, durability, and transportability. When the exchangeable worth of a commodity acquires the money form, the price form becomes the money price

form. The worth of commodities in relation to one another is shown through their relation to one and the same commodity: money. This understanding of the formation of prices leads Marx to see their fundamental purpose as one of facilitating the reproduction of commodities. Prices do this by enabling producers to acquire the necessary inputs and means of sustenance through the sale of their commodities to continue production of them.

When Marx moves to the formation of prices in capitalism, he seeks to show that their formation involves the formation of a profit on the basis of unpaid labour for the representative capitalist firm, and takes place in the context of competition between individual firms within and between sectors. He argues that competition within sectors gives rise to the formation of standard prices for standard products which are produced using standard technologies, and that competition between sectors gives rise to the appropriation of an economy-wide average rate of profit by producers of standard products in all sectors. Marx was at pains to point out, however, that the formation of prices takes place in the context of continuous divergences: divergences between prices for the same generic product; divergences between products of the same generic type; divergences between technologies and methods of production of similar goods; and divergences between rates of profits appropriated by standard producers of a given product in different industries.

Marx's view of the emergence of money is a logical corollary of his view of the formation of prices. Specifically, his view of the formation of prices suggests that money emerges with, and is indispensable to, the formation of prices and the reproduction of commodities which prices facilitate. It performs this role by conferring on commodities homogeneous price magnitudes which permit their owners to acquire the necessary inputs and means of subsistence to reproduce commodities on an expanded scale. That is, it performs this role by reflecting the relative resource costs (labour time) required for reproducing commodities in their prices. It is money's role as a measure of (exchange) value that defines it as money and is the basis for understanding the determination of its worth as money as opposed to a mere commodity. The distinction is important when considering the value of money as intrinsically valueless pieces of paper issued by the state.

### The magnitudes of prices

Naturally, Marx's explanation of the magnitudes of prices follows a similar trajectory to his explanation of the formation of prices. That is, he begins with the explanation of the magnitudes of prices in the context of the simple reproduction of commodities, and then extends this to take into account the reproduction of commodities in the context of capitalism. It is important to note that he sees the explanation of the former as constituting the essence of the explanation of the latter. When explaining the magnitudes of prices in both settings Marx distinguishes between *relative and money prices*, seeing the explanation of relative price magnitudes as logically prior to the explanation of money price magnitudes and notwithstanding the fact that prices are in the final instance money prices. This is because the explanation of money price magnitudes requires an explanation of the magnitudes of relative prices as well as the magnitudes of the value of money. Although Marx also makes a distinction between *long- and short-run movements* in the magnitudes of prices, he makes this distinction explicit only when explaining (changes in) the magnitudes of prices in capitalism.

#### *Explaining the magnitudes of relative prices*

At the heart of Marx's explanation of the magnitudes of relative prices in the context of the simple circulation of commodities is the notion that production on the basis of a division of labour involves the expenditure of social (although not necessarily equivalent) labour time which causes the products produced by this labour to have worth or value in relation to one another, with this worth reflecting the relative social labour time required for their production. When exchange comes to mediate the division of labour, the products of labour acquire the form of exchangeable worth, or the price form, and the labour time expended becomes additionally (in addition to being social) qualitatively equivalent units of simple general (abstract) labour time. It is magnitudes of this simple abstract social labour that fundamentally regulate the exchange ratios between the products of labour or commodities (Marx calls products 'commodities' when they assume the price form). What constitutes basic or simple abstract labour time will vary over time and geographic space, and will ultimately

depend on the particular socio-economic setting.

When Marx moves to the explanation of the relative magnitudes of prices in the context of capitalism, he distinguishes between long- and short-run movements in the magnitudes of prices, and focuses in the first instance on the former notwithstanding the fact that he sees short-run movements as having a bearing on long-run trends. Focusing on long-run trends in relative price magnitudes, Marx seeks to show that the fundamental determinant of these trends remains the relative labour time required for the production of the commodity. To do so, he first shows that this labour time comprises the labour time required to produce the (manufactured) inputs into production as well as that expended by workers in the immediate process of production, with the latter equal to the labour required to produce the means of sustenance of the workers as well as a surplus of labour time over and above this (which is equal to that required to produce the goods purchased with the profits). Marx then shows that intra-sectoral competition will lead to the prices of the standard products produced in each sector directly reflecting, and being determined by, their values as measured by the average labour time required to produce the bulk of these products in each sector, while inter-sectoral competition will result in the appropriation of an average rate of profit by standard producers in each sector such that the magnitudes of their prices will diverge from the magnitudes of their values. In spite of this divergence values will continue to be the fundamental determinant of the prices. Marx refers to the long-run relative prices which result from competition within sectors as market values and those which result from competition between sectors as prices of production, prices of production being modified market values. Obviously, with inter-sectoral competition it is the prices of production which are seen as deviating from the values of commodities, but still being determined by them.

Before proceeding it is necessary at this juncture to digress a little and pay some attention to one of the two alleged Achilles heels of Marx's analysis noted in the introduction: his so-called transformation procedure linking the values of products to their prices of production. This procedure has been repeatedly criticised by even those sympathetic to Marx's economic analysis on the grounds that it fails

to show the link between values and prices of production of commodities because it does not transform input values into prices of production. However, as I have argued elsewhere (see Nicholas 2011: 39–40), this incorrectly interprets what Marx is trying to do with this procedure. It sees him as trying to calculate prices in terms of values, when in fact he is trying to explain prices in terms of values. If Marx had transformed input values into prices he would have ended up tautologically explaining price by price in the manner of a number of supposed solutions to his transformation problem (see Nicholas 2011: 80, 86–87).

Although Marx sees long-run relative prices as fundamentally determined by relative labour time, and changes in these by changes in the relative productivity of labour in different sectors, his analysis does not preclude the possibility of other factors having a bearing on these long-run trends, including (a) non-productivity-related cost changes, (b) the appropriation of absolute rents, and (c) short-run movements in relative prices arising from demand and supply imbalances. Examples of non-productivity cost changes include sector-specific changes in taxes and/or subsidies and prices of raw materials. They do not include sector-specific changes in wages except in exceptional circumstances (see Marx 1978: 415–416). The appropriation of absolute rents would typically be associated with the behaviour of owners of key raw material inputs such as oil. And short-run movements in relative prices resulting from demand and supply imbalances can also be seen as having a bearing on long-run price trends if they give rise to changes in average methods of production. For example, if the demand for a product greatly exceeds supply such that relative prices correspond to those of the least efficient producers (and not producers producing the bulk of goods) and the majority of producers in the sector appropriate above economy-wide average rates of profit, the resulting inflow of capital into the sector may have some bearing on the average methods of production used in the production of the standard commodity by the bulk of producers once demand and supply balance is restored (see Nicholas 2011: 39–40).

#### *The magnitudes of money prices*

The magnitudes of the relative worth of commodities translate into their worth in relation

to money, or money prices, when money mediates exchanges and the worth of commodities is expressed in terms of money. Although Marx recognises that money can assume many forms, ranging from commodity money to intrinsically valueless pieces of paper issued by the state, for the most part he assumes money to be a commodity, arguing that this is the earliest form which money assumes and understanding this form of money captures its essence as money in the process of reproduction of commodities (see Marx 1978: 192). Crucially, Marx argues that when money is a commodity its value, and therefore the level of aggregate commodity money prices, will be given by its value both as a commodity and as money, with the former exerting a gravitational pull on the latter, but the latter also having some bearing on the former (see Nicholas 2011 for an elaboration of this point). As a commodity the value of money is given by the relative labour time required for its production, while as money its value is given by the average labour time of commodities (including labour power) that it circulates over a given period of time. As long as money is a commodity, changes in the value of money and corresponding changes in the aggregate money price level of commodities will be fundamentally due to changes in the relative productivity of labour in the sector producing the money commodity. This means that when money is a commodity inflation will mostly be due to a rise in productivity in the money-producing sector.

As with other commodities, so with the commodity that performs the role of money, its trend value can also be influenced by non-productivity-related relative cost changes in the sector producing the money commodity, the appropriation of an absolute rent by producers of the money commodity, and short-run movements in it caused by demand and supply imbalances. The demand and supply imbalances pertain to aggregate demand for, and supply of, all commodities, including labour power, and are brought about by changes in the desire of producers to hold money (or various financial assets) as opposed to repurchasing the necessary inputs to reproduce the commodity. Such imbalances in the supply of, and demand for, all commodities are mirrored by an excess supply of, and demand for, money. An excess demand for all commodities, implying an excess supply of money, would result in a

fall in the exchange value of money below its value as a commodity, with attendant consequences for the latter resulting from capital flows into and out of the money-producing sector. The fall in the exchange value of money below its value is typically facilitated by the substitution of money in the performance of its function as medium of circulation by credit and tokens of itself. As long as money is a commodity, however, the extent of this divergence between the exchange value and value of money, and the corresponding impact of the short-run movements in the exchange value of money on its value, will be limited. Money's value as a commodity will anchor its value as money.

Marx denied, however, that increases in aggregate money prices could be due to an increase in the value of labour power over and above that warranted by labour productivity increases. This is because he saw the value of labour power falling with increases in productivity, and believed that where this was not the case it would result in falls in the general rate of profits. Marx also denied that the value of money could be influenced, let alone fundamentally determined, by an increase in the quantity of money in circulation. This is because pivotal to his explanation of money prices is the notion that money measures the exchange value of commodities and confers this worth on them in the form of certain magnitudes of money prices prior to their, and its own, entry into circulation. This means that for Marx commodities would always enter circulation with given money prices, and money with a given value. This does not, however, preclude the possibility of credit and various substitutes of money facilitating an expanded circulation of commodities and giving rise to a divergence of the exchange value of money from its value.

The preceding interpretation of Marx's analysis of money as commodity money, and particularly his explanation of its value as money, suggests that there is in principle no problem with extending this analysis to take into account money as intrinsically valueless pieces of paper issued by the state, especially once it is recognised that even when money is a commodity a distinction needs to be drawn between its worth as a commodity and its worth as money, and that the latter does not require money to itself have worth. Indeed, since money's worth as money is given by the average labour time of commodities it

circulates, the possession by it of intrinsic worth is unnecessary as long as what functions as money is accepted as having command over goods and services.

The implication of this view of the determination of the magnitude of value of intrinsically valueless paper money is that there will be a tendency for the value of this money to fall over time. This tendency arises from the fact that, on the one hand, there is no longer an anchor for the value of money when it is intrinsically valueless pieces of paper issued by the state and, on the other hand, this sort of money is more readily made available to validate the expansion of tokens of itself and credit than is the case with commodity money. This tendency for the value of money to fall will however be fundamentally conditioned by changes in average labour productivity levels in the production of all commodities. Increases in the growth of average labour productivity levels of all commodities would typically exert a downward pressure on the rate of fall in the value of money and corresponding rate of increase in the aggregate money price level, while falls in average labour productivity levels would ease this downward pressure. As in the case of commodity money, changes in costs and imbalances in supply and demand can also have a bearing on the value of money and the aggregate money price level. In the case of costs what matters is non-productivity-related real costs affecting the production of most commodities. In the case of supply and demand imbalances the important thing to note is that where these imbalances induce a fall in the value of money – a rise in the money prices of commodities – there is no counterbalance redressing this fall. Indeed, the tendency is for a continuous fall in the value of money, with monetary authorities accommodating the increase in demand for money when it arises.

### **Extending Marx's theory of price and money to the international level**

When extending Marx's explanation of prices and money to the international level it is again necessary to begin with how these prices are formed and how the money that facilitates the international trade of commodities, that is, world money, emerges. It is this starting point that provides the basis for the

explanation of the magnitudes of international prices and changes in these.

### **International price formation and the emergence of international money**

International prices reflect the relative worth of commodities being exchanged between residents of different countries. They are formed whenever such exchange takes place. As long as this exchange is *ad hoc*, the exchange ratio between the traded commodities will vary over time and space, being determined largely by the relative strength of demand in relation to the availability of the traded items. However, once this trade becomes more regular and more integral to the reproduction of commodities in the different countries, the traded commodities increasingly acquire international values measured by international labour time, with the international exchange ratios between the commodities increasingly reflecting these values. Where the exchange is between capitalist countries, the exchange ratios reflect what can be referred to as international market values, and when capital becomes increasingly mobile between the trading capitalist countries, they reflect what can be referred to as international prices of production.

With the development of exchange between countries money breaks out of its national confines and serves increasingly to measure the international exchangeable worth of commodities. When this happens the international exchange ratios between commodities assume the form of money – world money. As with money within national boundaries so with money flowing between countries: it initially assumes the form of a commodity. With the increasing development of commercial and financial links between countries, this form gives way to the form of the paper issued by the state of the most economically powerful country – that country whose paper currency is seen as backed by the largest amount of goods and services. (Carchedi 1991b: 275 argues that world money is issued by the technologically most advanced country. However, there are a number of obvious problems with such a view, not the least of which is that it is difficult to establish what might constitute technological leadership among advanced countries.)

What this view of the emergence of world money suggests most importantly is that the formation of international value does not require either the international flow

of labour or capital between countries, or even that the trading countries are capitalist. All that is required is that the products traded become integral to the reproduction of commodities in the trading countries. It also suggests that the opening up of trade between countries does not lead to their specialisation in the production of particular commodities. Rather, it implies the gradual integration of the producers of the various countries engaged in trade into a more extensive division of labour. Although producers in certain countries may have certain cost advantages in the production of certain goods, these are unlikely to lead to a complete specialisation by each given initial conditions of national self-sustaining reproduction based on national divisions of labour and the requirement of some degree of trade balance between countries in the context of an expansion of trade between them. I will return to this point again in the discussion of Ricardo's doctrine of comparative advantage and the implications of Marx's analysis for understanding the impoverishment of the present-day developing countries, but it is perhaps worth noting here that one of the important conclusions that will emerge in this discussion is that it is not the development of trade *per se* that has led to this impoverishment.

### **Determination of the magnitudes of international prices**

In keeping with Marx's explanation of the magnitudes of prices in general, an explanation of their magnitudes in process of international exchange needs to be founded on a distinction between relative and money prices as well as between trends in these prices and short-run deviations from the trends. Again, the starting point has to be an explanation of trends in the magnitudes of relative prices.

#### *Relative international prices*

The international prices whose magnitudes need to be explained in the first instance are those formed in the context of *recurrent* trade between countries. The magnitudes of these prices are explained by the relative international values of the traded commodities, whether or not there is international labour or capital mobility. The international relative value or worth of commodities is measured by the average labour time required to produce the bulk of the commodities traded, allowing



for skill and productivity differences. Marx notes that more skilful and/or productive labour counts as labour which is productive of a higher value than less skilful and productive labour because the former produces more commodities and/or commodities of a higher quality in the same time (see Marx 1976: 524–525; Marx notes that more productive labour can imply more skilful or hard-working labour, but will for the most part result from labour working with more advanced technology and possibly better-quality natural resources). A change in the relative national levels of skill and productivity of labour will affect the international value of goods exported by a country only if its producers account for the bulk of trade in these types of goods. If the producers do not account for the bulk of goods of a certain type exported, increases in productivity will only translate into higher profits for these producers.

Although the logic of Marx's general analysis most certainly suggests that trend movements in the relative prices of internationally traded commodities need to be seen as dominated by relative productivity changes in the sector producing these commodities, whether this production is specific to one country or not, it does not preclude other factors having a bearing on relative international price trends in much the same way, and for the same reasons, as was argued above in respect of the general analysis. Specifically, it does not preclude the influence on these trends of non-productivity-related costs, absolute rents, and demand and supply imbalances. The non-productivity cost changes, absolute rents, and demand and supply imbalances which are of significance for trend movements in international relative prices would be those pertaining to the countries producing the bulk of the traded commodities of any given type. Since in the case of demand and supply imbalances their significance for trend movements in relative prices depends on the consequences which the forces accompanying the short-run movement of international prices have for the standard methods of producing the internationally trade commodity, the extent to which capital and technology is mobile will also have a bearing on this.

The logic of Marx's analysis suggests that trend movements in the values and prices of internationally traded goods will also exert an influence on the values and prices of non-traded goods, with the extent depending on

the importance of non-traded goods in the reproduction of all domestically produced commodities, including labour power. This in turn means that the more open to trade the economy, the greater this influence is likely to be, with obvious implications for fully specialised and internationally integrated economies such as the present-day developing countries (see below).

*The value of world money and the aggregate world money price level*

The magnitudes of international money prices are determined by the magnitudes of relative international prices and the international exchange value of money which facilitates the international circulation of commodities. The determinants of the magnitudes of relative international prices have been explained above. What is now required is an explanation of the magnitude of value of money which circulates commodities internationally. When explaining the international exchange value of money which facilitates the international circulation of commodities the point of departure is the exchange value of international or world money and not the international exchange value of national currencies (the determination of the international exchange values of national currencies – their rates of exchange with other currencies – is beyond the scope of the present study, but follows from the logic of the analysis being developed in it). This is because what facilitates trade between countries is something that is itself traded internationally and represents international worth. (Some Marxist commentators, e.g. Carchedi 1991b, have argued that explanation of world money prices requires an explanation of the international exchange values of national currencies, or exchange rates. However, the position taken in this essay is that it is world money and not national monies *per se* that facilitates international trade and confers comparable international exchangeable worth on commodities. Hence, it is the explanation of the value and exchange value of world money and not the values and exchange values of national currencies that is the appropriate point of departure for the analysis of international price formation and the determination of its magnitude.) As noted above, what initially facilitates trade between countries is a metal such as gold, but it eventually becomes the intrinsically valueless paper money issued

by the monetary authorities of economically powerful countries. And, as in the case of commodity money so in the case of international paper money, for ease of international commerce the tendency will be for one world money to dominate, although for certain purposes and in certain settings paper monies of other countries can be seen to be acceptable substitutes.

When international money is a commodity its international value is determined by both its value as an internationally traded commodity (the relative international labour time required for its production) and its value as world money (the average amount of labour time it commands in the process of international exchange). There can, and normally will, be a divergence between the two, but as long as world money is a commodity the former exerts a gravitational pull on the latter, notwithstanding the fact that the latter will have a bearing on the former. Taking gold as international money, if its international exchange value as money falls below its relative international value as a commodity, for instance because of its replacement in the process of international circulation by tokens, the value of gold will increasingly correspond to the international value of gold produced by more efficient producers. This in turn will result in some of the more inefficient producers moving out of gold production. The resulting contraction in gold production will eliminate the excess supply of gold and lead to some reversal of the fall in the international exchange value of gold. If faith is shaken in the tokens of gold circulating internationally, the reversal may even result in a rise in the value of gold. In any case, the international exchange value of gold, or rather its international value as money, will have a bearing on its international value as a commodity.

In one of the few passages by Marx on the value of world money he argues that its worth can vary between countries in the sense of commanding more or less international labour time in different countries than the international average (see Marx 1976: 702). He argues that in more productive countries it will command less international labour time (the value of international money will be higher) and more international labour time in less productive countries (the value of international money will be lower). This means that, for Marx, as the relative productivity of a country increases the prices of its

commodities in terms of international money will fall in relation to that of other countries, but the divergence will obviously be limited by the tendency of international money to exchange with commodities in the same ratios in different countries – the law of one price.

Although from the perspective of Marx's analysis the fundamental determinant of long-term trends in the aggregate world money price level is the relative productivity of labour in the production of world money, for reasons given above in the discussion of the value of money in general this does not preclude other factors having a bearing on these trends. Of note are, once again, non-productivity-related relative cost changes in the countries producing the bulk of gold, the appropriation of absolute rents by the producers of gold, and global aggregate demand and supply imbalances. Demand and supply imbalances can be conceived of as arising from changes in the propensity of those engaged in international commerce to purchase internationally traded commodities as opposed to holding on to gold (or purchasing financial assets with it). A concomitant of these aggregate demand and supply imbalances is, therefore, imbalances in the supply and demand for gold, and their consequence is deviations of the international exchange value of gold from its value. These deviations are facilitated by international credit and/or the international circulation of tokens of gold (e.g. silver), and can be seen as impacting on the international value of gold in the manner outlined above.

In the references to world money that Marx makes in his published writings he certainly assumes it to be a commodity, and in particular gold. However, in the same way as Marx's general analysis of money does not preclude its extension to intrinsically valueless paper issued by the state, so the analysis of world money as gold should not be seen as precluding an extension of this analysis to world money as the intrinsically worthless paper money issued by the state of a particular country.

When world money is the paper of a particular country its value is determined by both the average international labour time of the commodities that it commands in international trade and the average international labour time of the goods it commands in the domestic circulation of the country issuing

the world paper money. In the final instance it is the latter that will dominate movements in the former, although the former can have a bearing on the latter. This means that the fundamental determinant of changes in the value of world paper money and level of world money prices is changes in the relative labour productivity of the country issuing the paper (see also Carchedi 1991b). Taking the US dollar as world money, an increase in the world rate of inflation and fall in the relative worth of the US dollar would mostly result from a slower growth in US labour productivity and, conversely, a fall in world inflation would mostly be due to a relative rise in US labour productivity. Of note in this context is that relative changes in aggregate output are seen as having no bearing on the relative international value of the world paper currency and world inflation rate since, from the perspective of Marx's analysis, the quantity of money in circulation will adjust to the amount and prices of goods in domestic circulation.

As in the case of a world commodity money, so with a world paper money, one can certainly conceive of the exchangeable worth of this money varying between countries, and in particular between the country issuing the world paper money and the rest of the world, along the lines noted above in the context of world commodity money. But again, the extent of the deviation will be limited by the tendency for prices in terms of world money to be equal in different countries (the law of one price).

Other factors affecting the world money price level in the context of a world paper money would be relative unit cost changes and aggregate demand and supply imbalances in the world-money-issuing country (absolute rent has no bearing on the relative worth of world money when it is not a produced commodity). The cost changes that matter are non-productivity-related relative international unit costs of the world-money-issuing country. In the context of the current global economic system and the dollar as world money, one can imagine that the discovery of shale gas in the US and the prohibition of its export can exert downward pressure on its relative unit costs of production, resulting in upward pressure on the relative international worth of the US dollar and corresponding downward pressure on the world rate of inflation in US dollar terms.

The deviations in the aggregate demand for and supply of commodities that matter pertain

to domestic and global imbalances. Since, as noted above, the value of the world currency is more fundamentally given by the international value of the goods it circulates in the world-money-issuing country, of greater significance for the short-run and trend value of this currency would be aggregate demand and supply imbalances in the money-issuing country, with part of the excess demand resulting in trade imbalances. Again, assuming world paper money to be the US dollar, an excess demand for commodities in the US would result in a rise in the US money price level and downward pressure on the exchange value of the US dollar pushing it below trend. Both would exert an upward pressure on global prices in dollar terms. These would in turn result in trend upward movements in world money prices only if the accompanying expansions in credit and tokens of money were validated by domestic increases in US dollars. An excess world demand for commodities would exert a similar upward pressure on world money prices in dollar terms, but the extent to which this would translate into a rise in trend world US dollar prices would depend on the extent to which the accompanying world demand for US dollars was accommodated through, say, the running of an expanded trade deficit, capital outflows, and US dollar loans (swaps) to other world central banks (interest rate differentials between countries would have a bearing on short-term movements in the world money price level via its impact on the balance between global demand and supply). This is not to say that the value of the US dollar and the level of world prices in US dollar terms is dependent upon the injection of US dollars into the global economic system, since the US monetary authorities cannot simply inject money into the global system irrespective of the demand for this money.

### Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage

Ricardo developed his explanation of international prices in the context of expounding his doctrine of comparative advantage. This doctrine endeavours to show that the liberalisation of trade between countries would, or should, lead producers in the trading countries to specialise in the production of goods they have a natural comparative advantage in *vis-à-vis* other countries (see Ricardo 1973: 81). Trade on the basis of such specialisation

would result in gains for all countries specialising and engaging in trade in the sense that each would save on domestic labour time that needs to be expended in the provision of the same amount of goods consumed domestically. In expounding this theory Ricardo is insistent that, unlike domestic relative prices, the relative prices of internationally traded goods would not depend on relative labour times, that is, they would not depend on international labour times. This is because for him the labour expended in different countries cannot be considered as comparable in the absence capital flows between them (1973 81–83). There cannot be any such thing as international labour times in the absence of international capital flows. Instead, Ricardo sees the magnitudes of the relative prices of internationally traded commodities as settling somewhere between their autarchic pre-specialisation levels in the trading countries as determined by relative national labour times embodied in the production of the commodities. To illustrate his argument Ricardo uses trade between England and Portugal (see Table 1). He argues that with the opening up of trade between the two countries the relative international prices of cloth and wine will eventually settle somewhere between 1:1.2 and 1:0.9 – the autarchic relative prices of the two commodities in England and Portugal, with the exact ratio being indeterminate. Assuming that trade and specialisation results in England producing cloth and Portugal wine as per their comparative

advantages in the production of the two goods, if the international exchange ratio of cloth to wine came to rest at 1:1 (i.e. between the two autarchic price ratios), then trade on the basis of specialisation would see England saving 20 domestic hours of labour time per unit of wine consumed domestically and Portugal saving 10 hours of domestic labour time per unit of cloth consumed domestically. Both countries would have gained from trade and specialisation.

As a number of commentators have pointed out (e.g. Shaikh 1979), Ricardo certainly recognises that it is not relative but money prices that directly regulate international trade between countries and eventually give rise to the specialisation by each in production. That is to say, he recognises that trade and specialisation are not directly based on comparative advantage (reflecting relative national prices) but on absolute advantage (reflecting world money prices). However, he argues that comparative advantage translates into absolute advantage through the flow of world money between countries and the requirement for balance in this trade over the long run. For Ricardo it does this via a quantity theory type of mechanism whereby the inflows or outflows of world money cause all world money prices to rise or fall in the trading countries (see Shaikh 1979: 287–289). Hence, in the final instance, it is comparative advantage that determines patterns of trade and specialisation. Table 2 illustrates the results of this quantity mechanism in Ricardo's example

Table 1 Ricardo's example of trade between England and Portugal in cloth and wine

Before trade	Cloth (hours labour per unit)	Cloth gold price (oz)	Wine (hours labour per unit)	Wine gold price (oz)	Price ratio
England	100	50	120	60	1:1.2
Portugal	90	45	80	40	1:0.9

Note: 1 oz of gold = 2 hours of labour time in both England and Portugal.

Source: Adapted from Shaikh 1979: 287.

Table 2 The consequences of the opening of trade between England and Portugal

After trade	Cloth (hours labour per unit)	Cloth gold price	Wine (hours labour per unit)	Wine gold price	Price ratio
England	100	45	120	54	1:1.2
Portugal	90	49.5	80	44	1:0.9

Note: 1 oz gold = 2.2 hours of labour time in England; 1 oz of gold = 1.8 hours of labour time in Portugal.

Source: Adapted from Shaikh 1979: 287.

when money flows from England to Portugal after the opening up of trade. Since Portugal is seen as having an absolute advantage in the production of both goods at the point of the opening up of trade, it will export both goods to England in the first instance. The resulting trade deficit will be paid for by a flow of gold from England to Portugal. The consequence of this flow is argued by Ricardo to be a rise in gold prices of all commodities produced in Portugal and corresponding fall of all gold prices of commodities produced in England (in this specific example by 10 per cent). Relative prices of cloth and wine in each country will however remain the same. This process will continue until English producers become competitive in the production of cloth and export enough of it for there to be balance in the money value of trade flows between in the two countries.

From the perspective of the Marxist theory of international price and money developed above, Ricardo's theory can be argued to be fundamentally flawed in a number of important respects. Firstly, it suggests that Ricardo mistakenly denies the determination of international prices by international values measured by international labour time in the absence of capital mobility because he appears to have a mistaken view of how prices and values come to be formed. That is to say, it is not the mobility of capital, or even its existence, that explains the formation of prices, but rather production based on a division of labour mediated by exchange. For Marx, as soon as a good becomes integral to the reproduction of an economic system based on exchange, the labour expended in its production becomes part of the labour required for the reproduction of the whole system and qualitatively equivalent to all other labour expended in the production of all other goods which are similarly integral to the reproduction of the economic system. The existence of capital is premised on the expenditure of part of the labour in the production of all commodities as surplus labour – labour over and above the labour required to produce the wage goods of labour – and manifest in the magnitude of price containing a profit component. The mobility of capital leads to the profit component being equalised across all sectors – prices becoming prices of production. It does not cause commodities to have either worth or prices. Hence, as soon as trade becomes integral to the reproduction

of the economic systems of the trading countries, the goods traded represent international value or worth measured by international labour time and the magnitudes of the (relative) international prices of these goods come to be determined by the magnitudes of their (relative) international values. The fact that the firms exporting products are capitalist means only that the prices of the internationally traded commodities contain a profit component. The fact that capital is internationally mobile means only that this profit component corresponds to a certain international average rate of profit, and the prices of the internationally traded products become international prices of production. All of this means that if Portuguese producers of both cloth and wine produce the bulk of commodities for both the Portuguese and English markets, the values of the goods produced in Portugal will become the international values of these commodities, and it is these values that will determine the relative domestic prices of the traded products in England. That is, after the opening up of trade, and assuming all commodities are traded, the relative prices of cloth and wine in England will be those determined by Portuguese producers of both commodities. The relative prices of cloth to wine in England will move from 1:1.2 to 1:0.9.

Secondly, Ricardo is mistaken to argue that the movement of gold between countries would result in changes in its value in each country and a corresponding proportionate change in the gold prices of commodities in each. The opening up of international trade between England and Portugal can certainly be expected to give rise to a fall in the gold prices of both cloth and wine in England, but only because these are the prices of the two goods set by Portuguese exporters of these. In fact, the gold price of wine will fall by proportionately more than that of cloth in England, contrary to what one would expect from a quantity theory type of mechanism at work. That is, unit gold prices of cloth in England fall from 50 to 45 ounces of gold while the unit price of wine falls from 60 to 40 ounces of gold. The fall in the gold prices in England has nothing to do with the implied outflow of gold from it since there is also a change in the relative price of both, much as there is no reason to suppose that the corresponding inflow of gold into Portugal would result in a rise in gold prices in it. This is because, once it is accepted that gold, like all internationally

traded commodities, has a certain international price (an exchange ratio with all other commodities) determined by its international value, there is no reason to suppose that the flow of gold between England and Portugal would lead to the relative (international) labour time commanded by the gold falling in England and rising in Portugal (from 1 oz gold to 2 hours labour time in each to 1 oz of gold to 2.2 hours in England and 1 oz gold to 1.8 hours in Portugal) as is implied by Ricardo's quantity theory adjustment mechanism. The gold money prices of traded commodities and international value of gold in both England and Portugal will remain the same after the flow of gold between them.

This does not mean that there would be no tendency towards adjustments of the imbalances between England and Portugal, or even that the flow of money has no part to play in any adjustment. Rather, it suggests that the adjustments will come primarily from relative changes in productivity in England and Portugal (especially England as the deficit country) and/or patterns of trade between them. In the case of Ricardo's example this would mean that for England to begin exporting cloth to Portugal it would have to produce and sell cloth at, or below, the prices of Portuguese producers – that is, 45 ounces of gold per unit. To the extent that the flow of money has an impact on the required adjustments, it would be through their impact on relative productivities – increasing the pressure on English producers to improve their productivity.

Lastly, the Marxist analysis presented above suggests that trade *per se* would not lead to the sort of complete specialisation postulated by Ricardo given initial conditions of self-sufficient national reproduction based on national divisions of labour and the requirement of a certain balance in trade between countries as trade between them develops, and notwithstanding some lending by surplus to deficit countries. Rather, the expansion of trade can be expected to lead to the *gradual* integration of the producers of the trading countries into a more extensive international division of labour in which producers in the different trading countries produce and export commodities in which they have natural or acquired advantages. This can most certainly be expected to have some corrosive effect on self-sufficient national reproduction

systems. However, even if the producers of a particular country dominate the international sales of a particular product, the likelihood is that there will be a number of producers of the same product in other countries, some of whom may be using the same technologies and appropriating similar profits, while others will be using inferior technologies and appropriating lower levels of profits (see also Shaikh 1980). Some producers using inferior technologies may also be appropriating the same rate of profit as more efficient producers owing to their proximity to markets and various taxes and surcharges facing importers of these products. Moreover, with the flow of capital and technology between countries in the context of international competition between producers (and support by national states), initial patterns of specialisation are likely to change. Historically, the sort of complete specialisation envisaged by Ricardo has been the result of its imposition on the present-day developing countries by the present-day advanced countries during the early phases of the industrialisation of the latter and in the context of the destruction of the existing self-sufficient systems of reproduction in the former (see, for example, Kemp 1989, 1993). These are patterns of specialisation which the advanced countries have sought to continue right up to the present through a myriad of economic, financial, and political pressures. They are not the natural outcomes of the development of trade, not even trade in the context of uneven development. (It needs noting that some Marxists appear to agree with the logic of Ricardo's explanation of specialisation, i.e. that it is the natural consequence of the expansion of international trade in the absence of capital and technology mobility, only denying that it gives rise to the sort of complete specialisation envisaged by him; see e.g. Shaikh 1980.)

Of note in this context is that pivotal to Ricardo's argument that countries specialising and trading with one another will gain, or at least not lose, is the implicit assumption that each country can revert to the production of the imported good should the international terms of trade they face be less favourable than the domestic terms of trade that existed prior to trade and specialisation. In terms of Ricardo's example of trade and specialisation between England and Portugal, this would mean that if England is not able to import

wine at more than 0.83 units for each unit of cloth it exports it can revert to the production of wine and, similarly, if Portugal is not able to import cloth at more than 0.89 units for each unit of wine it exports it can revert to the domestic production of cloth. The important point is that England and Portugal are assumed to be able to revert to pre-trade and pre-specialisation patterns of production. If either England or Portugal could not revert to the domestic production of the imported good, then the logic of Ricardo's analysis suggests that there is in fact no limit to the movement of relative international prices in one direction or another and, therefore, no reason to suppose that countries will not lose from trade and specialisation. This fact has, of course, particular significance in the context of the above-mentioned imposition of patterns of specialisation on the present-day developing countries. These imposed patterns of specialisation, in the context of the destruction of self-reproducing systems of reproduction, in fact denied the present-day developing countries precisely this possibility (some degree of self-sufficient domestic reproduction) and, as a consequence, allowed the non-specialising countries, the advanced countries, to exert continuous downward pressure on the international prices and values of commodities exported by the developing countries, and via this to increase the absolute and relative intensification of labour in these countries (see also Kühne 1979). It is the enforced and sustained patterns of specialisation in the developing countries in the context of the destruction of their national systems of reproduction that have been the real sources of their impoverishment and not, for example, their alleged lower levels of productivity as claimed by a number of Marxist writers on the subject (see, for example, Carchedi 1991a; Shaikh 1980; Warren 1973). Indeed, it is an understanding of this fact that has also pointed to two of the important pillars of more successful development strategies adopted by a number of (mostly East Asian) developing countries in recent times: food security and the diversification of their production and export bases. (In an extensive empirical study of development processes in the developing countries, Rodrik 2007 provides considerable evidence to show that economic development requires, among other things, diversification, not specialisation.)

### Concluding remarks

The preceding has sought to contribute to the extension of Marx's theories of price and money to the international level. It was argued that pivotal to this extension is an understanding of Marx's views on how prices are formed and, concomitantly, how money emerges and the role it plays in price formation. Marx's understanding of how prices are formed in general permits an understanding of how, with the development of international trade, international prices come to be formed and their relative magnitudes determined by relative international labour time, without any presumption of capital flows between countries. International capital flows have a bearing only on the magnitudes of relative international prices, not on their existence. Marx's understanding of how money emerges and contributes to price formation in general permits an understanding of the emergence of world money and the determination of its value as well as the world money prices of commodities, denying most fundamentally any quantity theory mechanism related to world money flows between countries. Neither the value of world money nor world money prices in different countries change as a result of flows of money between countries.

This interpretation of the extension of Marx's theories of price and money to the international level was then used to consider Ricardo's explanation of international prices and money in the context of his theory of comparative advantage. It was argued that from the perspective of Marx's analysis Ricardo's explanation of international prices and money is fundamentally mistaken, as is his view that the opening up of trade between countries should lead to their complete specialisation with gains for all. Ricardo's explanation of relative international price is mistaken in that he sees relative international prices as determined in the final instance by the autarchic prices of the trading countries. He explicitly denies that international relative prices, unlike domestic relative prices, are determined by the (international) labour time required for their production on the basis of the mistaken view that such a determination requires international capital mobility. From the perspective of Marx's analysis what Ricardo fails to see is that once international trade becomes integral to the reproduction of

different commodities in different countries the traded commodities acquire international values or relative international worth as measured by the relative international labour time required for their production. Ricardo's explanation of world money and world money prices is mistaken in that he sees, on the one hand, world money as reflecting the national worth of this money and not its international worth, and, on the other hand, this national worth as determined by the quantity of world money in circulation in any country in relation to the goods it circulates. The problem with this view is that it suggests world money can have a different worth in different countries and that this worth can change with flows of money between countries. From the perspective of Marx's analysis what Ricardo fails to see is that world money has basically a single world value which is determined by the international labour time required for its production when it is a commodity, and the international labour time it commands when it is paper issued by a particular country. Flows of money between countries will not cause this value to change in the different countries. Finally, from the perspective of the extension of Marx's analysis to the international level Ricardo can be argued to be mistaken in seeing the opening up of trade leading to complete specialisation. This is because he fails to see that specialisation in the context of the opening up of trade is limited by the need for some semblance of balance in trade flows between trading countries in the process of the expansion of trade, especially given initial conditions of self-sufficient national reproduction. Indeed, complete specialisation would be found only where the national reproduction systems are ruptured and specialisation imposed, as in the case of present-day developing countries. The consequence of the imposition of specialisation patterns in the context of ruptured systems of reproduction is that the prices and values of the exports from these countries are subject to continuous downward pressure, something which is implicitly denied by Ricardo's doctrine of comparative advantage on the basis of the tacit assumption that all trading countries can revert to the production of all goods should they not obtain the relative prices they desire.

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## Nationalisation

Nationalisation is the seizure of private property by public authorities. The political, economic, administrative and judicial character of a seizure can vary. The reason, aim, agent, and method of seizure determine whether it is a confiscation, socialisation, collectivisation, etatisation, or municipalisation. Technically, confiscation is seizure of a particular private property; collectivisation and socialisation diffuse ownership to certain sectors of society; etatisation and municipalisation reflect the central or decentralised character of the public authority; nationalisation indicates on whose behalf the seizure takes place.

The general judicial concept for seizures is expropriation. Literally, expropriation has transitivity with nationalisation and the two terms are used interchangeably in the broad meaning of seizure. The narrower terminology corresponding to expropriation is eminent domain, compulsory purchase, and acquisition; all of which involve delegation of this authority to third parties for specific public purposes. The justification for seizure is 'public interest', which represents the interests of a population specified in terms of social classes, administrative scales, or

economic sectors. The seizure may produce permanent or temporary hybrid forms of ownership other than state ownership, such as co-operatives, quasi-public corporations, and autonomous institutions.

Expropriation is mainly theorised by Marxist political economy, which proposes the seizure of the means of production for the socialisation of private property. As a widespread political practice in the 20th century, nationalisation has been a process in decolonisation involving the seizure of foreign-owned property as a legitimate measure to consolidate national sovereignty. Current scholarly discussion focuses on the degree of compensation to be paid in nationalisations, determined by the conceptualisation of public interest and sovereignty.

### Historical and theoretical background

The main premise of nationalisation is the nation state. The nation state is the modern form of state based on citizenship instead of kinship. Citizenship developed in the burghs of Europe under feudalism but its embryonic form was seen in Ancient Rome. Citizenship, which was not based on nations at this stage, conferred individual freedom and the right to ownership. Roman law restricted individual rights on behalf of common interest. The state's exceptional authority to seize private property (*imperium*) was based on sovereignty over the communities, whose members had the right to own property (*dominium*). The duality of *dominium-imperium* later transformed into the modern private-public dichotomy.

After the disintegration of the Roman Empire, the emerging feudal regimes in Europe did not distinguish between public and private interests in the modern sense. As the bourgeoisie ascended to the ruling position in the modern era, the 'private' came to correspond to the sphere of individual capitalist economic activities, and the 'public' to the common interests of society. Expropriation of private property by the nation state (i.e. nationalisation) became an exceptional procedure justified by public interest that was assumed to be above class interests.

In the building of nation states, the act of seizure functioned as a means of primitive accumulation and secularisation. The

enclosure movement in England (which accelerated in the 17th century) expropriated small peasants' lands, while it played a secularising role during nationalisation of Church property during the French Revolution (1789). The same year, the Bill of Rights adopted by the US Congress approved the notion of 'eminent domain', restricting seizure of private land to the condition of public use and the payment of compensation. During decolonisation, nationalisation was utilised to seize foreign-owned property and in order to consolidate the emerging national bourgeoisie.

Marx (1978/1867) asserted that production was socialised as the development of capitalism centralised and concentrated production and at the same time private property. The centralisation and concentration of capital paved the way to mass production on an ever greater scale. Proletarian revolutions would 'expropriate the expropriators', thus completing the process of integration of production. Marx used the term 'socialisation' for the total transformation process. He anticipated that the first harsh phase of socialisation ('accumulation of capital') would inevitably lead to the second phase of socialisation ('expropriation of expropriators'), which would be easier, merely involving a transfer of ownership.

On the eve of the 20th century, Hilferding (1910) explained the vertical and horizontal integration of industry under the dominance of financial capital. According to his terminology, 'socialisation' of banks through concentration of capital would lead to centralised control of large-scale production while the liquidation of small-scale production through competition would socialise the assets of such producers. Socialisation of production necessitated integration of individual production units. However, it is known that capitalist monopolisation does not carry integration through to fruition.

Lenin's (1964/1917) contribution to the discussion elucidated the economic and administrative organisation under working-class power. He asserted that Soviet power would disintegrate the capitalists' bureaucratic control over capital through workers and peasants' seizures, and reorganise production through planning. Indeed Marx (1973/1871) had also attributed the failure of the Paris Commune to not having organised co-operative production under a general plan.

Two approaches to nationalisation emerged in revolutionary movements. Syndicalism emphasised self-management of enterprises after being seized by workers as the breaking point from capitalism. This approach, inspired by the ideas of anarchism, opposed the centralisation of the control over production. In contrast, Bolshevism considered nationalisations a critical phase in the socialisation process, freeing the productive forces from the constraints of old production relations. According to orthodox Marxism, productive forces are expected to mature as they are integrated through planning, eventually closing the gap between ownership and management. Basically, the dispute was about who should lead nationalisations and organise nationalised enterprises: the workers of the enterprises or the political power.

The implications of these ideas have been challenged in two sets of nationalisation experiences throughout the 20th century. The first comprises those in Europe that arose as a response to the consequences of the First World War and the ideological polarisation in the aftermath of the Second World War. The second comprises the rise of nationalisation in the decolonisation period and its retreat with the restoration of imperialist relations. The practice of nationalisation will be discussed in these two phases. Their residue is assessed in current discussions on the past and future of nationalisations in the early 21st century.

### **First phase (1917–50)**

In the run-up to the First World War and during the years after it nationalisations were carried out under different agendas. The Mexican Revolution established the 1917 Constitution, which gave the government an inalienable right to all underground resources, aimed at preventing oil exploitation by foreigners. Simultaneously, the nationalisation practices after the October Revolution in Russia laid the ground for the Soviet socialist state. On the other hand, partial nationalisations implemented in Germany after the First World War were influenced by the demand of unions to involve workers in enterprise management to promote the 'socialisation' of enterprises as autonomous units.

Systematic nationalisations were carried out by etatist and socialist regimes after 1929, particularly in countries devastated by

the war and the Great Depression. Some of the nationalisations were aimed at saving bankrupt private enterprises by the injection of public funds, with the intention of eventually returning them to private ownership. However, these nationalisations to bail out firms were applied selectively. As relations between imperialist powers deteriorated, in fascist Italy and Germany, nationalised enterprises were integrated into the state-owned military industry and not reprivatized.

The rise in resort to protectionist measures during the Great Depression led to the fragmentation of the capitalist world economy, resulting in a loss of faith in liberal economic theories. Keynes (1936) pointed out that state regulation of aggregate expenditures could maintain high levels of employment and investment, thereby forestalling the pressure for nationalisation. In the aftermath of the Second World War, economic planning was introduced to avoid nationalisations in the reconstruction of war-ravaged capitalist economies.

The bureaucratisation theories posited by Rizzi (1985/1939) in the inter-war years, which connected the formation of a new management class to nationalisations, became more relevant in the post-war period as public enterprises flourished. Another analysis of nationalisation qualified it as a temporary measure serving capitalists' interests. Dobb (1958) pointed out that the function of the nationalised sector in capitalist economies was to purchase the outputs of, and to supply inputs to, the private sector. According to Dobb, enterprises nationalised because of bankruptcy could be expected to be reprivatized after their financial recovery under public management.

The nationalisation experiences in the wake of the Second World War developed in two grounds. In Western Europe where capitalism reigned, selective nationalisations were implemented and commissions for self-management were established along trade union demands. In Eastern Europe where the People's Democracies were founded, widespread nationalisations were reinforced with land reform and economic planning. The People's Republic of China (PRC), on the other hand, brought private enterprises into joint state-private management as a step towards nationalisation and delivered collectivised land to the communes.

Both in the capitalist and socialist countries, nationalisations had a confiscatory

nature as a sanction for past national and public offences during fascist occupation. This opened a debate on the legitimacy of seizure and the liability of compensation. The peaceful co-existence policy in Europe resulted in attempts to merge communist principles with capitalist logic in international law.

Katzarov (1959) distinguished between nationalisation and expropriation, relating the former to a justified public issue and attributing a penal character to the latter. Bystricky (1956) on the other hand advocated the universal legitimacy of nationalisation without indemnity as a human right. In contrast, Seidl-Hohenveldern (1958) argued that both nationalisation and expropriation necessitated full compensation. Shao-chi (1956) theorised the redemption of the national bourgeoisie as a peaceful means of transition to socialism through state-capitalism. These diverse ideas had implications in the decolonisation process.

## Second phase (1950–2000)

International law specified 'prompt, adequate and effective compensation' (the Hull standard) as a condition for nationalisation in the wake of Mexico's nationalisation of US assets in 1936. In the post-war period, the United Nations (UN) recognised the right to nationalise in 1952 with Resolution No. 626 (VII) as part of permanent sovereignty over natural resources. A decade later, with Resolution No. 1803 (XVII), the justified grounds for nationalisation were stipulated as public purposes, security, or national interests, and appropriate compensation was set as a condition. In 1974 the UN adopted the Calvo doctrine that recognised the validity of the legislation of the home country in cases of legal disputes, against the opposition of France, Germany, Britain, Japan, and the US.

In the implementation of nationalisation, the countries that gained independence from colonial rule were influenced by the development strategy propagated and exemplified by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Soviet industrialisation experience (the First Five Year Plan taking place between 1928 and 1932) was a development model based on planning in a nationalised economy. By contrast, the Tennessee Valley Authority (nationalising the Tennessee Electric Power Company in 1939) implemented during the New Deal was used

by the US to show that capitalism could also use planning and public entrepreneurship for development.

The states that joined the Non-Aligned Movement (initiated in 1961) were attracted to the Soviet model in varying degrees, some using nationalisation as a political tool against imperialism and others as an economic tool for bargaining with foreign capital. The organisation of nationalised resources determined the orientation of the country towards the socialisation of the economy or towards reintegration into the world economy. In some countries the infusion of imperialist capital in the form of development funds from international financial institutions contributed to the rearticulation of capitalist relations.

Diverse experiences inspired controversial ideas on the role of nationalisations. Poulantzas (2000/1978) maintained that nationalisations in a capitalist context have to be distinguished from nationalisations for socialisation. When it came to the process of socialisation, Bettelheim (1975/1968) used the term 'chronological gap' for the historical delay in the development of socialist property relations from legal form to social reality. Guevara (1964) held that moral incentives in the planning process would close this time gap by accelerating the development of productive forces, mitigating the need for material incentives.

The discussion stemmed from the quest to follow a self-sufficient path of independent development. The uneven development between economic and political structures in post-colonial countries necessitated revolutionary voluntarism to overcome economic deficiencies. This opened a theoretical polemic between the advocates of gradual economic development towards socialism through a transitional moment of private ownership accompanied by market relations, and the advocates of political acceleration of development transcending through social mobilisation the economic phases assumed to be historically imperative. The first approach led to the Liberman reforms in the USSR while the second approach was implemented in the Great Leap Forward in the People's Republic of China.

Among the 'Third-World' countries, the pragmatic-temporary implementation of nationalisation (namely selective expropriation) instead of its programmatic-institutional implementation (pursuit of socialisation) determined

the persistence of the policy. In due course the former predisposition resulted in the competition among developing countries to attract foreign capital which they had previously considered an obstacle to independent development. After 1980 two important trends of neo-liberalism, namely globalisation and administrative decentralisation, advanced as the prospect of defending national public interests against the collaboration of international and local private interests waned.

The dissolution of socialism in the 1990s accelerated these trends. Commitments made to refrain from expropriations in bilateral and regional free-trade agreements invalidated the political legitimacy of nationalisations carried out in the past. The term 'seizure' now came to denote moderate measures against foreign investments ('creeping expropriations') with full compensation implied. According to UNCTAD (2012), foreign investments that were nationalised in the 1970s were subjected to indirect expropriations. The new grounds for nationalisations accepted as justified are motivated by environmental, public health, and welfare concerns.

The terminology of international law in the new millennium categorises seizures as direct expropriations and indirect expropriations which are defined variously in bilateral investment treaties, generally enlarging the scope of compensation. The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), established to arbitrate disputes between home countries and investor firms, focuses on claims of indirect expropriation and discriminatory measures. The awards are especially biased against expropriations related to political reactions (Libya-BP, 1973), popular protests (Argentina-Vivendi, 2009), and protectionist policies (Hungary-ANC, 2006).

### Individual country experiences

In the colonial period, the colonisers had used land seizures for primitive accumulation, such as the confiscation of land belonging to blacks by the British in South Africa (1870-85). As a reaction, anti-colonial movements took over property of foreign settlers, like those of the Europeans in Algeria (1962). In the age of imperialism, seizures became a means of maintaining national sovereignty, the foremost example being the

nationalisation of the Suez Canal in Egypt (1956).

The legitimacy of nationalisation was manipulated in the confiscation of property of social minorities, perceived as exploiters and usurpers of national resources. An example of nationalisation of assets of economically dominated groups is the transfer of the Chinese-dominated financial sector to the indigenous privileged classes in Indonesia (1960s). By contrast, in the nationalisation of land belonging to Palestinians by Israel (1949), the expropriators were the economically dominant groups.

In Latin American countries, various national movements united against comprador political elites and limited the economic power of foreign investors over domestic resources. Land redistribution and nationalisations of natural resources were carried out by corporatist political leaders such as Peron in Argentina (presidency 1946–55, 1973–74), Cardenas in Mexico (presidency 1934–40), and Vargas in Brazil (presidency 1930–45, 1953–54).

Nationalisations implemented in revolutionary processes were carried out not only through administrative and legislative measures but also through organised mass movements. The seizure of colonisers' lands by Vietnamese peasants was organised during the 1930s by the Indochinese Communist Party; the Cominform decision in 1947 to implement further nationalisations was realised with the seizure of small-scale enterprises by the Communist government in Bulgaria. A singular example was seen in Ethiopia in 1974 where nationalisations were combined with the mobilisation for education.

In some developing countries, nationalist governments tried to create an economic model distinct from socialism. These were indigenous variations of the so-called 'third way' espoused by the Non-Aligned Movement established in 1961. Governments that implemented nationalisations without the aim of 'expropriating the expropriators' gave names to their regimes to indicate the singularity of their development models; such as *Estado Novo* (New State) in Brazil (1937–45), *Demokrasi Terpimpin* (Guided Democracy) in Indonesia (1957–66) and *Ba'ath* (Arab Socialist Resurrection) in several countries in the Middle East. In some countries, communist movements that pressed the moderate

governments to continue nationalisation were either pacified (Portugal, 1974–75) or eliminated (Indonesia, 1965–66).

Religious institutions in some Christian and Muslim countries inhibited or even reversed nationalisations. Nationalisations were prohibited by the conception of Islamic finance in Sudan (1970s), and prevented by Islamic principles in Iran (1982). Catholicism was among the important factors in the restoration of previously nationalised private property under Falangism in Spain (1939) and after the dissolution of the People's Republic in Poland (1989).

In certain cases, public institutions created through nationalisations merged with traditional social structures, with varying results. The attempt in Iraq (1958) and Libya (1969, 1977) to liquidate feudal dominance while preserving the rural social structure to which egalitarian relations were attributed proved unsuccessful. In Hungary and Romania between the end of the Second World War and the mid-1980s, on the other hand, the collectivisation in land promoted the social position of women. However, in the socialist countries, the subsequent reintroduction of market relations in the 1980s generated pressure for the restoration of conservative social order.

The planning organisations that had consolidated the nationalised enterprises were later used in the restoration of private property. In Yugoslavia (1953) and Algeria (1988) decentralised planning that accompanied self-management of nationalised enterprises resulted in the revival of competitive relations. Granting autonomy to public enterprises was theorised as 'market socialism' in the People's Republics, where the endorsement of the profit maximisation principle ended the socialisation process.

The leaders of some national liberation movements that had achieved nationalisations in their countries later endorsed privatisations under the influence of neo-liberal thinking. As globalisation became the watchword, the pursuit of public interests and the concern for independence were degraded, paving the way for denationalisations. Exemplified by the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement in Bolivia, *Ba'ath* in Syria and the African National Congress in the Union of South Africa, they abandoned the non-capitalist development strategy in the wake of the dissolution of the actually existing socialist alternative (1990s).

Apart from the countries where counter-revolutionary governments eventually relinked them to the global capitalist system by forced marketisation 'reforms' such as Chile (1975), the main argument of the majority of post-colonial states for deregulating their economies was the need for capital investment. However, in order to attract foreign capital, it had to be indemnified from nationalisation. This necessitated acceptance of seizures as 'expropriations' that required prompt, adequate and effective compensation. Consequently, some countries (such as Bolivia and Ecuador in the early 2000s) rejected demands for compensation payment in seizures that they considered as a right of sovereignty.

Nationalisation as a makeshift towards reprivatisation was also applied in crisis-stricken peripheral countries as some post-colonial states sought financial aid from international financial institutions, thus renewing dependence on imperialist capital. However, economic crises triggered by foreign debt reintroduced nationalisation to bail out bankrupt private financial institutions through the injection of public funds. Banks in Mexico (1982) and Peru (1987) were nationalised, burdening the public sector with liabilities.

The privatisation of nationalised assets in various countries in the neo-liberal period was hindered by various factors. Argentina cancelled planned privatisations after the decision to renationalise the postal service (2003) following its refusal to go along with International Monetary Fund demands. Nationalist feelings against the Chinese minority in Indonesia and in the Philippines also slowed down the privatisation process when it was introduced in the 1980s. In some countries, some of the public enterprises whose seizure had been vital in the nationalisation process were protected against privatisation, as they were still qualified as 'strategic sectors'.

### Current discussions

The frequency of nationalisations throughout the 20th century has been studied by many scholars. Minor (1994) carried on Kobrin's (1984) research, which covered the 1960–79 period, to the year of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Hajzler (2010) updated the research while Tomz and Wright (2010) extended it back to the beginning of the 20th century.

These studies subsume all seizures under the concept of expropriation. They thus reflect a shift in the scholarly perception of nationalisation policies and practices towards a framework that ignores the political antagonism between imperialism and anti-imperialism.

Kobrin uses the term 'expropriation' interchangeably with 'nationalisation'. He distinguishes between selective and massive expropriations, attributing an ideological character to the latter. As developing countries find more effective ways to cope with foreign firms, nationalisations become less frequent. Reaching a peak during the mid-1970s in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, the option of nationalisation was mostly used as a bargaining chip against core countries rather than being implemented for a political objective. This pragmatism was reflected in the levying of taxes on and the regulation of direct foreign investments in the 1980s. Kobrin points out that this tendency is the result of backsliding from the anti-imperialist stance that was the basis of most nationalisation.

Minor provides information on the privatisations in the 1980s of previously nationalised assets. Some selective expropriations were observed during this period. States which had previously conducted nationalisations on a broad scale (such as Egypt, Vietnam and China) enacted legislation prohibiting nationalisation of foreign investment. Minor anticipates that the results of privatisations may engender a new wave of nationalisations in the future.

Kobrin and Minor's framework, which had taken into consideration social movements politically inclined to anti-imperialism, underwent a change in the literature of the 2000s. The studies of nationalisation took a technical form, focusing on economics and management. This shift is peculiar because of its incongruity with new trends. On the one hand, many states are resorting to regulative measures in crises caused by neo-liberal policies. On the other hand, a new anti-imperialist political trend has emerged in Latin America where a resurgence of nationalisation measures has taken place. Although a Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) was established to promote foreign investment in developing countries and press for protection from nationalisations, it seems not to have influenced the policies of some Latin American states.

Duncan (2006) argues that nationalisations are not prompted by political and economic

crises but rather by fluctuations in the prices of raw materials. Against Kobrin's emphasis on the ideological aims of the nationalising state, he points out that the appeal of nationalisation is that it can be used to satisfy popular expectations. According to Duncan, 'revolution' and 'sovereignty' are used only as pretexts to legitimise state intervention in the economy. Hence, in developing countries, nationalisation is not implemented to realise an anti-imperialist political strategy; rather it is utilised as a makeshift expedient.

Chang et al. (2009) conceptualise nationalisation in the same pragmatic framework. The swings between economic crises and institutional reform reflect the trade-off between 'efficiency' and 'equity'. The demand for equity motivates nationalisation, but efficiency necessitates privatisation; hence nationalisation–privatisation cycles are generated. Chang et al. maintain that the nationalisations in Bolivia, Venezuela, and Zambia have been induced by fluctuations in raw material prices; therefore, these states may be expected to reverse this policy depending on market conditions.

Hajzler explains nationalisation policies from a technology angle: the preponderance of natural resources and public services subjected to nationalisation arises from their technology-intensiveness. It is the increasing profitability of certain economic sectors in private hands that generally induces nationalisations in developing countries. Tomz and Wright hold that nationalisation is 'sovereign theft', an act of expropriation that should be compensated. They ignore that those countries implementing nationalisations during the last century have been subject to colonisation and to unequal trade treaties under military threat. Therefore, the legacy of imperialism vanishes in this assessment of nationalisations.

Harvey (2007) explains the flux between nationalisation and privatisation as opportunities for the adjustment to changing imperialist hegemony and capital accumulation strategy. As an example he refers to the aftermath of the nationalisation of oil in Iran by the Mosaddegh Government (1951). A coup toppled the government and denationalisation transferred the oil assets to a US company instead of the previous British proprietor company, a change reflecting the new imperialist hierarchy. Likewise in Chile, General Augusto Pinochet reversed

nationalisations carried out by Salvador Allende (1970–73) only after his rival (General Gustavo Leigh, a Keynesian) was sidelined in 1975 and export-led growth was favoured over import substitution.

Ha-Joon Chang (2007) analyses the utilisation of nationalisation by governments on behalf of capital when faced with national or sectoral crises. Interestingly, he uses arguments against state ownership put forth by market-oriented thinkers against policies of liberal governments. He suggests that Kornai's criticism of soft budget constraints in state enterprises in former socialist countries could be applied to the bailing-out of banks through nationalisation, which he describes as the privatisation of gains and socialisation of losses.

There appears to be an increasing mainstream concern to mitigate the pressures that make for the nationalisation–privatisation cycle. This may reflect uneasiness over the discontent arising from the results of the deregulation policies advocated by the Washington Consensus. Chua (1995) proposes re-regulation, accompanied by 'institutional reforms' against the resurgence of protectionism and the rising awareness of 'ecological colonialism', in order to consolidate privatisations.

About two decades after the implementation of the Washington Consensus, the concern to sustain neo-liberalism in the face of a global economic crisis has again put nationalisation on the neo-liberal agenda under the premises of the post-Washington Consensus. Stiglitz advocates the nationalisation of banks subsidised by government in the US (2009) and also nationalisation of natural resources subject to inequitable contracts in Latin America (2006), in order to protect foreign investment on a broader scale (i.e. capital exports, the basic form of imperialism).

Ali Somel

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## Neo-Liberalism and Financialization

### Neo-Liberalism

According to David Harvey (2005: 2) neo-liberalism 'proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade'. Neo-liberals therefore believe that free markets need to be unshackled from the demand management of the economy and society so that individuals can then follow their self-interests.

It was after the Second World War that demand management of national economies took centre stage when many governments sought to impose Keynesian policies, such as national bargaining with trade unions over wage levels in order to forecast wage costs and consumer demands. Neo-liberals, however, jumped on the inflationary tendencies of Keynesianism in order to push forward their own agendas. For example, during the 1970s higher wage demands from organised labour in the US and Western Europe led to increased prices, which were then tackled by cuts in public expenditure. But this ran into other problems, not least the spectre of industrial action by trade unions to maintain

living standards (Crouch 2011: 14). To counter these inflationary tendencies neo-liberals broadly argued, and indeed still argue, that individuals should be encouraged to interact with one another through their ego and self-interest in free markets rather than rely on a state to make economic calculations for them. Spontaneous order throughout society will as a consequence emerge (Birch and Mykhnenko 2010: 3). Social policy cannot, then, be used to ameliorate social inequalities thrown up by free-market economic processes and practices. Instead, neo-liberals take it for granted that 'the economic game, along with the unequal effects it entails, is a kind of general regulator of society that clearly everyone has to accept and abide by' (Foucault 2008: 143).

None of this implies that neo-liberals are entirely anti-state as such. Indeed, Harvey's definition also usefully draws attention to the fact that for neo-liberals free markets require an 'institutional framework' if free markets are to prosper. This is an extremely important point if for no other reason than the fact that neo-liberalism is often thought to only promote free markets in society. But this is not true. While supporting free markets neo-liberals have also been keen supporters of the need to ensure that a strong interventionist state is evident in society in certain areas. Early neo-liberal ideas say as much. Emerging in Germany during the late 1920s, and comprising thinkers such as Walter Eucken, Franz Böhm, Alexander Rüstow, Wilhelm Röpke, and Alfred Müller-Armack, the Freiburg School explicitly thought that 'entrepreneurship is not something that is "naturally given", akin to [Adam] Smith's idea of the natural human propensity to truck and barter. Instead it has to be fought for and actively constructed' (Bonefeld 2012: 636). These 'ordoliberal' held strongly on to the belief that the pursuit of private property, self-interests, entrepreneurial determination, and so on also had to be socially ordered through the state. After 1945 this brand of new liberal thinking was complemented by other luminaries in the economic world. Most notable of these economists was Milton Friedman, whose work at the University of Chicago with like-minded colleagues criticised Keynesian demand management of the economy in favour of deregulation and monetarism. Unlike ordoliberalism, the neo-liberalism of Friedman et al. was more anti-state and

advocated a larger degree of pro-market strategies in policy-making (Peck 2010).

Even so, those following Friedman's brand of free-market ideology were also adept at using state power for their own ends. For instance, one of the first experiments in implementing neo-liberal policies in fact arrived in an authoritarian state system in Chile when in 1973 Augusto Pinochet staged a *coup d'état* against the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende. As well as rounding up, imprisoning, and killing many in the opposition, Pinochet also called on the help of neo-liberal economists to apply their brand of free-market economics (Crouch 2011: 15). The next notable large-scale neo-liberal offensive came in 1979 with the election of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government in the UK. Privatising nationalised industries and passing legislation to strengthen the forces of law and order were just two broad policies that demonstrated Thatcher's commitment to a free economy and strong state (Gamble 1988). Anti-inflationary policies were also pursued to avoid wage-price instabilities and overloaded governments, while rising levels of unemployment and poverty were deemed acceptable because they helped to loosen labour markets (Cerny 2008: 18–20; O'Connor 2010: 698). Under the presidency of Ronald Reagan the US pursued similar policies, while neo-liberal ideology more generally spread throughout the global world during the 1980s.

Despite these real effects of neo-liberal policies some critics nevertheless argue that many theories of neo-liberalism establish ideal-typical models which fail to take account of the complexities of societies. Wacquant (2012) in particular finds fault with what he considers to be one-sided views of neo-liberalism. Marxists for example regard neo-liberalism as a strictly economic macro project best encapsulated through the beliefs that neo-classical economics, privatisation, and 'small states' work best to safeguard capitalist interests and power. Foucauldians on the other hand regard neo-liberalism as a more concrete and contingent social project comprising a 'conglomeration of calculative notions, strategies and technologies aimed at fashioning populations and people' (Wacquant 2012: 69; see also Barnett et al. 2008). In contrast to these two approaches, Wacquant prefers to analyse neo-liberalism as neither a strictly economic project nor a

series of concrete governing techniques. For Wacquant neo-liberalism is therefore best viewed as a state project that includes fiscal constraints over welfare policy alongside an increase in penal policies aiming to curb disorders generated by welfare reform.

Jessop (2013), however, also reminds us that neo-liberalism has assumed different guises during specific periods in time and in specific countries. In other words, neo-liberalism has not remained an unchanging and static phenomenon as is perhaps suggested by Wacquant's definition. In the United Kingdom alone neo-liberalism has altered its form under successive Conservative and Labour governments from the 1980s through to the 2000s (Kiely 2005: 32–33). Moreover, neo-liberal policies have been adapted to suit different contexts, from the neo-liberal shock therapy in Russia during the collapse of the Soviet Union to Atlantic neo-liberalism in the United Kingdom and US, to neo-liberalism in developing countries, and finally to Nordic neo-liberalism (Jessop 2010: 172–174). It is for this reason, as Peck (2010: 20) recognises, that neo-liberalism does not have fixed coordinates of explanation as such, but rather represents a 'problem space' that resides within and at the boundaries of the state but also seeks to socialise institutions residing in civil society to take on a free-market ethos. Neo-liberals have therefore recognised the need to develop their ideas in order to suit the times they find themselves in and to convince sections of the public and policy-makers that the future resides in perpetuating the neo-liberalisation of society.

Neo-liberalism also shares a relationship with what has become known as financialisation. In actual fact, the two often work off from one another. Neo-liberal projects across the world have for example privatised the public sector, thus preparing the way for private investors to take over the running of particular social services and repackage them for financial markets and investors. Neo-liberalism promotes deregulation throughout society, including the financial sphere. For example, it 'imposed strong macro stability, and the opening of trade and capital frontiers' for finance (Duménil and Lévy 2011: 18). But what exactly is financialisation? It is to this question that we now turn.

### Financialisation

In one sense financialisation simply points towards 'the increasing role of financial

motives, financial markets, financial actors and financial institutions in the operation of the domestic and international economies' (Epstein 2005: 3). However, different approaches to financialisation can be identified. One influential approach in the social sciences and humanities highlights how financial networks are created through financial categories and financial models themselves, which not only 'describe economies ... but are intrinsic to the constitution of that which they purport to describe' (Langley 2008: 25). In this respect finance can be analysed as being 'performative' insofar as financial models and other financial devices and objects create a certain calculative logic among agents and objects and this in turn helps to shape the economy. In this definition, then, performativity designates the point at which an object is brought into being at the moment it is performed in concrete events.

One illustration of this type of performativity would be a financial model for prices which brings into being a set of prices, and thus changes actual existing prices, the moment it is performed in certain economic markets. For instance, options are a type of financial derivative based on the idea that one trader has the right to either buy an option at a stated time for a fixed price, for example to give \$5 to another trader for the option to buy crude oil at \$75 in six months, or sell an option at a point in time for a fixed price (Scott 2013: 68). One problem with options, though, has been how to decide when it is indeed the best time to buy them in the first place. This problem was 'solved' in 1973 by the Black–Scholes model in which stipulated that 'it was possible to construct a portfolio of an option and a continuously adjusted position in the underlying asset and lending/borrowing of cash that was riskless' (MacKenzie 2007: 58). According to MacKenzie, the influence of the Black–Scholes model went beyond simply presenting a 'correct' solution to a particular economic conundrum. Instead it started to change the behaviour of option traders. After all, the model was soon highly regarded in academic circles, it was simplistic enough for traders to understand its basic principles, and it was publicly available through newly established personal computers. It is in this sense that the model helped to socially construct, or 'perform', economic reality in accordance with its own principles

and thereby opened up a space for derivative traders to make seemingly 'rational' calculations about the buying and selling of options (compare Callon 2007).

For Arvidsson and Colleoni, such illustrations imply that financial markets are directed by 'calculative frames' of 'convention' that enable a 'rational analysis' of financial markets to come into being among financial actors. These calculations and social conventions in turn guide interpretations of financial data and lead to financial evaluations of companies and goods among different financial communities. Knowledge about the reputation of a company, say, Facebook, thereby circulates through these communities and can help encourage investments in the company in question (Arvidsson and Colleoni 2012: 142). Financial models and modes of calculation are also attached to other means of communication. One obvious illustration in this respect is the huge growth of information about finance in popular media (see also Thrift 2005).

However, if one argues that capitalism works within 'rational' calculative frames of convention then, as Engelen et al. (2012: 367) observe, this further implies that financial practices are to some degree predictable because certain rules of 'convention' are followed by financial actors. Engelen et al. suggest this gives a misleading picture of global finance, primarily because far from being predictable, global finance in fact operates in highly unpredictable circumstances. Financial strategies do not follow a set pattern or logic but more often evolve from a set of volatile circumstances which prove impossible to foresee. And such unpredictability is deeply embedded in the global financial architecture (Engelen et al. 2012: 367).

This is an important point because it suggests that the manner in which capitalism operates is not only found at a concrete level of calculations and conventions, but also operates at a deeper structural level where contradictions and dilemmas are evident. Starting from the standpoint of critical political economy, this alternative viewpoint attempts to understand how financialisation has become entrenched in the daily economic decision-making of major actors and corporations in the global capitalist economy. While not denying the importance of cultural conventions, critical political economy also explores how finance has become a growing

source of profits throughout the global economy (Krippner 2011: 27).

To give just one illustration of what this mean in real terms, major corporations are today able to fund many of their investments without the help of banks. They draw revenues instead by going to open financial markets, where they trade in bonds and equities (Lapavitsas 2013: 38). Again, many of these developments are related to the rise of neo-liberalism pursued by dominant states. As McNally (2006: 40) observes, those politicians who championed a move away from 'closed' national economies in the late 1970s to a competitive global economy actually advocated not the freeing up of trade as such but the liberalisation of capital. This then helped to pave the way for various forms of financialisation to take on highly complex appearances like derivatives and hedge funds (for a good discussion of these financial devices see Blackburn 2006).

At the same time, there has been a rise in the number of 'financial intermediaries' (corporate lawyers, hedge fund managers, stock market analysts, pension fund advisors, financial traders, and so on) willing to articulate financial imperatives to society. Banks are a case in point in that they too now gain profits by operating in financial markets to gain commissions and fees (Lapavitsas 2013: 38). With other financial organisations, banks also encourage individual households to increasingly take on financial burdens. So, for instance, during the 1990s financial intermediaries in the United Kingdom, with the help of government, made it easier for households to divert their savings into financial mechanisms like securities which then ended up in secondary financial markets. The coupons created by these markets could subsequently 'be held directly by households or indirectly by pension funds and insurance companies pooling household savings' (Froud, Sukhdev, and Williams 2002: 127). Profits were thereby generated in part through these emerging markets. Financialisation has therefore penetrated everyday life, placing a pressure on ordinary working people to pursue financial avenues and knowledge in their day-to-day activities and lives, with private pension schemes being an obvious illustration (Martin 2002: 78).

Among radical political economists, however, there is some disagreement about the form, function, and consequences of financialisation on the global economy.

Post-Keynesians follow Keynes's belief that a financial rentier class grows in maturity when capital is depressed. The rentier class is therefore like a parasite, feeding off the 'real' productive sections of the economy through forms like interest on loans (Lapavitsas 2013: 30). For this reason the rentier class is a 'functionless investor' who gains profits from financial market activity through their ownership of financial firms and financial assets (Epstein and Jayadev 2005: 48–49). According to post-Keynesians, then, financialisation is closely tied to an increase in the increased action and influence of the rentier class. Epstein and Jayadev (2005: 50), for example, estimate that the income share of the rentier class in the United Kingdom went up from 11.48 per cent to 24.5 per cent between the 1970s and 1990s.

An alternative perspective of financialisation to post-Keynesians is that of Marxism. Without doubt, both Marxists and Keynesians share some similar assumptions such as their critical remarks on the rentier class. Yet Marxists argue that financialisation is the result of deeply rooted contradictions within the heart of capitalist production which can never be eradicated, while post-Keynesians see the problems of financialisation as being based on poor decisions by politicians and policy-makers that can in principle be rectified by better management. However, there are different Marxist perspectives on the rise of financialisation. One school of thought sees financialisation as the outcome of stagnation. By the 1970s, according to Foster and McChesney (2012), capitalism was dominated by large monopolies that had generated large surpluses but could not invest these in normal productive spheres such as infrastructure projects (railways, roads, and so on) for the government. Most infrastructure projects had already been exploited by previous capitalists. Therefore the financial sphere was seen as a way to avoid stagnation. Investments in speculative and debt-driven finance thus became attractive because of the huge profits that could potentially be made. Speculative finance soon took on a life of its own, which is especially noticeable in relation to the use of debt to bankroll speculation. In the 1970s total outstanding debt in the US was around one and half times gross domestic product (GDP). By 2005 it had shot up to three and half times GDP (Foster and McChesney 2012: 60; see also Magdoff and Sweezy 1987).

A different Marxist perspective draws on Marx's argument that capitalism exhibits a propensity for the general rate of profit to fall over time. One of the most well-known proponents in this respect is that associated with Robert Brenner. He argues that capitalists have failed to invest in new productive capital. Specifically, Brenner (2002: 18) claims that intensified intra-capitalist competition from the 1960s onwards has led to 'manufacturing over-capacity and over-production in forcing down profit rates, both in the US and in leading capitalist economies more generally'. To compensate for a declining profit rate capitalists can temporarily seek out other ways to make money. During the 1990s, for example, Brenner (2002: 224) notes that venture capital and financial speculation hyped up an emerging belief that a new economy was coming into being based in part on high-tech industries, jobs, and services. But he argues that the new economy owes much of its existence to the predatory and speculative nature of the (over-)accumulation of capital in its financial form. Many investments in the high-tech sector were and are based on financial speculation rather than the production of goods with a foreseeable real profit gain (Brenner 2002: 229; for a similar Marxist perspective see Callinicos 2010).

Other Marxists dispute this and claim instead that financialisation represents the power of US economic global hegemony. Dominant capitalist nations have been willing to engage in financial investment in the US economy on the assumption that they will benefit in some way from the US's continual economic dominance in the world (Panitch and Gindin 2005). Panitch and Gindin (2012: 135) therefore argue that the American state has been enormously influential in maintaining the hegemony of the US dollar. Indeed, the Federal Reserve has managed to push liquidity into the economic system when required to try to off-set and manage economic crises. For Panitch and Gindin, then, the liberalisation of capital during the 1970s and greater global competition was underpinned by the determination of the US Treasury to maintain a common purpose among the core advanced capitalist nations and global institutions, which meant spreading financialisation across the world. The result was to bring new advantages to American industry. As Panitch and Gindin go on to note (2005: 114), from 1984 to 2004 the US economy (GDP) grew by

3.4 per cent, greater increase than those of other Group of 7 (G7) countries during this period, while its volume of exports averaged 6.8 per cent between 1987 and 2004 compared with an average of 4.5–5.8 per cent for the other G7 countries.

One useful conclusion that one can draw from Marxism is the idea that neo-liberalism and financialisation do not represent relatively stable socio-economic projects. Despite their differences, Marxists all agree that it is truer to say that both exhibit highly contradictory tendencies. The 2008 global economic crash is testimony to the deep-seated irrational nature of the relationship between the two, but evidence also suggests that more a country goes down the path of neo-liberalism and excessive financialisation, the more social inequalities it will generate and the less income and wealth will flow to its population (Lansley 2012). Moreover, neo-liberalism has made meagre gains for many in the developing world in terms of economic growth, notwithstanding the claims of the World Bank and other apologists to the contrary (see Hart-Landsberg 2013: 80–82). More positively, the contradictory nature of neo-liberalism and financialisation creates cracks, fissures, and gaps in its own structures that then open up opportunities for those with progressive agendas to put forward alternative social and political programmes to those who celebrate free markets.

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## Neo-Liberalism and Imperialism

### Introduction

Let us start with some rough definitions and distinctions. First, we are concerned with

modern imperialism and neo-liberalism, which are intimately connected with capitalism. A developed capitalist economy is one in which capitalists or the bourgeoisie own the means of production and the rest of the people, designated as workers or proletarians, own only their labour power (Dobb 1946: 7; Marx and Engels 1969 [1848]). But the proletarians are free in a legal sense: no private person (including corporations) can compel them to do anything legally without paying them a wage. No country has fully fitted this model of the capitalist mode of production.

There is a second aspect associated with capitalism. Capitalists not only make their profit by utilising the labour power of their workers, they have also to compete with one another by using whatever means they have at their disposal, for fear that if they cannot win they will lose all their capital, or their businesses will be taken over by other capitalists. One of the first things they have to do is to save as much of their profit as possible and invest it in such a way as to increase their profits further. As Marx (1957 [1867]: 595) wrote: 'Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!' As investment grows in size, various kinds of manufacturing production display economies of scale. Long before William Petty in the late 17th century, and Adam Smith in the second half of the 18th century, an Italian monk called Antonio Serra (2011 [1613]; Bagchi 2014a) had theorised that manufacturing displays economies of scale. This contrasts with agriculture, where the output is limited by the size and fertility of the land and increasing applications of inputs yield, after a time, diminishing amounts of output. Hence, he concluded, promotion of manufacture was the means of increasing the prosperity of a kingdom or region.

There is a third basic aspect of capitalism which is often overlooked. Workers have to compete with one another in order to survive. As Marx and Engels (1976 [1845-46]: 83) wrote:

Competition separates the individuals from one another, not only the bourgeois but still more the workers, in spite of the fact that it brings them together. Hence it is a long time before these individuals can unite ...

Capitalism can develop only in societies in which the kind of non-market power

exercised by feudal lords has been abolished or greatly moderated, and in which the capitalists or landlords turned capitalists control state power. This happened in several communes of northern Italy and in Flanders by the 11th-13th centuries (Abulafia 1977; Braudel 1984). These capitalists often make their first piles of wealth in foreign trade: 'Intercourse with foreign nations was the historical premise for the first flourishing of manufactures, in Italy and later in Flanders' (Marx and Engels 1976 [1845-46]: 76).

Referring back to the second characteristic of capitalism, we can again use a citation from Marx and Engels (77):

With the advent of manufacture the various nations entered into competitive relations, a competitive struggle, which was fought out in wars, protective duties and prohibitions, whereas earlier the nations, insofar as they were connected at all, had carried out an inoffensive exchange with one another.

Most of the historical evidence supports both parts of the above citation. The flows of trade within Asia were far more extensive than within Europe and between Europe and Asia before the rise of European powers, and by and large these trades were conducted peacefully (Abu-Lughod 1989). China and India, the two most populous countries of the world, had extensive internal and external trade, and big merchants conducting such trades from centuries BCE. However, these merchants acted under the regulations of states over which they had no control, and could not dispose of their property as they pleased, nor did they dare to engage in war to increase their profits (Bagchi 2005: chs 9-10).

Between the 10th and 12th centuries, communes of Italy emerged as capitalist states. Communes were regions ruled by the citizenry of a town. Many of them remained subject to the authority of the Holy Roman Emperor or a prince or the Pope. But communes in Central Italy (Lombardy), organising themselves in the Lombard League, threw off the suzerainty of the Holy Roman Emperor by the 12th century. Merchants of some of the Italian towns, many of which were ports connected by trade with the Byzantine Empire, Egypt and the Levant, grew wealthy and powerful through trade and then

subjugated the countryside and compelled the surviving feudal lords to give up their privileges and submit to the rule of the magistracy of the town council. For the history of the emergence and consolidation of the Communes, see Procacci (1973): chs 1 and 2 and Epstein 1999. They developed or revived the Roman laws relating to private property (Marx and Engels 1976 [1845–46]: 99–100). One of the earliest such examples was Amalfi in southern Italy (ibid; Braudel 1984: 106–108). ‘Amalfi was penetrated by a monetary economy: notarial documents show that her merchants were using gold coin to buy land as early as the ninth century. Between the eleventh and the thirteenth century, the landscape of the *valle* of Amalfi was thereby transformed: chestnut trees, vines, olive-groves, citrus fruits and mills appeared everywhere. The Amalfi Tables (*Tavole Amalfitane*) became one of the great maritime codes of Christian shipping in the Mediterranean’ (1984: 107). Then two things happened to the city: in 1100, it was conquered by the Normans who proceeded to establish a feudal order on the whole of southern Italy and the island of Sicily. And in 1135 and 1137, Amalfi was sacked by the city-state of Pisa, its rival in trade. Those events sealed the fate of Amalfi as a city-state and trading power.

But the aggression against Amalfi by the city-state of Pisa is only one in an almost unending series of wars by Italian city-states against each another, against the North African Arab sultanates or viceroalties of the Ottoman Empire, and the rapidly declining Byzantine Empire. I shall cite only a few examples of such continuous competition for profit and power using violent and diplomatic means. In 1284, at the Battle of Meloria in the Ligurian Sea, the Genoese defeated and destroyed the entire shipping of Pisa, and the latter then paled into insignificance as a maritime power (Caferro 2003). Ironically enough, exactly 400 years later, a French fleet of 160 ships bombarded the city of Genoa for three days and destroyed its shipping. Genoa had already declined to a tiny power, and its decline was hastened further by this. The French bombarded Genoa in order to eliminate it as a competitor in the salt trade and because it had refused to join the war against Spain with which the city had close commercial and financial relations (Reinert 2009: 260). Such events became a regular feature in wars between rival capitalist powers. For

example, in 1801, a British fleet commanded by Horatio Nelson, the most famous British naval commander of all time, bombarded Copenhagen because Denmark-Norway had joined an Alliance of Armed Neutrality, and as a neutral power, would not cease trading with France (Fremont-Barnes 2012: 84; Pocock 1987: 229). This feat was repeated in September 1807 by another British naval commander, and much of Copenhagen was burnt to cinders. So the infamous Japanese attack, against the US-occupied Pearl Harbor in December 1941, had many precedents in intra-European rivalries.

The destruction of Amalfi as a city-state and the establishment of a feudal order had an effect on the economic and social structure of southern Italy that lasted for the next seven centuries, if not longer. Until the 11th century or so, northern Italian city-states had to pay for the goods imported from Naples and Sicily with bullion, gold, or silver. Increasingly, however, the northern Italian merchants brought cloth and other manufactures to the region and used these in part to pay for the primary products they took from it. They found it increasingly in their interest to deepen the dependence of southern Italy on northern cloth (Abulafia 1977: 284). So the problem of dependency which has plagued the non-European colonies conquered by the European powers and the USA could occur even before centre–periphery division had emerged in the *global economy*.

### Imperialism straddles the world

Among the Italian city-states, Venice had emerged as a great power by defeating its arch rival Genoa. It fought four wars with Genoa between the 13th and 14th centuries and emerged triumphant in the fourth war fought between 1378 and 1381 (Lane 1973: chs 13–14; McNeill 1974: chs 1–2). Even before that victory, Venice had been acting as a great power in the eastern Mediterranean, siding with one power or another as suited its interests. It continued in that role until it was thoroughly trounced in a series of engagements with the Ottoman Empire, which had captured Constantinople, the seat of the Byzantine Empire, in 1453. However, Venice consolidated its position on the mainland of Italy, extending its territorial possessions on *terra firma*. This situation ended when Francis VII of France invaded Italy and the



rivalry between European states was fought out among the much bigger states of Spain, France, and England, and with the newly independent Republic of Netherlands, erstwhile part of the Spanish Netherlands, as a player (*ibid.*: 123).

From the 16th century, several European powers – including England, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Sweden and Prussia – strove for dominance in global trade and territorial power (Bagchi 2005: ch. 4). Eventually, between the 1690s and the final defeat of Napoleon in the Anglo-French wars (1815), freshly sparked by the French Revolution and its successful defence by the nationalist army put together by the revolutionaries (Fremont-Barnes 2012), France and Britain became the two major European powers vying for global dominance. The consolidation of British hegemony over the global economy and trade lasted till the creation of the nation state of Italy in 1861, and the German Reich after the defeat of Napoleon III by Prussia in the Battle of Sedan in 1871 (Hobsbawm 1987: ch. 6). With the Ottoman Empire visibly declining after its defeat in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–78, a Congress of the European Great Powers, including Ottoman Turkey, was convened in Berlin, with Bismarck the reich chancellor playing host. Under the Treaty of Berlin, Romania, Montenegro, and Serbia were created as independent principalities by detaching them from the Ottoman Empire, and the process was started of creating a new nation state of Bulgaria, taking it out of the Ottoman Empire (Motta 2013: section I, ch. 1). This arrangement settled little of which power was to get what share of the global resources, markets, and fields of investment. Most of Asia – including India and China – had already been subjugated, the coastal areas of West, South and East Africa were already in the possession of one European power or another, and they were now competing for the acquisition of all the interior of Africa. One of the claimants of the huge territory of the Congo was King Leopold II of Belgium, who used Henry Morton Stanley to explore and stake out a claim for him. In 1884, at the Berlin conference of the major European powers, again hosted by Bismarck, Leopold's claim was recognised and the whole of Africa was divided into spheres of control among the European powers. Leopold had already managed, through his agents, to secure US recognition of his claim (Hochschild 1999:

chs 3–5). 'The scramble for Africa' received its official sanction.

### Imperialism and theories

Eric Hobsbawm (1987) called the period from 1875–1914 'the age of empire'. This designation is justified only to the extent that this was the period during which all the major capitalist powers were trying to grab whatever colonies were still left un-usurped by the others, and began also planning to take away other powers' colonies wherever they could. The developments that took place during this period gave rise to the Hobson-Lenin theory of imperialism (Hobson 1902; Lenin 1957 [1916]), and also to parallel studies by liberals such as H.N. Brailsford and Marxists such as Rudolf Hilferding (1981 [1910]), Rosa Luxemburg (1951 [1913]), and Nikolai Bukharin (1972 [1915]). Of these theories, the Hobson-Lenin theory has proved most influential. The subtitle of Lenin's pamphlet has led to a deluge of unnecessary controversy. Hobsbawm (1987: 11–12) has pointed out that Lenin never claimed that imperialism was 'the highest stage of capitalism'. He had called it the 'latest' stage of capitalism, and the subtitle was changed after his death.

Among these theorists, Rosa Luxemburg used colonial conquests as the centrepiece of her analysis. She argued that since capitalists are always taking away a large share of the surplus value created by labour, the latter would not have enough purchasing power to buy the consumer goods produced by them. Therefore, the capitalists needed to break down what she (and many other Marxist authors) called the 'natural economy' of non-capitalist countries and convert the erstwhile producers of those economies into buyers of the commodities to be sold by the capitalists. It was also necessary to dispossess the producers in order to increase the supply of labour to an ever expanding capitalist system (Luxemburg 1951 [1913]: especially section 3, 'The historical conditions of accumulation').

From Bukharin (1972 [1915]) to Kalecki (1971 [1967]), many Marxists and others have criticised Luxemburg for her theoretical mistake about the solution of what the Marxists called the realisation problem and is now known as the problem of effective demand (after Keynes). Theoretically, it is possible, as was argued by Tugan-Baranovski,

that capitalists can invest greater and greater amounts as their total profits and even their share of profits go up. But as the capitalists invest larger and larger amounts, in the general case, their profits will fall. They will then retrench their investment and the realisation crisis will affect the economy. One solution to the problem is competition among capitalists: in order to survive and preserve themselves from being taken over by another firm, they have to invest even when the profitability of their operations is declining. But there is again a limit to the decline in profitability and they have to retrench their expenditure, and the realisation crisis is triggered once more. Thus, Luxemburg's problem cannot be wished away just by showing the incompleteness of her theoretical model.

In the last chapter of her book ('Militarism as a province of accumulation'), Luxemburg pointed to another factor that has become increasingly important in the current neo-liberal phase of imperialism, both as an instrument of domination and control, and as a means of generating higher effective demand and profits, without empowering the working class through an improvement in its real earnings or working conditions. Military expenditures, arms sales, and military bases of Western powers, especially the US, have played a major role in enforcing the global imperial order (Grimmett and Kerr 2012; Shah 2013). While the US, in spite of the recession, continues to be by far the biggest military spender in the world, and also remains the biggest seller of arms (with Russia ranking second), it is ironic that, developing nations (especially client states of the Western bloc) are the biggest buyers of arms.

Hilferding's theory of finance capital (1981 [1910]) was a generalisation based mainly on the Continental European countries (including Tsarist Russia) trying to catch up with Britain. Banks had played a critical role in many of those countries by giving cheap credit to the industrial firms. Hilferding saw this as an amalgam of finance and industrial capital. The role of finance in the contemporary imperial order is very different (Patnaik 2011). Finance has emerged as a separate power on its own. It directs the global, inter-state financial organisations such as the World Bank, the IMF, the Asian Development Bank, the European Central Bank, and so on to act according to the interests of the biggest hedge funds, private equity funds, and

other private financial giants. It also buys up politicians and political parties by giving them campaign funds in all kinds of ways, and holding them hostage, as the careers of US presidents from Reagan to Obama and the rise to power in India of the Bharatiya Janata Party and Narendra Modi in 2014 vividly illustrate. Modi's campaign for the post of prime minister cost, at a conservative estimate, INR50 billion or about US\$850 million (Ghosh 2014). In actual fact, it cost several times more, because much of the expenditure by the local campaign agents was made without any receipt, in order to avoid restrictions on expenditure made by the Indian Election Commission, a statutory body.

The aggrandisement of the finance companies has proceeded apace even after the financial and economic crisis officially signalled by the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008. This has been helped by the bail-outs of banks by all concerned governments. No CEOs of finance houses have been prosecuted, even when they had resorted to fraudulent behaviour (Rakoff 2014). The weaker economies of the Eurozone – generally with a history of belonging to the periphery of the zone, such as Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain (PIIGS) – have been the worst sufferers of the financial crisis starting in 2007–08, and some of them have been led up the garden path for slaughter by the big finance companies (Dunbar and Martinuzzi 2012). But those companies have great influence with the governments of the US, UK, Germany, and France. So ordinary people in the PIIGS are made to suffer under a draconian austerity policy (Blyth 2013).

Side by side with these developments, millions of poor citizens – including small businessmen – in advanced capitalist as well as developing economies have been excluded from formal credit networks. They have to pay usurious interest rates to local moneylenders or intermediaries of big finance houses and often lose their land or other means of livelihood when they default on their loans. Hundreds and thousands of them, such as farmers in India and Mali, have committed suicide as a result (Bagchi and Dymksi 2007).

Some resistance to the dominance of the IMF and the US-EU finance companies is being built up through the agreement signed in September 2009 by the leaders of Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia to

establish the Bank of the South with a capital of \$20 billion (MercoPress 2009), and by the May 2014 agreement to establish the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) development bank, along with a currency reserve pool. But whether they can rival the IMF or World Bank depends on how much capital they can mobilise. In 2013–14 the World Bank and China Development Bank each lent around \$32 billion to developing countries (Williams 2014). On the other hand, while the late Hugo Chávez was president of Venezuela, his country lent, or granted, a larger amount to the peoples of America than the US administration. In 2007, for example, Venezuela spent more than \$8.8 billion in grants, loans, and energy aid as against \$3 billion spent by the Bush Administration (Lamrani 2013).

### Free trade imperialism and neo-liberalism

Although Adam Smith and David Hume preached free trade, their homeland did not adopt it during their lifetime. Britain adopted free trade for its own external commerce only in the 1840s when the Corn Laws protecting British agriculture were abolished. It should be emphasised that free trade and *laissez faire* are not synonymous. Britain adopted free trade policies but from 1833 began adopting laws restricting child labour, women's labour, and hours of work in mines and factories. Britain could do all this because by then it had become the leading industrial and economic power in the world. In the 18th century, Josiah Tucker had laid the foundation of the theory of free trade imperialism (Bagchi 2014a; Semmel 1970). His analytical model used what would later be known as the theory of cumulative causation. Both Adam Smith and Tucker were opposed to colonies established by monopoly companies that had been established by means of charters granted by their governments. They were also opposed to the special privileges granted to producers in the home governments that impaired the economic development of colonies. They opposed the British government's attempt to quell the revolt of the 13 American colonies. But Smith had little to say about the general attempt of the Europeans to conquer non-European peoples.

Tucker's opposition to colonialism was in some ways more fundamental, based as it was

on what could be called the Hume-Tucker theory of economic development (Bagchi 1996).

According to Tucker, writes Bagchi (2014a: 552):

Hume's essays on money and the balance of trade ... were being read as implying that a rich country, through free trade, would necessarily be brought down to the same level of income as a poor country. This reading suggested that when a rich country trades with a poorer country, it will gain gold or silver (virtually the only international currencies of the time) for the goods it sells to the poorer. The access to that bullion, coined or uncoined, would raise prices all round in the richer country and eventually make its exports uncompetitive, so that bullion will flow out of the richer country until the prices and, by implication, incomes were equalised in the two countries.

Tucker countered this view by working out the rationale of cumulative causation keeping the richer country ahead ... According to him, the richer country would be able to stay ahead of the poorer because: (a) the richer country, with better implements, infrastructure, a more extended trading network and more productive agriculture, would be more productive overall; (b) it would be able to spend more on further improvements; and (c) the larger markets of the richer country would provide scope for greater division of labour and greater variety of products. Tucker also pointed to the advantages a richer country would enjoy in terms of human resources and the generation of knowledge: (a) it would attract the abler and more knowledgeable people because of higher incomes and opportunities; (b) it would be better endowed with information and capacity for producing new knowledge; and (c) a greater degree of competitiveness gained through higher endowments of capital, knowledge, ability to acquire more knowledge and capital and the energy of people with more capital and ability to generate more capital and knowledge in the richer country would make products cheaper. Finally, the larger capital resources of the richer country would lower interest rates and render investable funds cheaper.

Gallagher and Robinson (1953) coined the phrase, ‘imperialism of free trade’, and argued that in the 19th century Britain primarily concentrated on the policy of forcing colonies – formal and informal – and defeated powers to abolish restrictions on foreign trade, rather than always wanting to acquire new territories as colonies. Thus, for example, when Spanish and Portuguese America threw off the rule of Spain and Portugal, the UK recognised their independence on condition that they allowed the free import of British manufactures. This policy more or less ensured that few large-scale industries grew up in Latin America in the 19th century. Of course, the ‘imperialism of free trade’ required to be backed up by military action from time to time (Semmel 1970). The two wars the UK fought in the interest of forcing China to allow the free import of opium – a drug which was produced by Indian peasants but from which the British Indian government derived a large revenue – are perhaps the most notorious examples of this policy.

But British liberalism did not mutate into neo-liberalism during the heyday of the British Empire. While one principal feature of liberalism was the centralisation of decision making into a few hands (Wallerstein 2011), its market-friendly policies, and the freedom of contract it wanted to universalise, were constrained by the workers’ struggles in the core countries and the need of the factory-owners to have a healthier workforce and the rulers to have more fighting-fit armed force (Atiyah 1979; Bagchi 2005: ch. 7; Clark 1995). The largest formal colonial empire ruled by Britain and the mass migration of the poorer sections of the population to the US, Canada, and other lands taken over by Europeans also obviated the need for the creation of a neo-liberal global order.

It was after the end of the so-called Golden Age of Capitalism (Marglin and Schor 1990) – from say 1945 to 1970 – that we witness the full unfolding of neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism is a symptom of capitalism in extremis, of the involution of the system, when it regurgitates resources it has already captured to try and draw nourishment from them. In practice, neo-liberalism is a virus that penetrates every pore of the social body and every atom of the surrounding earth and its stratosphere. It attacks the family and seeks to reduce it to a relationship among

self-centred individuals; it commercialises love and makes potential lovers into consumers through the celebration of St Valentine’s Day; it commercialises and corrupts sport, reducing it to a consumer item and a means of advertising the prowess of the country or the city. In nature, it spoils the soil, pollutes and makes scarce clean drinking water, clean air, and sanitary living quarters. It attacks the innards of the earth’s surface under land, rivers, along coastlines, and under the deep ocean floor. It has evolved the ideology of austerity for defrauding the poor of whatever control they may have over their lives (Blyth 2013). In the following, the many facets and effects of neo-liberalism will be analysed, with illustrations from all regions of the world (for brief accounts of the rise of neo-liberalism, see Bagchi 2005: chs 22–25; Harvey 2007).

Independent countries following Britain rejected both the practice of freedom of external commerce, and from the late 19th century, *laissez faire* doctrines as well. Alexander Hamilton in his *Report on Manufactures* (1791) argued that the new republic of the United States of America should impose duties and other restrictions on imports of British manufactures in order to safeguard and promote domestic industrial production. In 1841, Friedrich List argued that the British had become industrially the most advanced country in the world by adopting policies of import restriction and state patronage for domestic production and shipping during the preceding centuries (List 1909 [1841]). Countries wanting to prosper industrially and economically should study British practice and ignore the British propaganda in favour of free trade. Neo-liberalism can be seen as the adoption of both free trade imperialism abroad and *laissez faire* for the domestic polity by the principal capitalist powers, and enforcement of such policies in all countries that are subjugated by them.

### **Neo-liberalism, media, and corporate power**

Ruling classes rule by using coercion, encoded in law, and by persuading the ruled to believe in the right to rule of the former. This ideological hegemony is exercised through educational systems, through nurturing in the family, and through propaganda. This propaganda can often take the form of

feeding false information to the public and suppressing the correct information. The propaganda war by the US-led coalition of Western powers reached new heights from the Thatcher-Reagan era of neo-liberalism onwards (Herman and Chomsky 2002).

The basic characteristics of their 'propaganda model' as set out by Herman and Chomsky (2002: 2), in which the inequality of wealth and power plays the crucial part, can be understood by combining three of the basic ideas adumbrated by Marx, and the Marxists and other radical writers (including, of course, Chomsky and Herman in their other writings). The first idea is that under capitalism two laws operate, unless they are countered by resistance of the workers or liberal defenders of free competition as against oligopolies. These two laws are those of concentration and centralisation of economic power. In most areas of commodity production, economies of scale in production, finance, marketing, and advertising will enable a large firm to cut the cost of production, raise finance on more favourable terms and reach the buyers on a wider front than a small firm. Economies of scale in production are best exemplified by the three-fifths law in process (ore refining and chemical industries); namely, that as the volume of a vessel doubles the surface area increases only by approximately three-fifths, thus conferring a cost advantage to the owner of the larger container. This plus the advantage in raising finance that a larger firm generally enjoys will allow it to take over smaller firms and thus economic power will be centralised in fewer hands. The process of centralisation was accelerated as a market for firms developed in the 1960s (Manne 1965; Shleifer 2000). The second proposition is that the dominating ideas in a society are the ideas of the ruling class. The third strand of the argument is that despite advances made by some ex-colonial countries in economic and human development, the world is dominated by the imperial countries led by the US. The fourth, relatively recent strand of the argument is that the ideas of neo-liberal liberalisation have gripped the ruling classes of the subordinate countries and the latter have done their best to inculcate them among the labouring population. Herman and Chomsky applied their propaganda model to the US ruling class, but it can be applied to the relation between media, corporate power, and the state in every market

economy. Moreover, the suppression or exclusion of relevant information, the deliberate channelling of disinformation, and the concentration of media and corporate power have been taken much further in the 21st century.

There is a reciprocal relationship between the media and the government. In Britain, successive prime ministers from Tony Blair to David Cameron, and leaders of the Opposition (would-be prime ministers) have taken care to cultivate Rupert Murdoch, chairman of News Corporation and arguably the most powerful media magnate in the world (Allen 2012). The kind of deception and false propaganda on the basis of which Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush had conducted wars in Nicaragua, a proxy war in Iran, and the first war against Iraq reached their apogee in the Second Gulf War against Iraq in 2003. As Bagchi (2005: 334) writes:

... neoliberalism has increasingly resorted to divesting the state of functions that Adam Smith thought could never be in the private domain. These include military and security operations both at home and abroad. Prison services are privatized and private firms profit from them. Military functions are contracted out to private firms, and in the name of security and war against terrorism, the executive branch of the government removes their own accountability and the accountability of the firms to the legislature or the electorate (Johnson 2004; Pieterse 2004). The deception and the disinformation about the weapons of mass destruction in the possession of Saddam Hussein (Economist 2003a: 2003b) are all of a piece with this attempt on the part of White House and Whitehall to put themselves above not only international law but the laws of their own nations.

After the 9/11 events of 2001, the US Surveillance Court allowed the official spy agencies to breach all earlier standards of protection of privacy through accessing trillions and trillions of personal information of its citizens and non-citizens all across the world (Savage and Poitras 2014). As the scale of surveillance increased, courageous whistleblowers such as Daniel Ellsberg (who leaked the lies spread by the Pentagon during the US-Vietnam War), Julian Assange, Edward Snowden, and their associates such as Laura

Poitras revealed the escalation of the reach of surveillance and its iniquity. Secrets were sold to dictators, people were killed, arrested, and kept in secret prisons without the benefit of any legal defence (Big News Network 2013; Campbell 2014; WikiLeaks 2014). The spy agencies of the USA and some European countries spied on friendly governments as well as on governments of what they considered to be hostile countries, and on businesses of other countries whose secrets the US corporate houses wanted to know.

In the meantime, Israel, the longest-offending rogue state since 1948, continued with impunity its murderous campaign of ethnic cleansing directed at the Palestinians, that land's original inhabitants; not content with driving out the Arabs from the legal territory of Israel, it has continued to try and destroy Palestinian homes and villages. (Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old US student was killed by an Israeli bulldozer razing a Palestinian home in 2003.) Courageous Israeli citizens such as Ilan Pappé (2007; 2014) and Mordechai Vanunu who disclosed Israel's nuclear programme remain in exile (Pappé) or a prisoner of conscience (Vanunu). Vanunu's case illustrates the length to which a neo-liberal, racist regime can go to punish a protester: 'in 1986, Vanunu went to Britain to tell the *Sunday Times* the story of the then secret nuclear weapons facility at Dimona in Israel. He was lured by a woman from Mossad [the Israeli spy agency] to Italy. There, he was kidnapped, drugged and smuggled out of the country to Israel, where he was convicted of espionage' (Campbell 2014). Since then, he has been kept many years in solitary confinement, his passport has been taken away, and when out of prison, he is not allowed to make any public statement; and he was not allowed out of the country even though a group of 54 British MPs had invited him.

The strongest supporters of Israel are the hard-core European and US Zionists and the neo-conservatives such as Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz. In fact, neo-conservatives have been accused of putting the interest of Zionists in Israel even above those of the US (Heilbrunn 2004; Lieven 2004a; 2004b). But in fact, Israel serves a vital role by terrorising the Arab countries with its military might, continually replenished with US help (Chomsky 2012). It is now a moot issue as to how useful Israel will remain as an ally, when

fundamentalist Islam and desperate resistance have spread all over West Asia and North America, often unwittingly helped by the US intelligence agencies. But Israel's determination to take away the lands of the Palestinians by killing or driving them off remains unabated, with scant regard for world opinion as its genocidal assault against the Gaza Strip in July 2014 demonstrated.

In India, all the neo-liberal regimes have used media to sustain their power. They also evolved the phenomenon of 'paid news'; that is, advertisements for particular politicians and parties which appeared as news, without the newspaper signalling them as such. The Press Council of India, supposedly the watchdog for media, condemned the practice (Guha Thakurta 2011; Press Council of India 2010;), but it continues in some form or another. In any case, with corporate control of the media, only news that can benefit the corporates commercially or politically finds a place in big newspapers or major TV channels, although smaller papers and electronic media try to keep up a tradition of investigative journalism (Sainath 2011).

### **Neo-liberalism, creative adaptation and resistance**

Several countries or regions of East Asia (including Singapore in South-East Asia) have creatively adapted to neo-liberalism and boosted their economic growth and human development, although virtually all of them have paid a price in increased inequality and constraints on human freedom. They include Taiwan, South Korea (Republic of Korea, ROK for short), Singapore, People's Republic of China (PRC, or China), and more recently Vietnam. On the other side of the world, major Latin American countries such as Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Ecuador have resisted the worst aspects of neo-liberalism and US domination from the late 1990s or the first decade of the 21st century. But the history of such resistance goes back to that of Guatemala's President Juan José Arévalo, under whose leadership the dictator Ubico was overthrown in 1944, and his successor Jacopo Arbenz. Because of the pro-worker and pro-peasant policies of the two democratically elected presidents, which hurt the interests of the United Fruit Company, at that time the US-based biggest producer and seller of bananas in the world,

the CIA organised a coup against Arbenz and overthrew him (Cullather 1999). Guatemala, along with most of the Central American republics, moved into a long night of rule by mass-murdering dictators, helped by the US. Resistance against US-backed dictators erupted in Cuba, where, from 1953–58, rebel forces led by Fidel Castro fought against and eventually overthrew the dictator Fulgencio Batista and established a socialist regime from 1959 (Wright 2001). That regime has served as a beacon of the left in Latin America and the Caribbean (and for other socialist activists across the world); and it has naturally attracted the concentrated enmity of the US ruling classes and their collaborators throughout the region. In 1973, on 11 September 1973 (the 9/11 of Latin America), Salvador Allende, the democratically elected socialist president of Chile, was overthrown and killed by the armed forces of the country, aided and abetted by the US government, and the vicious dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet was installed. During the 1980s, the US conducted a wholly illegal and vicious war through its surrogate collaborators in Nicaragua against socialist Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, FSLN), which was fighting to liberate the country from the grip of the dictator Anastasio Somoza.

Despite the continuous opposition and machinations of the US, by 2009, battered by US-inspired neo-liberal policies, 13 countries of Latin America had elected leftist presidents, including Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua, who had been the leader of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua (Lupu 2009). Apart from Fidel Castro, another charismatic leader, Hugo Chávez emerged in Latin America to challenge the neo-liberal and US dominance in the region. After being democratically elected in 1998, Chávez survived a coup organised by the elite of Venezuela, and – despite continuous disinformation spread by the Venezuelan elite and mainstream US media – won every election till his death in 2013. He left a legacy of land reforms, public education, health care for the poor, and a high degree of participation by the ordinary people in decisions of the state (Harnecker 2013). There have been some setbacks, and some regimes have been seduced by promises of US or World Bank aid, but on the whole the left turn continues in the region. The latest victories have been those of Michelle Bachelet

of the Socialist Party in Chile in March 2014 and of the ex-guerrilla leader Salvador Sanchez Ceren as the president of El Salvador in the same month (Wilkinson 2014).

Virtually the only developing countries or regions that have been able to industrialise in a proper sense – that is, where both employment and income generated by industry contribute a much larger fraction to the national or regional employment and income – are Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong. Of these regions, Taiwan and South Korea had been colonies of Japan. For various historical reasons, both South Korea and Taiwan underwent thoroughgoing pro-peasant land reforms in the 1950s. In Singapore, the government owned 70 per cent of the land, and used that as a lever for both raising revenues from the government-owned housing board and for relocating industries when structural change so demanded. In Hong Kong, all the land is now owned by the PRC. Before 1997 as well, most of the land was owned by the government. In the PRC and Vietnam, the communist regimes had got rid of landlords. The abolition of landlordism had thus created the basic condition for the development of capitalism in the private enterprise economies of Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and pre-1997 Hong Kong, and a base for building basic forms of socialism in PRC and Vietnam such as publicly funded education and health care and a guarantee of a minimum standard of nutrition.

However, the private enterprise economies of Taiwan and ROK learned from Japan, the pioneer of East Asian industrialisation. (For a brief history of the Japanese experience of competing with Western capitalist countries and moving towards industrialisation, see Bagchi 2005: ch. 12.) First, while these economies obtained loans and aid from the Western countries trying to build a bulwark of resistance against communism, they tried to become free of dependence on those loans as soon as possible. Otherwise they might have become dependent perennially on Western countries. Second, even when they had been receiving Western loans and aid and had privileged access to Western markets, they did not allow any foreign enterprise to acquire a foothold in any important sector of the economy. Until 1993, ROK – and until very recently, Taiwan – strictly controlled foreign direct and portfolio investment. Third, they all adopted policies that induced or compelled their firms

to absorb any foreign technology they bought or borrowed and upgrade it to suit their own requirements as quickly as possible.

Until 1978, China operated a command economy. When it wanted to bring in reforms, it did so under its own compulsion, not under the pressure of the IMF, World Bank or USAID. Before the start of reforms, China had already built up a network of roads and other infrastructural facilities by utilising its enormous manpower resources. It also constructed a large industrial sector, although often only with 1950s Soviet-era technology. It was still a very poor country. It suffered a food crisis in the early 1980s and had to avail itself of UN food aid. But the reforms it had introduced in agriculture, in industry and decision-making processes began yielding results soon. PRC had nationalised all land, and, until 1978, the land was cultivated collectively by the village or cluster of villages and towns under the commune system. Land is still state-owned in China, but the local or provincial government can lease it out to users for specific purposes. In agriculture, PRC introduced the Household Responsibility System under which a household was given a plot of land to cultivate under its own responsibility, with specific payments to be made to the state (such as, for example, an amount of grain delivered, later generally changed to cash payments). The prices of agricultural products were raised in order to increase the incomes of the peasants. Other steps taken by the government included: (a) decentralisation of powers of raising revenues and spending them (with the central government making transfer payments to correct imbalances between surplus and deficit provinces); (b) greater autonomy of state enterprises to retain profits and invest them; and (c) introducing a credit system to finance investments and monitor them (ESCAP 2014: ch. 7). The state continued to change the reform measures as conditions changed. It took quick measures to control balance-of-payments deficits, so as to avoid dependence on foreign loans. It also continually changed policies with regard to state enterprises and research institutions, sometimes merging them, sometimes directing a research institution to float commercial firms, and so on (Gu 1999; Oi and Walder 1999). When it began foreign direct investment, it offered many concessions to the investors, first creating special

economic zones for them and then allowing them also to operate in other regions, especially in the economically backward western provinces of the country. These concessions often resulted in an extreme degree of exploitation of labour. But on the other hand, the conditions imposed on foreign investment generally led to a surplus of foreign exchange inflows over outflows. PRC also never allowed free flow of portfolio investment into its stock markets by the residents. Similar restrictions were also operative in Taiwan. This is one of the reasons why neither of the two economies were affected by the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98. China has now emerged as the second largest economy in the world, with a still relatively low per capita income but reasonably high levels of human development, and an enormous increase in inequality.

Vietnam was utterly devastated by the 30-year war with Western powers: France to start with and the US after the French defeat at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu. In 1979, almost simultaneously with the Chinese reforms, the government of Vietnam began dismantling the 'bureaucratic centralism and subsidy system' because of the urgent need to improve the living standards of the peasants and equip them with the resources and incentives for improving productivity. An American trade (and investment) embargo on Vietnam was lifted in 1994. In 1995 Vietnam joined ASEAN, the Association of South East Asian Nations.

Vietnam's advance was built on some earlier foundations. It had a long record of investment in human capital, both in education and in health provision. In 1990, the adult literacy rate for men here was already 94 per cent, and 87 per cent for women. Beyond this, Vietnam had invested substantially in higher education, and there was a cohort of officials well trained, for example, in agricultural techniques and engineering, generating a receptivity to technical change (Beresford 1993).

The core of Vietnam's economic strategy since the early 1990s has been a rapid integration into the world economy: the development of a diversified portfolio of oil, manufactured and agricultural exports, and the attraction of direct foreign investment. This has been combined with successful domestic agricultural growth and a continued role for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) while encouraging growth of the private sector.



Gross capital formation, largely from domestic sources – despite substantial inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI) – rose from just over a quarter of GDP in the mid-1990s to over a third of GDP in the early 2000s.

Unlike Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia, Vietnam remained unaffected by the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98, and it emerged as the fastest growing economy of South-East Asia. Like China, it retained autonomy of economic and social policy and depended – despite the large inflows of FDI – mainly on domestic sources of growth in demand (ESCAP 2014: ch. 6). But as in China, this achievement was bought at the cost of increases in inequality between town and country and among persons.

### Neo-liberalism and corruption

Corruption, in the sense of people making money by using political connections, has been endemic to capitalism and especially to capitalist colonialism. Businessmen from metropolitan countries enjoyed enormous patronage from the colonial authorities in the allocation of land and construction of plantations, railways, ports, and purchase of commodities by the government. With the rise and growth of the stock exchange, the corruption reached new heights, for example, in 18th-century Britain (Dirks 2006) and France under Louis Napoleon (aka Napoleon III) (Plessis 1987). Since the late 19th century, there has been no period in which ‘crony capitalism’ – that is, the enrichment of the capitalists in association with politicians and bureaucrats – has ceased to operate. This has been especially true of the arms industry, including the making of ships of naval forces, and increasingly of aircraft, both civilian and military. The US administration has, for example, lobbied repeatedly for the purchase of Boeing or Douglas McDonnell aeroplanes as against the products of the European company Airbus SAS (formerly Airbus Industrie).

But the advent of neo-liberalism worldwide since the 1970s has escalated both the scale and spread of corruption. In the US, much of the corruption has been legalised by allowing many industries such as gun making, finance and health care to have recognised lobbyists who try and influence Congressmen. The latter two have been particularly active in the 1990s and in the 21st century. Moreover, politicians raise campaign funds by various

means. Recently, the US Supreme Court has legalised donations by corporations to politicians and parties (Liptak 2014).

Beyond the borders of the state, the US state permits any illegality committed by its corporations and citizens, so long as it does not infringe any sacred tenet of US foreign policy, such as the real or imagined security of Israel. Another sacred tenet was earlier not to allow anybody to give any assistance to communist countries through trade, aid, or sensitive technology. That prohibition still continues in the case of Cuba, on which the USA tries to enforce its completely illegal embargo of trade. But the focus has shifted to the so-called war on terror (of a specifically Islamic variety), started by the Republican Administration of President Bush and continued diligently by the Democratic one of President Obama. Behind such wars there also are many links to crony capitalism, such as Dick Cheney and Halliburton Corporation profiting from the Iraq War, or the family of George Bush continuing to benefit from its cosy relationship with the Saudi monarchy, a throwback to the most benighted realms of the past (Bronson 2006; Unger 2007; Woodward 2004).

Corruption was rife in the dictatorships in the Third World either promoted directly or supported by the US and its allies. Indonesia under the control of Suharto’s military regime was one of the stellar examples of such corruption. According to an investigation by *Time* magazine, after his fall from power in 1998, Suharto was busy protecting his family’s wealth: ‘\$9 billion of Suharto money was transferred from Switzerland to a nominee bank account in Austria. Not bad for a man whose presidential salary was \$1,764 a month when he left office’ (Colmei and Liebhold 1999). Altogether, ‘Suharto and his six children still have a conservatively estimated \$15 billion in cash, shares, corporate assets, real estate, jewelry and fine art – including works by Indonesian masters’ (1999). Suharto’s regime left a legacy of corruption which affects the lives of millions of Indonesians and damages the environment very seriously. For example, in East Indonesia, when construction contractors were asked to give competitive bids, it was found that several of them had done so in identical writing and some did not bother to go through the actual bidding process (Tidey 2012). This kind of collusive behaviour is

almost routine in many developing countries, including India. Under the Suharto regime, the major source of revenues had been exploitation of natural resources, including oil and other minerals and the forests of other islands. These resources were generally extracted by big foreign companies, often in association with the Suharto family or military top brass. They had often simply burned the forests as a cheap way of clearing them for creating plantations or extracting minerals. This practice continued after the change to a formally democratic regime. In 2006, Indonesian forest fires created a haze that covered neighbouring states including Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines (Ghosh 2006).

The only two indexes of success recognised by the World Bank are the rate of economic growth, as conventionally measured, and the extent of poverty reduction, as measured by the crudest and minimalist criteria, such as the percentage of people falling below an income of US\$1 (\$1.25) or \$2 per day. (For a critique of the conventional poverty measures, see UNDESA 2009: ch. 2.) Indonesia under Suharto is supposed to have done well by these criteria, although the reduction of poverty was exaggerated, and the labour department and the statistics departments contradicted each other (Bagchi 1998). (Under the military regime, many data were unavailable to outsiders.) Among the major Asian countries, Indonesia suffered the most in the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98. The officially measured proportion of people under the poverty line jumped from 18 to 24 per cent between 1997 and 2001, but there was a huge clustering of people above the poverty line, so that a small change in cost of living or earnings can push large numbers of people below that measure. Moreover, there were huge differences in the incidence of poverty between outer regions and Java, and even within Java, between villages and cities (Bremar 2001; UNDP 2001: 7–9).

The globalisation of corruption under neo-liberalism produced startling and costly results for the Indian public with the entry of Enron into the electricity generation sector in India. When Kenneth Lay took over as the CEO of Enron in 1979, the company specialised in the production and transmission of natural gas and pipelines and in production of plastics. It soon expanded its business to the generation and sale of electricity. It built

political links with the Bush family and the Republicans:

Since 1993, Lay and top Enron executives donated nearly \$2 million to Bush. Lay also personally donated \$326,000 in soft money to the Republican Party in the three years prior to Bush's presidential bid, and he was one of the Republican 'pioneers' who raised \$100,000 in smaller contributions for Bush. Lay's wife donated \$100,000 for inauguration festivities. (Scheer 2001)

Attracted by the enormous amounts of income that the Enron executives – including the CEO Lay – could earn from trading in derivatives and stock options and bonuses from rising values of shares in the stock market, Enron resorted to creating derivatives in energy supplies, offshore entities to hide the liabilities it assumed, and creative accounting in collusion with Arthur Andersen, the world's biggest accounting firm, before its dissolution. When ultimately, Enron could no longer deceive its creditors, it filed for protection under US bankruptcy law in December 2001. It is interesting that it enjoyed a high credit rating from the global credit agencies even up to the middle of 2001. The complex web of deception Enron built can be gauged from the fact that after it filed for bankruptcy it was found that it had created 2,800 offshore units and that 54 pages were required to list people and companies owed money by it (Cornford 2006: 20). On the way to bankruptcy, it had totally pauperised its workers by locking all their pensions into the stocks of the firm. The value of those shares fell to nothing after Enron crashed. Enron also defrauded the US and Canadian publics in other ways. After deregulation of electricity supplies in the US and to a smaller extent in Canada, Enron had got into the business of supplying electricity to the US state of California and to Canada. The result was the following development:

In the midst of the California energy troubles in early 2001, when power plants were under a federal order to deliver a full output of electricity, the Enron Corporation arranged to take a plant off-line on the same day that California was hit by rolling blackouts, according to audiotapes of company traders released here on Thursday

... . Enron, as early as 1998, was creating artificial energy shortages and running up prices in Canada in advance of California's larger experiment with deregulation .... [T]he California energy crisis ... produced blackouts and billions of dollars of surcharges to homes and businesses on the West Coast in 2000 and 2001. (Egan 2005)

Enron got into India soon after the Indian central government introduced neo-liberal reforms in 1991. On the assumption that India needed enormous amounts of private foreign funds in order to create large capacities for electricity generation, in 1992 the government amended the 1948 Electricity Act that reserved electricity generation and strictly regulated the pricing of electricity. The amendment allowed the entry of private companies into the business of generation and transmission of electricity, and, what is more, guaranteed a return of 16 per cent on the capital invested to foreign investors (Victor and Heller 2007: ch. on India by Rahul Tangia). It may be mentioned that even the colonial British Indian government had only guaranteed a return of 5 per cent to British companies constructing railroads in India. Indian officials visited the US scouting for investors, and Enron seized the opportunity. In 1992, it signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the government of India for building a series of gas-based power plants with a generating capacity of 2000 MW.

A confidential World Bank report of 1993 argued that the project was economically unviable and therefore it did not receive the bank's funding. Nonetheless, in the same year, the electricity board of the state of Maharashtra, in which the plant would be located, concluded a 20-year agreement for building the plant at Dabhol. But when the opposition party, the Hindu-chauvinist Shiv Sena, came to power here in 1995, it filed a law-suit to cancel the agreement. But after a meeting between an Enron executive Rebecca Mark and Bal Thackeray, the unelected and non-accountable supremo of Shiv Sena, the Maharashtra government agreed to renegotiate the agreement. (Enron later showed an expenditure of \$20 million for 'educating' the public in India.) After a review by the neo-liberal energy, Kirit Parikh, the government went ahead with the project on the basis of slightly altered terms. Dabhol's first phase, begun in 1999, proved to be too expensive and too burdensome because

the Maharashtra State Electricity Board had to pay for the cost of utilising the plant's full capacity, even if it could use only a fraction of that capacity. The Maharashtra government then set up an inquiry committee under the chairmanship of Madhav Godbole, a senior and widely respected bureaucrat, and the report condemned the whole project in no uncertain terms. The already built Dabhol plant was shut down. Meanwhile, Enron filed for bankruptcy. Most experts (Godbole and Sarma 2006; Prayas Energy Group 2001; 2005) were against trying to restart the plant because there were legal complications arising from the Enron crash and, technologically, the plant had become obsolete owing to the shutdown. However, Parikh argued for restarting the plant, and the views of the neo-liberal experts prevailed. The state-owned National Thermal Power Corporation and Gas Authority of India Limited were persuaded to float a joint venture and take over the plant in 2005, and, after technical glitches suffered by equipment supplied by General Electric had been overcome, the plant started operating in 2010.

The Indian Enron story shows that while the neo-liberal policy of generating private profit at public cost was being pursued, there was stiff opposition against it, from conscientious bureaucrats to scientists (e.g. the Delhi Science Forum and Prayas Energy Group) and the general public. The victory of the neo-liberals in their programmes was made possible because they ran a democracy that money could buy. It is necessary to pay some attention to the theory and practice of democracies that benefit plutocrats all over the world.

### Neo-liberalism and democracy

Under capitalism, formal democracy has always been weighted in favour of the propertied classes. But for a brief period, first in the major Scandinavian countries such as Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, and in most West European countries between around 1945 and 1970, working classes found a voice and a welfare or social democratic state operated. One principal contribution of neo-liberalism has been to destroy the workers' resistance in those countries and install democracies that money can buy. In India, the most populous formal democracy in the world, the same tendency prevailed under neo-liberalism – in the central government

and in most of the constituent states. The climax was reached in the parliamentary elections of 2014, when the Hindu nationalist BJP, led by Narendra Modi, obtained an absolute majority in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the central legislature) by mounting a lavishly funded campaign. Because of the majority rule of representation in every constituency, the BJP obtained that legislative majority with only 31 per cent of the votes polled. In the US, lobbying for particular interests and corporations has been legal for a long time. Between 1998 and 2013, lobbyists contributed a total of \$60.38 billion to the two major parties, the Republicans and the Democrats. Among the top-contributing sectors were finance (insurance, banking, hedge funds), private health care, and defence suppliers. Among corporations, top contributors included Boeing, General Electric (GE), Google, by now the biggest internet company in the world, and Pfizer, the biggest drugs and pharmaceuticals company globally, which conspired to create the entity called the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Center for Responsive Politics 2014a; 2014b). Besides contributions by lobbyists, individual politicians also receive campaign funding from corporations. For his 2008 campaign, for example, the presidential candidate Barack Obama received funds from Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase, Microsoft and Google, among others. Altogether he was able to raise \$417.5 million in direct campaign funding (Center for Responsive Politics 2014a; 2004b). It is not surprising then that Obama would pursue policies that would benefit these corporations or that he should appoint as treasury secretary Tim Geithner, who has had a close relationship with both the foreign policy establishment and Wall Street all his life. Nor is it surprising that the policies Obama followed during both his terms should be those of George Bush and Bill Clinton. The US Supreme Court has now lifted all limits on campaign funding, so big corporations can simply buy the legislators who will back them (Liptak 2014).

In India, corporations used to finance both the Congress Party, which has been the longest-ruling centre party and the BJP, which had ruled in several major constituent states since 1990 and been at the centre in the early 21st century. Between 2004 and 2012, corporate houses made 87 per cent of the total contributions to political parties, most of them to the aforementioned parties (Association

for Democratic Reforms 2014). Of the total amount of INR3,789 million, the BJP received INR1,925 million and the Congress received INR1,723 million. These are only legally disclosed amounts.

### **Imperialism, neo-liberalism, inequality, and resistance**

As should be clear from the earlier analysis, imperialism has led to unprecedented levels of inequality, fed by finance, media control, and corruption. It has also irreversibly damaged the environment. While neo-liberalism has not yet been defeated, it has faced stiff resistance, not only in Latin America but also in numerous regions of the world, in the form of workers' movements, women's movements, and movements to protect the environment.

The beginning of the twenty-first century has witnessed a collapse of the growth of employment worldwide, except in most countries of East Asia, and not only in the formal sectors but even in low-paid informal sectors (ILO 2003; 2004). This is especially true of the youth (that is, persons between the ages of 15 and 24 according to the UN definition) who constitute 25 per cent of the working age population but account for 47 per cent of the unemployed. Worldwide, there were 88 million unemployed youth in 2003 (ILO 2004). Moreover, women have been the first victims of spreading unemployment in many countries. In particular, in some Asian countries which had specialized in using female labour for export production, there has taken place a 'de-feminization of labour' as machines operated by men have displaced women ... Rates of unemployment have soared perhaps to levels as high as 36 per cent in the Caribbean and Middle East and North Africa among young people between the ages of 15 and 25 years' (Bagchi 2005: 328–329).

Such trends are likely to continue in most countries, especially since many developing ones, including India, have concluded what are called WTO-plus free trade agreements, under which the highly subsidised agriculture of the US and EU is competing with very poor farmers of the Third World. Such struggles for existence of already impoverished farmers

and women in subsistence agriculture will also cause more environmental damage through over-grazing, deforestation and failure to put back organic soil nutrients (Singh and Sengupta 2009).

During the last few decades, there has been a steep increase in the shares of the top 1-5 per cent of income earners in many advanced capitalist countries, and especially the US and the UK (Atkinson et al. 2011). Piketty (2014: parts 1, 3) has demonstrated that over the last three decades 60 per cent of the increase in US national income went to just the top 1per cent of earners; the incomes of the top .01 per cent and the top .001 per cent increased even more steeply. Enormous increases in salaries and other incomes of the top layer of executives even during the period of global recession, and capital gains accruing from operations of deregulated stock markets, have contributed greatly to this historic increase in inequality in these countries.

Global income inequality has also increased over this period (Milanovic 2011). One reason for this global inequality is that in most of the developing economies, except for the East Asian industrialised or industrialising ones, landlordism still prevails. As in earlier centuries, imperialism has utilised the use of non-market power for its own ends. However, we have already noted how in Latin America many leftist regimes are challenging the imperialist world order. They are also, as in Bolivia and Ecuador, empowering the majority Amerindian communities and throwing out the criollo elite that is complicit with imperialism.

All over the world, including the US, Mexico, and other countries, workers organised in formal trade unions and unorganised workers – many of them immigrants – are fighting for their rights (Bagchi 2014b; Lynd and Gross 2007; Weinberg 2007). In Porto Alegre in Brazil and Oaxaca province in Mexico, such groups were able to take control of municipalities and implement a variety of participatory democracy. One problem with workers' international solidarity is that colonialism created an enormous gap between the wages of workers in imperial centres and those in the colonial lands. Under the neo-liberal dispensation, capital is fully mobile across international borders but workers' mobility across those borders has been kept very restricted. One consequence is that the

forementioned wage gap that continues in spite of the slow rise or stagnation of wages for the majority of workers in the US and EU (Bagchi 2014b; Cope 2012).

Even under those constraints, successful experiments in participatory democracy have occurred; for example, in the state of Kerala in India, in the city of Porto Alegre in Brazil, and in Venezuela under Chavez (Thomas Isaac and Franke 2000; Harnecker 2013; Kingsley 2012;). That kind of democracy necessarily challenges the basic tenets of neo-liberalism.

All over the world, women have been actively defending their rights and the democratic principles under which they can defend them (see e.g. El Saadawi 2012; Patel 2010). They are fighting for universal literacy, universal health care, an end to human trafficking (of which women are the most numerous victims), equal pay for equal work, and a decent livelihood for the nurturing care which they bestow on their children and other members of their communities. This is also a fight against neo-liberalism, because under that extremely inegalitarian order, both the demand for food grains – of which the poor are the main consumers – and investment in agriculture (which has again been of a labour-displacing nature) have suffered badly, and led to the displacement of several hundred million women from agricultural work, forcing them into very-low-wage work in cities where they live under subhuman conditions.

Finally, scientists have long campaigned for human beings to respect Nature's boundaries. Apart from the International Panel on Climate Change, which has documented the irreversible nature of climate change and has been campaigning for limiting the emission of greenhouse gases by using more renewable sources of energy, a group of 18 scientists has identified what they call planetary boundaries which human beings cross at their peril and at the peril of life on earth (Rockström et al. 2009). These boundaries are determined by the following factors, and some of them have already been crossed: climate change, ocean acidification, stratospheric depletion, interference with the global phosphorus and nitrogen cycle (through intensive use of artificial fertilisers), an alarming rate of biodiversity loss, interfering with natural ecological balance, excessive use of freshwater globally, drastic change in land use patterns, and excessive loading of aerosols such as

particulate matters through a tremendous rise in the production and use of internal combustion engines in automobiles of all kinds, and finally chemical pollution of water and food.

A system that is driven by competition for profit and power, which is the fundamental prime mover of the neo-liberal imperial order, cannot respect the planetary boundaries as the repeated failures of the Copenhagen inter-governmental conferences on climate change have demonstrated.

In spite of the spread of resistance against neo-liberalism and imperialism in the form of jihadist movements in the Islamic world and peasant wars in Latin America, rejection of the Washington consensus (namely, that you should leave all economic activities up to the market and the private sector) in most countries of Latin America, and the rise of China as the world's second largest economy, imperialism and neo-liberalism with corporates as the core commanders continue to rule most of the world, and military expenditures remain massive. 'World military expenditure in 2012 is estimated to have reached \$1.756 trillion. This corresponds to 2.5 per cent of world gross domestic product (GDP), or approximately \$249 for each person in the world' (Shah 2013). That per capita expenditure is higher than the income of the working poor in the poorer nations of the world. However, while the US remains the dominant military power accounting for 39 per cent of the global military expenditure and with hundreds of military bases across the globe, it is being challenged by Russia in Syria, Ukraine, and even in Latin America. The Russian president Vladimir Putin met Fidel Castro in Cuba, and offered help for offshore exploration of oil (Anishchuk and Trotta 2014). On the other side of the Caribbean, the government of Nicaragua has signed an agreement with a Hong Kong Chinese company for construction of a canal that will link the Caribbean (and the Atlantic) with the Pacific Ocean, and thus provide an alternative to the Panama Canal (Westcott 2014). Thus, the US and its allies are being challenged internationally by two powerful nations and by a host of countries revolting against neo-liberalism or military domination by the US. But humankind is still waiting for a world of knowledge economies, where the search for new ways of using nature without causing irreversible damage and improving health, education, and creativity will be the driving force rather than the

exploitation of wo(man) by wo(man) and profit-motivated extraction of non-renewable natural resources.

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## Petrodollar Imperialism

American imperialism, no domain escapes it. It takes all shapes, but the most insidious is that of the dollar. The United States is not capable of balancing its budget. It allows itself to have enormous debts. Since the dollar is the reference currency everywhere, it can use others to suffer the effects of its poor management. (French president Charles de Gaulle, 1963, quoted in Brands 2011: 75)

De Gaulle's quote provides an excellent introduction to petrodollar imperialism. Known by a variety of other terms, including 'dollar hegemony', 'dollar dominance', the 'dollar Wall Street regime' and 'exorbitant privilege', petrodollar imperialism is the theory that the US primary control of the world economy is due to the fact that since 1944 oil has been almost exclusively priced in American dollars.

This means that every country in the world that imports oil (the vast majority of the world's nations) has to have immense quantities of dollars in reserve. Because they are US dollars, they are invested in US Treasury bills and other dollar interest-bearing securities that can be easily converted to purchase dollar-priced commodities like oil. This is what allows the US to run up trillions of dollars of debt; the rest of the world simply buys up

that debt in the form of US interest-bearing securities.

This system can only function if oil exporters refuse to accept anything other than American dollars for payment. With few exceptions, oil exporters have done this since the early 1970s, when the US Nixon Administration successfully negotiated with Saudi Arabia, traditionally the world's dominant producer, to accept only American dollars for its oil. Saudi Arabia then used its influence to get the rest of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) to agree as well. Crucially, most Arab oil exporters since that time have also agreed to invest their surplus oil revenues in US government securities. This recycling of oil revenues is known as 'petrodollars', or petrodollar recycling. Between 1973 and 2000, Saudi Arabia recycled as much as \$1 trillion of its oil profits, primarily in US Treasury notes and other government interest-bearing securities. Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates recycled between \$200 and \$300 billion (Cleveland 2000: 468). While it is difficult to ascertain exact numbers as many countries do not itemise specific holdings, recent estimates are that Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar currently hold \$2.1 trillion in dollar reserves (Fisk 2009).

In addition to being the exclusive currency for all oil sales, the dollar is also the primary currency for global trade in general. If Mexico wants to purchase manufactured goods from China, it must first convert its pesos to dollars; China in turn accepts dollars and then converts them to yuan. This means that countries need to have dollars at hand not only to pay for oil, but also to facilitate trade in general. Some 80 per cent of all world trade is denominated in dollars and more than two-thirds of foreign held reserves worldwide are also in dollars (Prasad 2014).

Thus, the US directly benefits from both the importing and exporting of oil, and from global trade activity in general. It is a key underpinning of the US economy, and a benefit not available to other countries. This is what in large part allows the US to be in debt for \$17,567,647,844,797 (\$17.567 trillion) as of April 2014 (US Debt Clock 2014); so much of the world economy gets invested back into the US economy, and indirectly guarantees US debt will always be bought up. According to the US Treasury, foreign investors accounted for about 33 per cent of all US federal government debt. As of February 2014, major

oil-importing and dominant manufacturing countries China and Japan held \$1.27 and \$1.21 trillion in US Treasury Securities (US Treasury 2014).

Author John Perkins helped negotiate one of the first petrodollar recycling agreements with Saudi Arabia. In *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, he writes:

In the final analysis, the [US] global empire depends to a large extent on the fact that the dollar acts as the standard world currency, and that the United States Mint has the right to print those dollars. ... It means, among other things, that we can continue to make loans that will never be repaid – and that we ourselves can accumulate huge debts. (Perkins 2004: 250–251)

*Observer* (UK) newspaper business writer Faisal Islam explains that this is what allows the US to:

carry on printing money – effectively IOUs – to fund tax cuts, increase military spending, and consumer spending on imports without fear of inflation or that these loans will be called in. As keeper of the global currency there is always the last-ditch resort to devaluation, which forces other countries' exporters to pay for US economic distress. It's probably the nearest thing to a 'free lunch' in global economics. (Islam 2003)

Petrodollar imperialism gained more popular credence with the publication of William Clark's 2005 book *Petrodollar Warfare*, which posited that the 2003 US invasion of Iraq had been in large part to prevent the Saddam Hussein regime from pricing its oil in euros instead of dollars. The belief that US imperialism is directly linked to the dollar as the de facto global currency for oil was also strengthened by the 2011 US and NATO intervention in Libya, which followed shortly after Muammar Qaddafi's regime proposed a gold dinar as the currency for all of Africa and the exclusive payment currency for Libyan oil. In February of the same year, International Monetary Fund chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn openly called for a new global reserve currency. Three months later he was forced out in disgrace when a New York hotel

maid accused him of sexual assault. He was replaced by the dollar-embracing Christine Lagarde. Strauss-Kahn has since been cleared of all charges (Katusa 2012).

Proponents of this theory also point to US-led attempts to contain Iran's nuclear power ambitions as a ploy to distract from the real issue of concern, that Iran announced it would stop accepting dollars for its oil in 2007, and that ongoing US tensions with Iranian ally Syria were severely exacerbated when Syria switched to the euro for all international trade in 2006.

## History

The international agreement to price oil in dollars was part of the 1944 Bretton Woods agreements for how the post-Second World War global economy would function. Bretton Woods was intended to provide a stable international financial regime which would ensure that the type of economic collapses that had led to the Great Depression, and the subsequent rise of fascism and the carnage of war, did not occur again. This meant establishing a rule-based system that could not be manipulated by more powerful states to their own advantage (Korten 2001: 161–162).

Gold was set as the anchor of the new system. The US dollar was established as the de facto global currency for trade and commerce, but the price of the dollar was pegged directly to actual gold reserves, and gold was set at \$35 an ounce. Other countries' currencies were then fixed against the dollar; changes in currency rates could only occur via the International Monetary Fund. The criteria for a change in a country's currency exchange relative to the dollar was if the country needed to address a 'fundamental disequilibrium' in its current account. While the dollar served as the main currency for international trade, its exchange rate was similarly fixed to any other country's currency because it was fixed against gold. The system encouraged states to stay in surplus; they could then demand that their surplus dollars be exchanged for gold.

But by the late 1960s, under the strain of financing the Vietnam War, the US was running out of gold reserves sufficient to exchange other countries' surplus dollars for gold (178–179). The American government had a number of options to address this predicament. These included bringing its own deficit under control by cutting back on the

tremendous military costs from the Vietnam War, or by reducing imports, or by devaluing the dollar against gold, which would have meant countries got less gold for their surplus dollars. Instead, in 1971, the Nixon Administration pulled the US out of the gold standard altogether. By removing the need to have enough gold reserves relative to the amount of dollars it printed, the US gained instant and significant leverage over other countries, in particular regarding oil (Gowan 1999: 19).

While assuring the rest of the world that it would not impede moves to a basket of currencies to replace the dollar as the exclusive currency for oil, Nixon and his secretary of state Henry Kissinger were secretly and successfully negotiating with Saudi Arabia to guarantee that international oil sales would continue to be priced exclusively in dollars. The Nixon Administration also negotiated that Saudi Arabia's significantly increased oil profits would be invested in the US economy, primarily in government interest-bearing securities, and that its profits would be directly invested in US and British private banks (Spiro 1999: 121–123). Petrodollar recycling was thus born, and the first billions of what would become trillions began flowing into the US.

Nixon and Kissinger's manoeuvring was part of a long-standing US relationship with the Saud royal family. In 1945, US President Franklin Roosevelt ensured that Saudi Arabian oil would be under US control when he entered into an agreement with Saudi Arabia's King Saud. The US would protect and guarantee the Saudi regime, in return for exclusive access to Saudi oil (Yergin, 1991: 413–416).

John Perkins worked as a consultant for a private firm that helped the US government negotiate trade deals. In *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, he details how he directly worked on the initial post OPEC oil crisis deal between the US and Saudi Arabia. Perkins writes, 'I understood, of course, that the primary objective here was not the usual – to burden this country with debts it could never repay – but rather to find ways that would assure that a large portion of petrodollars found their way back to the United States' (Perkins 2004: 97).

Perkins said of the plan he helped to develop:

Under this evolving plan, Washington wanted the Saudis to guarantee to

maintain oil supplies and prices at levels that could fluctuate but that would always remain acceptable to the United States and our allies. If other countries such as Iran, Iraq, Indonesia, or Venezuela threatened embargoes, Saudi Arabia, with its vast petroleum supplies, would step in to fill the gap; simply the knowledge that they might do so would, in the long run, discourage other countries from even considering an embargo. In exchange for this guarantee, Washington would offer the House of Saud an amazingly attractive deal; a commitment to provide total and unequivocal US political and – if necessary – military support, thereby ensuring their continued existence as the rulers of their country. ... The condition was that Saudi Arabia would use its petrodollars to purchase US government securities ... (102–103)

But the true essence of petrodollar imperialism rests on the next moves pursued by the Nixon Administration: its manipulation of the 1973 OPEC Oil Embargo. On 15 October 1973, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), consisting of its Arab members plus Egypt and Syria, declared they would embargo oil sales to any country that supplied arms to Israel during the Yom Kippur War. As a result of the embargo, the price of oil quadrupled to nearly US\$12 per barrel by 1974 (Hammes and Wills 2005: 501–511). The US was embargoed, and the crisis impacted its economy, but less so than it did other countries because America was a domestic producer of oil and therefore less dependent on OPEC and the Middle East.

As detailed in Peter Gowan's *Global Gamble* (1999: 21, 27), Nixon and Kissinger had been pressuring Saudi Arabia to significantly increase global oil prices via OPEC two years before the Embargo began. By manipulating the OPEC Oil Crisis, the US was able to guarantee a financial windfall for itself; higher oil prices meant countries purchasing oil had to have more American dollars in reserve to purchase that oil. When the OPEC crisis quadrupled the price of oil, countries suddenly needed four times as many American dollar reserves to purchase oil supplies. This meant a near immediate 400 per cent increase in foreign investment in the American economy, primarily in short-term US government debt securities. For those poor countries that did

not have the available revenues to pay for this, the Saudi Arabian surplus oil revenue was now available from US banks as loans (22).

Which brings us to the final but by no means least significant of the petrodollar imperialism underpinnings orchestrated by Nixon and Kissinger. As well as dismantling the gold standard as the backbone of the international financial and currency regime, the Nixon Administration succeeded in eliminating the previous limitations on private banks as a source of direct capital for international finance. Under Bretton Woods, international finance and loans were under the direct control of government-controlled central banks. Private banks and investment firms were prohibited from moving their funds freely to other countries, although there were some exceptions for financing trade and specific foreign-development investment. The idea was that money would stay in that country and contribute to the country's economic and social development goals, thus contributing to internal financial and, theoretically, social stability, rather than seeking profit opportunities elsewhere (Beder 2006: 48–49).

In 1974, the US simply eliminated its own limits on external and internal capital flows. By dropping the capital constraints previously placed on private financial institutions, the increased and considerable OPEC oil revenue was available to be invested directly into New York banks. US private banks and investment firms then became the dominant international financial force, largely replacing the Bretton Woods government-controlled central banks (Gowan 1999: 21).

Eric Helleiner, who has written extensively on this issue, says 'the basis of American hegemony was being shifted from one of direct power over other states to a more market-based or "structural" form of power' (Helleiner 2005).

Crucial to petrodollar imperialism is the control it gives the US over developing countries via its ability to manipulate their debt. This achieved firstly by creating or exacerbating existing debt, as evidenced by the US initiation of the OPEC oil crisis and the subsequent quadrupling of the cost of oil. But the US can also manipulate other countries' debt by simply lowering or raising its domestic interest rates via the Federal Reserve, which is then passed on to any and all international loans. A rise in domestic US interest rates means that countries which have taken out

loans from US banks or the IMF/World Bank are now faced with a sudden increase in the interest tied to those loans, and hence an almost automatic increase in dollars going back to the US.

This is what happened with the Third-World debt crisis of the early 1980s, when fiscal policy under the Reagan Administration saw US interest rates rise to 21 per cent. This in turn skyrocketed Third-World debt, which had to be repaid in dollars. This debt had grown substantially from 1973 onwards, when oil-importing countries had to borrow funds to cover the 400 per cent sudden increase in global oil prices as a result of the OPEC crisis. The Saudi and Gulf States' petrodollars that had been invested in the US were then available as loans, directly or via the World Bank and IMF, to these countries. The foreign debts of 100 developing countries (excluding oil exporters) increased 150 per cent between 1973 and 1977 to cover the quadrupled cost of oil (International Monetary Fund, n.d.)

Many of these same countries then faced even more severe economic crises in the aftermath of the first round of the debt crisis brought on by the significant rise in interest rates. The debt was owed primarily to the World Bank, IMF, and the New York private banks that had been liberated under Nixon from the capital restraints built into the original Bretton Woods structure. Bail-out packages from the World Bank and IMF came with stringent neo-liberal conditions requiring privatisation, deregulation, and cutbacks on government spending. These structural adjustment programmes became the ultimate means of US control over a soon to be neo-liberalised global economy, with significant financial flows to the US and the developed world occurring as a result.

By 2004, this arrangement had seen the world's poorest countries pay an estimated \$4.6 trillion in debt repayments to the world's richest countries, a significant portion of which went to the US. In 2011, they paid over \$620 billion servicing this debt. As of the end of 2012, the total debt owed by so-called developing countries was \$4.8 trillion (Elmers 2014). Many of these countries have paid back their initial loans many times over, but are kept in a state of indebtedness due to interest rises, as highlighted by the 21 per cent US interest rate rise in the early 1980s.

In an unfortunately typical example, in 2005 and 2006, Kenya paid as much in debt

repayments as it did for providing critical services to its people like health care, roads, public transport, and provision of clean drinking water combined. Between 1970 and 2002, sub-Saharan Africa, the poorest region in the world, paid \$550 billion on loans totalling \$540 billion. Yet it still owed an incredible \$295 billion due to interest (Jubilee UK 2011).

Thus, the US can run up staggering debts with no significant consequences, while simultaneously benefiting immensely from other countries' debt and guaranteeing that the world's poorest countries will disproportionately support the US economy.

### **Iraq's threat to petrodollar imperialism**

In *Petrodollar Warfare: Oil, Iraq, and the Future of the Dollar*, analyst William Clark (2005) put forward his theory that Iraq's switch to the euro, and the threat that other oil-producing countries might follow, was the primary motivation for the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq. The book was preceded by a widely read and discussed article by Clark just prior to the invasion.

In September 2000, Saddam Hussein announced that Iraq would no longer accept the 'currency of its enemy', the US dollar, for its oil and would instead accept only euros. Iraq openly encouraged the rest of OPEC to do the same (Sachs 2000). If every oil-producing nation followed Iraq's lead and accepted euros instead of dollars, it would mean the end of the US empire. Oil-importing countries (most of the world) would have to convert their dollar reserves into euro reserves, and thus would remove the trillions invested in the US economy. A resurgent and regionally strong post UN sanctions Iraq, supported politically and economically by European rival oil powers involved in rebuilding its oil-producing infrastructure, would then have been in a position to encourage vocal US critics Iran and Venezuela to switch as well from the dollar to the euro.

Writing in 1999 before the euro had been introduced as a currency, Peter Gowan said:

Directly threatening to U.S. interests in such a scenario would be the impact on the dollar; for Saddam Hussein might have preferred to denominate his capital

in marks or yen. As the world's biggest debtor, with its debt denominated in dollars, the U.S. economy would clearly be vulnerable if a significant proportion of Middle East oil revenues were switched to another currency. For the United States to concede such political power to Saddam was unthinkable. (Gowan, 1999: 159)

Economic Hit Man author John Perkins wrote:

A decision by OPEC to substitute the euro for the dollar as its standard currency would shake the empire to its very foundations. If that were to happen, and if one or two creditors were to demand that we repay our debts in euros, the impact would be enormous. (Perkins 2004: 250–251)

Europe itself began to enthusiastically encourage the rest of the world to switch to the euro shortly after Iraq's decision. In June 2001, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on 'the European Union, in dialogue with the OPEC and non OPEC countries, to prepare the way for payment of oil in euros' (European Parliament 2001). A month earlier, there were media reports that 'EU leaders [have] made an audacious bid to lure Russia away from its reliance on the greenback, calling on Moscow to start accepting euros instead of dollars for its exports, dangling the attractive carrot of a boom in investment and trade' (Newbold 2001). Russia is one of the world's largest oil exporters.

Youssef Ibrahim, a member of the US Council on Foreign Relations, told CNN in February 2003 that 'The Saudis are holding the line on oil prices in OPEC and should they, for example, go along with the rest of the OPEC people in demanding that oil be priced in euros, that would deal a very heavy blow to the American economy' (Islam 2003). The next month, the US invaded Iraq.

In June 2003, the US military occupation moved back to accepting only dollars for Iraq's oil, and eliminated the acceptance of euros. It did so despite the fact that the euro was valued 13 per cent higher than the dollar, and thus directly reduced the revenue value of Iraq's oil sales (Hoyos and Morrison 2003).

Inherent in the George W. Bush Administration's 2002 National Security Strategy was that no rival to the US be allowed

to rise in the post-Cold War geopolitical world. Russia, one of the few nations with the potential to rival US power, is heavily dependent on its oil-producing revenue. By invading Iraq, the US gained de facto control over Iraq's oil production, and ultimately over the global oil market; a cut in the oil price via Iraq in combination with Saudi Arabia would mean a cut in Russia's own hegemony, and more importantly, a direct impediment to its ability to economically rival the US.

An example of the US utilising its petrodollar imperialism to great geopolitical effect was its Cold War diplomacy with the Soviet Union. Energy analysts Edward Morse and James Richard argue that it was Saudi collusion with the US for geopolitical gain that set the groundwork for the debt-ridden collapse of the Soviet economy. In the mid-1980s, as the Soviet oil industry was attempting to expand, Saudi Arabia used its spare capacity to drive down the global price of oil to \$10 a barrel, a drop of over 50 per cent:

The aforementioned Saudi-engineered price collapse of 1985–86 led to the implosion of the Soviet oil industry – which, in turn, hastened the Soviet Union's demise ... Saudi spare capacity is the energy equivalent of nuclear weapons ... It is also the centrepiece of the U.S.–Saudi relationship. The United States relies on that capacity as the cornerstone of its oil policy. (Morse and Richard 2002: 20)

Alternatively, China and Europe are both dependent on oil imports. Raising the price of oil would have similar deleterious impacts on these and/or any other countries dependent on oil imports, which the US did not hesitate to do when Nixon manipulated the OPEC oil crisis. Control of world oil prices via control of the world's currency means in large part control over the economies of Europe, China, Russia, and any other present or future rivals to US hegemony.

As military analyst Stan Goff puts it, 'Oil is not a normal commodity. No other commodity has five U.S. navy battle groups patrolling the sea lanes to secure it' (Goff 2004).

### Contemporary issues

As of 2014, the US faces new challenges to retain its petrodollar imperialism. A key factor to the success of the petrodollar regime

has been that much of the world until recently has been dependent on the US for its security. Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and Western Europe are all in the US post-Second World War security orbit, as are key Arab oil-producing states, most crucially Saudi Arabia and now Iraq. It certainly made, and continues to make, some sense for these countries to adhere to the dollar's primacy as the dominant trade currency in return for US protection.

However, key oil producers Venezuela, Iran, and Russia are most decidedly not US allies. Nor is China, the world's leading manufacturer. And with the rise of the BRICs (Brazil and India joining Russia and China) as powerful international economies, US economic leadership is no longer dominant.

And in response to the global financial crisis, caused by the US sub-prime mortgage crisis and housing-market bubble collapse, the Federal Reserve's response has been the controversial policy of Quantitative Easing (QE). QE is the process of expanding the number of dollars in circulation, while keeping interest rates at near zero levels to encourage borrowing and to promote economic growth. This in turn has meant much lower returns for US Treasury bills and other interest-bearing instruments, and subsequently lower returns for other countries' dollar reserves invested in those Treasury bills (Eichengreen 2012: 180). Between the outlays to save the 'too big to fail' banks, profligate military spending on the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and the War on Terror, US debt increased by \$10 trillion in just ten years, and went from 36 per cent of GDP in 2001 to 82 per cent in 2011 (Hung 2013).

Relying on the rest of the world to simply buy up the dollars it prints to cover its increased spending would appear to be catching up on the United States. Many are now suggesting that what was unthinkable a few years ago is now inevitable. In 2009, French president Nicolas Sarkozy said 'Today, we have a multipolar world, and the system must be multi-monetary. In the world as it is now, there can't be submission to what a single currency dictates' (Vinocur 2009). A 2011 World Bank report predicted that the dollar would be abandoned as the world's single currency before 2025 (World Bank 2011). The same year, Russian prime minister Vladimir Putin said of Americans: 'They are living like parasites off the global economy and their monopoly of the dollar' (Tsvetkova 2011).



At an international meeting of the BRICS, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa openly declared that they want the dollar's dominance to end:

Recognizing that the international financial crisis has exposed the inadequacies and deficiencies of the existing international monetary and financial system, we support the reform and the improvement of the international monetary system, with a broad-based international reserve currency system providing stability and certainty. (Sanya Declaration 2011)

In October 2009, long-term Middle East correspondent Robert Fisk of Britain's *Independent* newspaper broke the story that Gulf oil-producing countries, along with China, Russia, Japan and France, were in high-level secret discussions to launch a new system to replace the dollar as the de facto currency for global oil sales by 2018. The dollar would be replaced by a basket of different currencies, including a new currency for the Gulf Co-operation Council countries of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain. Other currencies would include the euro, the Chinese yuan, and Japanese yen. Gold would also be included in the mix (Fisk 2009).

China was cited as one of the most enthusiastic participants in the meetings. It has developed a somewhat mutually dependent relationship with the US; China buys American debt in the form of US government securities (\$1.27 trillion as of February 2014, according to the US Treasury). In return, the US consumes an enormous amount of Chinese products. This arrangement has been relatively stable as long as the US economy has continued to buy Chinese goods, and as long as US government securities have provided a decent rate of return.

However, Europe has now surpassed the US as China's principle export market, and thanks to QE, the rate of return on its trillion-dollar holdings is anaemic. However, any sizeable unloading of its dollar holdings would result in a collapse of the dollar's value, and a significant loss of its dollar assets.

China has a multitude of other reasons to be unhappy with the dollar as global currency hegemon. With the increase of dollars in international circulation due to QE

and the resulting depreciation of the dollar, Chinese exports have become more expensive. It has also resulted in inflation, as China has had to print more of its own currency to keep up with the increased supply of dollars. While the US has done this for a variety of reasons, at least one of them has been to make US exports cheaper and thus more attractive in order to help end the self-imposed Global Financial Crisis, at least for itself (Eichengreen 2012, 135).

With the Middle East importing a vast amount of goods from China, as does the rest of the world, these dollars are then exchanged for Chinese yuan in order to buy Chinese goods. If China could buy oil in yuan, the Middle East countries could then buy Chinese goods with the yuan they would be holding in reserve from oil sales.

Proponents of petrodollar imperialism point to Iran as another example of the US using its foreign policy and military to protect its dollar dominance. Ostensibly, US-led sanctions against Iran have been to address its nuclear aspirations. But Iran in recent years has also successfully and directly challenged the US dollar as the exclusive global currency for all oil transactions, with the direct assistance of Russia, China, and others.

It began in 2005, when Iran announced it would form its own International Oil Bourse (IOB), the first phase of which opened in 2008. The IOB is an international exchange that allows international oil, gas, and petroleum products to be traded using a basket of currencies other than the US dollar. Then in November 2007, at a major OPEC meeting, Iran's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called for a 'credible and good currency to take over US dollar's role and to serve oil trades' (China Daily 2007). He also called the dollar 'a worthless piece of paper' (BBC News 2007). The following month, Iran (consistently ranked as either the third or fourth biggest oil producer in the world) announced that it had requested all payments for its oil be made in currencies other than dollars (Reuters 2007).

The latest round of US sanctions target countries that do business with Iran's Central Bank, which, combined with the US and EU oil embargoes, should in theory shut down Iran's ability to export oil and thus force it to abandon its nuclear programme by crippling its economy. But instead, Iran is successfully negotiating oil sales by accepting gold, individual national currencies like China's yuan,

and direct bartering involving China, India, and Russia, among others (Doran 2012).

By accepting and encouraging countries to pay for its oil in currencies other than the US dollar, Iran has deliberately taken the same action that, according to *Petrodollar Warfare* (Clark 2005), led directly to the US invasion of Iraq. Like Iraq pre-invasion, Iran is not a member of the World Trade Organisation, has not had any dealings with the IMF since 1984, and does not have any debt with it or the World Bank. Like Iraq before it, the US and its oil companies are cut out of any future oil development in Iran. Like a post-sanctions Iraq, Iran has the potential to be the dominant power in the region and to provide development assistance on a vastly different model to that imposed by the WTO (World Trade Organization), World Bank, and IMF.

For now, the dollar remains dominant as the de facto global currency. However, the ascendancy of the euro and eventual internationalisation of the Chinese yuan, the rise of non traditional allies like China and Russia in the global economy, and the increasingly obvious decrease of America's global economic domination are all factors in predicting the dollar's eventual fall.

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## Sources of Surplus Value and Imperialism

Empire turns on prime forces: a stronger power's initial siege and pillage of material values from a weaker one, followed by a yoke of tyranny imposed upon resisting populations and extraction of surplus-value from their labour.

Here we sketch these contours, framing each historically, concentrating on Britain's evolving global empire and its ideological foundations, crisis of capital accumulation, and expanding colonial system.

### Material value

The underlying sources of material value are not generally known or recognised as being associated with the Sun's irradiation of Earth that, over the last 4.8 billion years, created and stored energy in rock, soil, water and atmosphere; energy ultimately used by plants and animals.

As living varieties, these sustained and gave life to our species to gather, hunt, and domesticate the means of existence, providing the sources of energy that populations require for survival and shaping materials for personal consumption and exchange (Krooth 2009).

Over the stretch of millenniums, these initial sources of use-and-exchange-values fused as accumulated wealth (linked to other forms taken through pillage, wars, and conquests; mercantilism and the extraction of labour-effort from those in bondage) in peonage or slavery, *ecomienda* or serfdom, wage-work or under the head-right system of tribal leaders providing community labour for the coin of empire.

### Ancient and modern imperial ruin

To one degree or another, all these sources of accumulated wealth came to centre in emergent primitive communities, feudal estates,

enlarging cities, and imperial helotries: controlling, exploiting, and impoverishing populations and the natural world.

Failing agricultural output, internal social conflict, and military build-up often bred crises of too little food and resources to support local populations and maintain the power position of an elite among the discontented many. Failing legitimacy of the elite might then be offset by foreign conquests to replace diminishing domestic resources used to pacify home populations.

More intensive exploitation domestically and abroad foretold environmental tragedies: terrain denuded of forests; soil fertility declining and eviscerated; food production plummeting and putrefied; resources and raw materials in short supply; skills and crafts undermined; and attempts at foreign conquest meeting resistance and sometimes defeat.

Imperial ruin then set up new equations of power between social classes and between them and the natural domain, producing stresses that might only be lessened by conscious measures to secure both populations and the remains of the natural order. Yet most empires rose and fell without such resolution, leaving behind weakened, dispersed peoples and environmental degradation (29–33, 191–192).

### Use-values and merchant capital

Empires and their precursors nonetheless varied; and the nature of each left a unique footprint of collected resources and material wealth, still seen in ancient cities and museums.

Marx wrote that the merchant capital carrying trade of *use-values* practised among the Venetians, Genoese, and Dutch merely circulated commodities and money to accumulate profit. ‘No matter what the basis on which commodities are produced, which are thrown into circulation as commodities – whether the basis of the primitive community, or small peasants or petty bourgeois, or the capitalist basis, the character of products as commodities is not altered, and as commodities they must pass through the process of exchange and its attendant changes of form’ (Marx 1961a: 320).

Money or goods would be exchanged for products in one location at one price, then the products would be sold for more money or

wares at another location, with the merchant taking the profit; next the process would be repeated, taking products to others buyers elsewhere ‘where the principal gains were not made by exporting domestic products, but by promoting the exchange of products of commercially and otherwise economically underdeveloped societies, and by exploiting both producing countries’ (323).

### European expansion

The future foundation for comparable merchant trade in *use-values* evolved as Europeans expanded their reach into the Americas.

Led by the discovery of the New World and driven by European drives to appropriate wealth, initial Spanish and Portuguese conquests in the Americas encompassed genocide and brigandage; followed by brutalising labour mining gold and silver; then agricultural field slavery; and, lacking biological immunities to European diseases, plague, from all of which the indigenes lost 81–90 million of their populations over the next 500 years (Krooth 2009: 218–223; 237–238, 244).

Designed by Catholic popes an ocean away, issuing edicts dividing America into viceroyalties to satiate a handful of crowned heads, noblemen and courtiers, they planned the importation of African slaves to mine bullion, to colonise food production under labour *encomienda*; and thereafter by mercantilism to impose inequitable trade.

These were the sometime overlapping steps of the invaders.

By the opening years of the 16th century, the Spanish had contracted with the Portuguese to supply slaves for their New World colonies. And the Spanish sovereigns then began a system of special contracts (called ‘*Assiento*’) with foreign nations, corporations, or their subcontractors to bestow from time to time a monopoly to supply Africans for their American possessions (Krooth 2013: 32–33; Morel 1969/1920: pp. 15–19, 153–155).

Early records vary recording this lucrative commerce in human flesh and labour. But from 1776–1800 an average of 74,000 slaves each year were imported into all the South and North American colonies and territories, totalling 1,850,000. The Portuguese annual average alone was 10,000 (Morel 1969/1920: 15–19). On went the carnage until more than

10 million souls were chained in the Middle Passage, more than half of them dying in wretchedness of starvation and sickness en route.

### From the sundered

From the sundered was torn labour's toil, transformed into ingots fulfilling the mercantile system's conception of wealth (Krooth 1975: 2; 2013: 33–35).

Thereby, between the European discovery of America and the acceleration of Britain's initial industrial revolution about 1760, some \$1,859 million in gold and \$3,994 million in silver were produced by enslaved populations throughout the world. As the periodic production of bullion rose steadily eight-and-a-half times, the major European sea powers accumulated metallic wealth in order to pay past debts to the leading Italian banking families, the Lombards and Fuggers, the remainder to buy foreign wares and to lay the base for new capitalist industries (Krooth 2013: 35–36).

The Spanish concentrated on Mexican slave mines, eventually becoming the principal colony for extracting gold and silver, shipping one-fifth to the Spanish Crown in Madrid. Under occupation, the population meanwhile plummeted from 11 million in 1519 to some 1.5 million around 1650. (36; Wallerstein 1974: 189, fn 74).

From Mexico, Father Mololina openly denounced the Spaniards' cruelty, fulminating that 'countless' natives were killed in labour in the mines; that forced service at Oaxaca was so destructive that for half a league around it one could not walk except on dead bodies or bones; that so many birds flocked there to scavenge that they darkened the sky. Only he who could count the drops of water in a rainstorm or the grains of sand in the sea could count the dead Indians in the ruined lands of the Caribbean Islands (Hanke 1959: 22).

With brutalising efficiency, the *ecomienda* system also enslaved native peoples and chained millions to the land. Miguel de Salamanca, the oldest and most authoritative of the Spanish clerics, described the system as 'Indians ... being allotted for life in order that, working as they are worked, all the profit deriving from their work goes to those who hold them in *ecomienda*; whereas this form of *ecomienda* and the manner to which it

is executed is contrary to the well-being of the Indian Republic' (Hanke 1960: 56).

Little bullion was discovered north of the Rio Grande however, Britain gradually turning towards establishing mercantile colonies, changing policies from seeking to accumulate wealth by raiding gold from the Spanish Main to establishing colonial trading territories from which emergent British industries could draw low-price raw materials to manufacture and return them at a high-price to the colonial market (Krooth 2009: 215–217; Lewis 1841: passim; Smith 1937: 531; 555–556).

### Mercantile capital accumulation

Starting in 1660, the British mercantile or colonial system moved beyond accumulating profits by pure merchant trade. Copied from Dutch merchants and adapted in Charles II's first Parliament as a Navigation Act (renewing and extending one passed nine years earlier), its object was to exclude the ubiquitous Dutch and other foreign shippers plying the North American colonial trade at a moment when barely half of England's 13 North American colonies had been established.

Britain was determined to completely regulate mercantile trade.

As the colonies were viewed as vast 'plantations' existing for the welfare of the Mother Country, they were to supply what the Mother Country could not produce herself, and to take in exchange the surplus produce and manufactures of the Mother Country. Colonial industry was to be stimulated or not along the lines of this policy. While the welfare of the colonies themselves was a secondary consideration, it could be generously measured when it produced no conflict with the welfare of the Mother Country.

It thus was to be a closed commercial system. No goods were to be imported into or exported from British possessions save in British or colonial ships. And under a system of 'enumerated articles' covered by more than 100 acts of Parliament, Britain admitted to her ports colonial foods and raw materials at a lower duty than was levied on similar goods from foreign nations.

The system also concentrated on mercantile colonies as a vent to sell at a high price varieties of British manufactured textiles, tools, and other factory products. Colonies were to sell to England at low prices their foods and produce to feed the Mother

Country's emergent working class; to supply British factories with low-cost raw materials so that the manufacturers might secure for themselves all the advantages arising from their further improvement at elevated prices — also prohibiting the colonies from manufacturing goods (not even a nail for a horseshoe railed the Earl of Chatham in Parliament) for their own markets, effectively keeping colonies and their labourers as permanent debtors (Krooth 1975: 3; Lewis 1841: 206–208, and *passim*). The resulting trade balance favouring Britain actually reflected more labour-toil drawn from the colonised exchanged for less labour-effort drawn from Britain's factory proletariat using machines driven by steam-power.

When the North American colonies had grown into large and flourishing communities able to mine resources, to manufacture, and to ship commodities, however, the British government required them to contribute to its expenses to subjugate them by arms; and though they had the means of payment, they also had acquired the power and disposition to resist. Describing themselves as Americans, anti-colonialism successfully began, leading to the 1776 revolt, victorious in 1783, eventually creating an unbroken continental nation from the Atlantic to the Pacific which was able to export commodities and, two centuries later, financial capital (Krooth 1975: 3–6, 28; Lewis 1841: 206–208; Sides (2006: 209, 214, 308).

### Tracing the past

Such expansive continental futures could hardly be successful in a geographically partitioned Europe of nation states, though after 1751 the wages system had become central to the British political economy, turning on increased factory production, employment of a dispossessed proletarian army, and expansive overseas markets.

As the Industrial Revolution took hold, the basic sources of surplus-value expropriated by capital and elaborated by empire were variously described by Scottish free-trader Adam Smith as being values created from workers' exertion over and above the value of the wages paid to them, seen as the underlying source of the wealth of all nations.

And yet by 1832, *vis-à-vis* surplus-value, English workers could no longer win higher relative wages or improvements under the

existing social order; they proved themselves unable to overturn and take charge of the production forces then in the hands of a determined owning class dominating parliament (Engels 1940: 14; Thompson 1963: *passim*).

Marx and Engels insisted nonetheless that this was the only path for labour to secure the full labour-value of its whole output.

Marx railed that: 'A forcing up of wages ... would therefore be nothing but better payment for the slave, and would not conquer for either the worker or for labour their human status and dignity' (Marx 1961b: 81).

Engels more pointedly explained:

It is not the highness or lowness of wages which constitutes the economical degradation of the working class: this degradation is comprised in the fact that, instead of receiving for its labour the full produce of this labour, the working class has to be satisfied with a portion of its own produce called wages. The capitalist pockets the whole produce (paying the laborer out of it) because he is the owner of the means of labour. And, therefore, there is no redemption for the working class until it becomes the owner of the means of work — land, raw material, machinery, etc. — and thereby also the owner of the whole produce of its own labour. (Engels 1940: 14)

Thomas T. Malthus held another view, emphasising natural restrictions on population growth by lack of the means of subsistence to maintain the multiplying millions.

Malthus had come to this conclusion in his 'Essay on Population' (1798) by drawing on Sir James Steuart, De Foe, and others to attack the French revolutionary teachings of Condorset. Rather than focus on the workers' lack of control of the means of production and inability to purchase their whole output, Malthus simply ignored the capitalists' appropriation of the entire product from which wages were paid. Rather, he said that the causes of labour's lack of sustenance were due to the population's reproduction on a geometric scale, while the landlords directed a peasantry that could only produce increasing quantities of food on a mathematical scale:

Taking the whole earth and supposing the present population to be equal to a thousand millions, the human species would

increase 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256 and subsistence as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. In two centuries, the ratio of the world's population to means of subsistence would be 256 to 9; in three centuries, it would be 4096 to 13, and in two thousand years, the difference would be incalculable. (Malthus 1926: 13–16).

With such a dismal comparison, Malthus concluded that the only remaining alternatives were depopulation: 'positive checks' associated with famine, starvation, epidemics and plagues; general pestilence, other natural disasters, and the 'vices of mankind' such as murder and wars.

But at root, Malthus's system rested on a theory of landlordism in which under-consumption in society could be alleviated by calling on the landlords to take up any excess of production.

Malthus revealed he actually understood capital's exploitation of labour: the excess of production was due to the lack of consumers, given the capitalist class had little incentive to continue to employ workers to produce goods that could not be sold, clearing the market. Labour's wages would only buy subsistence, with capital's surplus equal to the balance of commodity values workers created over and above wages paid. Even the capitalists themselves did not purchase enough to take up the excess supply of commodities, for they sought to accumulate their savings.

With the market glutted, only the landlords were able to take up the excess output and keep the system operating smoothly. Malthus insisted that it was essential that a nation 'with great powers of production should possess a body of unproductive consumers' (Malthus 1836: 38–39, 463). Here was a way to avoid the disastrous fluctuations of market overproduction.

### Relations of production

Adam Smith was alive to these and other changes in the source of value over time, viewing a nation's capital stock as equivalent to our present-day meaning of 'accumulated capital'.

Pointing to its sources from the ever changing relationship between investors of capital in workshop production on one side of the social equation, and on the other side, the employment of workers with nothing to sell

save their labour-power, Smith judged that a rise in wages paid by capital to those workers would necessarily follow when demand for labour exceeded its supply.

'The reward of labour, therefore, as it is necessary effect,' he wrote, 'is the natural symptom of increasing national wealth. The scanty maintenance of the laboring poor, on the other hand, is the natural symptom that things are at a stand, and their starving condition that they [the conditions sustaining national wealth] are going fast backwards' (Smith 1937: 73–74).

When a nation's industrial ownership classes were accumulating capital, wages were increasing because employers tended to put everyone to work and there were more jobs offered than workers available. At mid-point in a nation's economic life (when the capital accumulation process slowed), employers tended to cut wages to lower the cost of production, in order to lower market prices and thereby stabilise or elevate profit accumulation. When the point of the disaccumulation of capital was reached, however, employers grew anxious to reimburse themselves for losses and pressured the labour force to accept lower wages for increased efforts.

Workers thereafter could no longer win a greater share of the value of their own output under the rigid social order; and to win the full value of their labour would have to strive to control the production forces still held by the capitalist class.

### Class entitlements to surplus-value

The distribution of surplus-value to the different sectors of the ownership class of capitalists and others ultimately bred a struggle between its claimants. Those who argued for their own class entitlements to portions of surplus-value variously supported, attacked, or sought destruction of the wage system.

Petty capitalist engaged in craft and petty workshop production wanted to destroy not only the wage system and the instruments of labour, but also the inventors who created the technology and methods which threw them out of craft labour by competitively superseding their workshop output; the hallmark of the petty commodity form. They initially responded by hanging inventors of the machines that had put them out of work, burning and idling factories, and destroying

the very commodities factory workers had made. As these methods failed to relieve the market crisis, they then variously moved to take over factories and to appropriate manufactured commodities. And a pending revolution possible, the owners responded by mobilising hired guards and state police to destroy the power of both anarchistic and organised labour (Mantoux 1978: 23–42).

Socialists also wanted to destroy the wage system; but they were determined to capture the means of production as their own, not to destroy them.

Supporting the wage system, preserving the production relationship between capital and labour, were reformers like: John Stuart Mill, who believed that the market redistribution of output could be altered in favour of labour (Mill 1909: 199–201, ff.); and Nassau Senior, representing the interests of manufacturers, who sought to annually pay workers subsistence from a fixed, invariable wage-fund and, as a residual, to reward capital's investment in production (rather than their use of it for personal consumption) with profits earned during the last hour of a 12-hour workday (Senior 1836: 153, 168 ff., and passim).

### David Ricardo: Protector of the manufacturing class

But the whole fault with capital's lack of a proper return on its investment lay at the doorstep of the landlords, insisted David Ricardo in his *Principles of Political Economy*, at base designed to protect the industrial class.

He argued that, as the land put into agricultural use produced diminishing returns and more labour was required to produce the same bushel of corn (that is, wheat), the landlords would receive higher prices. With the corn supply limited, and the Corn Laws keeping out cheaper foreign grain, high demand would raise corn prices. Land rents would reflect such prices as the landlords parasitically cut deeper into what was rightly due to labour for subsistence and reproduction of its social class, and thereafter to capital. Thus were the landlords raising the price of bread that workers paid for subsistence, in turn raising their demand for wages, thereby reducing capital's residual share of surplus, causing the falling rate of profit on capital invested – though no additional quantity of manufacturing labour was required that

independently would raise the price of manufactured goods (Ricardo n.d.: 64).

Thereby the landlords were receiving rent as unearned income. And since they added to the cost of production by increasing the price of corn and other necessities workers purchased, driving labour's upward pressure on wages, the landlord's unearned surplus was at the expense of the residual share due capital after wages were paid. The landlords' appropriation of rents was thus opposed to the interests of both labourers and manufacturers.

A bitter argument broke out concerning the Corn Laws of 1815. The great landowning families had isolated themselves from every other social class by using the Corn Laws for their own selfish profit. And in 1838 the workers and owners united in the Anti-Corn League against their mutual oppressors, agitating for repeal of the duties on imported grain. Reaching a head in 1845–46, repeal of the Corn Laws initiated the golden age of free trade for the manufacturers, with their import of cheaper raw materials for manufacture in heavily tooled industries, and after 1850 cheaper foodstuffs for the working class (Krooth 1980: 11–13).

### Lines of demarcation

Meanwhile, in Britain, how social classes were properly demarcated depended upon the way in which surplus-value was taken, distributed, and redistributed.

The free market was hardly free to the workers selling their labour-power, faced as they were with landlords and manufacturers monopolising the market prices that workers paid for subsistence and other commodities.

British landlords had long since kept their workers in check by turning the countryside into sheep-runs, driving serfs into parishes under the Speedhamland System and Poor Laws to labour in workshops under severe conditions in return for so-much bread and wine. When the labourers refused to work at capacity, the outraged parish ratepayers then abolished the subsidies, and the mill-owners carted them off to factories as slaves, there to labour and die.

The British mill-owners who drove the enslaved, then paid them in subsistence or not at all, carried their output to domestic markets at whatever price they could secure above their labour-value; then dumped the excess output in foreign markets, spreading



their original investment in the fixed costs of factory machinery over the increased number of all units their workers produced. In so doing, they lowered unit costs, captured world markets, and maximised overall profits.

Between 1840 and 1880, market shares held by world traders changed. Though the United Kingdom controlled 32 per cent of the volume of international trade in 1840, her share had fallen to 23 per cent by 1880. And although the overall world market had vastly enlarged, with France's share barely increasing (from 10–11 per cent), the upstart US post-Civil-War manufacturers had enlarged their share from 8–10 per cent, and from 1871 the ongoing consolidation of Germany 'blood and iron' empire raised its share of global trade from zero in 1840 to 9 per cent in 1880 (*Ministère du Travail* 1925: 339–342; *Statistical Abstract of the US* 1921: 923; *Statistical Abstract of the US* 1928: 447, 450; *Statistische Jahrbuecher fuer das Deutsche Reich* 1880–1914: *passim*).

To prevent the domestic disaccumulation of surplus-value, free-trade Britain quickly moved to protect its home market with tariffs just high enough to keep out foreign manufactured goods; undercut its competitors by dumping manufactured commodities at slightly lower prices; mercilessly driving its workers to outperform competitor nations, providing them with imperial imports of subsidised foods and five high-powered stimulants: sugar, tea, coffee, tobacco, and opium.

Thereafter, until 1880–82, foreign revenues became British manufacturers' (and the nation's) major source of accumulated surplus.

### **From mercantilism and free trade to financial capital exports and colonies**

The wages system and free trade were locked together in an unholy dance that periodically led to a larger body of workers than available wage jobs; the vast accumulation of surplus wealth from labour-toil at home; nonetheless falling profit returns on capital; the bank centralisation of previous forms of assets and revenues; the accelerating export of finance capital, iron, steel, and machines; as well as administrative oversight of colonial production (Krooth 1980: 19–20; see also Andrew 1910: 3, Table 1; 17, Table 7; 18, Table 8).

Though the population of England and Wales increased about 20 per cent from

1861 (28,927,485) to 1881 (34,884,848), Britain still had to import food as agricultural employment and production did not keep pace. Per capita consumption of food-stuffs, as well as stimulants like tea and sugar, meanwhile went up (3.68 tea/sugar lb per capita in 1867, and 5.02 lb in 1887), helping to drive the workforce to greater production of coal (1877, 14,610,763 tn; but 1887, 162,119,812 tn); pig iron (1877, 6,608,064 tn; but 1887, 7,471,000 tn) and steel ingots (1877, 904,567 tn; but 1887, 3,1916,778). As the basic ingredients for manufacturing abroad, iron and steel exports jumped, doubling from 1,355,128 tn in 1867 to 2,695,542 in 1887.

Along with these essentials, a labour force was also sent abroad. To sidestep domestic economic stagnation and the rise of unemployed people, debtors and the dangerous-idle stealing bread and horses, the 'excess' population was put in workhouses, or sent to the gallows, or shipped to colonies to extract surplus-value from their own and indigenous people's toil at mining, agriculture, and commercial activities. This temporarily 'solved' the crisis of too many people and too little food in Britain.

The bond was not to be broken, as the most rapid expansion of colonies and export of finance capital came in the 1880s (when, as already said, British goods quickly lost markets to German and US competitor wares), threatening the further accumulation of profits at home. As an offset, Britain again shifted its imperial posture, now sending financial capital, pig iron, steel ingots and machinery for production, and consumer goods to other industrial nations and colonies, thus tying its future success to exogenous wealth accumulation (Krooth 1980: 20–21; see also Andrew 1910: 19, Table 9, for the continuous increase in global imperial revenues: £69,600,218 in 1867–68; £77,730,671 in 1877–78; £89,802,254 in 1887–88; £106,614,004 in 1897–98; and £146,541,737 in 1907–08).

Meanwhile, between 1884 and 1900, Britain acquired 3,700,000 square miles of new colonial territories. By 1914 the British Empire covered 12.7 million square miles, of which the United Kingdom represented 121,000 or less than one-hundredth. In terms of population, moreover, of the 410 million British subjects, constituting about one-fifth of the people of the globe, 44 million resided in the United Kingdom; only a little more than one-tenth of the Empire's inhabitants.

From this empire ruled by the few came total trade of about £180,000,000 a year, bringing to

Britain revenues amounting to approximately £19,500,000 sterling. And to this empire, British capital investors had sent £4 billion by 1913 (UK billions throughout this essay).

In returns, between 1880 and 1910, overseas investment earnings tripled (£57,700 in 1880 but £170,000 million in 1910), and other income from shipping, insurance, and services increased by more than a half (£96,400,000 in 1880 but £146,700,000 in 1910).

Together, the sum of trade and earnings abroad was reflected in the accelerated accumulation of capital. In the 63-year period 1812–75, British wealth increased by £5.848 billion, as compared to the total accumulation of £7.924 billion in the following 37 years (1876–1912).

The more rapid accumulation of capital came from the large-scale expansion of colonies after 1875 and especially after 1882. For the colonies where British manufactured goods were exported and raw materials and foodstuffs were obtained offered investment and loan rewards for British capital, while seeking reinvestment abroad.

### Dividing line: Export of finance capital

An expanded, more rigid colonial system and a vast effusion of finance capital now supplemented the free-trade commerce of earlier years. Finance capital export became the dividing line between mercantilism and free trade on one side, and, on the other, the imperial outgo of capital and machinery for production abroad.

This fundamental change turned on large-scale industrial techniques; the integration of finance with other forms of capital and industry; the monopolisation of production; and their combined influence over state policies, pushing finance capital exports and the export of capital goods and enhancing the foundation for accelerated gross imperial revenues (Krooth 1980: 20–21, *passim*).

Toward the end of the 19th century, then, the wages system producing surplus-value and its vast accumulation transformed mere capital into financial means, neglecting investments within Britain, exporting it to multiplying colonies and dominions. It reached an historic *apogée* that in the future would outlast two world wars and dozens of smaller ones.

The Great Powers would again realign global territories to divide resources and working populations producing both commodities and surplus-values, overcoming the welfare of people at home and abroad; spreading ever new technologies of production and using fossil fuels that today threaten environmental conditions handed down from millenniums past and essential for the existence of species (Krooth ; 2009: xxi–xxiv, 1–28, 549–648).

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## Super-exploitation, the Race to the Bottom, and the Missing International

There have been many opportunities for people with radically different conceptions of the world system to see their basic suppositions and truths, often untouched by the conjuncture, reborn in the face of the post-2008 world. This has been particularly stark in

recent accounts of the apparent flip in fortunes of 'the West and the rest', as the layers of the structurally unemployed and precariously employed historically associated with the Southern periphery now appear to be regular features of advanced capitalist societies, particularly in Europe (see Breman 2013); while at least initially, the full effects of the global financial crisis seemed to be forestalled in emerging economies, particularly those rich in natural resources.

In crude relief, consider two recent national anecdotes back to back. In December 2010, with the official unemployment rate at the historical low of 5.7 per cent, Brazil's outgoing president Lula da Silva declared the country to be on the verge of reaching full employment (IBGE 2010; Partido dos Trabalhadores 2010). The discourse that followed has linked the country's relatively healthy rates of GDP growth to the growing purchasing power of a burgeoning young workforce; millions of workers having ostensibly joined the ranks of a new 'middle class' on the back of rising real wages, labour market participation, and formalisation (e.g. Maia Junior 2012; cf. ILO 2013). While emphasising favourable conjunctural elements including the global sellers' markets for Brazil's main commodities and auspicious macroeconomic conditions, this discourse downplays continuing structural contradictions that become clear once this 'new middle class' is put back into the context of Brazil's class structure overall; one which continues to be characterised by historical problems associated with Brazilian dependent development, including structural unemployment, a massive relative surplus population, low wages (and more recently, an over-reliance on household credit), income inequality (Duarte 2013), and new degrees of displacement from, and denationalisation of, land (Teixeira and Gomes 2013, particularly the essays by Teixeira and Sauer).

Meanwhile in Europe, certain commentators see even an imperialist power like Britain on the road to becoming a 'developing country', as it slips down the rankings of key competitiveness indicators in relation to Asia (Chakraborty 2013). Conveniently ignoring the historical and continuing provenance of the City of London's 'natural resources' in value transfers from the global South (Norfield 2013), the head of the *Guardian's* economics desk writes that:

In Britain, we have become used to having our resources skimmed off by a small cadre of the international elite, who often don't feel obliged to leave much behind for our tax officials. An Africa specialist could look at the City and recognise in it a 21st-century version of a resource curse: something generating oodles of money for a tiny group of people, often foreign, yet whose demands distort the rest of the economy.

These blinkered accounts of the forward march of history (in the latter case, suddenly going into reverse) have found widespread expression on the left. In Western Europe, many sections have proposed a renewal of the post-war Keynesian social consensus to preserve historical working terms, conditions, and living standards in an extremely hostile environment, and as an exit to the current crisis more generally. What have been lost in this appeal are the global dimensions of accumulation that sustained the original post-war consensus, even following the end of formal empire, and the social contradictions between sections of the working class globally through which such accumulation continues.

This has cropped up, for example, in the concerns voiced by various trade unions that an eventual trade and investment agreement between the European Union and US (the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or TTIP) may threaten labour, environmental, healthcare and education standards associated with an already beleaguered social Europe; very legitimate fears which stand in stark contrast to the general silence (with some exceptions) that greeted the negotiations of similar, but many would argue neo-colonial, treaties that the EU has carried out with the periphery over the last 20 years (including the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Islands [ACP] group, Latin America and India, amongst others). Similarly, the latest wave of criminalisation and deportation of migrant workers from Western Europe has been marked by an unfortunate lack of outrage and meaningful action by the traditional left as, either overtly or *soto voce*, it retreats into protectionism over jobs and housing for its own, 'native' working class; rather than, alternatively, fighting the very mechanisms which are driving the crisis faced by workers everywhere. Over the last generation, increasing numbers of workers have become 'free trade refugees': people moving from

Southern countries devastated by neo-liberal trade and investment agreements to the very co-signatories to these agreements which, in partnership with their national bourgeoisies, have facilitated a new, neo-liberal phase of underdevelopment. Hence, the recent revival of a slogan from anti-colonial struggle in the UK in relation to the horrifying story of Colombian Isabella Acevedo, the former cleaner of a one-time Tory immigration minister, who was criminalised and deported in July 2014: "We are here because you are still there" (see Oldfield and Naik 2014; Ordoñez 2014). The inaction surrounding global structures like trade agreements and immigration controls that pit the interests of workers and oppressed classes (rather than nations, *per se*) against one another would seem to signal a tacit acceptance that working-class interests in the North are in fact served by these structures; in other words, of an alignment of working-class interests with those of 'their' national capital. In the imperialist nations of the North, this can only be reactionary.

The objective of this essay is to locate an alternative starting point from which to speak about the global crisis of labour in the current phase of imperialism; that is, not from the standpoint of the neo-liberal crisis of work, labour rights, trade unions, and living standards in the global North (and indeed, around the world), but by reflecting on the resurgence of super-exploitation in the global South. Theoretical treatments of the phenomenon emerged in the context of the Marxist strand of dependency theory, whose use is still largely confined to Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and South Asia. The reasons, in turn, for the continuing significance (or in some quarters, revival) of the dependency perspective stem from its ability to provide conceptual tools for reckoning capital-labour relations (and so, struggle) within a nation, regional and global framework. Such tools are badly needed to overcome the limitations of anti-capitalist strategies that remain tied to the trope of the local or nation in the imperialist age; and particularly those emanating from the global North.

The essay is broken into three sections. It begins by reviewing the episodic treatment of super-exploitation and a related phenomenon, *labour segmentation*, in Marx's *Capital*. While Marx noted that the retention of super-exploitation in the midst of higher degrees of labour productivity was central to the development of the prototypical English industrial

revolution, he neglected to incorporate either super-exploitation, or labour segmentation more broadly, into his labour theory of value. With this issue unresolved in Marx, two important issues have subsequently been glossed over by much of the Marxist left. First, the role of difference – conceived not simply as a series of mystifying ideologies (of race, gender, sexuality, immigration status, etc.) that obfuscate the unity of the working class, but as a feature of core social relations under globalised capitalism – in structuring the highly unequal ways that labour power is valued within both national and global markets. Secondly, as we saw in the two earlier anecdotes, there has also been a tendency to abstract the life chances, working terms, and conditions enjoyed by workers in a given national social setting from the global patterns of accumulation upon which they today depend.

The essay then moves on to consider the work of the Brazilian Marxist dependency theorist Ruy Mauro Marini. Marini (1978; 2005a; 2005b) examined one example of labour segmentation established under the imperialist division of labour of the classical free trade era and, in this context, developed the arguably most rigorous treatment of dependency from a labour (or production) standpoint in the context of works such as *Dialéctica de la dependencia* (or *The Dialectics of Dependency*, originally published in 1973). Recovering a key contribution of the dependency perspective, the essay argues that accumulation in the imperialist age, rather than creating conditions for the emergence and generalisation of ‘modern’ modes of labour productivity, has driven the reproduction of labour super-exploitation in dependent economies like Brazil. It suggests more generally that what unifies imperialism as a period (whether we think of captured trade under mercantilism and settler-colonialism to formal empire, the ascendant finance and monopoly capital of the late 19th–early 20th century, or the hegemonic circuits of productive and financial capital following the Second World War) are two things. First, the degree to which core social relations in countries of the global South (despite being formally independent since the early 19th–20th century, depending on the region) have been reproduced to sustain the extraction and external accumulation of surplus value (Bresser Pereira 1984: 50–54; Latimer 2014: 2). And secondly, the degree to which this global accumulation

takes place on the basis of the combination of different rates of exploitation. By way of example, the essay turns to examine the resurgence of super-exploitation in one of the most dynamic and globally integrated sectors of the so-called new ‘Brazilian Miracle’: the sugar/ethanol industry. Here, despite recent improvements in real wages and job formalisation, higher rates of profit were in fact made possible by the general lowering of labour costs a decade earlier, following trade liberalisation and neo-liberal restructuring of the labour process, job markets and regional production; what I would identify as the neo-liberal crisis of labour (Latimer 2014).

The final section returns to Marx, and to the implications of this argument for class struggle. It revisits the discussion of the general law of accumulation in *Capital Volume I* (Marx 1974: ch.25) to comment on particular and general forms of exploitation in the global crisis of labour. The essay ends by arguing that the structural divisions within and contradictions between sections of the global working class need to be at the core of anti-capitalist strategy, if the global left is to be able to construct an international capable of effectively challenging global capitalism.

### **Super-exploitation in the labour theory of value: from Marx to Marini**

Super-exploitation, broadly defined as a mode of extracting an ‘extra’ degree of surplus value involving recourse to extreme exploitation, is best understood in the context of a division of labour involving differential rates of exploitation, or labour segmentation. With few exceptions, neither super-exploitation nor labour segmentation has been addressed in the labour theory of value in any systematic way. Rather, in many ways, the phenomenon is caught in the empirical realm. In anthropology and cognate disciplines, for example, recourse to systematically higher rates of exploitation in Southern economies is often explained in cultural terms; for example, with the argument that capital in the export-processing zones embeds forms of exploitation in existing culturally specific forms of inequality (based, for example, on gender, kinship, and regional hierarchies) to order and control highly exploitative labour processes (e.g. Granovetter 1985; Ngai 2005; Ong 1987; cf. Heyman 1998).

Throughout *Capital I*, Marx himself (1974) observed the continuing use of outmoded, exhaustive forms of exploitation in the shift from absolute to relative surplus value that underpinned the industrial revolution in England: in the gendered and age-related division of labour that saw women and children performing labour-intensive tasks in early industrial factories (ch. 15, 422); and in the production and leveraging of the relative surplus population to increase the rate of exploitation in formal labour settings (ch. 25). In the latter, for example, Marx observed that young men were ‘drained of their strength while still at a tender age, after which they were treated as useless and left to perish’ as members of a floating surplus population (Catephores 1981: 275–276). Illustrating how segmentation may constitute ‘a barrier to the expansion of the productive forces to the extent that it restricts the supply of labour, [and] limits the development of labour power’ (Bowles and Gintis 1977: 179), this took place at the very life stage when, in earlier forms of industry, young men might have been taken on as journeymen and apprentices and trained for adult tasks. (For recent efforts to mediate the often overwrought distinction between exploitation and oppression in advanced capitalist societies, see Dixon 1977; Heyman 1998; Ness 2005; Valiani 2012; Walia 2010. Their works examine the role of segmented labour markets in the super-exploitation of gendered, racialised and/or migrant labour.)

In both instances, Marx noted that the segmentation of the workforce (in the first instance, ‘forms of organization of labour rendered obsolete by the very development of capitalist production’, and in the second, the periodic cycling of workers through formal employment and out again) was crucial to accumulation (Catephores 1981: 274).

Although then, technically speaking, the old system of division of labour is thrown overboard by machinery, it hangs on in the factory, as a traditional habit handed down from Manufacture, and is afterwards systematically re-moulded and established in a more hideous form by capital, as a means of exploiting labour-power. (ch. 15, quoted in Catephores 1981: 274)

However, Marx neglected to elevate these instances of super-exploitation (and more generally, of the combination of differentiated

rates of exploitation) to a high level of abstraction in *Capital*, and ultimately assumed that the rate of exploitation would equalise across a given society (Catephores 1981; Higginbottom 2012; Sotelo Valencia 2014: 541; cf. Marx 1974: 212, 235). As others have suggested, this is arguably one of many heuristic devices Marx used in the course of elaborating the labour theory of value; crucially, for example:

Assuming that labour-power is paid for at its value, we are confronted by this alternative: given the productiveness of labour and its normal intensity, the rate of surplus-value can be raised only by the actual prolongation of the working-day; on the other hand, given the length of the working-day, that rise can be effected only by a change in the relative magnitudes of the components of the working-day, viz., necessary labour and surplus-labour; a change which, if the wages are not to fall below the value of labour-power, presupposes a change either in the productiveness or in the intensity of the labour. (Marx 1974: 511, emphases added; cf. Bueno and Seabra 2010: 71; Marini 2005b: 187)

While perhaps a valid analytical step, as Bowles and Gintis (1977) argue in an otherwise problematic analysis of labour segmentation, ‘the assumption of equal rates of exploitation is in no way required by historical materialism and is inconsistent with a critical Marxian concept: uneven development’ (176; also Rosdolsky, in Foster and McChesney 2012: 131). This elision was also historically problematic in the setting of the original industrial revolution, during the extension of global capitalist relations in the same period (the ‘classical’ phase of global accumulation, c.1769–c.1880), and in the imperialist phase which followed (Cope 2012: part I). If we understand imperialist expansion in the latter as a response to contradictions between capital’s drive to expand production and stagnating rates of profit in the last quarter of the 19th century, then the ordering and articulation of a new division of labour between diverse sections of slaves (until 1888 in Brazil), other forms of unfree labour, unpaid domestic labour, rural and urban workers, and peasants in the colonial (and, in relation to Latin America, neo-colonial) periphery and those

in the metropolitan core should be understood as an epochal key to their resolution. (In this sense, this essay is conceived in part as a contribution to a broader research project that explores the role of differentiated rates of exploitation in global accumulation strategies under imperialism, which to date counts such valuable works as Cope 2012; Nash and Fernández-Kelly 1983, particularly the essays by Nash, and Bonilla and Campos; Rodney 1981; Sanderson 1985, Tomba 2007.) In the context of formal empire, for example, both Lenin and Bukharin observed that the division of labour enabled the production of super-profits in the colonies through the super-exploitation of colonial labour (Higginbottom 2012: 253). Decades later, a key contribution of the Marxist strand of dependency theory would be to illustrate this dynamic in a division of labour now organised around formally independent nation states. In this vein, I would suggest that the combination of differentiated rates of exploitation (including super-exploitation) is a key characteristic of class formation and accumulation under the consecutive stages of imperialism, including neo-liberalism.

From the genocidal displacement of Indigenous communities in the early 16th century and the equally genocidal trade in and exploitation of enslaved Africans, to the marginalisation of freed Africans in the transition to a wage-based economy and their displacement by immigrant labour, super-exploitation and labour segmentation have been intrinsic to the formation of Brazilian capitalism, which itself 'cannot be understood separately from its globally-informed structure and function' (Marini 2005a: 138, my translation; also Duarte 2013: 196–199; Lockhart and Schwartz 1984: 198–201). In a description of the racial economy of colonial Brazil, Lockhart and Schwartz (1984) quantify the subhuman valuation of African life in arguably the harshest plantation economy of the day which, despite unceasing slave uprisings and republican movements, would last until abolition in 1888.

Slave owners estimated that a slave could produce on the average about three-quarters of a ton of sugar a year. At the prices of the period, this meant in effect that slave would produce in two or three years an amount of sugar equal to the slave's original purchase price and the cost of

maintenance. Thus if the slave lived only five or six years, the investment of the planter would be doubled, and a new and vigorous replacement could be bought. (218)

Likewise, Souza (1974) would comment on the revival of super-exploitation a century later in the highly competitive auto sector of greater São Paulo during the so-called Brazilian Miracle (1968–72), in a passage that closely echoes Marx's observations of modern industry above:

In all its stages, the economic process instituted in Brazil was based on the co-existence of advanced forms of capitalist exploitation and the most backward forms of production. The basis ... of this development was the intensive exploitation of labour power and not the utilization of technology. However, these two forms complemented each other, and only when the world system required the more advanced forms of production (agricultural or industrial) were they introduced. (See also Humphrey 1980; Pinto 1965; Sotelo Valencia 2014: 543.)

It is in this context that the contribution of Ruy Mauro Marini (2005a; 2005b) to the labour theory of value, in the form of his thesis on super-exploitation, is significant, insofar as it offers one of the most rigorous treatments of this apparent 'backwardness' to date (see also Bueno and Seabra 2010; Osorio in Almeida Filho 2013; Sotelo Valencia 2014; on the significance of this thesis to historical and contemporary debates within Marxist dependency theory, see Kay 1989; Prado 2011; Sotelo Valencia 2014). While many use the term figuratively or descriptively to talk about a variety of low-wage, physically exhausting and often dangerous work, Marini examined the historical function of super-exploited Brazilian labour, unfree *and* free, in the production of particular use values for consumption in the metropolitan core during the 19th century. On this basis, he began to theorise a new modality, if not a discrete form, of extracting surplus value; one which Marx might have observed in concrete settings but which he declined to fully integrate in the labour theory of value, as illustrated above.

Super-exploitation involves the extraction of an extra degree of surplus value through

any combination of techniques (for example, the extension of tasks or hours in the working day, the intensification of the labour-process) which amount to qualitatively higher degrees of exploitation, rather than through the development of the worker's productive capacity per se (Marini 2005a: 156; Marini 2005b: 189; cf. Furtado 2007: 232–233); that is, without an increase to the technical composition of capital (or the proportion of capital invested in the purchase of labour power, or wages, to that of constant capital, or machinery). In other words, the improvement of productivity through new technology and techniques of production is neglected in favour of intensifying the physical labour process, often to the point of complete exhaustion.

The relation of super-exploitation to the two modes of surplus value identified in *Capital* is a current subject of debate. In Marini's work, the concept cannot be reduced to either absolute surplus value, with which it is often conflated (Marini 1978; cf. Salama 2009; Cardoso and Faletto 1979), or to relative surplus value, although it may occur in combination with either. Starting from Marini's original texts, Bueno and Seabra (2010) argue that super-exploitation 'brings together diverse modalities of extracting surplus value, centred on the evasion of the law of value in relation to the labour-power commodity' (74) in so far as it bypasses the exchange of commodities of equal value (71, my translation). For Higginbottom (2009), super-exploitation constitutes a third mode of extracting surplus value that arose under, and has come to characterise, surplus value extraction from the global South during the imperialist phase of capitalism. I accept the position of Sotelo Valencia (2014) which positions super-exploitation as an imminent mechanism that conditions the development (or, perhaps better, limits the generalisation) of relative surplus value in low-wage and 'emerging' economies like Brazil: 'Super-exploitation as a production regime is not negated in dependent countries when relative surplus value emerges, even to a limited extent, and imposes its logic – though not its hegemony – in the production and accumulation of capital' (5).

However, super-exploitation also by definition involves a reduction or suppression of wages to the point where it falls below the value of the worker's labour power, or the level necessary to reproduce her or his labour power in a given social formation.

This rendered section of the worker's wages is thus converted into an extra source of surplus value that is appropriated by the capitalist (Bueno and Seabra 2010; Marini 2005a: 154–155). This element in fact arises later in *Capital Volume I*, where Marx amends one of the problematic working assumptions flagged earlier and so makes conceptual space for super-exploitation as a general tendency of capitalist development:

In the chapters on the production of surplus-value it was constantly pre-supposed that wages are at least equal to the value of labour-power. Forcible reduction of wages below this value plays, however, in practice too important a part, for us not to pause upon it for a moment. It, in fact, transforms, within certain limits, the labourer's necessary consumption-fund into a fund for the accumulation of capital. (Marx 1974: 599; see Higginbottom 2012: 263–264)

Finally, Marini (2005a) locates super-exploitation at a specific position in the global system shaped by imperialism, rather than as a universal historical stage: specifically, as a characteristic of capitalist development specific to dependent economies, such as the export-oriented economies of Latin America (and elsewhere) where, in contrast to advanced capitalist countries, workers were not expected to fulfil their second function as consumers of the use values they produced (154–155, 165). Rather, this kind of exploitation marked sectors that relied on the extensive and intensive use of labour (namely, extractive industries and plantation agriculture) and, consequently, in which there was little need for high or continuing reinvestment of constant capital. Marini suggests that the tendency of local oligarchies at the periphery of the global system to resort to super-exploitation explains why the supply of prime materials and foodstuffs from Latin America increased in the very period that their terms of trade diminished (153, 156).

Crucially, this systemic reliance on super-exploitation in the 19th-century division of labour draws our attention to some of the structural contradictions which shaped the global working class in this period. Marini (2005a) argues that the super-exploitation of Brazilian labour underwrote a qualitative shift in English industrial development from



1840 onwards, with the provision of cheap foodstuffs and raw materials (142–147). This flow (amongst others, of course) supported the shift from absolute to relative surplus value; in other words, to the generalisation of a stage of expanded production based on higher rates of labour productivity, or a higher technical composition of capital (Marx 1977: 145). This shift would only be approximated in Brazil itself a century later and never, to date, in a generalised way. Marini's argument is that this shift took place (in part) not only due to higher national rates of labour productivity in England, but also to its reliance upon cheaper imported raw materials and foodstuffs; in other words, upon a lowering of the costs of production and social reproduction respectively in the core economy on the basis of super-exploitation in the periphery. Thus, in the bid to develop the productive forces of one core region, he illustrates how imperialism accentuated and relied upon different rates of exploitation overall: '... the combination of forms of capitalist exploitation are carried out unevenly throughout the system, engendering distinct social formations according to the predominance of one form or another' (Marini 2005b: 189).

With echoes of Marx's deconstruction of the bourgeois origin myth of primitive accumulation, this element of Marini's work undermines yet another origin myth: that the shift to relative surplus value in England was entirely the product of national class struggle by its working class, a common theme of Eurocentric histories of the classical Industrial Revolution. There is both an historical and geographical (or system-level) point to be made here. Where Marx (1977) argues that the increased degree of labour productivity reached in the shift to the production of relative surplus value 'rests on a technical basis, and must be regarded as given at a certain stage of development of the productive forces' (145), Marini illustrates that this moment of industrial 'progress' was paid for (in part) by the super-exploitation of unfree and free workers elsewhere in the global system. This contrasts with traditional Marxist narratives that assume (more or less explicitly) that the national frame is the most appropriate scope with which to interpret capitalist development (and the social, democratic progress), even within imperialist countries, and that capitalist development will ultimately progress from stage to stage

in all national economies of the capitalist world. Rather, this case illustrates how, when adjusted to the global frame (or within the nation state, a framework that encapsulates all workers, active and reserve), capitalist development drives backwardness; it is not its cure. What Marini offers is a single case (for now, abstracted from a more general picture of the global system of the period) that illustrates the continuing reliance of core industrial development on accumulation by means of super-exploitation, albeit now through the arm's-length relations afforded by free trade and dependency.

### **Super-exploitation under the new Brazilian Miracle**

Adding to the effort of those attempting to revive Marini's contribution in analyses of this latest phase of imperialism (e.g. Almeida Filho 2013; Amaral and Carcanholo 2009; Bueno and Seabra 2010; 2012; Duarte 2013; Higginbottom 2012; Marini 2008; Martins 2011; Osorio Urbina 2004; Sader et al. 2009; Sotelo Valencia 2009; 2014), I suggest that labour segmentation has become one of the key challenges to Brazilian class struggle over the past generation, in the context of the restructuring of production, of labour processes, and of labour markets; in other words, in the context of the neo-liberal crisis of labour (Latimer 2014; cf. Duarte 2013). Certain elements of this crisis are not new. However, the perennial tension of structural divisions within the working class have taken front-and-centre stage in the neo-liberal period. The deepening of divisions within the working class (writ large to include rural and urban wage earners, informal-sector workers, semi-proletarianised peasants, and the increasingly complex reserve army) have enabled the resurgence of super-exploitation in already labour-intensive sectors, and particularly those which benefited from the opening to deregulated trade and direct investment flows in the 1990s, financial deregulation, and constant demand for minerals and raw materials in the new century (Duarte 2013: 198–201).

Perhaps nowhere is this trend clearer than in agribusiness, the sector now celebrated as the core of a new 'Brazilian Miracle' (cf. Amann and Baer 2012). According to the *Economist* (2010), the source of this sector's success lies in its smart use of the country's

abundant land base and resources; in the state's attention to developing new technologies rather than to subsidies, regardless of the new monopolies that have developed around them; the successful introduction of genetically modified crops, championed by capital and the central government after a protracted battle with land-based social movements, non-governmental organisations and dissident state governments throughout the 1990s; and the embracing of trade liberalisation, competition, and capital-intensive farming through economies of scale.

Echoing similarly myopic visions of the previous 'Miracle', the new conditions of labour and land relations which have made this boom possible have been sidelined altogether in this account. Take, for example, the conditions faced by day labourers in the sugarcane fields of São Paulo state, which came to light following a series of work-related deaths. Brazil is now the largest global producer and exporter of sugarcane and sugar-based ethanol, and one of the largest domestic markets for biofuels. In 2006, the highly modernised sugar/ethanol sector of São Paulo state accounted for 55 per cent of the value of sugarcane production in the country (DIEESE 2007: 2; IBGE 2009: 734). The paulista sector saw heavy investment in fixed capital throughout the 1990s, accounting for 75 per cent of all mechanisation in the sector, while 32 per cent of the national workforce in the sector was discarded in the same period (DIEESE 2007: 19–20). Traditional sugar oligarchs, now in partnership with multinational subsidiaries in sectors that use sugar(-based) inputs, claim that the new technology has allowed them to move from production on the extensive margin (that is, bringing in additional land under cultivation, often through recourse to the illegal but established habits associated with *grilagem*, or land-grabbing) to intensive production (which includes recovering the *cerrado*, or scrublands, which extends over nine states including São Paulo), thus reducing the social basis of land-related conflict (cf. Mendonça 2009: 68; for historical examples of *grilagem* with respect to public and Indigenous lands, and the use of the 1850 Land Law to restrict land access to freed African slaves, see Duarte 2013: 196–197; Lockhart and Schwartz 1984: 402–403). However, increasing productivity margins have allowed agribusiness complexes to push smaller farms out, exacerbating land

inequalities and adding to the reserve army (DIEESE 2007: 5, 24; IBGE 2009: 111).

This is a highly modernised sector which entertains an 'ideology ... that tries to negate the existence of human labour on sugarcane plantations' (Silva 2011, my translation). And yet researchers and activists have pointed to a resurgence of super-exploitation at the interstices of a segmented workforce, falling real wages, and extreme hikes to the physical demands placed on workers (Alves 2006; DIEESE 2007: 20; Mendonça 2009; Silva and Martins 2010). A recent study by DIEESE (the Inter-Union Department of Socioeconomic Statistics and Studies, 2007) shows that rural unions have in fact made considerable gains in terms of the overall number of formalised workers in the paulista sector; that is, those working as registered workers (with a signed workers' card that provides access to labour rights under federal legislation) and under collective agreements. However, these gains have been offset by the effect of waves of newly arrived migrants from the North-East (most recently, the state of Maranhão) and nearby Minas Gerais, most of whom have been added to the workforce as unregistered workers. Amongst registered workers, average wages fell 26 per cent between 1992 and 2002 to R\$310 (US\$140) monthly, less than the current minimum wage.

Since 1992, workers harvesting the cane manually have also faced sharp increases to their daily quotas: in contrast to the average national daily quota of 6 tons in the 1980s, workers are now faced with daily quotas of 7.4–10.7 tons just to meet the grade of 'regular to good' productivity, and up to 13.4 tons daily to meet the 'optimal productivity' target. According to DIEESE, this is 37 per cent higher than the daily output expected of workers in the North-East, while workers in the paulista sector are paid only 15 per cent more (DIEESE 2007: 23). The physical costs to the worker are profound. To meet the medium range target of 10–15 tons daily, workers must deliver '30 strikes [of the machete] per minute for eight hours per day', according to one researcher (Mendonça 2009: 72).

Beyond insufficient dietary conditions – caused by low salaries, from excess heat, from the elevated consumption of energy due to the extremely strenuous tasks involved – the imposition of the quota (that is, the ever-increasing daily amount

of cane cut) has set the pace increasing labour productivity since the 1990s, when machine harvesters became employed in increasing numbers. The rate affects not only migrants but also local workers. For this reason, these capitals require a young workforce, gifted with great physical energy to perform this activity. And so, the turnaround has become very high by virtue of the constant replacement of labour consumed during the production process. (Silva and Martins 2010: 213–214, my translation)

All told, heightened rates of exploitation have been observed across the board, often to the point of death (Silva and Martins 2010: 213–214; see also Alves 2006). In 2005 alone, a Regional Labour Delegation registered 416 deaths in the state due to workplace accidents (including burning to death), heart attacks, and cancer (Mendonça 2009: 73). It has also resulted in the rise of working conditions which labour activists and the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MTE) identify as *de facto* debt slavery. Several of the largest exporters of sugar/ethanol have been recently added to the government's 'dirty list' of firms whose operations have been found to use forced labour. These include: the Cosan Group, Copertrading, the Moema Group, Louis Dreyfus Commodities, the Noble Group/Usina Cerradinho (ONG Réporter Brasil 2011; also Instituto Observatório Social 2004).

Industry in São Paulo has seen a threefold increase in the tonnage produced annually between 1991 (144.6 tons) and 2011 (406.5 tons) by these means, rather than simply by technological improvements to productivity alone (Instituto da Economia Agrícola 2012).

The first thing to note here is the significance of transnational class relations in the reproduction of this pattern of exploitation which (despite clear resonances with the description of super-exploitation provided by Lockhart and Schwartz 1984) should be understood not simply as a backward survival of an earlier stage of development, but rather as an inherent feature of accumulation in a *modern*, dependent economy (Marini 2005b: 192). These processes are driven by the demands of northern and 45 emerging' nations for cheap agricultural, energy, and industrial inputs, which include US, EU and Japanese markets for biofuels (Franco et al.

2010; Mendonça 2009). They have also been enabled by trade liberalisation, new speculative markets in land and agricultural commodities (particularly since 2008), measures to facilitate the commodification and marketing of biotech inputs (seeds, fertilisers), and those to facilitate the domestic and foreign concentration of land ownership (Teixeira and Gomes 2013).

While such trends have allowed increasing control over the production chains in question to be centralised by multinational agribusiness giants and finance capital, the externalisation of the most labour-intensive stages of production to subcontractors enables companies to deny knowledge of any rampant human and labour-rights violations taking place in upstream sectors (Instituto Observatório Social 2004: 12). In this sense, the logic of outsourcing that shapes transnational capitalist class formation (that is, alliances between Brazilian and northern capital) provides the mirror image of the segmentation of labour (cf. Marini 2008: 254); however, both are necessary for super-exploitation to occur. Finally, while working communities around the world have experienced some version of the neo-liberal crisis, these rates of exploitation are (generally) not found in countries of the industrialised north. Taken as a whole, these points should put the particularities of Southern labour back on the agenda of class-based, anti-imperialist struggles.

### The general law of accumulation and the race to the bottom

To-day, thanks to competition on the world-market ... we have advanced much further. 'If China,' says [John Stapleton MP] to his constituents, 'should become a great manufacturing country, I do not see how the manufacturing population of Europe could sustain the context without descending to the level of their competitors.' ... The wished-for goal of English capital is no longer Continental wages but Chinese. (Marx 1974: 601)

There is one more aspect we can take from Marx (1974) on the issue of labour segmentation; namely its implications for class struggle. This comes, in embryonic form, in the context of his discussion of the general law of accumulation (ch. 25). At moments of

accelerated accumulation (rather than crisis), Marx observes that:

The greater the social wealth, the functioning capital, the extent and energy of its growth, and, therefore, also the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productiveness of its labour, the greater is the industrial reserve army. The same causes which develop the expansive power of capital, develop also the labour-power at its disposal. The relative mass of the industrial reserve army increases therefore with the potential energy of wealth. But the greater this reserve army in proportion to the active labour-army, the greater is the mass of a consolidated surplus-population, whose misery is in inverse ratio to its torment of labour. The more extensive, finally, the Lazarus-layers of the working-class, and the industrial reserve army, the greater is official pauperism. This is the *absolute general law of capitalist accumulation*. Like all other laws it is modified in its working by many circumstances .... (644, emphasis in the original)

Using the concrete example of the shift to a generalised regime of relative surplus value in England, Marx argues that capitalist accumulation tends to produce a population that is contingently and then absolutely unnecessary to its reproduction. Ultimately, in Volume 3, Marx (1977) positions this essential, 'immanent contradiction' as a response to the tendency of the rate of profit to fall (ch. 13; Mattick 1983: 94), insofar as the weight of the reserve population can be used to temper workers' demands for better wages and working conditions and so, to bolster the rate of profit.

In terms of the issue of what extent the 'general law' of accumulation can be said to constitute an actual law of capitalist development, I agree with Veltmeyer (1983) who sees it as referring to 'certain tendencies rooted in the basic structures of the capitalist mode of production' which can be modified through particular historical circumstances, and certainly by class struggle (218–219; Foster and McChesney 2012: 130–131). Since Marx's time, various authors have highlighted the ways in which such circumstances were created by imperialism, including the welfare legislation established in the post-Second World War period in core nations (initially

paid for with colonial revenue) to offset the potential for social instability in times of long-term hardship (Mattick 1983: 97); the leveraging of the rate of profit in manufacturing following its collapse in the 1970s by the internationalisation of production and increased competition between regional workforces (Latimer 2014; Marini 2008: 253–254; Sotelo 2009: ch. 2; 2013: 2); and the current appropriation of surplus value from the South through new financial instruments and markets (Norfield 2013). And so, while 'the modifications the system undergoes in the very course of its development may set aside the general law of accumulation ... and thus meet the optimistic expectations of the ruling class and raise doubts among the exploited classes about capitalism's vulnerability ... [they] do not affect its general validity' (Mattick 1983: 95–96).

It is in this discussion of the general law of accumulation where Marx best captures contradictions between social layers of the working class (in this context, within a single social formation) that actually facilitate capitalist reproduction from one cycle to the next (Latimer 2014). The various layers of the reserve army in Chapter 25 are not, I would argue, significant in and of themselves; nor were they intended to be understood as something extraneous to exploitation and productivity in the formal labour process following capitalist expansion. Rather, the law speaks to the unity of the working classes, or the intrinsic link between the active layers of workers and those so-called 'ex-workers'; in countries like Brazil, many of them also recently, or occasionally, 'ex-peasants'.

In this sense, the general law of accumulation is a good way to think through the contemporary 'race to the bottom'; or the general social relation that links national and sub-national segments of workers across borders with 'profound inequalities of labour-powers' (Higginbottom 2012: 252); a relation which, rather than leading to an equalisation in rates of exploitation, tends to tie each to the other in a downward spiral of working terms, conditions, and living standards. The previous section illustrated that super-exploitation continues to be a modern feature of class formation, here as a response to the particular way Brazilian agribusiness has entered the global system in the neo-liberal period. The general law of accumulation helps to clarify the intrinsic connection between such

particular forms of exploitation and the general crisis of labour amongst working peoples (of the generalisation of precarious labour arrangements, for example); and so, the capacity of capital to leverage the fortunes and gains of one layer of workers against others (for example, the pitting of jobs in extractive industries against acts of Indigenous sovereignty around land and resources in settler colonies).

Marx himself never developed the general law of accumulation to its logical conclusion – in other words, by exploring its implications for anti-capitalist struggle – but there are kernels.

As soon, therefore, as the labourers learn the secret, how it comes to pass that in the same measure as they work more, as they produce more wealth for others, and as the productive power of their labour increases, so in the same measure even their function as a means of the self-expansion of capital becomes more and more precarious for them; as soon as they discover that the degree of intensity of the competition among themselves depends wholly on the pressure of the relative surplus population; as soon as, by Trades' Unions, &c., they try to organise a regular co-operation between employed and unemployed in order to destroy or to weaken the ruinous effects of this natural law of capitalistic production on their class, so soon capital and its sycophant, Political Economy, cry out at the infringement of the 'eternal' and so to say 'sacred' law of supply and demand. Every combination of employed and unemployed disturbs the 'harmonious' action of this law. But, on the other hand, as soon as (in the colonies, for example) adverse circumstances prevent the creation of an industrial reserve army and, with it, the absolute dependence of the working class upon the capitalist class, capital, along with its commonplace Sancho Panza, rebels against the 'sacred' law of supply and demand, and tries to check its inconvenient action by forcible means and State interference. (Marx 1974: 640, italics in the original)

If the general law is the central contradiction of the capitalist mode of production, the only issue of equal importance was that of how

workers would address this 'secret'. In other words, it concerned whether workers could achieve means of common struggle predicated on the recognition not of an undifferentiated subject and class interest, but rather of a long-term common fate across vastly different realities (including the violence intrinsic to class formation in a colonial setting; see also Lindberg 2014).

## Conclusion

As may already be apparent, there isn't much in this essay that is actually new (see e.g. Veltmeyer 1983), although there is much that has been systematically sidelined or dismissed in contemporary debates on left and left-labour strategy. As exemplified by Chakraborty (2013) at the outset, the current crisis affecting European workers (expressed in terms of austerity measures, harder and longer working lives, mass unemployment, destitution, and elder neglect, weakened unions, and the end of the welfare state) has given rise to easy comparisons with the plight of workers in the global South under neoliberalism. However, without trivialising the hardships faced by working-class communities in the North (particularly racialised youth, migrant workers, and women), super-exploitation as it appears in an emergent Brazil has not existed in Europe for more than a century (cf. Sotelo Valencia 2014: 549). This is not to say, however, that for better or for worse, the conditions and horizons of possibility for jobs, pay, working and living standards in both regions are not tied together, if we are to take a global reading of the general law of accumulation seriously.

Using a case from Brazil, this essay sought to use the resurgence of super-exploitation in the global South as an alternative starting point from which to consider the global crisis amongst working people. It is positioned as a contribution to current efforts to grapple with the particular and general forms of exploitation in the global crisis of labour, and the structural divisions and contradictions between sections of the global working class that have crippled organised labour and communities in resistance to global capitalism. In adopting this tack, the essay is not intended to be a celebration of the fragment, or part of some conspiratorial assault on Marxist analysis by post-structuralism, but simply a call to attend to the ways that workers have

been put in order historically and geographically by capitalism in its imperialist phase. In this context, 'backward' forms of exploitation continue to be reproduced, not because of the inadequacies of class struggle in closed social formations in the South, but, in the first instance, because they continue to be profitable and functional to global accumulation at the hands of both national and international capital. In dependent countries, workers are forced to contend not only with 'their' national capital but also the financial, governance and trade-related structures controlled by the capital of advanced capitalism under which they operate; this still holds true, despite the rise of export-capital from so-called 'emerging' economies like Brazil (Bueno and Seabra 2010; Foster and McChesney 2012: 139). If the general law of accumulation can be argued to hold beyond national borders, these forms arise because they are possible in the absence of a viable international struggle for socialism, rather than the current forms of accommodation.

Early works from the dependency perspective were often positioned with an eye to understanding why, following the globalisation of capital in the first phase of imperialism, a worker's international capable of challenging capital at a structural level had not followed suit. In the North, it is discouraging to see the degree to which efforts to theorise capitalism in its latest phase of globalisation (it bears rephrasing: theories which emerged in the very moment that global production moved *en masse* to the South) have systematically attempted to sideline both the global (class) dimensions of accumulation and the particular role of Southern labour within it. For this reason, I expect that the challenge of labour segmentation, which this essay argues has become a central challenge to class formation in the neo-liberal age, will be solved through the practical efforts of workers who see internationalism as central to their self-interest and even liberation (Lindberg 2014), not in theoretical debate. No more compromises.

### Acknowledgements

A preliminary version of this essay was presented to the First International Meeting on the Labour Theory of Value and Social Sciences at the Universidade de Brasília in October 2012. I am thankful to both the

organisers and participants of this event, many of whom are working to expand Marini's ideas in a systematic way, and for the first time, in his country of birth (as well as to revive Marxist dependency theory); to anonymous reviewers of this project; as well as to Andy Higginbottom for a supportive and patient ear, and his own recent ideas on the subject. All translations and errors in this text are my own.

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## Two Pillars of US Global Hegemony: Middle Eastern Oil and the Petrodollar

[W]hoever controls the Middle East controls the global oil spigot and whoever controls the global oil spigot can control the global economy, at least for the near future. (Harvey 2005: 19)

Throughout recent history, the oil-rich regions of the Middle East have played a key role in determining US foreign policy. This is simply because the Middle Eastern oil regions currently account for 65 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves, and 30 per cent of its day-to-day production, and therefore the Middle East has been the geographic centre of gravity of the world oil industry (Renner 2003). They are therefore a truly vital strategic US interest. Since the new and bountiful discoveries of cheaper oil in the Persian Gulf just after the Second World War, oil from the Middle East has gradually come to displace US oil. Without direct and secure access to this resource, the world economy would fall into a very serious crisis, and the position of the leading power, the US, would be dealt a mortal blow. In order to continue growing, the US-dominated world capitalist economy needs plenty of cheap and readily

available oil. The Middle East supplied 22 per cent of US oil imports, 36 per cent of OECD Europe's, 40 per cent of China's, 60 per cent of India's, and 80 per cent of Japan's and South Korea's in 2006 (Energy Information Administration 2006).

But this dimension cannot be reduced solely to matters of economic prosperity, even though it represents a part. Above all, the oil dimension in US foreign policy is a strategic one which mainly concerns exercising global power, a central part of US global hegemony. The purpose of this essay is to seek some understanding of how and why the oil of the Middle East came to play a central role in the rise and continuation of the hegemonic position of the US.

When a hegemonic power imposes its political and economic authority over a region, it does so in relation to its allies and its local protégés. Gramsci used the term 'hegemony' to signify that the dominant power leads the system in a direction that not only serves the dominant group's interests but is also perceived by subordinate groups as serving a more general interest (Gramsci 1971: 106–120, 161). Harvey's usage of the term is similar: 'the particular mix of coercion and consent embedded in the exercise of political power' (Harvey, 2005: 36). US ally Japan and West European economies are dependent on oil imports from the Middle East, and US protégés in that region, the oil monarchies, require US protection and military and political support. Through its influence over the oil-rich regimes in the region, the US has consolidated its strategic presence in the Middle East by effectively controlling the 'global oil spigot'. This seems also an effective way to ward off any competition for top position in the global hierarchy as all its competitors are heavily dependent on this essential source, oil, coming from the Middle East.

It was during the First World War that the US accorded to the Middle East region a strategic importance due to its rich oil resources. At that time, Britain's declining global empire was controlled by key oil-producing regions of the Middle East. During the First World War, keeping those oil-rich lands under British control was a crucial goal for the British government. Sir Maurice Hankey, the powerful secretary of the British War Cabinet, wrote to the foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, during the war's final stage, that 'oil in the next

war will occupy the place of coal or at least a parallel to coal'. Therefore, Hankey said, 'control over these [Middle Eastern] oil supplies becomes a first-class British war aim' (given in Yergin 1991: 185–188). For a detailed analysis of Great Power rivalry over Middle Eastern oil, see James A. Paul's summary (2002).

Oil surpluses of the 1930s quickly disappeared during the Second World War, and the US, the new hegemonic state within the capitalist world, began to rely on foreign oil in the 1940s. With only 6 per cent of the world's population, the US accounted for one-third of global oil consumption. Energy security, since then, has become an essential dimension of US state security, meaning the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price and unwavering access to foreign oil reserves. The question of US influence over Middle Eastern oil-rich countries has become increasingly important since the Second World War. Between 1940 and 1967, US companies increased their control of Middle Eastern oil from a mere 10 per cent to over 60 per cent. (Monthly Review 2002). The so-called 'Carter Doctrine' of January 1980 perhaps symbolises this heightened significance of the region's oil for the US state more than anything else: 'Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force' (given in Klare 2004: 45–47). President Jimmy Carter, in his annual State of the Union Address to Congress, also reiterated his plans to increase military spending by 5 per cent, with special emphasis on developing a 100,000-man 'rapid deployment force' capable of intervention in the region. President Carter himself did not use the term 'Carter Doctrine' to refer to his policies in the Middle East in any public statement during his term in office. However, the label was used later in official US documents (see Meiertons 2010).

More than 30 years have passed since the first expression of the Carter Doctrine, and the significance of the oil-rich Middle East for the global position of the US remains as one of the central pillars of world politics. It ensures, with the use of violence if necessary, that Middle Eastern oil remains accessible, free-flowing, cheap, and under US control.

In the rest of this essay, I will focus on three interrelated issues in order to appreciate this complex relationship, and to explain the role played by Middle Eastern oil, pricing of oil, and links between the region's oil trade and arms trade in sustaining the unique position of the US as supplier of the world's reserve currency.

### The emergence of the US as global hegemonic power

During the early part of the 20th century, the US patiently put key stepping stones in place to build its state as a modern imperial power. Once the dominance of the industrial North over the agrarian South was established soon after the American Civil War, the US government initiated essential foundations of its world system of control, first in Latin America and the Philippines, and then in Western and Central Europe, Japan, Korea, and the Middle East. Its superior army, high-tech weapons systems, and globe-trotting military and intelligence networks have of course been central to this project. But equally important, if not more so, has been its strong grip on the world economy, trade, and financial markets, mainly through the role played by the US dollar as the world's universal currency or reserve currency.

Reserve currencies are held by governments and institutions outside the country of issue and are used to finance international economic transactions, including trade and the payment of debts. Reserve currency status is not just an international status symbol. It brings international *seigniorage*, benefits for financial institutions of the issuing country, relaxation of the external constraints on macroeconomic policy, and wider geopolitical consequences of exercising currency hegemony. How did the US currency achieve this status?

During the war, the dollar became a world currency, equal in strength to the British pound. Among others, Eichengreen (2008) explains this process in detail. In one of his recent volumes, he traces the rise and fall of the dollar system with more recent data (Eichengreen 2011). Eichengreen sees, in particular, the Suez crisis of 1956 as the landmark event undermining once and for all the importance of the British pound sterling.

During the war, European economies were short of capital, which meant high

rates of return for the US loans, which further strengthened the dollar, and pushed the French and the British to peg their currencies against the dollar at depreciated rates during the 1940s and 1950s (Kennan 2000: 449–454).

Dollar hegemony has always been critical to the future of the US-dominated global hierarchy, and due to its extensive financial and political consequences even more so than the US' overwhelming military power. In turn, the US economy is intimately tied to the dollar's status as a reserve currency for dealing with trade deficits and keeping the interest rates low at home. The continuing dominance of the US dollar was not only a matter of simple economics and finance, but was also 'deeply rooted in the geopolitical role of the United States' (for a detailed explanation, see Gokay and Whitman 2004: 65–69).

The central place that the US superpower, 'actually existing American empire' in David Harvey's words, has come to occupy in the global system rests on a particular convergence of structure and history (Harvey 2005: 6). The most crucial and conclusive phase in this process occurred during and after the Second World War. Only after the twin disasters of the 1929–30 Depression and the Second World War did the world capitalist system obtain a new lease under the hegemonic leadership of the US. This reorganisation of capitalism could not have been accomplished without the uneven development of certain structural characteristics that also shaped the post-war leadership of the US imperial state. This process was well examined by Peter Gowan under the apt title *Contemporary Intra-Core Relations*: 'the empire-state offers a mechanism for managing the world economy and world politics which is sufficiently cognisant of trans-core business interests' (Gowan 2004: 490). This required that the US create a new international monetary system advocating new trade regimes and imposing new development strategies. US-dominated international institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, came to dictate and conduct the modus operandi of such development strategies. The post-war state of ruin, in both physical and economic senses, in much of Europe, Asia, and parts of Africa, which created a power vacuum in the world system, provided conditions for this total restructuring of international trade and finance under the leading role of the US

and its multinational companies. The economic and financial system in France was exhausted, the whole of the German state was disintegrated, Britain was on the brink of bankruptcy, and the Japanese economic system was completely shattered and disorganised after the collapse of its imperial state. All these countries needed urgent economic assistance of some kind and they looked to the US for that. With the crumbling of international competitive capital, only the US remained as a secure capitalist state capable of determining the terms of a new world economic order. For the next two decades, the American economy was able to produce and sell all the vital industrial products so much more efficiently than other industrial powers that it could outperform producers in these other countries' home markets. Hence, the world system had entered a new phase in which the conditions were ripe for the US, the only superpower capable of re-structuring the capitalist world economy according to its own vision.

The first task in rescuing the global capitalist order was to reorganise the nation states of Europe and Asia as willing members, while placing the US at the command centre of the world system. Hence emerged the *Pax Americana*, a historically specific inter-state system; in other words, what Peter Gowan fittingly referred to as the 'protectorate system', a US-centred global 'hub-and-spokes' arrangement (Gowan 2002). Economically, this required the creation of a new international monetary system that could provide the necessary movement of capital for the reconstruction process, and the construction of a system of world trade that could eliminate the persisting effects of the Depression and the war. The post-war restructuring began at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, which adopted a gold standard for world currency, and encouraged the rapid expansion of direct foreign investment and world trade. The Bretton Woods system was an international monetary framework of fixed exchange rates. Drawn up by two leading powers, the US and Britain, John Maynard Keynes was one of the architects (Gokay and Whitman 2009). The pre-war gold-exchange system remained in place as the currency standard, except that it substituted the dollar for the British pound as the key reserve currency. This meant that all economies that were to be part of this system would be required to

recognise dollars as their basic reserve currency and link their own currency to its value. The US dollar, however, enjoyed immunity from any currency instability, because it was, as the universal/reserve currency, pegged to the value of gold, which was fixed at \$35.00 an ounce. The Bretton Woods system was a natural consequence of the already obvious, global, economic supremacy of the US. Huge amounts of gold were accumulated by the US, primarily from Britain and the Soviet Union through the Lend-Lease programme, which required payment in gold for war-time assistance, to both military and civilian sectors. Lend-Lease agreements were first formulated in December 1940, and then formally set up seven months later. By the end of the war, the bulk of the world's gold supply was held by the US in Fort Knox, Kentucky, and the massive supremacy of US industrial production guaranteed that it would enjoy huge surpluses in its balance of trade (IMF, March 2006).

In the wake of the so-called economic miracles of the 1950s and 1960s ('the Golden Age of Capitalism', as Eric Hobsbawm called it [1994: 285ff.]), the high growth rates, technological innovation, social and geopolitical peace, and rapid development of US-led Western capitalist economies enabled them to accumulate millions of dollars as reserves (Mann 1995: 104–105). As a result, these years witnessed steadily rising levels of investment, and a continual boom.

As the 1950s and 1960s passed, an inequitable distribution of power and wealth within the Bretton Woods system led the US to overreach the advantages offered by the dollar's reserve currency role. The US became more and more inflationist with regard to the value of the dollar, particularly with respect to Japanese and West European economies. As the dollars accumulated in foreign banks, the actual value of the dollar sank against gold. Gold flowed progressively out of the US during this period: US gold stock dropped from over \$20 billion in the early 1950s to less than \$9 billion by 1970. Nervousness about this gold depletion was expressed in the early years of the Kennedy Administration, but it didn't become a crisis until the late 1960s and early 1970s when the US balance of trade became negative (Gokay and Whitman 2010).

In parallel with the decline in gold stocks and competitive trade, US corporate profits also begin to decline in the face of competition from Germany and Japan. After this, the

US lost some of its power over global trade and finance. Collectively, these trends indicated the beginning of a long decline in the comparative dominance of the US economy. The late 1960s and early 1970s were particularly harsh times for US finance: the dollar was weakened further, which opened the door for other central banks to diversify and start keeping alternative currencies as a hedge against any steep decline in the value of the dollar. French president de Gaulle, witnessing the sharp decline of confidence in the US economy and currency, happily sold US dollars, eventually accumulating more gold than Fort Knox (Time Magazine 1965). The Bank of England joined the French in demanding gold for dollars, which accelerated a run on the dollar, provoking a currency crisis that lasted until the middle of 1971. At that point, bowing to a tripling of the US balance of trade deficit and an increasing outflow of capital, President Nixon announced a series of drastic changes in the world's currency arrangements. In a dramatic televised address to the nation on 15 August 1971, Nixon declared an end to the Bretton Woods fixed dollar-gold link, which meant that the US would no longer honour the dollars for gold valued at a fixed rate, but would only agree to a system of floating exchange rates, whereby each currency would be valued according to world demand (El-Gamal and Jaffe 2010: 4). At one stroke, the US president invalidated 25 years of currency agreements, and introduced a prolonged period of currency instability (Fouskas and Gokay 2012: 65–68).

The US administration's spectacular end to the convertibility of the dollar reinstated the economic autonomy of the US state. The US dollar, however, no longer convertible into gold at a fixed price, entered into a process of prolonged decline. The devaluation led almost immediately to an explosion of global price inflation and a collapse of share values on equity markets, which in turn restored the US balance of trade. With this radical shift, the dollar became an irredeemable currency, no longer defined or measured in terms of gold, and no longer restrained in its printing.

From the early 1970s onwards, the unspoken objective of all US administrations has been to slow down the decline of the US economy. First and foremost, it was a serious crisis inspired by a significant loss of confidence in the dollar. As a result, the dollar was left 'floated' in the international monetary

market, which weakened its position as the hegemonic currency. Now the dollar had no firm backing other than the 'full faith and credit' of the US government. From that point on, the US had to find a way convincing the rest of the world to continue accepting every devaluated dollar in exchange for economic goods and services the US required getting from the others. It had to find an economic reason for the rest of the world to hold US dollars: oil provided that reason and the term *petrodollar* became the crucial link in this. Since the 1971 devaluation, the petrodollar has been at the heart of US dollar hegemony (Fouskas and Gokay 2005: 16–19).

### Petrodollar system

After 1971, the US economy entered into a long period of instability. During this period there were a number of recessions, including a mini recession in 1971, a deeper and larger recession from 1973–75, a period of hyperinflation from 1979–80, a severe recession in 1981–82, a real-estate bubble and stock market panic in 1987, and a deep recession in 1992–93. Nine of the 22 years from 1971–93 were 'economically troubled', together with the years in-between reflecting uneasy transitions from one crisis to another. The one persistent effort that marks this volatile period was a forceful attempt by the US to restore the role of the dollar as the universal reserve currency by linking the dollar to yet another commodity: petroleum, thus creating the petrodollar. The petrodollar system provided some strength and prestige to the US currency, and shifted the focus of global politics to the oil-rich Middle East.

A petrodollar is a dollar earned by a country through the sale of oil. The term 'petrodollar system' derives from the way the diplomatic relations between the US and Saudi Arabia linked the sale of oil to the dollar through a series of negotiations and agreements concluded during the 1972–74 period. As a result, the US government reached a series of agreements with Saudi Arabia, known as the US-Saudi Arabian Joint Economic Commission, to provide technical support and military assistance to the power of the House of Saud in exchange for accepting only US dollars for its oil (Department of the Treasury 2002). This understanding, much of it never publicised and little understood by the public, provided the Saudi ruling

family the security it craved in a dangerous neighbourhood while assuring the US a reliable and important ally in the Middle East (Kaiser and Ottaway 2002). Saudi Arabia was and remains the largest oil producer in the world and the leader of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC (US Energy Information Administration 2014a). It is also the only member of the cartel that does not have an allotted production quota, which makes it the 'swing producer', meaning that it can increase or decrease oil production to bring about an oil drought or glut in the world market. Saudi Arabia hence practically determines, or has the means to determine, oil prices. Soon after the agreement with the Saudi government, an OPEC agreement consented to this, and since then all oil has been traded in US dollars (Klare 2004: 40–45).

Now why would this matter so much?

Oil is not just the most important commodity traded internationally. It is the key industrial mineral; it has a central role in modern economies, without which no modern economy works. If you don't have oil, you have to buy it, and if you need to buy it on the world markets, you commonly have to purchase it with dollars. This provides an essential base for the dollar's reserve currency status: other countries buy and hold large reserves of dollars (in the same way they buy and hold gold) because they cannot purchase oil without dollars. This made the 'petrodollar' a de facto replacement for the pre-1971 gold-dollar standard, guaranteeing a constant demand for dollars whose value was linked to oil through the OPEC pricing standards. In 2002, a former US ambassador to Saudi Arabia told a committee of the US Congress: 'One of the major things the Saudis have historically done, in part out of friendship with the US, is to insist that oil continues to be priced in dollars. Therefore the US Treasury can print money and buy oil, which is an advantage no other country has' (Nixon 2003).

This system of the US dollar acting as global reserve currency in oil trade keeps the demand for the dollar 'artificially' high. This allows the US to print dollars at next to no cost to subsidise increased military spending and consumer spending on imports. As long as the US has no significant challengers and the other states have faith in the US dollar, the system operates well (Spiro 1999: 121). This has been the situation and the crucial basis for the US economic hegemony since

the 1970s. Needless to say, this system also empowers the US administration to compellingly control the world oil market. The dominance of the dollar is not simply the result of the size of the US economy; it is also the result of two other things: global politics and finance. In this scheme, the industrialised countries had to purchase oil, either from OPEC or from one of the smaller oil producers, but they could conduct these purchases only by pricing and buying oil in dollars, thus restoring the dollar's role as a required reserve currency (see among others Gokay and Whitman 2004: 64–65).

So long as OPEC oil was priced in US dollars, the US government benefited from a double loan. The first portion of the loan was for oil. The government could print dollars to pay for oil, and the US economy did not have to generate goods and services in exchange for the oil since OPEC used the dollars for all traded goods and services. Obviously, the strategy could not work if dollars were not a means of exchange for oil. The second part of the loan was from all other economies that had to pay dollars for oil but could not print currency. Those economies had to trade their goods and services for dollars in order to pay their oil imports to OPEC producers (Spiro 1999: 121).

In this situation, dollars rapidly accumulated in foreign banks, particularly those serving petroleum-exporting countries. This petrodollar overhang created an additional financial issue: unlike Western Europe and Japan, most of the oil-exporting countries had limited possibilities for domestic development and consumption, and therefore they could not invest most of this money. Many of these economies in the region are structured strictly on 'rents' from oil, which provide most of the export earnings and state revenues. Despite their extensive oil wealth, the oil-rich countries of the Middle East have failed to develop a diversified economic base. All finished manufactured goods as well as financial and high-tech services are imported and controlled by Western multinationals. Adam Smith once commented that the Tartars and other Asian nations may be rich precisely because they are resource poor. 'In the Middle East, ... the political process is that the rulers do not tax citizens or businesses, but hand out selective privileges, financed by oil revenues, against loyalty and support from a largely parasitic private sector' (Noreng 2006: 87–88). Some efforts were made to redistribute oil revenues

across the populations by subsidising housing, education, and health care. But mostly, oil money was used to support excessive consumption, corruption, and gross waste. The Nixon Administration responded 'creatively' by coaxing these countries into purchasing US Treasury bills and bonds, which performed as yet another subsidy for the US economy. This has, since that time, been the primary strategy for the US administration to deal with its colossal trade deficits by keeping domestic interest rates low (Kaiser and Ottaway 2002). The cash balances of oil exporters soon found their way into the US-controlled international banking system, and these petrodollars went straight back into the US economy at zero currency risk. Some of this cash was recycled as loans, with some interest of course, to oil-importing countries, mainly by US-controlled international financial institutions.

For a long time everything worked smoothly. But the end of the Soviet-controlled socialist bloc economies in Eastern Europe and the emergence of a new single Europe and the European Monetary Union in the early 1990s began to present an entirely new challenge to the global position of the US economy. In particular with the creation of the euro in late 1999, a totally new factor was added to the global financial system. Within a relatively short period, the euro has emerged as a realistic alternative, establishing itself as the second most influential currency in the world's financial markets. If a considerable part of petroleum trade were to use euros instead of dollars, many more countries would have to hold a greater part of their currency reserves in euros. According to a June 2003 HSBC report, even a moderate shift, as small as 15 per cent, away from dollars, or a change in the flow, would create considerable changes (HSBC 2003). The dollar would then have to openly battle with the euro for global trade and financial markets. Not only would Europe not require dollars anymore, but also Japan, which imports more than 80 per cent of its oil from the Middle East, would have to switch most of its dollar assets to euros. The US, too, currently being the world's second largest oil importer after China, would have to retain a significant amount of euro reserves. This would be catastrophic for US efforts at monetary management: the US administration would be compelled to drastically change its current tax, debt, and trade policies, all of which are relentlessly volatile.

Today, US citizens spend \$700 billion (US) a year more than they generate, so they require a reserve of an additional \$700 billion. This means that, on average, each US citizen benefits from \$3,000 more imported products per year than he/she earns (US National Debt Clock 2006). They acquire this large amount of money from the Central Banks of China, Japan and European countries, thanks to the US dollar's status as global reserve currency and the simple fact that all other central banks hold dollar reserves. China is the principal holder of US currency reserves with \$853.7 billion, and Japan is the second biggest with over \$850 billion in dollar assets (Bloomberg 2006; Mainichi News 2006). So the rest of the world are producers and sellers: Japan, China, India, Brazil, the EU, and the rest. The rest of the world invests, produces, and exports to the US. They lend more and more to the US. This situation is, however, considered unstable and very risky by experts. The increasing instability of the US economy is emphasised by a major 2005 report from the IMF (IMF 2006) which pointed out that the US economy is increasingly being maintained by what it described as 'unprecedented borrowing' from foreigners. The report went on to describe the US deficit as unmanageable and risky in the long term.

### **Weapon-dollar-petrodollar circulation**

The politicisation and concentration in the Middle East of the oil business went hand in glove with the region's commercialisation, privatisation, and concentration of the global arms trade. In the 1950s, some 95 per cent of US armament exports had been provided as foreign aid, whereas by 1980 the foreign aid as armaments had fallen to 45 per cent and by 2000 to less than 25 per cent. From the early 1970s onwards, when the petrodollar became an essential dimension of the US global hegemony, US defence production experienced a high degree of privatisation and internationalisation, followed by an unprecedented degree of mergers, acquisitions, and consolidations according to the pattern of 'new multinational corporations'. From the early 1970s onwards, the Middle East became the world's chief importer of weaponry, taking the lead from South-East Asia. In this way, a large amount of that oil

income, petrodollars, started to be spent on buying armaments and hence turned into weapondollars. Tensions in the region, in particular the escalation of Arab-Israeli conflict, created the necessary conditions for a type of dollar recycling based on arms trade. Since the 1940s, the role of the Middle East in world accumulation had been intimately linked to oil exports, and from the 1970s onwards, this trade became the basis of the petrodollar system, which was then accompanied by another dimension: turning a large amount of this oil income into weapondollars (Nitzan and Bichler 2002: 25). These two flows provided a powerful new lease of life for the US economy, inasmuch as their combination was associated with the generation of substantial profits for the US arms manufacturing industry, American-British giant oil companies, and of course the US Department of the Treasury. Most importantly, these two flows (oil going out, and weapons coming in) were dollarised. Thus, for example, in 1974, Saudi Arabia's arms imports were worth \$2.6 billion in 1974, whereas between 1985 and 1992 this figure increased ten times and reached \$25.4 billion. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the US increased its arms sales to Middle Eastern states, in particular during the Iraq-Iran war of 1980–88. The amount of arms sales to the region reached its peak in 1988 when 'the Administration suggested increasing US arms exports by \$3.3 billion, to a level exceeding \$15 billion – with proposed shipments worth \$3.6 billion to Israel, \$2.7 billion to Egypt, 4950 million to Saudi Arabia, and \$1.3 billion to other Middle Eastern countries' (Nitzan and Bichler 2002: 261, f.n. 26). Sharply intensified armed conflict and quickly rising tensions in the Gulf region and (with the end of the Cold War) Central Asia and North Africa, including the Pakistani/Indian conflict, meant much greater US military involvement in the region, and greater consolidation of the alliance between US arms manufacturing/weapons trade and energy interests.

Did any of these policies reverse the long-term relative historical decline of the US? The short answer is plainly no.

It did not take long for the contradictions of the system to break down. The entire system of petrodollar-weapondollar coalition managed to keep demand for dollars artificially high, and as the price of oil went up following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the

demand for dollars intensified even further, raising the value of the dollar sharply and, as a result, once again subsidising US domestic and military spending. This form of speculative dollarisation, however, enhanced further the inflationary trends in the US, Europe, and Japan, intensifying the stagnation of the global economic system. The yin and yang of this petrodollar/weapondollar system also meant that US benefits were counterweighed by rising costs inflicted on other members of the world economic system. These were predominantly those countries recently emerged from post-colonialism, other weak economies, and periphery states, as the US practically exported its own economic and financial problems. Thus, when the system was faced with various crises (such as the 1973–75 recession, the hyperinflation of the late 1970s, and the sharp global recession of 1981–82), the US administration could successfully shift the negative effects onto its lesser partners, which then suffered the greater burden as world oil prices rose sharply after 1974. William Greider (1989) effectively demonstrates how the US shifted the effects of the 1979–83 crises were shifted to the periphery.

At the same time, rather than promoting sensible social investments in its allies in the Middle East, the US continued to encourage using the petrodollar/weapondollar overhang as an opportunity to promote the purchase of US Treasury bonds and bills, to deal with its current account deficit. As a result, the US increasingly came to depend on foreign investors as the prime financial source for domestic account management, which had the effect of artificially increasing prices, leading to an inflationary surge that eventually weakened the perceived value of the dollar, triggering an acute fall in demand for dollars and a resultant upward spike in US interest rates (Kaiser and Ottaway 2002).

All this was an unsteady attempt by the US administration(s) to restore the global role of the dollar and US economic supremacy by linking the dollar to two key commodities of the world economy: petroleum and weapons. There were clear reasons underpinning the functionality of this weapondollar-petrodollar system. The first was economic, in that the Bretton Woods system never found a way to effectively recycle the massive profits and extensive speculation the global oil trade produced; the second was political, in that the administration(s) transferred the focus of



global politics to weapons procurement and built-up, as well as to the petroleum production and conflict in the Middle Eastern region (Gokay 2005: 40–56).

Understanding how that system was first constructed and advanced with all those existing flaws and contradictions reveals important insights into the current state of the US hegemony and the root causes of its direct military involvement in the region since the end of the Cold War. What emerges is that all the wars and acts of military aggression conducted by the US since 1991 have been those of an economically declining power, rather than an indication of superiority. Andre Gunder Frank identified this strategic trend in post-Cold War US foreign policy as ‘Washington sees its military might as a trump card that can be employed to prevail over all its rivals in the coming struggle for resources’ (Frank 1999).

### **Impending scenarios: hegemonic reversal**

Since the end of the Cold War, the US has waged four wars in the region (two in Iraq, one in Afghanistan, and one in Libya) and is currently threatening more. Each conflict has of course its own specific reasons related to local conditions. However, there is a common denominator: the need to keep the oil of the region ample and inexpensive, and most importantly, under firm US control, so that the US-led system of global capitalist economies can continue to grow. US strategists do not simply want to obtain oil, which is a simple matter if one has money. They also want to eliminate all potential competitors, safeguarding the region politically and militarily so that the flow of oil from the Middle East to world markets can happen under its direct control.

The US military is now dominant and its limitations are minimal. Its spending is almost as much as that of the next 11 countries combined ranked beneath it (SIPRI 2013: 6–7, 9.). Yet the economic power of the US has been in stagnation since the 1970s and has declined since the end of the Cold War. The world economic landscape is rapidly changing and a very different world is emerging. In particular, the US share of world trade and manufacturing is substantially less than it was just prior to the end of the Cold War, and its relative economic

strength measured against the EU and the East Asian economic group of China, India, and the ‘South-East Asian tigers’ is similarly in retreat. The persistent use of US military power can therefore be viewed as a reaction to its declining economic power and not merely as a response to the post-Cold War geopolitical picture. US leaders see their superior military power as the key weapon that can be employed effectively to prevail over all rivals, and thus to stop this decline. The expansion of the Chinese economy, so far the closest contender for a global hegemonic position, is directly dependent on access to petroleum, and therefore securing access to the oil reserves in the region is a cornerstone of Chinese policy (Roberts 2005: 158–164). In September 2013, China’s net imports of petroleum and other liquids exceeded those of the US on a monthly basis, making it the largest net importer of crude oil and other liquids in the world (US Energy Administration Information 2014a).

In the Middle East, control of the region’s oil resources, keeping the US dollar as the only currency used in the world oil trade, and using these effectively to prevent any challenge to the hegemonic position of the US are all interlinked and cannot be separated from each other. On 22 March 2003, at the beginning of the US-led war against Iraq, General Tommy Franks, chief commander of the US forces in Iraq, was explaining one of the key objectives of the Operation Iraqi Freedom as ‘to secure Iraq’s oil fields and resources’ (CNN.com 2003). Securing US interests regarding the oil resources of the Middle East is not as simple as just going and militarily capturing key positions of a country. Political events since 2001 have clearly demonstrated that superior military forces of the US and its Western allies may take but cannot hold Iraq’s, Libya’s, or other Middle Eastern countries’ oil. Far from staving off the downfall of the US economic and financial hegemony, the continuing military aggression and arrogance of the US state may instead push the regional powers to distance themselves from its strategic goals. Member countries of OPEC, for instance, have sharply increased deposits in other currencies including the euro and the Japanese yen, and placed less in dollars starting from 2001 and the Afghan War. OPEC members cut the proportion of deposits held in dollars from 75 per cent in the third quarter of 2001 to 61.5 per cent. US

dollar-denominated deposits fell from 75 percent of total deposits in the third quarter of 2001 to 61.5 percent in the last quarter of 2004. During the same period, the share of euro-denominated deposits rose from 12 percent to 20 percent (FT.com 2004).

Competition for the rich oil resources of the Middle East played a central role in the 20th-century's key military and political conflicts. Even the two major world wars, which happened in the first half of the 20th century, were intrinsically linked to competition for access to the energy-rich Middle East. If history provides any reliable guide to the future, the present century will more and more be marked by new wars for this still very significant but increasingly scarce natural resource in the region. 'This is the secret ticking bomb under the global economic system in the twenty-first century. The only long-term solution is to significantly reduce our energy usage' (Fouskas and Gokay 2012: 139–140).

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## Unequal Exchange

The term 'unequal exchange' became widespread in the 1960s and 1970s through Marxist debate on underdeveloped countries and their falling terms of trade. The source and centre of the debate was the Greco-French economist Arghiri Emmanuel, the English translation of whose work described it as 'the imperialism of trade' (Emmanuel 1972a). The terms of trade were central to this kind of imperialism, in contrast to the export of capital in classical Marxist analyses, or the transfers of profit by multinationals underlined within monopoly capitalist and dependency traditions – the 'old imperialism' decried in Truman's Point Four programme.

Emmanuel's theory stated, contrary to the assumptions of the by then conventional Heckscher-Ohlin theory and its recent reformulation by Samuelson, that relative prices depended on wages, not the other way around; and that, contrary to the assumptions

of Ricardo's comparative costs, first, labour was sufficiently immobile to allow for significant wage-disparities between countries, and, second, that capital was internationally mobile and tended towards equalisation.

Theoretical novelty apart, controversy was occasioned by the implications for international worker solidarity. In terms of Johan Galtung's (1971: 83) structural theory of imperialism, which it may well have inspired, the equalisation of the rate of profit and non-equalisation of wages translates into a 'harmony of interest' among capitalists and a 'conflict of interest' among centre and periphery workers. The conventional explanation, then and since, of the commonly observed absence of worker solidarity was that a 'labor aristocracy' section of the working class, perhaps even whole nations, had been 'bribed' by capital. Emmanuel, by contrast, made the nationally enclosed workers movements into the principal cause of unequal exchange.

Immediately upon publication, there was an avalanche of attempts to reintegrate unequal exchange with more conventional Marxist and monopoly interpretations as a subcategory of a more general inequality in terms of labour transfers, starting with Bettelheim (1962; 1972), but repeated *ad nauseam* in the ensuing debates, and expressed as a difference between labour values and prices of production. The idea that different capital-intensities engender transfers of labour values is an established idea within Marxism. In addressing 'the question of nationalities' in 1907, Otto Bauer (2000) found that the more capital-intense German regions appropriated value from the less capital-intense Czech ones of the Hapsburg Empire. With the break-up of the Empire, by the time of the second edition in 1921, this unwittingly transformed into an international rate of profit and transfer of value. Bauer greatly influenced both Evgenii Preobrazhensky's (1965) model of Soviet industrialisation by extracting surplus through domestic unequal exchange with the peasantry, and Henryk Grossmann's (1967) model where the international equalisation of profits entails an unequal exchange between Asia and Europe helping to offset the fall in the rate of profit. While Emmanuel did not consider these value transfers due to capital-intensities to represent unequal exchange, he did adopt the notion of internationally mobile capital. By contrast, the

monopoly and dependency tradition (Sweezy, Baran, Frank; Bettelheim was a notable exception) was highly dismissive of an internationally equalised rate of profit and of international trade as a means of exploitation and transfer. Marxists in general considered interest in the relative prices of goods to be superficial 'circulationism' or commodity fetishism compared to the really heavy stuff such as production, multinationals, and the export of capital (Andersson 1972; Brewer 1990; Brolin 2006a: chs 2, 6; 2006b: chs 5–7, 12; Emmanuel 1972a: 94f; 1972b; Howard and King 1989; 1992).

Indeed, every subsequent alternative formulation to Emmanuel (e.g. Amin 1973; 1974; Andersson 1972; 1976, Braun 1977; Delarue 1973; 1975a; 1975b; Gibson 1977; 1980; Marini 1973; 1978), and almost every critic since Bettelheim (1972), have abandoned wages as the independent variable, preferring to make higher productivity the cause (and thereby justification) of higher wages, and/or 'monopolies' the cause of unequal exchange. Having reviewed many of these (Brolin 2006a; 2006b; Evans 1984; Mainwaring 1980; 1991), it is easy to agree with Koont (1987: 10) that: 'It would be desirable to extricate the concept of unequal exchange from the morass it has sunk into on the terrain of value transfers'. Unfortunately, this is not the path taken in the currently more vociferous ecological revival of unequal exchange, where the transfer of labour is simply supplanted or complemented by transfers of land.

Paradigmatically originating in urban-rural exchange, the idea that exchange of primary products for manufactures is disadvantageous was probably hoary with age already when mercantilists, protectionists, neo-mercantilists, import-substitutionists, and so on made it a cornerstone of their policy recommendations. It was inherent to the original formulation of the Singer-Prebisch thesis. With its focus on the inherently immobile land factor, ecological criticism of industrial civilisation and globalisation has long demonstrated a certain anti-trade bias (Bramwell 1989: 17). Attempted integration with a critique of world poverty in the post-war era shifted emphasis from overpopulation to inequality, notably in 'centre-periphery' trade of industrial for primary products. Thus, Borgström (1972: 76–83) estimated how Europe imported huge 'ghost acreages' mainly through its overseas trade

with European settlements; although focusing on Latin America he chose to see such exports as characterising underdeveloped countries (Brolin 2006a: 280). (Emphasising differently, Hardin [1993] similarly found no net imports into the US.) Borgström's idea of phantom or appropriated carrying capacity was renamed 'ecological footprint' by Rees (1992) under which name it has since become trademarked and calculations made opaque (Brolin 2006a: 285–297). Studies of the British industrial revolution have observed both the 'fossil acreage' (Catton 1982) added by the coal industry (Sieferle 2001, Wrigley 1988: 54f), and in colonial sugar and cotton imports (Pomeranz 2000: 274ff., 313ff.), arguing for their crucial importance in relieving industrial Britain's land constraints (for criticism, see Brenner and Isett 2002; Wrigley 2006). Translating point source fuels and minerals into areal units appears to constrain ecologist historical understanding of industrial civilisation. The identification of raw materials exporting peripheries with exploitation and underdevelopment is the central tenet of ecological unequal exchange (e.g. Bunker 1984; 1985; Cabeza-Gutés and Martínez-Alier 2001; Foster and Holleman 2014; Hornborg 1998; 2009; Martínez-Alier 2002; Odum 1971; 1996; Odum and Odum 1981), not worrying about contradictory North American, Australasian, or Scandinavian examples in the past (Katzman 1987), or, indeed, even the whole world until the post-war consumer society definitely tipped the scale (Bairoch 1993, Brolin 2006a). This disregard for falsifying economies that are both exporters and intensive consumers of energy signals a possible inability to account also for this consumer society.

Thus, where the standard Marxist interpretation speaks of unequal, or non-equivalent, exchange as a net transfer of labour or labour values, ecological unequal exchange is commonly defined in terms of a net transfer of land or land values (natural resources, ecological footprints, energy, or elaborations thereof such as 'exergy' or 'emergy'). Both of these currently popular usages of unequal exchange are highly problematic, and this is what has occasioned me (Brolin 2006a) to try to revive interest in Emmanuel's original theory as well as Lewis's almost wholly neglected one.

While not an accepted concept in mainstream economics, these and other approaches to unequal exchange can be illustrated

by reference to traditional Heckscher-Ohlin trade theory based on productive-factor endowments. From this perspective, net transfers of labour simply result from exchange between relatively labour-rich (capital and land-poor) regions and labour-scarce (capital-rich and land-rich) regions. Net transfers of land, on the other hand, result from exchange between relatively land-abundant (labour-scarce and capital-scarce) regions and land-scarce (capital-rich and labour-rich) regions. For example, looking at the epoch for which it was conceived (the 19th and early 20th centuries), according to Heckscher-Ohlin theory, we should expect a net transfer of land incorporated in goods exported from relatively land-rich regions, such as Australasia, North and Latin America, to relatively land-scarce (Western) Europe, or conversely net transfers of labour incorporated in goods exported from Europe to the New Worlds. Labour or land inequalities would seem to exhaust almost all of the current literature and debate on unequal exchange/ecological unequal exchange. For the sake of completeness, however, although no such formulation of unequal exchange as yet exists, a net transfer of capital results from exchange between relatively capital abundant (labour-scarce and land-scarce) regions, and capital-poor (labour-rich and land-rich) regions. The same would be true for other possible factors, such as knowledge or skilled labour.

In theory, inequality in terms of one factor should be compensated for by inequalities of the others in ways that possibly benefit all participants and increase overall output. That is, however, given that there are no monopolistic distortions on either goods or, especially, factors markets, which brings us to a fundamentally different approach to unequal exchange.

The point of Heckscher-Ohlin is of course to argue that immobility on the factors market can be compensated for by trade in the goods produced by these factors. Even from this perspective, however, it can be admitted (Williamson 2002) that the indirect equalisation of factor remuneration via trade in goods is less efficient than the direct equalisation that would result if, parallel to the free international market for goods, there were an equally free and internationally competitive market for factors. The divergence from this hypothetical 'normal' state, due to monopolistic and other 'institutional' distortions

on the factors market, is what constitutes unequal exchange according to Lewis (1954; 1969; 1978a; 1978b) and Emmanuel (1962: 22; 1972a: 64; 1976b: 264; Latouche 1977: 240f).

If unequal exchange in the first view is part of the normal workings of any conceivable economy and not evidently detrimental (on the contrary, commonly beneficial in increasing overall output), unequal exchange in the second view is an aberration from the 'normal' workings and very much detrimental (cf. Bettelheim [1962] on unequal exchange in the 'broad' and 'narrow' senses; Emmanuel [1972a] on 'broad' and 'strict' senses; Brolin [2006a] on 'non-equivalent' and 'unequal' exchange). Similarly, Adam Smith noted how towns gained from monopolising both labour (through guild regulations) and land (through the better access to communications conferred by its location at junctions), occasioning an 'artificial advantage' in exchange with the country that gave townspeople a greater share of the annual produce of society than would otherwise fall to them (Smith 1937: 124f; cf. Andersson 1976: 39; Brolin 2006a: 36f; Raffer 1987: 14).

In the Marxist or ecologist literature on net transfers, it is mainly by denying that one or other of the productive factors (read 'capital') is really productive that unequal exchange is found, and not always even then. Even when a net transfer of land or labour is found, it is not evident why this in itself should be something bad for the exporter; for example blocking its economic development and/or being detrimental to its ecology. Apart from its questionable explanatory value, approaching unequal exchange from the perspective of net transfers, as is now the case (whether in terms of land, labour, or both), is desperately incomplete, always verging on irrelevance since any true estimate of inequality would have to be made in the composite land-labour-capital-etc. factor, rather than to the exclusion of any particular one (read capital). This point was made by Emmanuel early in the unequal exchange debate.

While Emmanuel (1972a: xxxi) occasionally spoke carelessly of how low-wage countries exchange 'a larger amount of their national labour for a smaller amount of foreign labor', he (1972a: 325) then clarified: 'Since equivalence in capitalist production relations signifies not the exchange of equal quantities of labor, but that of equal aggregates of factors ([e.g.] labor and capital),

nonequivalence (unequal exchange) can only signify the exchange of unequal aggregates of these same factors'. Attempts at measuring such aggregates would have to face problems of the incommensurability of its component parts, as well as the conclusions reached in the, so called, 'capital controversies' of the 1960s and 1970s. More precisely, for Emmanuel (1972a: 1f), then, 'the exchange of commodities represents, in the last analysis, an exchange of factors, that is, an exchange of claims [Fr. *droit*] to a primary share in the economic product of society'. Speaking of claims underlines the meaningful part of classical, Marxist, Sraffian, or other so called 'objective' price theories in pointing towards an underlying social reality, distributional conflicts, as opposed to the transfer of metaphysical entities embodied in goods: 'Now, as with all economic phenomena, unequal exchange reflects relations among people, in no way relations between things – in the present case the relations of underdeveloped man with developed man' (Emmanuel 1962: 12, my translation). The anomaly of falling terms of trade, as it was first believed for raw materials, revealed, as it turned out, an underlying social inequality.

### The terms-of-trade debate

Development economics emerged as a clearly defined academic subdiscipline only in the early post-war period, very much on the fringe of economic orthodoxy and much more tolerant of radical political suggestions (such as land reform, state control, or even socialism) as necessary preconditions for economic development. One of the most hotly debated issues, and an important origin of unequal exchange theory, was the terms-of-trade debate, or the Singer-Prebisch thesis. Inspired by Amin (1974), Love (1980) even calls Prebisch the originator of the debate on unequal exchange but the sense in which this could be true is questionable. This is partly because Love underrates Singer, who made the substantial contribution with respect to the terms-of-trade debate (Toye and Toye 2003), and partly because the only other sense in which 'the' debate on unequal exchange originated would have to have been with Emmanuel (1962; 1972a).

Based on former studies by the League of Nations and Schlote, Singer concluded that average prices of primary commodities

relative to manufactured goods had been declining over a period of more than half a century, the relative prices of primary goods deteriorating by about one-third since the 1870s and somewhat less than 30 per cent since 1913 (UN 1949: 23). Schlote's data for the United Kingdom went further back, and the trend up to the 1870s showed, by contrast, a marked increase for the goods imported over those exported. This shift in the trend went counter to the general assertion among classical economists, apparently correct at the time, that the development of productive forces in manufactures and the limited expansive possibilities of raw materials and 'land', would ensure that the terms of trade change in favour of the latter (Findlay 1987: 626).

Now, as evidenced by the rising standards of living in industrialised countries from 1870, there was 'little doubt that productivity increased faster in the industrialized countries than in primary production in underdeveloped countries', Singer explained (UN 1949: 126). Hence, the changes observed in terms of trade do not mean that increased productivity in primary production was passed on to industrialized countries; on the contrary, they mean that the underdeveloped countries helped to maintain, in the prices which they paid for their imported manufactures relative to those which they obtained for their own primary products, a rising standard of living in the industrialized countries, without receiving, in the price of their own products, a corresponding equivalent contribution towards their own standards of living (*ibid.*).

If there is any single origin for the post-war debate on 'unequal exchange' in Love's (1980) more general sense, this conclusion is a good candidate. It was the report's most controversial implication, in line with Singer's (1949: 2f) slightly earlier recognition that the Marxist view of how rising standards of living for certain groups coincide with general deterioration and impoverishment was much truer for the international scene than for the domestic. Singer's 'clear message of historical injustice' was 'very shortly to be rejected by the subcommission' (Toye and Toye 2003: 450). It was, in fact, the reason why Prebisch avoided the general fate of UN authors to remain anonymous (Toye and Toye: 456f).

Prebisch quoted both Singer's data and his conclusion (ECLA 1950: 10, n. 3) to make the same point, adding only the 'centre-periphery' terminology. Technical progress

had been greater in industry than in the primary production of peripheral countries: 'Consequently, if prices had been reduced in proportion to increasing productivity, the reduction should have been less in the case of primary products than in that of manufactures, so that as the disparity between productivities increased, the price relationship between the two should have shown a steady improvement in favour of the countries of the periphery' (ECLA 1950: 8), which would have distributed the benefits of technical progress alike throughout the world. Since the ratio actually had moved against primary products, centre incomes must have increased more than productivity: 'In other words, while the centers kept the whole benefit of the technical development of their industries, the peripheral countries transferred to them a share of the fruits of their own technical progress' (ECLA 1950: 10). Singer (1950) reiterated these arguments in the context of possible disadvantages in receiving foreign investments that reinforced specialisation on the export of food and raw materials, and the advantages for investing countries in increased dynamism and lower prices of imports, concluding: 'The industrialized countries have had the best of both worlds, both as consumers of primary commodities and as producers of manufactured articles, whereas the underdeveloped countries had the worst of both worlds, as consumers of manufactures and as producers of raw materials. This is perhaps the legitimate germ of truth in the charge that foreign investment of the traditional type formed part of a system of 'economic imperialism' and of 'exploitation' (Singer 1950: 479f).

The most obvious empirical objection in the ensuing debate struck at the identification of primary/agricultural production with underdevelopment or backwardness. Viner (1952: 61ff) pointed to the numerous exceptions to this alleged rule: Denmark exporting butter and bacon; New Zealand exporting lamb, wool, and butter; Australia exporting wool and wheat; similarly with California, Iowa, Nebraska, and so on. Looking at Italy and Spain, neither was it evident that industrialisation was synonymous with prosperity. The problem in poor countries was not to be found in agriculture as such, or in the lack of manufactures as such, but in underdeveloped agriculture and underdeveloped industry. The large share of primary production was not

a cause of poverty, but merely an associative characteristic of poverty and low agricultural productivity (Viner 1952: 50).

In fact, Singer himself had already noted as a major limitation of his UN study that it was based on price relations between primary commodities, which formed the major export articles of underdeveloped countries, and manufactured goods (specifically capital goods) which formed an important part of their imports. 'It may, however, be very misleading to conclude that changes in total terms of trade as they affect under-developed countries follow directly from changes in price relations between these major classes of commodities. In particular, the high prices of food imported into under-developed countries must be considered before conclusions are drawn from simple changes in price relations between primary and manufactured goods' (UN 1949: 4).

The most significant contribution to the debates was made by Kindleberger (1956), concluding that there was no long-run tendency for the terms of trade to move against primary products as such (exemplifying North American wheat or Swedish timber), particularly allowing for changes in quality of manufactures. By contrast, the terms of trade ran heavily against underdeveloped countries. Since productivity presumably had increased more in industry than in agriculture, and obviously more in the developed than in the underdeveloped countries, if the commodity terms of trade ran in favour of developed and against underdeveloped countries, the double factorial terms of trade had done so still more (Kindleberger 1956: 240). That deteriorating commodity terms of trade suggested a more important deterioration in the double factorial terms of trade was of course the point all along. However, as observed by Streeten (1982: 8), the debate had been shunted onto the wrong track by disputing the historical evolution of the actual terms of trade, since the relevant issue was not what the terms of trade were compared to what they had been, but what they were compared to what they should have been.

The Singer-Prebisch theorem involved a renaissance for the age-old mercantilist belief in a 'fundamental inferiority of trade in basic produce as compared with trade in manufactures', later to re-emerge also with ecological unequal exchange. However, replying to Kindleberger's criticism, Singer (1958: 87f)

himself largely abandoned this conception in favour of the idea that it was instead the terms of trade of developing countries as such that were deteriorating, whether they produce raw materials or manufactures. 'Singer I assumed the central peripheral relationship to reside in the characteristics of different types of commodities, i.e. modern manufactures versus primary commodities. Singer II now feels that the essence of the relationship lies in the different types of countries' (Singer 1974-75: 59). Recollecting the early years, Singer (1984: 292f) wrote of the 'point first made by Charles Kindleberger, that the tendency toward deterioration is more a matter of the characteristics of different countries than of different commodities', dubbing it the 'Kindleberger effect' as supplementing the 'Prebisch-Singer effect.'

According to Singer (1987: 627) the latter was originally explained by differing elasticities for primary products and manufactures (1 and 2), or disproportionate factor incomes in manufacturing (3 and 4): (1) a drop in the price of primary inputs will only mean a proportionately smaller drop in the price of the finished product and no great effect in demand can be expected; (2) demand for primary products is bound to expand less than demand for manufactured products, partly because as incomes rise a smaller share will be spent on agricultural products, partly because of the development of synthetic substitutes for primary commodities; (3) monopolistic profits of multinationals in addition to higher prices charged for innovations; (4) both labour and commodity markets are more organised in industrial countries, with trade unions, monopolistic firms and producers' organisations ensuring that 'the results of technical progress and increased productivity are largely absorbed in higher factor incomes rather than lower prices for the consumers' (Singer 1987: 627), whereas in underdeveloped countries increased productivity is likely to show up in lower prices, benefiting the overseas consumer rather than the domestic producer.

Interestingly, Kindleberger (1943a; 1943b) had himself invoked 'Engel's law' of demand to explain why the terms of trade would inexorably move against raw material countries as the world's standard of living increased, arguing for industrialisation based both on the differing elasticities of demand for primary and manufactured products, and on the special



institutional organisation of production in industry – arguments with which Prebisch (Love 1994: 421) and possibly Singer were both familiar. Now, however, Kindleberger (1956: 247) observed contradictions between the argument from elasticities and that from organisation of factors, concluding that the latter were supererogatory: 'If it can be conclusively established that the elasticities facing the underdeveloped countries are lower than those facing the developed, there is no lack of forces to explain why the terms of trade work as they do'. Emmanuel (1972a: 82) agreed that 'it is hard to see what a more dynamic posture of the factors could do in the face of a defective structure of external demand, if it is really demand that determines prices'. This led Prebisch ultimately into circular reasoning, 'taking wages sometimes as cause and sometimes as effect': 'Prebisch is looking for a cause for a certain evolution of world prices. He thinks he has found this in a certain evolution of wages, which is in turn conditioned by a certain evolution of productivity. Now, productivity can in no case affect wages except through prices' (Emmanuel 1972a: 87).

Of course, Emmanuel's (1972a: 172) declared objective was precisely to challenge the view that demand determined prices and prices wages, following the lead of Arthur Lewis who in 1954 had argued 'that in the long run in the less developed countries (LDCs) it is the factorial terms of trade that determine the commodity terms of trade, and not the other way around' (Lewis 1984: 124f).

### Unequal exchange between temperate and tropical sections of the dual world labour market

In spite of Lewis's 1954 article on the 'unlimited supplies of labor' being 'widely regarded as the single most influential contribution to the establishment of development economics as an academic discipline' (Kirkpatrick and Barrientos 2004: 679), his 'open' model explaining the terms of trade has been largely neglected. This contrasts with the stir created by both Singer-Prebisch and Emmanuel.

In Lewis's (1954; 1969; 1978a; 1978b) basic model, 'unlimited supplies of labor' from the non-capitalist sector ensures that wages are kept down also in the capitalist sector, where profits are thus increased and investments can proceed at an increased pace. Wages in the non-capitalist sector are

basically set by the level of productivity in subsistence agriculture. So far as it concerns the terms of trade, his theory is this: productivities in subsistence agriculture determine the wage differential between the world's two large groups of migrants in the 19th and early 20th centuries, from Europe to temperate regions of settlement, and from China and India to tropical regions, which roughly correspond to the developed and underdeveloped world respectively, and are in turn kept separate by monopolisation of the high-wage labour market. With the wage level fixed or determined 'from the outside', an increase in productivity for tropical exports can only decrease unit prices, thereby explaining, in Lewis's mind, the terms of trade.

Asking why someone growing cocoa earns one-tenth of the income earned by someone making steel ingots, Lewis abandoned the conventional argument based on the relative marginal utilities of cocoa and steel. Since Lewis's model assumes the alternative option of growing food for subsistence, people's 'relative incomes are determined by their relative productivities in growing food; and the relative prices of steel and cocoa are determined by these relative incomes and by productivities in steel and cocoa' (Lewis 1969: 17). Demand was important in the short run, but the long-term determinants were the conditions of supply.

Lewis (1954; 1969) assumed a temperate country producing three units of steel and food respectively, and a tropical country producing one unit of rubber (or coffee) and food respectively. Accordingly, the commodity terms of trade were 1 steel = 1 food = 1 rubber (coffee), while the factorial terms of trade determined by relative productivities in food were 1 temperate wage = 3 tropical wages. Now, if productivity tripled in rubber (coffee) this would be excellent for temperate workers (as consumers), since then 1 steel = 3 rubber (coffee), whereas it would do tropical workers in either line of production 'no good whatsoever' (except as consumers of rubber/coffee) since their wages would continue to be determined by food productivity. If, on the other hand, tropical food productivity were to triple, then tropical wages would rise correspondingly in both food and rubber (coffee) production, equalising the factorial terms of trade, and ameliorating the commodity terms of trade so that 1 coffee = 3 steel. Thus, temperate workers were better off if productivity

increased in what they buy, and worse off if it increased in the tropical food sector. Tropical workers 'are benefited only if productivity increases in their subsistence sector; all other increases in productivity are lost in the terms of trade' (Lewis 1954: 183).

This gave Lewis the key to why tropical produce was so cheap, even in cases such as the sugar industry, where productivity was very high by any biological standard, and had been advancing by leaps and bounds, trebling over the 75 years preceding 1954, outdoing anything comparable in the wheat industry. And yet workers in the sugar industry continued to walk barefooted and to live in shacks, while workers in wheat enjoyed among the highest living standards in the world: 'The reason is that wages in the sugar industry are related to the fact that the subsistence sectors of tropical economies are able to release however many workers the sugar industry may want, at wages which are low, because tropical food production per head is low. However vastly productive the sugar industry may become, the benefit accrues chiefly to industrial purchasers in the form of lower prices for sugar' (Lewis 1954: 183).

The capitalists did not enter the argument, Lewis explained in parenthesis, 'because their earnings are determined ... by the general rate of profit on capital' (Lewis 1954: 183). This (necessary) assumption, vaguely made in passing, of a uniform rate of profit between the countries, was what Emmanuel found most revolutionary. *Somebody* had to benefit from the low wages, Emmanuel (1972a: 89) noted, and this could only be the capitalist (as in Lewis's closed model) or the consumer: 'If it is the capitalist, there may perhaps be exploitation or bad distribution within the nation, but there is no unequal exchange on the international plane. If it is the (foreign) consumer, we have plundering of some nations by others. If the capitalist cannot benefit by it (at least not in the long run), owing to competition of capital and the equalization of profits, only the consumer is left, and for him to benefit it is necessary that prices fall'. Apart from this vagueness, Emmanuel found nothing to be said against Lewis's model, except that assuming the presence of a self-subsistence sector made it too restricted to serve as a general theory.

In fact, Lewis did not have just any subsistence agriculture in mind, but based his model on the historical example of the first global

century before 1913, which saw the emergence of 'the new international order', as he termed it. Lewis's explanation is based on extending his model of unlimited supply of labour to the whole world, and on the politically enforced creation of a dual world labour market, based on farm productivity in Europe and Asia respectively. 'The development of the agricultural countries in the second half of the nineteenth century was promoted by two vast streams of international migration', about 50 or 60 million people leaving Europe for the temperate settlements (USA, Canada, Argentina, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa), and about the same number leaving India and China for tropical plantations, mines, or construction projects, largely as indentured labourers (cf. Williamson 2002: 21ff): 'The availability of these two streams set the terms of trade for tropical and temperate agricultural commodities, respectively. For temperate commodities the market forces set prices that could attract European migrants, while for tropical commodities they set prices that would sustain indentured Indians' (Lewis 1978b: 14). The Asians 'came from countries with low agricultural productivity, and were willing to work for a shilling a day or less', whereas Europeans 'expected wages in excess of those earned in Europe', where farm productivity was several times higher than in Asia (Lewis 1978a: 158).

The similar difference between European and tropical wage and agricultural productivity levels suggested a causal relationship. If agricultural output per man was six or seven times greater in Britain, the largest source of European migrants, and even more in the US, the largest recipient of European migrants, than in tropical agriculture, similarly, in the 1880s, the wage of an unskilled construction worker in Australia was nine shillings a day, compared to the wage of a plantation labourer at one shilling a day (Lewis 1978b: 14ff).

This aspect of his argument is not the most convincing, unnecessarily restricting his theory and neglecting institutional differences that may similarly influence both productivity and wage levels. Lewis *did* mention several such influences, for example the interest of capitalists in certain colonial or imperialist policies directed against increasing productivity of the subsistence workers and thereby wages (Lewis 1954: 149). Thus, plantation owners had no interest in seeing knowledge of techniques or seeds spread

to peasants, turned peasants off their lands, opposed land settlement, and would use their influence in government to the same effect. 'Imperialists invest capital and hire workers; it is to their advantage to keep wages low, and even in those cases where they do not actually go out of their way to impoverish the subsistence economy, they will at least very seldom be found doing anything to make it more productive. In actual fact the record of every imperial power in Africa in modern times is one of impoverishing the subsistence economy, either by taking away the people's land, or by demanding forced labor in the capitalist sector, or by imposing taxes to drive people to work for capitalist employers' (Lewis 1954: 149). Nevertheless, if capitalists did not enter his formal argument, neither did landlords, in spite of the prime importance of rents (together with wages) in the distribution of income in the first, although not the second, global century, and despite the various institutional settings and property relations in land necessary for his model to function as predicted. Thus, if land in the temperate settlements was free and abundant, this was an endowment that was partly an institutional or political artefact: 'In many cases the land was sparsely occupied by native peoples (Indians in the Americas, aboriginal Australians, African tribes). There was no hesitation in making war on these peoples, killing them off, or confining them to reservations, so that large acreages could pass into European farming' (Lewis 1978a: 183). Conversely, landownership in tropical regions was more concentrated, even becoming so by long-term improvement in terms of trade together with short-term fluctuations (Williamson 2011), and could, if necessary, 'populate' them with slaves or indentured labour (Engerman and Sokoloff 1997). In fact, monopolistic concentration of landownership, supported by systems of labour control, will in itself result in, on the one hand, monopsony on the rural labour market and consequent lower wages (so to speak, creating unlimited supplies of labour) and, on the other, lower agricultural productivity (of both land and labour) (Griffin et al. 2002).

A crucial point of Lewis's argument, however, is the creation and maintenance of two distinct labour markets, which in turn set the prices of their respective exports, further offering temperate settlements highly divergent prospects from those of the tropics (Lewis 1978a: 158). From the high temperate income

per head there came immediately a large demand for manufactures, opportunities for import substitution and rapid urbanisation, large domestic savings per head, with money available to spend on all levels of education, soon creating their own power centres and managerial and administrative élites, independent of and sometimes hostile to the imperial power long before formal independence. Thus, while the 'factoral terms available to them offered the opportunity for full development in every sense of the word', those available to the tropics 'offered the opportunity to stay poor ... at any rate until such time as the labour reservoirs of India and China might be exhausted' (Lewis 1978a: 192). This was well understood by the working classes in the temperate settlements themselves, including the US, who 'were always adamantly opposed to Indian or Chinese immigration into their countries because they realised that, if unchecked, it must drive wages down close to Indian and Chinese levels' (Lewis 1978a: 192).

Obviously, no-one believes that Indians and Chinese would actually have preferred to move to horrific labour conditions in tropical areas, rather than to what has been called the 'workers' paradises' of temperate areas, had they had the choice. This is a fairly well-known, if unattractive, story of anti-immigration policy, surging with the welfare state and labour organizing against both local capital and international low-wage competition. Economic recession and unemployment inspired protectionism, social policies and anti-Asian sentiments. Pre-First World War Australia was a pioneer in protecting itself from the flux of workers from Asia and the poorer regions of Europe, starting with Victoria State in the mid-1850s, the first restrictions on immigration appearing in the 1880s, and a federal-level European language test established in 1902, on the instigation of the Australian Labour Party. Restrictions were extended in the inter-war years to promote British settlers and hinder non-Britons, refusing entrance on national, racial, or occupational grounds. New Zealand followed suit already in the 1880s and 1890s; in the four decades from the 1880s to the 1920s, the Chinese population of Oceania actually decreased, while South Africa took measures against Indians and Chinese in 1913. The first restraints in the US were imposed with various Chinese Exclusion Acts from the 1880s onwards, and from 1917 Chinese

were simply refused entrance. In the 1920s, a system including several European countries was instigated with quotas for each country of origin of a few per cent of the number having immigrated until 1910 or 1890. Immigration sank drastically in every decade, with new minimums following new restrictions in the depression years. Canada followed its big American brother from the early 1900s, notably Asians in the 1920s and Southern and Eastern Europeans in the 1930s, while at the same time encouraging Britons. Pioneered in the countries of British settlement, anti-immigration restrictions became generalised in the 1920s and 1930s (Bairoch 1997, I: 476ff; II: 176, 483f; III: 26ff; James 2001; McKeown 2008). This closing of national borders and weakening international solidarity just as cheaper travel made movement easier and the spread of knowledge opened up new vistas and horizons was 'frankly one of the most reactionary trends of our time', Myrdal (1964: 95) observed. 'The improved economic status and security of employment of the working classes have given even the labourer vested interests at home as a professional' (Myrdal 1964: 96). While certain types of specialised workers would have an international labour market, the common people were 'tied to their land of birth as firmly as in feudal times the serf was tied to the estate of his lord', allowed to go sightseeing or visit the market but obliged to return (Myrdal 1964: 97).

Picking up Lewis's idea of the dual character of the world labour market, Williamson (2002: 21ff) sees a segmentation of convergence regions in the high-wage West and the low-wage Rest. If, as Williamson argues, labour mobility was the most important force in convergence, monopolisation of the high-wage labour market (its opposite) could equally be treated as the major force in the 'great divergence' between developed and developing countries, but apart from Lewis and Emmanuel this seems never to have been done. If Lewis focused on the late 19th and early 20th centuries, unequal exchange in Emmanuel's perspective has a peculiar role in explaining the 'overdevelopment' of the post-war Golden Years.

### **Unequal exchange as a factor in capitalist overdevelopment**

Already in the first global century before 1913, 'a well-integrated world capital market

insured that risk-adjusted financial capital costs were pretty much equated the world around', Williamson (2006: 37f) has concluded: 'Thus, while capital was mobile internationally, labor and land were not'. Heckscher (1919) observed the great mobility of capital, relative immobility of labour, and complete immobility of land, but as his theory was formulated just after the globalising trends had collapsed in the First World War, the standard Heckscher-Ohlin theory instead assumed complete immobility of factors. Global goods and capital markets more or less recovered after the autocratic World War and Depression interval (Obstfeld and Taylor 2003; 2004), whereas the globalisation backlash of labour markets became a permanent feature not even discussed at the Bretton Woods conference and with only restricted revival in recent decades so as not to risk any 'convergence' (Chiswick and Hatton 2003; Hatton and Williamson 2005; McKeown 2008). These and other differences between science and the city, underlined by Myrdal (1957; 1964) in his critique of Heckscher-Ohlin assumptions and predictions, became important for Emmanuel.

Emmanuel's theory assumes, on the one hand, a relative mobility of capital, sufficient to give rise to a tendency for global equalisation of the rate of profit, and a relative immobility of labour so that wage rates may differ considerably between countries; on the other, an exogenous (extra-economic, institutional) determination of nominal wages, depending on power relations between social classes in each country and each epoch (Emmanuel 1975a: 36).

The gist of all Emmanuel's demonstrations (1962; 1972a; 1975a), whether in Marxist price of production schemas or Sraffian input-output systems of varying levels of generality, is that an increase in (nominal) wages in any country will be passed on to the prices of the products of that particular country, whereas the corresponding decrease in the rate of profit will be spread out globally, entailing an increase in the relative prices of the products experiencing the wage increase; that is, an amelioration of their terms of trade. (Only then and according to consumption will real wages be determined.)

Less worked out historically than Lewis's model, Emmanuel thus explicitly posits a rate of profit that, unlike other factorial rates of remuneration, is internationally competitive

and tends toward equalisation. Just as for Lewis, Emmanuelian unequal exchange is caused by monopolisation of the high-wage labour market, which results in higher prices than would otherwise be the case, and in better terms of trade with the surrounding low-wage market. Wages (the 'independent variable' of his system) are determined externally (not merely by agricultural productivities as for Lewis, but institutionally, politically, historically, etc.), and are, as his definition puts it, 'safeguarded from competitive equalization on the factors market' (Emmanuel 1972a: 64; cf. 1962: 22). Simply put: 'Underpinning unequal exchange there is a monopoly, all right; not, however, a monopoly of goods ... but the monopoly position held by the workers in the advanced countries' (Emmanuel 1972a: 169).

While there was much controversy and misunderstanding over Emmanuel's Marxist price of production schemas (which he abandoned in 1970, along with arguments in terms of labour value, as soon as he was no longer obliged to relate to Bettelheim as his thesis supervisor), the real issues appear to have been the political conclusions on the lacking basis for international worker solidarity, and its theoretical counterpart in the choice of wages as the independent variable, something which every subsequent alternative unequal exchange theory discarded, but without resolving the theoretical problems thereby created (Brolin 2006a; 2006b; Emmanuel 1985: 153ff; Evans 1980; 1984; Mainwaring 1980; 1991).

Emmanuel's view on wages as exogenously determined is arguably common to both classical and Marxist economics, where the baseline is set by subsistence agriculture as in Lewis, but with 'subsistence' consumption levels given an added variable historical and cultural element. Thus, apart from any initial wage differences (whether due to environmental factors, agricultural productivity, or other factors), Emmanuel (1972a, ch. 3; 1975a: 36) pointed to efficient developed-country trade unions and political mobilisation since the late 19th century, coinciding with successful repression of similar activities in the underdeveloped countries under colonial or semi-colonial regimes, plus the drain of means which could have enabled wage negotiations in these countries. Because of his emphasis, Emmanuel is perhaps not sufficiently alert either to how rising European

emigration in the late 19th century might have helped political mobilisation, or to how domestic power relations might be affected by shifting commodity terms of trade, such as the century-long boom in tropical agriculture (in spite of the Singer-Prebisch thesis) that, along with short-term swings, contributed to deindustrialisation, concentration of land ownership, and lower wages (Williamson 2006; 2011). Just as the globalisation of goods and factor markets is related to the global extension of communications, Emmanuel's argument on nationally 'fenced' political organisation could profitably be linked to the 'globalisation backlash' as well as an extensive literature linking nationalism and the press.

It was not unequal exchange or the terms of trade, but wage disparity in itself that gave rise to unequal development or the Great Divergence. The link between the variations in wages, or especially the foreseeable increase in wages, and those of development was based directly on international specialisation and choice of technology, on capital movements, and on investment incentives (Emmanuel 1972a: 371f; 1975b: 54f).

Perhaps inspired by Habakkuk (1962; cf. Allen 2009), Emmanuel (1972a: 174) saw high wages as the cause of technological development rather than the other way around, by their necessitating increased capital intensity and encouraging investment through expanding the market. This had further implications for the international division of labour, where it became relatively cheaper for investors in low-wage countries to choose branches of production with low capital intensity and little qualified work (Emmanuel 1975b: 56). 'Thus, low-paid laborers keep machines and engineers out of the underdeveloped countries, while machines and engineers take the place of highly paid laborers in the advanced ones', Emmanuel (1972a: 374) argued, concluding that this 'substitution of one factor for another, caused by market forces alone, is the most dynamic element in the blocking of subsequent development in the first group of countries and in the accelerated growth in the second group'.

The 'perverse' movements of capital (more recently revived as the 'Lucas paradox' after Lucas [1990]) from low-wage areas where there is a shortage of capital to high-wage areas where it is plentiful, had been generally observed in the early post-war development

debate (Bettelheim 1962: 7ff; Lewis 1954: 440; 1978a: 177; Myrdal 1957; 1964; Nurkse 1952: 574; 1953; cf. Brolin 2006a: 205ff). Emmanuel (1972a: 372) observed: 'Since the prime problem for capitalism is not to produce but to sell, capital moves toward countries and regions where there are extensive outlets and expanding markets, that is, where the population's standard of living is high, rather than toward countries and regions where the cost of production is low. It thus moves toward high-wage countries, neglecting those where wages are low'. Because of the lack of investment opportunities in poor countries, what little surplus was formed was either wasted in luxury consumption or expatriated and invested abroad.

Already Adam Smith (1937: 406f) and Tugan-Baranowsky (1913: 189) had observed that in a capitalist economy it is easier to buy than to sell. Emmanuel's explanation (1966: 1198; 1984) is based on the fact that revenue does not equal the produced but the realised value, only part of which, notably that corresponding to wages, is transformed into revenue before the sale and independently of its results, whereas profit (of enterprise) is not acquired as revenue until after the sale and according to its results. So long as there are unsold goods (which is always), the value of aggregate supply will exceed that of the aggregate purchasing power standing against it, making the market price tendentially inferior to the equilibrium price of production. This makes the system dependent on spending artificially created credit, creating a contradiction between the will and the power to invest, and giving the system a tendency to produce below full capacity in inherently unstable business cycles (Brolin 2006a: 217–230).

If depression in this sense was capitalism's normal state, the only way to explain the crisis-free post-war Golden Years (with unprecedented growth-rates, wage increases, and all but full employment) was by the partial or total reabsorption of the excess of production/supply over revenues/demand. While redistribution from profit of enterprise to other sources of income (that were partitioned before the sale) could alleviate the perceived disequilibrium, ultimately, some extraneously induced demand was needed, either in the form of a surplus balance of payments, a budget deficit, or 'overtrading', in the sense of purchasing beyond one's means.

A balance of payments in excess had been a lasting preoccupation of policymakers since mercantilist times, particularly in depressed times when they outweighed improving the terms of trade, as if 'the luxury of optimising the terms of trade can only be afforded once the maximisation of exports in particular and the marketing of the social product in general have been more or less achieved' (Emmanuel 1984: 346). Their compatibility was evidenced by the fact that 'for almost a century, the terms of trade of the developed countries as a whole have been improving spectacularly, while the overall balance of payments of the same group has not been in deficit' (Emmanuel 1984: 350). This said, neither could a surplus balance of payment explain post-war development. Budget deficits also realised part of the social product with purchasing power from outside production, and their importance has certainly increased since Emmanuel's time (notably in the US), but in his view could not explain the Golden Age.

This leaves 'overtrading', meaning 'to spend a virtual revenue by anticipating its realisation' (Emmanuel 1984: 352), something which obviously presumes a type of credit (well-known to economists) which not only transfers purchasing power in space from saver to investor, but also in time from the future to the present. However, such *ex nihilo* generation of bank money was merely a necessary, not sufficient, condition. For overtrading to result there must also be perceived opportunities for profitable investments. Emmanuel (1978: 59f; 1984) distinguished three kinds of incentives to overtrade:

1. *Erratic and momentary*, by consequence of certain accidental ruptures such as technical or commercial innovations, discoveries, opening of external markets. While referring to an extensive literature ever since Schumpeter on the long-wave consequences of interlinked innovations, it seems that Emmanuel nevertheless may have underestimated this factor in post-war economic growth and stagnation.
2. *Recurrent*, linked to the upward phase of the business cycle, and, thus, while crucial for capitalist development in general, not the explanation behind the crisis-free growth of the Golden Age.
3. *Chronic*, following from certain modifications of structure, the most important in the developed countries being, on the one

hand, an institutionalised inflation; on the other, a regular rhythm of augmenting wages which, in turn, had 'been made possible by external resources originating in the exploitation of the Third World, and made effective by trade union struggle and, more generally, the political promotion of working-class aristocracies in Occidental societies' (Emmanuel 1978: 59, my translation).

If the general problem is one of the relative demand for money and for every other good, it is easy to see how a depreciation of the currency could act as a stimulant facilitating sale and as an incitement to overtrade, but while the flight from money was meant to stimulate domestic activity and commodities, it risked favouring the commodities and currencies of competitors. In modern capitalism of the post-war era, Emmanuel (1984: 384–394; 1985: 225–252) argued, the stimulus arising from inflation was closely related to that of wage increases, where the latter urge on the former in so-called cost-push inflation. This presumed either goldmines in countries not hit by the wage increase (as was generally the case), or universal inconvertibility of currencies, which became official in 1971 but was the unofficial practice before that. As a consequence, the rate of profit could vary independently of wages, by making wage increases wholly or partly nominal after they had occurred. In this way, the late capitalist system had managed to create double stimulation, partly through the expansion of the market for consumer goods due to any residual real-wage increase, and partly through the expansion of the market for means of production through overtrading, which had the important side-effect of lessening resistance to wage claims, thus restarting the process. Seemingly, this cornucopia could go on forever, but its limits revealed themselves when the rise in oil price put in doubt the continued growth of nominal wages at a rate faster than retail prices.

For Emmanuel, there was nothing as important as the variations of wages. Unlike any other mode of production, capitalism stood all the natural functions of human society on their heads, began with the end, with the actual or potential consumption downstream attracting production and capital upstream, as if 'it is the possibility of clearing the estuary of a river that determines the volume of its tributaries' (Emmanuel 1974: 72).

Production can only take place as a function of prior real or expected markets, but left to itself, capitalism's own laws of motion tend to prevent the expansion of this river mouth (Emmanuel 1984: 372).

In a closed system, an exogenous growth of wages would diminish the rate of profit at an alarming rate, but in a system open to trade with low-wage regions the cost of wage increases could be transferred to foreigners and the decline in the rate of profit be halted, thus simultaneously allowing high wages and a high rate of profit – Emmanuel's definition of the consumer society (Emmanuel 1985: 171–198). Unequal exchange was thus offered as the solution to the problem of the fall in the rate of profit, in a way similar to that suggested by Grossmann in the 1920s, although, by contrast, in Emmanuel's case the rise in wages was the source both of unequal exchange and the fall in the rate of profit (Andersson 1976: 41; Brolin 2006a: 69; 182f; Howard and King 1989: 316; Loxley 1990: 717).

In Emmanuel's (1972a: 172) view, for a country in a competitive system to derive an advantage from its foreign trade, paradoxically, it must consume more than the others do, whether in the form of direct wages or other forms of consumption. While seemingly natural that one can only spend as much as one earns, the object of his study on unequal exchange was 'to prove that under capitalist production relations one earns as much as one spends, and that prices depend upon wages'. Noting that what his critics had found most scandalising was being led to recognise 'that increased consumption brings about greater development and greater enrichment of nations', Emmanuel (1972a: 337f, emphasis in original) challenged his adversaries' astonishment with a Popperian generalisation: 'No capitalist country has ever become poorer for having spent too much'.

The common basis for the blocking of underdeveloped countries and the overdeveloped feed-forwarding of consumption lay not primarily in deliberate conspiratorial, or uninformed strategies of great power-holders, or even in peculiarities of social structure and technology, but in freely working market forces. For when the primary problem is not to produce but to sell, 'he who dominates is not the biggest producer but the biggest consumer' (Emmanuel 1974: 72).

For Emmanuel (contrary to his Marxist brethren but much like contemporary

ecological critics of overconsumption), exploitation and unequal exchange were not a question of production but of appropriation, and the development of the forces of consumption was more important than development of the forces of production. The unequalisable levels of energy and material consumption (Laulan 1972), and the ecological stress it created, ultimately explained the lack of solidarity between workers of rich and poor countries (Brolin 2006a: 200ff; Emmanuel 1974: 78f; 1975a: 63ff; 1976a: 71ff;). In this sense, unequal exchange is a kind of Maxwell's demon at the borders of countries with wealthy populations, maintaining and enforcing wage and consumption differentials (cf. Martinez-Alier 2002: 204). ('Maxwell's demons were unnatural beings who were supposed to be able to maintain, or even increase, the difference in temperature between communicating gases by sorting out high-speed and low-speed molecules' [Martinez-Alier 1994: 30].)

Directing attention towards the areas that Marx's projected tomes left unfinished, although addressing economists of all denominations, Emmanuel also tried to integrate some unpredicted developments. Marx's recurrent theme of increasing polarisation of society into workers and capitalists may have been reasonable at a time when domestic inequalities were increasing and exceeded those between nations. Ironically, precisely around the publication of *Capital* in 1867, the still ongoing secular rise in real wages in England and the developed world began, and the income differences between the West and the Rest exploded, so that today 80 per cent of world inequality is driven by location rather than class (Milanovic 2011: 109ff).

It is perhaps similarly ironic that Emmanuel's and other theories of unequal exchange and unequal development should have been formulated precisely at the moment of East Asia's wholly unpredicted economic rise (Crafts and Venables 2003). In the words of Joyce: 'The West shall shake the East awake ... while ye have the night for morn'. Theories of unequal exchange are nevertheless still relevant in interpreting a world economy that has been liberated from the traditional land constraints of an 'organic economy' by point source fossil fuels into a feed-forwarding, high-wage, high-technology spiral (Allen 2012; Wrigley 1988; 2006). Global 'big time'

divergence is maintained largely by monopolistic exclusion of the world's poor peoples from rich labour markets in a way that is not only unequal but also increasingly recognised as the world's greatest economic inefficiency (Hamilton and Whalley 1984; Pritchett 1988; 2006).

John Brolin

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## Wallerstein, Immanuel Maurice (1930–)

### Early life and academic influences

The child of German émigrés to the US, Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein was born in New York on 28 September 1930. Jews who had emigrated to Berlin from elsewhere in the Austro-Hungarian empire earlier in their lives, Wallerstein's mother and father relocated once more to New York as did other members of his extended family to parts far and wide amidst the changing political situation in inter-war Germany (Wallerstein et al. 2012: 10). His early youth was imbued with a sense of political consciousness grounded in the polyglot culture of his parents and issues of Jewish nationalism, the rise of fascism and Nazism, and the great split within the global left between the Second and Third Socialist Internationals over support for the First World War (Wallerstein 2000). As a boy, his personal development was also marked by a sense of moral commitment born of a background in the Jewish tradition, an identity as a first-generation American coming of age in New York City, and a brief career from the ages of ten to 15 as a stage actor (Wallerstein et al. 2012: 8, 12).

Wallerstein's formal academic development can be dated to a course taken in high school on Asia, which led to an early interest in newly independent India and its nationalist leaders. In the years that followed, his views matured as he developed a deeper concern for politics, world affairs, and the United Nations. Entering Columbia University in 1947, he earned his BA in 1951. After two years in the US army, Wallerstein went on to study for an MA at Columbia in 1954, working on a thesis about the political foundations of McCarthyism in the US, the generally positive reception of which work confirmed his self-identification as a 'political sociologist' (Wallerstein 2000: xvi). Remaining at Columbia for his PhD (awarded in 1959), Wallerstein re-oriented his intellectual focus (as well as solidarity work) toward Africa, writing a dissertation that compared the development of nationalist movements in Ghana and the Ivory Coast. At Columbia, Wallerstein's interests in European social theory, including the work of Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and the Frankfurt school also found fertile ground. By the early 1960s, the

great French-Creole Caribbean psychiatrist and supporter of Algerian liberation Frantz Fanon, whom Wallerstein came to know personally, had also become a key influence (Wallerstein et al. 2012: 5).

While Africa would remain Wallerstein's empirical focus during the first phase of his academic career until the early 1970s, it was also during this time that the ideas that would culminate in the first volume of *The Modern World-System*, on *Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (Wallerstein 1974a), began to take shape. Over the course of the next decade, he came into personal association with two other key influences. The first was the great French historian and leader of the Annales school of history, Fernand Braudel, whom Wallerstein first came to know in the early 1970s. Braudel's ideas about the historical contingency of time and space concepts and the need to understand historical change as unfolding over different time cycles (especially the so-called *longue durée*) were crucial foundations for what became Wallersteinian world-systems analysis. The second was the Belgian physicist and Nobel laureate Ilya Prigogine, whom Wallerstein first encountered in 1980. Prigogine's ideas about dissipative structures, indeterminacy, and irreversibility within complex systems have proved especially important to Wallerstein's thinking about the character of the modern world-system as a system and his related concerns about epistemology.

### The political economy of world-systems

In its capacity as an approach to political economy (and related issues in historical sociology), world-systems analysis starts from an insistence on 'historical social systems' or 'world-systems' rather than nation states as the unit of analysis. For Wallerstein, such systems are defined by their autonomy ('they function primarily in terms of the consequences of processes internal to them') as well as their boundedness in time and space, being held together by an 'integrated network of economic, political, and cultural processes' (Wallerstein 2001: 230). With respect to the question of boundaries, as in other approaches to political economy in the Wallersteinian view, it is the social division of labour from which the unity of a

historical social system commences. In the political economy of world-systems, however, the social division of labour comprises both an intra-societal class division as well as an inter-regional geographical division. As such, two main types of entities or social formations are defined in world-systems analysis: 'those with a single overarching political structure, the world-empires; and those without one, the world-economies'. World-empires are conceived largely on the model of tribute-siphoning military-bureaucratic hierocracies that extract surplus from within their contiguous territory, albeit in a graded pattern that leaves the peripheral hinterlands of the imperial domain the most intensively exploited. Within the political economy of world-systems, additional allowance is made for a third smaller-scale form as well, that of the mini-system, which is exemplified by entities of more limited geographical expanse and more finite temporal duration than either type of world historical social system (231). The mini-system is best exemplified by the society of the archetypical pastoralist or hunter-gatherer: subsistence-oriented economies that are thought of as being relatively homogenous and based on patterns of production and exchange that are supposed to be largely self-contained. In this tripartite distinction between mini-systems, world-empires, and world-economies, Wallersteinian political economy extrapolates and develops Karl Polanyi's distinction between reciprocal, redistributive, and market modes of exchange (Polanyi 1957: 58).

For the greatest part of history since the so-called Neolithic revolution, in the Wallersteinian view, it was the world-empire that remained the predominant form, proving capable of absorbing nearby world-economies. Together, these two varieties of world-systems are said to have comprised a large but countable number between 10,000 BC and AD 1500 (Wallerstein 2001: 231). Although more prevalent, world-empires are themselves said to have been constrained by the administrative costs of territorial expansion, which imposed relatively sharper limits – at least in principle – on their spatial and, therefore, temporal extent. Prior to 1500, Wallerstein contends that it was primarily in the void left by the disintegration of some previous world-empire – the larger instances of which persisted for as much as half a millennium – that new world-economies found space to develop, albeit

usually so as to have made for systems that proved even more transient and fragile than their imperial counterparts (231).

In Wallerstein's view, there occurred a historically unprecedented reversal in the balance between these two forms during the 15th century, and it is in explaining this transition that the political economy of world-systems becomes focused on the origins, growth, and persistence of the particular world-system known as the 'capitalist world-economy'. As a synonym for the modern world-system, the capitalist world-economy is understood to have progressively expanded to its full global extent in three major phases. These can be briefly summarised as follows. From approximately 1450–1650, the modern world-system emerged on the wings of capitalist agriculture and the inability of any particular political hegemon (especially the Habsburgs) to assert dominance over the system so as to domesticate it into a world-empire instead. This first phase of the modern world-system was inclusive of the beginnings of 'mercantilism' and the development of long-distance trade and early European expansion across the Atlantic. In this early period, the system came to be centred in north-western Europe (England, France, and Holland) while also including at its margins parts of the Americas and most of the rest of the European continent excluding the Russian and Ottoman Empires. In the period from 1750–1850, a second major expansion of the system took place, as the capitalist world-economy came to incorporate Russian and Ottoman territories as well as the South Asian subcontinent (with the decline of the Mughal Empire), parts of South-East Asia, large parts of West Africa and the rest of the Americas. During this second period, power within the system was consolidated inward, with an ongoing struggle taking place within the centre between France and Britain and a concurrent shift occurring from agricultural to industrial capitalism. The third and last expansion of the modern world-system took place in the half-century from 1850–1900, which witnessed East Asia, Oceania, and remaining parts of Africa and South-East Asia being brought into the system (Wallerstein 1999: 58). Of course, the precise details concerning the exact timing and coverage of the phases of expansion by which the modern world-system came to incorporate different parts of the globe are subject to disagreement. The above snapshot

captures only Wallerstein's own particularly influential point of view, as developed at greatest length in the first three volumes of *The Modern World-System* (Wallerstein 1974b; 1980; 1989a) and as yet to be developed in the still to be published fifth volume.

As should be apparent from the discussion to this point, exponents of the world-systems perspective proclaim a specifically historical approach to understanding the nature of capitalism. For Wallerstein, the commitment is summarised through the express equivalence that he has drawn between studying the development of the capitalist world-economy and studying 'historical capitalism' (Wallerstein 1995). In contrast to 'Marxist and others on the political left', according to Wallerstein, to study historical capitalism is to disavow a purely 'logico-deductive' analysis that starts 'from definitions of what capitalism' is 'thought to be in essence' in order to then see how it 'had developed in various places and times' (1). At the same time, the dynamic of expansion through the progressive incorporation of new areas into the capitalist world-economy is suggestive of the lasting influence on the political economy of world-systems of post-war dependency theory, as initially formulated by the German development economist Hans Singer and his neo-Marxian Argentine counterpart Raúl Prebisch at the end of the 1940s. From the outset, Wallerstein thus presumed that the modern world-system comprised a relation between one or several territorial centres constituting the 'core' of the capitalist world economy and their respective 'peripheries'. The overlap with Prebisch's terminology for describing post-war patterns of relation between the 'peripheral' economies of poor countries that were concentrated on the export of primary goods to the 'core' economies of the rich countries (that themselves created value-added secondary products to be sent back in the opposite direction) was not accidental.

Defined as it has been in essentially functional terms, however, the relationship between core and periphery has been subject to significant modification in the world-systems perspective as compared to dependency theory. Most obviously, there is the notable divergence by which core and periphery are made to constitute not two different types of national economy but two different parts of a single historical social system. More importantly, to the extent that the core-periphery

relation is coequal with a geographic division of labour, it was very quickly found necessary to supplement the conceptual vocabulary of world-systems analysis by introducing the category of the 'semi-periphery' to designate a third possible type of intra-systemic space. In so doing, world-systems thinkers both increased the explanatory power of their perspective and, at least to some observers, introduced a certain level of arbitrariness into it given the catch-all and/or bet-hedging quality of the notion of the 'semi-periphery' (Washbrook 1990: 482–485).

The emphasis on the intra-systemic geographic division of labour and the importance of trade in generating and fuelling the expansion of 'historical capitalism' that it portends have precipitated other criticisms as well, especially from those working in a more traditionally Marxian vein. Robert Brenner's early critique of Wallerstein on these points (as well as various other related ones, including the latter's implicit criterion for defining capitalism) is suggestive of the larger disagreements that remain at play. In stating his original critique, Brenner not surprisingly completed the re-enactment of the earlier and more celebrated Dobb-Sweezy debate within Marxian theory. (According to Brenner, Wallerstein, like Sweezy, is to be designated a 'neo-Smithian Marxist' who displays a basic 'failure to take into account the differential limitations and potentialities imposed by different class structures' internal to a national economy; like Smith they are said to neglect class and class struggle by instead equating 'capitalism with a trade-based division of labour' [1977: 38].)

Be this last criticism as it may, world-systems analysis does not shy away from the implication that capitalism historically turned upon a process of 'not only appropriation of the surplus-value by an owner from a laborer, but an appropriation of surplus of the whole world-economy by core areas' (Wallerstein 1974b: 401). The process of 'unequal exchange' is thus at the heart of the master division of space into core, semi-periphery, and periphery (and, in the time before the capitalist world-economy reached its global limit, the parts of the world that were 'external' to the system). This leads to a version of the above-stated summary of the system's historical expansion that can be recast in more generalised terms. States at the core of the system are politically and militarily strong,

specialising in production involving 'high skill levels' (ibid.) and capable of appropriating the lion's share of the system's surpluses. The result is the 'concentration of capital in core zones' and the further strengthening of their 'state machineries', thereby ensuring that the state machineries of the periphery become or stay weaker (Wallerstein 1995: 32). The latter eventuality further accords with the economic role of the peripheral states, which is defined by the fact that they are forced to specialise 'in tasks lower down the hierarchy of commodity chains' atop which the core states sit, such as through the production of raw materials. So is it that states at the periphery gravitate toward 'using lower-paid work-forces', in the process 'creating (reinforcing) the relevant household structures to permit such work-forces to survive' (32). True to their categorical designation, the states of the semi-periphery inhabit a 'third structural position' that intermediates between the other two (Wallerstein 1974b: 403). The semi-periphery carries out this intermediating function both through its middling role within the order of economic exploitation and as its ideological role as part of a 'middle stratum' to which the most exploited areas can aspire, thus preventing the build-up of revolutionary fervour from below (402, 405).

The overall dynamic that links core, semi-periphery, and periphery thus involves a series of political and economic watchwords. These include the processes of the endless accumulation of capital for its own sake; commodity chains that from the system's first growth phase have been geographically expansive; the crucially important role of income-pooling households for suppressing wage rates, especially in the periphery; the emergence of an inter-state order consisting of strong, weak, and intermediate states; and the major cleavages of ethnicity, race, nation, class, and gender that run through the 'geoculture' that comprises not so much the superstructure as the 'underside' of the system (Wallerstein 1991: 11–12; Wallerstein 2000: 207–289).

A final key watchword is the 'Kondratiev cycle', a concept that has been crucial for Wallerstein in charting the course of the modern world-system, whether during the earlier phases discussed above, the period starting in 1900 after it reached its full global extent, or the 'age of transition' we are said to have been living through in the wake of the Second World War (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1996). Comprising periods of global economic

expansion and contraction that are thought to take place at 45–60-year intervals, Kondratiev cycles bespeak an important long-wave dynamic according to which the modern world-system ebbs and flows. As such, they are (and since being postulated always have been) conceived as being distinct from the shorter-term fluctuations of the ordinary business cycle (9). At the same time, Kondratiev cycles also signify the debt of world-systems analysts to Marx's preoccupation with capitalism's tendency toward boom and bust crises and, mores proximally, to the loose attempt of their namesake – Soviet economist Nikolai Kondratiev – to restate Marxist crisis theory in formal terms during the 1920s. (It was Joseph Schumpeter, another important influence on Wallerstein, who first popularised Kondratiev's notion of 'long waves' and renamed them 'Kondratiev waves'.) In the political economy of world-systems, Kondratiev cycles are to be distinguished from the 'far longer' hegemonic cycles over the course of which predominant power holders within the modern world-system have tended to persist in controlling its core (9).

For many world-systems analysts – Wallerstein chief among them – the turn of the millennium is seen as finding world society on the downside of both a Kondratiev cycle, that started in 1945, and a hegemonic cycle that started in 1870 once Great Britain began to give way to the US and Germany as the key hegemon at the core of the system. By this view, each such cycle peaked during the late 1960s (9), not coincidentally in and around the time of what is seen to have been the 'world revolution' of 1968 (Wallerstein 1989b). Ultimately, therefore, Wallerstein has consistently maintained that the long moment of the present that has assembled around the transition to a new millennium is emblematic of a period characterised not by equilibrium but structural crisis. As such, the present comprises a state of a system (in this case a historical social system) whose secular trends – e.g. toward the commodification of everything – have pushed it too close to its asymptotes to continue 'its normal, regular, slow, upward push'. As a consequence, the structural position of the system now leaves it to 'fluctuate wildly and repeatedly'. In turn, the possibilities that this circumstance allows are said to be only twofold. Ongoing fluctuation will either lead to the 'recreat[on] of



order out of chaos or [to] a new stable system' (Wallerstein 2011). The vital normative commitments that undergird a perspective like Wallerstein's should make amply clear which way the future is hoped to lie for most adherents to the political economy of world-systems.

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## World-systems Analysis and Giovanni Arrighi

Giovanni Arrighi (1937–2009) was one of the world's leading theorists of world capitalism, imperialism, and anti-systemic movements. With Immanuel Wallerstein and Terence Hopkins, he played a major role in the development of world-systems analysis, with its fecund synthesis of Marxism, Third-World radicalism, and critical social science, from *Annales* to the German historical school. World-systems analysis focused on the emergence of the capitalist world-economy structured into a tripartite zonal hierarchy divided into: rich and powerful core states; poor and weak peripheral states; and states of intermediate power and wealth in the semi-peripheral zone. From his early work on Southern Africa, to his iconoclastic *Geometry of Imperialism: The Limits of Hobson's Paradigm* (1983), to his trilogy on capitalism and world hegemony seen over the *longue durée*, including his magisterial *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power and the Origins of Our Times* (1994), *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World-System* (1999, with Beverly Silver) and *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of a New Asian Age* (2007), and a series of pathbreaking essays (including 'Marxist Century, American Century: The Making and Remaking of the World Labour Movement' [1990], 'World Income Inequalities and the Future of Socialism' [1991], and a host of others), Arrighi established himself as one of the most original and brilliant thinkers of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Born in 1937 in Milan, Giovanni's political and scholarly interests were shaped by the common anti-fascist sentiments of his family, as during the Second World War northern Italy was occupied by the Nazis, followed by the development of the anti-fascist resistance and arrival of the Allies. Trained as a neo-classical economist and working at a host of different-sized business enterprises, Arrighi next took a teaching position in then Rhodesia. Here, in Africa, like many other world-system scholars, Arrighi developed his scholarly trajectory, mapping out the inequalities of the global system, following in the footsteps of Immanuel Wallerstein and Walter Rodney, both of whom he met in Africa, and their forerunners such as Oliver Cox, W.E.B. DuBois and C.L.R. James. During his time in Rhodesia, Arrighi met the African of Indian descent Bhasker Vashee, who later served as long-time director of the Transnational Institute, an international fellowship of committed scholar-activists, headed earlier by the legendary anti-imperialist activist Egbal Ahmad and Orlando Letelier, former adviser in Allende's socialist government in Chile and later murdered in a car bomb in Washington, D.C. by Pinochet's secret police. Arrighi and Vashee were in fact jailed together for their anti-colonial activities, with Giovanni deported after a week and Bhasker only released from solitary confinement after a year-long campaign. By 1966, Giovanni had gone on to Dar es Salaam, then home to many of Africa's national liberation movements, where he met Wallerstein, Rodney, John Saul and many others.

One of Arrighi's earliest essays, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A Study of the Proletarianization of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia', included in his *Essays on the Political Economy of Africa* (1973, with John Saul), helped make his career. The essay was a brilliant analysis of the dispossession of the African peasantry in the age of imperialism. Here, along with the work of Saul, Martin Legassick and others, Arrighi helped develop a distinctive South Africa paradigm analysing the contradictions of this process for capitalist development in the region. Subsequently, Arrighi returned to Italy to teach, helping to found Gruppo Gramsci, before moving on to the centre of world-systems analysis in the US, SUNY Binghamton, and then later to Johns Hopkins, where he taught until his death in 2009.

One of Arrighi's most important but neglected works is his *Geometry of Imperialism*. Among the problems Arrighi identified here was that the term had come to be applied to everything and anything, thus weakening its conceptual usefulness. Indeed, Arrighi relates how, during an important seminar at Oxford on the subject in 1969–70 (a turning point in the debate on imperialism, according to Michael Barrat Brown), he presented a paper on the question, noting that its characteristics after the Second World War were radically different to those analysed by Hobson and Lenin.

During the discussion, someone asked me whether I did not think that, by dint of filling 'old bottles' (the theory of imperialism) with 'new wine' (the novel content being lent to the theory) we would end up no longer knowing what was being discussed. (1983)

Lenin, in his work, noted that imperialism and colonialism were not synonymous with capitalism, going back as they did to Rome, and instead placed his emphasis on the central role of finance and/or monopoly capital. Moreover, Lenin specifically outlined the phenomenon of uneven development, which, he argued, following Hobson, was then leading to a global conflagration between imperialist states in the world capitalist system. This, argued Arrighi, was a quite accurate designation of the situation before the First and Second World Wars, but was largely irrelevant thereafter, as might have been expected from Lenin's own remarks on the subject. In applying the term 'imperialism' to quite different phenomena, it became what one analyst called 'A Tower of Babel'. In an analysis that was subsequently incorporated into his later work, Arrighi noted that Lenin tended to conflate two definitions of finance capital. The first was Hobson's, designating as it did a supranational entity with few if any links to productive activity; this resulted from class struggle, and led to income inequalities and the concomitant tendency towards underconsumption, his 'tap-root' of imperialism, as in England. The second definition was Hilferding's emphasis on the linkage between nations and their monopoly firms. These two designations more or less accurately captured the situation of England and Germany.

Hobson, first in his *The War in South Africa* (1900) and then later in *Imperialism* (1905),

used the term to designate the process whereby nationalism, at least among the Great Powers, became subject to a general tendency by states to expand beyond their own borders. This was to be distinguished from colonialism of earlier periods, whereby population transfers became the basis for the effective expansion of a nationality, or new nations, as in the Americas or Australia. In the era of imperialism, the process tended to generate nationalisms of their own, replete with exclusivism and xenophobia, as with South Africa's white Afrikaners. Hobson contrasted this, too, with variants of internationalism, informal orders of trade and investment based on peaceful exchange, which Arrighi refers to as 'Informal Empire' as opposed to formal territorial ones, based on economic inter-dependence in the former and replete with politico-military competition in the latter. Of course, as Arrighi outlined in his chapter on English imperialism, Britain combined both informal and formal territorial empires, with India the centre of the latter (hence the term 'Free Trade Imperialism') while the US tended towards Informal Empire based not on free trade but on free enterprise via the multinational corporation.

Clarified further here is Hobson's conception of finance capital, as speculative monetary flows going towards the great financial houses, or high finance, 'who use stocks and shares not so much as investments to yield them interest, but as material for speculation in the money market' (quoted in Arrighi 1983: 116). Hobson referred to these financial houses as the 'governor of the imperial engine', able to manipulate the life of nations. In Hobson's view, then, high finance presents two main characteristics. In the first place, it is:

a *supranational* entity laying outside the place defined by the expansion of a nation-state. Secondly, while not belonging to this plane, it nevertheless influences it in a critical manner. For in so far as it is a *speculative intermediary on the monetary market*, high finance tends to transform the excess liquidity present on the market into demand for new investment opportunities, that is, principally for state loans and territorial expansion. (Arrighi 1983: 117)

This contrasts, too, of course, to a substantial extent, with Polanyi's conception of financial capital in his *The Great Transformation*

(1957), as Arrighi points out. This goes back to a contradiction at the heart of high finance itself, needing the state for expansion and protection, but at times vulnerable to escalating inter-state competition, especially as this reversed the very tendency towards under-consumption to which it ostensibly owed its existence, presaging the triumph of commodity capital over money capital. Here, too, one can see the distinct types of supranational tendencies and variants of imperialism: the nation state and industrial and commodity capital, in Germany, contrasting sharply as it did with US hegemony and the supranational expansion of its multinational corporations, especially after the Second World War. In his afterword, Arrighi arrived at an understanding that his work had become perhaps more useful, less as an analysis of imperialism than as a preface to a theory of world hegemony, with each expressing 'a different type of supra/transnationality of capital', with differing trajectories. To be sure, Hobson often referred to related aspects of imperialism, notably the public subsidy of private profit that went with its territorial ambitions, something that has been underscored in the context of US power by Noam Chomsky and others. Yet Arrighi, by focusing on the specific historical situation that Hobson and Lenin were analysing, tried to focus in on the analysis and specific object of the debates on imperialism overall during this period, in contrast to the conditions obtained after the Second World War. So while those related phenomena as Hobson and others underscored undoubtedly continue, including of course the use of violence to achieve politico-economic objectives abroad, Arrighi underscored the extent to which, despite US counter-revolutionary policies worldwide, US hegemony was associated with formal decolonisation of the vast majority of the globe.

Arrighi's most ambitious work, *The Long Twentieth Century* (1994; 2010), is widely considered by many the most compelling single volume account of capitalism over the *longue durée*. Drawing on Marx, Gramsci, Polanyi, and Braudel, he argues that capitalism has unfolded over a series of long centuries, within which hegemonic powers led systemic cycles of accumulation presiding over material and then financial expansions of the capitalist world-system. Here, Systemic cycles of accumulation brought together a hegemonic bloc of business and governmental

organisations from the Italian city-states where capitalism emerged, wherein the capitalist city-state of Genoa allied with imperial Spain, the resulting transformation producing the successive three hegemonies of historical capitalism: the United Provinces, Britain, and the United States. What was distinctive here was the emergence of a capitalist logic of power, where the pursuit of money and profit was either more important than territory per se, or they cross-fertilised each other, as in the example of imperial Britain. As opposed to the ideology of the competitive free market, the basis for the book is Braudel's conceptualisation of capitalism as the top level of world trade and finance, closely in league with violence and state power, where the law of the jungle operates and the great predators roam, guided by the principle of monopoly, where the great profits of capitalism have always been made.

This analysis is in line with Arrighi's emphasis on the centrality of Schumpeterian innovations and concomitant rents and monopolies in profits and related competitive pressures which, as part of recurrent bouts of inter-state and inter-enterprise competition, shaped and moulded the capitalist world-system as it evolved to global scale and scope, divided as it is between relational zones of unequal power and wealth, into the core rich states, the poor peripheral zones, and an intermediate semi-peripheral zone of medium level wealth. While all world-systems analysts agree on the reproduction of inequality in the capitalist world-economy, however, there is less agreement as to its causality. Here, Arrighi has underscored the centrality of unilateral transfers of capital and labour, both forced and voluntary, from the African slave trade to white-settler colonialism and related investment from Britain and elsewhere, in the great leap forward in wealth and power of that geopolitical designation today known as the West, underscoring of course, here, the entwined processes of race, ethnicity, and class formation in the global system. Furthermore, as conceptualised here, the capitalist world-economy is based on the reproduction of oligarchic wealth, presupposing the exploitation, exclusion, and ecological appropriation and despoliation of the great majority of humanity and their natural resources as outlined for example in Alfred Crosby's (2004) *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900*. While

transformations in the structure are possible, as seen in the rise and fall of hegemonic and great powers, and rises or declines in wealth, underscored here is the structure of inequality. At the same time, as Arrighi argues, over time there have been substantial transformations in the social foundations of the three hegemonies of historical capitalism.

The publication of Adam Smith in Beijing: *Lineages of the Twenty-First Century* (2007) represented the culmination of what Arrighi called an unplanned trilogy on historical capitalism and the origins of our times, begun with *The Long Twentieth Century* (2010/1994) and continued with *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System* (1999). The central idea behind the book was twofold: first, to analyse the shift in the epicentre of the capitalist world-economy from North America to East Asia in the context of Adam Smith's theory of economic growth and development; and second, to interpret Smith's masterpiece *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) in light of this very shift.

The book begins, like the *Long Twentieth Century* before it, with quotations from Smith on the discovery of the Americas and Smith's emphasis on the 'superiority of force' in determining the outcomes of market exchanges, not unlike similar observations by Fernand Braudel's comments on Europe as that monstrous shaper of world history. Part I, 'Adam Smith and the New Asian Age', analyses what Kenneth Pomeranz refers to as the 'Great Divergence' between East and West, with the rise of Western Europe and its settler offshoots in the Americans, notably North America, and the decline of Chinese-led East Asia. Drawing on Smith and Kaoru Sugihara, Arrighi contrasts what, on the one hand, he calls a Smithian, natural-path, Chinese-led East Asia path of both extensive and industrious development, with pronounced investments in labour-intensive, labour-absorbing, energy-saving production and based on market exchanges; with, on the other hand, the unnatural capital and energy-intensive path, based on labour-saving technology and replete with an industrial revolution and a correspondingly close relationship between state and capital. Of course, this conceptualisation of the rise of Chinese-led East Asia as a market-based social system, rather than capitalist, is a subject of fierce controversy and debate, with many arguing against Arrighi for the capitalism-based nature of Chinese development in the world-system today.

The resurgence of Chinese-led East Asia today is seen as a result of a fusion between these two paths, though with a clear understanding that given the ecological limits inherent in Western processes of industrialisation, some more ecologically friendly form of development will be necessary if East Asia's continued rise is to open up a more sustainable path of development for the global system as a whole. What is particularly distinctive here in the Chinese-led East Asian model is not that there are no capitalists in these developments, but that they have no capacity to dictate to the state their own class interests as opposed to the general interest. In the Western capitalist path, in contrast, to varying degrees, as Marx and Engels noted, the power of the capitalist class turns the state into the executive committee for managing the common affairs of the bourgeoisie. Two critical aspects of the capitalist path of Western development were the inter-state competition for mobile capital that allowed capitalists to dictate to the states the conditions under which they would assist them to power, and the related arms race that created a virtuous circle for capitalist development in the West and a vicious circle for most of the non-Western victims of white-settler imperialism and colonialism across the globe.

Part II, 'Tracking Global Turbulence', examines Robert Brenner's varying accounts of the crisis of capitalist development beginning in the 1970s, but also compares the present downturn with that of the late 19th century, notably the Great Depression of 1873–96. Central to the analysis is the way in which the downturn of the late 19th century heralded the classic age of imperialism, as inter-enterprise competition turned into inter-state competition for overseas territories and markets, leading to the generalised conflagration that was the First and Second World Wars. As Brenner argues, in an analysis that was first laid out theoretically by Adam Smith, increased inter-capitalist competition played a central role in declining profits, in what Arrighi sees as a crisis of the over-accumulation of money or finance capital which cannot be profitably reinvested, going instead to varying degrees into state loans for overseas territorial expansion, or military spending.

A central difference, then, and one crucial to Arrighi's analysis of the contrast between late 19th- and early 20th-century imperialism

and similar phenomena today was the US reconstruction of the global capitalist market after the Second World War within the institutional framework of US global military alliances. In this formulation, the Cold War was about containing America's communist enemies and its capitalist allies, the latter as semi-sovereign states, as part of its informal empire. While appreciative of Brenner's analysis, Arrighi critiques it for underestimating the role of the US war in Indochina in the declining fortunes of US hegemony, being almost exclusively focused instead on US competition with Germany and Japan. This process of hegemonic decline continued with the new Cold War beginning in the late 1970s and 1980s, resulting in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the temporary efflorescence of US power in a unipolar one-superpower world. As in previous hegemonic cycles, the temporary reflation of the hegemonic power was simultaneous with a resurgence of its financial power in the global capital markets. This process was of course part and parcel of the financialisation of the US and global economy, with roots in the over-accumulation crisis and the move to floating exchange rates in the 1970s.

Here, the counter-revolution in monetary and development policy beginning with the rise of US interest rates in 1979 and the emergence of the Washington Consensus, ensured the reflation of world demand centred on the West, to the detriment of the Second and Third Worlds, which had borrowed money at variable interest rates for development in previous decades. This reversal also represented a massive abandonment of the New Deal tradition of subordinating private to public finance, showing too the ability of the capitalist class to dictate to all states the conditions under which it would assist to power, reflected here in the rise of the price of money, which facilitated an unprecedented wave of US indebtedness on the global capital markets. Simultaneous with the historic reversals in monetary policies were a host of inter-related bubbles and concomitant financial crises from Asia in 1997 to the global financial crisis and Great Recession of 2008.

Of course, it was also the Vietnam War and the related crisis of American capitalism and subsequent booms that allowed East Asia to move up the value-added hierarchy of the world-economy by simultaneous regional development and the selling of commodities

in the West. Moreover, this process was part and parcel of what Arrighi called his systemic cycles of accumulation and related hegemonic cycles. Here, hegemonic powers preside over material expansions of the world-economy, with pronounced investments in material production and trade. When competition increases and profits concomitantly decline, the over-accumulation of capital and increased inter-state competition provides the supply and demand conditions for a financial expansion of the world-economy, the emergence of new regional centres or hegemonic contenders, and a related increase in systemic chaos. In these various autumns of hegemonic cycles and long waves of capitalist development, there are increasing polarisations of wealth, power, and income in the global economy and various national locales, as expressed for example in the *belle époque* of the European bourgeoisie in the late 19th century and the US's successive gilded ages, including that of today. This tendency has been recognised most recently in Thomas Piketty's (2014) *Capital in the 21st Century*, where he notes the tendency towards oligarchy globally and most especially in the US, which he sees as representing the most unequal society in world history in terms of the relationship between work, income, and wealth inequality. And in fact, though Arrighi's work in this regard is often misunderstood, class struggle and the polarisation of the capitalist world-economy into core and peripheral locales, along with related inter-state competition for mobile capital, in fact play critical roles in his conceptualisation of systemic cycles of accumulation, hegemonic cycles and recurrent phases of material and financial expansions of the capitalist world-system.

In Part III, 'Hegemony Unravelling', Arrighi begins by analysing the resurgence of the debate on empire and imperialism following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks and the ascendance of those promoters of the Project for the New American Century in the Bush Administration, which led to the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in the Spring of 2003, whose disastrous legacy is still with us today with President Obama's announcement of a new endless war against ISIS. Underscored here, however, are the differences between what Arrighi sees as the US's bid for a truly world empire after 9/11 and previous instances of imperialism. Most significant, Arrighi argues, is the degree to

which the US invasion of Iraq has backfired, merely adding to the rise of Chinese-led East Asia in the global economy. In this light, the superbubble of American hegemony, as George Soros once dubbed it, appears to have been ephemeral indeed, despite the still great residual power of the US in the increasingly chaotic global system.

Arrighi reviews the literature on the new imperialism, including David Harvey's (2003) book of that exact title. Arrighi (2007: 11) notes that both Hobson and Harvey were quick to point out the variety of contradictory phenomena to which the term 'imperialism' has historically been applied, underscoring that: 'Its most general meaning is an extension or imposition of the power, authority or influence of a state over other states, or stateless communities'. By this definition, Arrighi notes, the phenomenon has been around for quite some time, assuming a variety of forms. But Harvey focuses in particular, as did Hobson, on the relationship between capitalism and imperialism, while Arrighi in turn underscores the space of flows, or capitalism seen as a succession of systemic cycles of capital accumulation, and the fusion between capitalism and the state, where world capitalism can be seen as part and parcel of the rise and decline of hegemonic powers, as outlined in his three hegemonies of historical capitalism. What is particularly interesting here is the link Arrighi establishes between the over-accumulation of capital and the production of space, drawing on Harvey's theory of the spatio-temporal fix of capital addressed early in his classic but sadly neglected *The Limits to Capital* (2007). This fix is linked to what Marx referred to as 'the annihilation of space through time', part and parcel of processes of capitalist globalisation, as capital seeks to overcome barriers to its reproduction by moving through time and space seeking to valorise.

The accumulation of capital, then, and related processes of imperialism, become linked to Schumpeterian processes of creative destruction, including what Henri Lefebvre (1992) called *The Production of Space*. There are many analogies here with Edward Soja's *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (2009). Here, creative destruction, including that of built environments, is part and parcel of the changing historical geography of capital accumulation, as landscapes are made and destroyed to facilitate the capitalist accumulation of capital,

including through war, if necessary. As Arrighi notes, Harvey's analysis was inspired by Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (as was Marx's), where the contradictions of bourgeois civil society within unequal nation-states and their combination of wealth and poverty (what Marx called the absolute, general law of capital accumulation) necessitated the turn towards overseas expansion through imperialism and colonialism, which in turn ensured that the general law would be part of capital accumulation on a global scale, including the core-periphery divide. This spatio-temporal fix sought by bourgeois society was also analysed to varying extents by Hannah Arendt (1973) in her *Origins of Totalitarianism*.

One of the key processes is the ongoing primitive accumulation of capital, including the dispossession of original producers from their means of production, or what Harvey and others have called accumulation through dispossession. Here, Arrighi points out the convergence and divergence between his and Harvey's analysis, looking at the connections between dispossession and the expanding reproduction of capital in hegemonic powers, and his own and Marx's, who noted that the varied staging points of capitalist development (Venice, Holland, Britain, and the US) are simultaneously representative of the transfer of wealth and money capital, which restart capitalist development, in containers of ever larger scale and scope. At this point, Arrighi points to an anomaly within current processes of the expanded reproduction of capital on a global scale, namely that instead of surplus capital going to the rising centre, China, it is the latter that is investing in the US.

This suggests a limit to the process, whereby, in Arrighi's reformulation of Marx's general formula of capital,  $M-C-M'$ , also represents a recurrent pattern of global capitalism, in its alternation between phases of material expansions of the world-economy ( $M-C$ ) and phases of financial expansions ( $C-M$ ) (or Marx's abbreviated general formula ( $M-M'$ ), representing what Arrighi calls systemic cycles of accumulation ( $M-C-M'$ ). These cycles have propelled capitalist development and related processes of imperialism forward in space and time through recurrent spatial fixes aimed at the broadening and deepening the increasingly global division of labour during material expansions of the capitalist world-system. When these expansions reach their limits and there is an over-accumulation

of capital relative to profitable outlets for investment, capital pulls out of trade and investment in material production and shifts towards investments in or betting on states, including through the buying-up of national debts until the system is remade under newer and broader social foundations under a rising hegemonic power. In previous cycles, then, overseas imperialism and related belles époques of the European bourgeoisie deepen the crises of capitalist development, including by the exacerbation of inter-state competition and inter-imperialist wars as part of struggles for world hegemony. Indeed, Arrighi (2007: 235) quotes approvingly Arendt's observation that imperialism ought to be thought of as 'the first stage in the political rule of the bourgeoisie rather than the last stage of capitalism'.

Arrighi moves on to chronicle Braudel's contention that the territorial size of the centre of accumulation in the global system necessitated growth to manage its ever-growing global spatial scale. Arrighi then takes the reader through a tour of capitalist imperialism from the Italian city-states, to the Dutch Republic, to the fusion of capitalism and imperialism in Britain, with a particular focus on the industrialisation of war. Thereafter, Arrighi, drawing on the work of Ludwig Dehio, shows how the rise of the US and the USSR transformed, to a larger extent, the previous European balance of power with the emergence of superpowers on both sides of Continental Europe. As Arrighi chronicles the declining returns that the US is garnering from its militarised and extroverted path of capitalist development, part of the West European legacy, he sets the stage, finally, for Part IV, 'Lineages of the New Asian Age'.

Here, Arrighi traces China's astonishing resurgence at the centre of the material expansion of the East Asian region, underscoring the unique aspect of East Asia's 500 years peace, predating and relative to that of the West's militarised inter-state system, with its only 100-year peace on the European continent from 1815 to 1914. What was unique here, in what Fernand Braudel once called the super world-economy of the Far East, was its market-based economy, and China's related tribute trade system, here distinguished from capitalism, the top layer of high trade and finance closely linked with state power. While capitalists existed throughout this system, unlike in the West, they did not control

the state. Of course, under the impact of the expanding Western inter-state system and capitalist world-economy, China and East Asia were eventually incorporated into the Western system as subordinate units.

Yet here, the achievements of the Chinese communist revolution, for all its violence and terror, made great gains, as Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen and others have shown, in the fields of health care, education, and eventually economic development. Along with the role of the overseas Chinese trading diaspora, not to mention China's almost unlimited supplies of labour, in sharp contrast to Africa, this enabled China to resume its former position at the head of the trade expansion in the region, not to mention its role as the world's industrial workshop. Underscored here are the market-based rather than capitalist aspects of this development, notably the process of accumulation without dispossession, including the role of township and village enterprises in the region, in sharp contrast to the processes of accumulation with dispossession that characterise the Africa of the labour reserves, especially in Southern Africa. In the latter region, drawing on the work of Gillian Hart and others, Arrighi notes that this legacy of white-settler colonialism and especially British imperialism impoverished the Southern African peasantry and working classes, eventually posing massive blockages to the continued accumulation of capital and contributing to the increasing peripheralisation of Africa in the global system.

While underscoring the social origins of China's ascent, Arrighi notes that unless China and the East Asian region are able to address the unsustainable aspects of capitalist development in the West and its impact on the global South, most especially ecological degradation, global impoverishment and global inequalities, then it is unlikely that a new path will be opened up for the remaking of the global system on new and enlarged social foundations, able to provide for greater democracy, equality and a new more sustainable relationship between humans, other species and nature and between human beings themselves. If, however, the positive traditions of the East Asian heritage can embrace new paths of development, more egalitarian and more sustainable, in conjunction with other forces in the global North and South looking for alternative socially just policies for a new global system, then Chinese-led

East Asia's resurgence may be seen in hindsight as providing for a true commonwealth of civilisations based on mutual equality and respect that was Adam Smith's hoped-for long-term outcome of world-market formation and bring many of those phenomena associated with imperialism to an end.

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# **THEMES AND CONCEPTS**

# Agriculture, Underdevelopment, and Imperialism

A view has gained currency of late that 'imperialism', in the sense of a 'world system of colonial oppression and financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of "advanced countries"' (Lenin 1977: 637), is no longer a useful category in the era of globalisation. The notion of imperialism, it is argued, has necessarily a 'spatial' dimension, captured for instance in Lenin's reference to 'a handful of advanced countries' in the above remark; but, with 'economic superpowers' now emerging from within the ranks of the Third World, that spatial dichotomy has ceased to be relevant, which makes the concept of imperialism itself irrelevant.

On the one hand the monopoly capitalists in the emerging Third-World countries have been integrated into international finance capital; and on the other hand the oppression and dispossession of the non-monopoly segments of the population, not just the workers, is not confined to Third-World peasants and craftsmen, but extends also to vast sections of the population in the advanced countries, who are pushed into penury for instance by financial crises. Hence the tendency is towards a homogenisation of the two segments of the globe, the advanced and the backward countries, which undermines the meaningfulness of the concept of imperialism.

The purpose of the present essay is to critique this view and establish the abiding relevance of the concept of imperialism. It argues that capitalism simply cannot exist as an isolated self-contained system; that it can do so only within a pre-capitalist setting, by exercising domination over its pre-capitalist surroundings (which no longer therefore retain their original pristine form); that this domination necessarily has a 'spatial' dimension, in the sense that whether or not capitalism in the metropolis also dominates its own internal pre-capitalist or small producers, it cannot do without dominating such producers located in a particular 'outlying' geographical region; and that no difference is made to this phenomenon of domination, and hence to the phenomenon of imperialism, by the fact that

capitalism and capitalists (including monopoly capitalists integrated with international finance capital) emerge powerfully within this region too.

I  
Modern industrial capitalism in Western Europe was associated from the very beginning with the processing of raw materials that were not produced, and indeed were not *producible*, in Western Europe itself. Cotton, whose processing into cloth pioneered the industrial revolution, was not producible in Britain, the pioneer industrial capitalist country. It had to be imported from the tropical and sub-tropical colonies. Likewise a variety of consumer goods, from fresh fruits to tea and coffee, which entered into the daily budgets of the bulk of the population in the capitalist metropolis, were simply not producible in the metropolis itself and had to be imported from distant tropical and subtropical lands, where again their cultivation had to be either introduced or augmented for meeting metropolitan needs. Indeed the economic historian Phyllis Deane (1980) sees the industrial revolution as following from, and being conditional upon, the development of a certain pattern of world-wide trade. This pattern however was *imposed* upon the rest of the world, especially upon the tropical and subtropical lands, characterised by pre-capitalist production, by the emerging metropolitan capitalism itself.

## Dependence of metropolitan capitalism

This dependence of metropolitan capitalism upon the pre-capitalist producers of the tropical and subtropical lands for supplying it with a range of raw materials and consumer goods has not changed to this day; indeed it cannot change, given the fact that these goods are simply not producible in the temperate regions where metropolitan capitalism is predominantly located.

This fact, however, is so thoroughly obscured by the extreme smallness of the weight of such primary commodities in the total gross value of output in the advanced capitalist countries that it is scarcely ever taken into account, even by radical authors. But this smallness is a result of the specific valuation process. Such valuation itself in other words expresses a relationship of

domination. It expresses the domination characterising the metropolis's relationship with the 'outlying regions': with its pre-capitalist and small producers, and also with its low-paid plantation workers, who produce the primary commodities needed in the metropolis. It is ironic that this fact of domination, which underlies the low value of these commodities, is sought to be denied on the basis of such low value itself (I emphasise the social basis of this valuation process in Patnaik 1997).

To borrow Harry Magdoff's argument (2000), one cannot make steel without using iron ore, no matter how much is paid for the latter. If iron ore is obtained *gratis* by snatching it from regions where it was earlier used, and hence its value has zero weight in the gross value of steel produced, then this fact, far from expressing the absence of domination, expresses rather the extreme severity of it. Relative value comparisons therefore are irrelevant to the argument about the absolute necessity of a whole range of products of the 'outlying regions' for metropolitan capitalism.

As accumulation occurs, the need for such products increases, for any given output-mix in metropolitan capitalism; and as the output-mix in the latter changes owing to product innovation, newer goods from the 'outlying regions' begin to be demanded (which also happens because of process innovation). Metropolitan capitalism must not only have these goods supplied from the 'outlying regions', but have them supplied at prices that do not increase at a rate which can threaten the value of money in metropolitan capitalism. It is not enough in other words that the 'outlying regions' should just be opened up for trade and made to supply these goods to the metropolis, which *per se* is just a once-for-all process. It has to be continuously ensured that their supply price does not rise to threaten the value of money, since any such threat can have a seriously destabilising effect upon the capitalist system, which is quintessentially a money-using system. (The threat to the value of money in the metropolis posed by increasing supply price of primary commodities is independent incidentally of the weight of their value in the gross value of metropolitan output.)

### Primary commodities, land, and investment

The fear of such an increase in the supply price of primary commodities (and hence in their terms of trade vis-à-vis manufactured

goods) haunted David Ricardo, who saw the accumulation process under capitalism grinding to a halt, and the arrival of a 'stationary state', as a consequence of it. What Ricardo had failed to appreciate, however (because, being a believer in Say's Law, he never saw money as a form in which wealth could be held under capitalism), is that long before the arrival of the stationary state, money as a form of holding wealth would have been subverted by the rising supply price of primary commodities, disrupting the functioning of the capitalist system. (I use the term 'money' throughout this essay to refer only to currency and bank deposits irrespective of whether 'money' in this sense has a commodity link.)

The danger of such disruption was recognised by John Maynard Keynes, who even paid an oblique tribute to Lenin while doing so. In his opus *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Keynes wrote (1919: 112): 'Lenin is said to have declared that the surest way of destroying the Capitalist System is to debauch the currency... Lenin was certainly right.'

And yet, in addition to the money prices of primary commodities produced in tropical and subtropical regions rising to 'debauch' the currencies of metropolitan capitalist countries, even the terms of trade between manufacturing and primary commodities have not moved secularly in favour of the latter as visualised by Ricardo. Indeed, on the contrary, barring war years, when in any case the capitalist state intervenes so heavily in the functioning of markets and in wealth-holders' choice of assets that the danger of a spontaneous subversion of the money-form loses all relevance, the secular movement of the terms of trade between primary commodities and manufacturing has been against the former.

This is not because the output of these commodities has increased in keeping with the requirements of the capitalist metropolis, and done so at decreasing unit costs, or at the very least non-increasing unit costs, for given money wages (or unit money incomes of producers). In other words, the decline in terms of trade for tropical primary commodities is not because Ricardo's prognostication of a limited land mass constraining the output increase of agricultural products has been proved wrong. On the contrary, not only has the tropical land mass that can sustain such production remained fixed in size, but land-augmenting technological progress and land-augmenting investment, like in irrigation

(which makes multiple cropping possible), has been quite conspicuous by its absence under the regime of metropolitan domination. In the entire history of the British Empire, for instance, there was hardly any significant investment in irrigation undertaken in any part of the empire, other than in the Canal Colonies of the Punjab (Bagchi 1982).

This is hardly surprising. Such land-augmenting investment and technological progress necessarily require a substantial spending effort by the state; but prior to the Keynesian revolution in economics the very idea of the state moving away from the tenets of 'sound finance' (i.e. of balancing the budget), let alone playing a proactive role in undertaking investment, was considered anathema. Even after Keynes had advanced the argument in the midst of the Great Depression that government expenditure financed by borrowing was not to be shunned, it took several years, indeed until after the Second World War, before significant public investment became acceptable as practical policy in the metropolis itself; in the colonies of course such acceptability had to await decolonisation.

The question therefore arises: since the size of the tropical land mass, on which alone can several of the commodities required by metropolitan capitalism be produced, is given, and since land-augmenting investment and technological progress in the tropics were conspicuous by their absence during the entire period before decolonisation, how was the rising requirement of metropolitan capitalism for such commodities met, even as the terms of trade moved adversely for them?

The simple answer to this question is that even though the output of tropical primary commodities as a whole did not increase, there was a compression of their use within the regions where they are produced, to make more of them available to the metropolis. The mechanism of such compression was, to borrow Utsa Patnaik's argument (1999: 354), an 'income deflation'. Income deflation, imposed on these 'outlying regions', made available to the metropolis the commodities that it needed. This happened either directly, through a shift of such commodities from local absorption to meeting the needs of the metropolis, or indirectly, through a shift of land use from crops whose absorption declined because of

income deflation to those which the metropolis needed.

What is true of commodities produced on the tropical land mass, which has a more or less fixed size, is also true more generally of exhaustible resources. They too will be generally subject to increasing supply price (for given money wages). This poses a threat to the value of money in the metropolis as accumulation increases the demand for such commodities. One way of warding off this threat, even as accumulation proceeds, is to impose an income deflation in the 'outlying regions' so that more of such commodities become available for metropolitan needs by squeezing their absorption outside the metropolis. Income deflation imposed on the 'outlying regions' in short is one of the means of ensuring that the value of money remains intact in the face of capital accumulation. *The imposition of such income deflation is a major characteristic of imperialism.*

### **Colonial extraction from pre-capitalist economies**

The two chief means through which income deflation was imposed in the colonial period were the system of colonial taxation, which led to a 'drain of surplus' from the colony to the metropolis, and the displacement of local crafts through competition from metropolitan capitalist products, which was called 'de-industrialisation' in Indian nationalist writings. How these two mechanisms worked can be clarified through a simple example.

Consider a pre-capitalist economy, where 100 peasants produce 200 units of food, of which they consume 100 and give the rest to the overlord as revenue. The overlord in turn supplies this to 100 artisans, who give in exchange 100 units of artisan products. The overlord, we assume for simplicity, consumes no food, and the peasants and artisans, who have identical value productivity, consume only food. Now, suppose the capitalist sector encroaches upon this economy, removes the overlord, imposes taxes worth 100 upon the peasants, and takes the proceeds for its own use.

For accounting purposes it can show its imports of 100 as being balanced by an export of 'administrative services' to the pre-capitalist sector, that is, as payment for ruling the latter; and this would also figure as an expenditure item in the government budget in the pre-capitalist economy. Both

the government budget and the trade account will then actually *appear to be balanced*, while in fact the capitalist sector is appropriating the surplus from the pre-capitalist sector. The consequence will be the displacement of the artisans, who would now be unemployed, and the use of the *roo* food, which they were consuming earlier, by the capitalist sector. The latter in this way has got its requirement of food (or other raw materials for the production of which the land earlier devoted to food production can now be used), without there being additional output in the pre-capitalist sector, and hence any scope for the phenomenon of 'increasing supply price' to manifest itself and threaten the role of money.

The second mechanism, 'de-industrialisation', operates as follows. In the above example, even if there are no taxes, that is, the overlords are not replaced and continue to obtain the same income as they were doing before, but are induced to consume imported goods from the capitalist sector in lieu of domestic artisan products, even then while trade will be actually balanced, with *roo* of food being exported against *roo* of imported manufactured goods from the capitalist sector, domestic employment (of artisans) will have fallen by *roo*, and so will domestic output by *roo*. In other words, even with balanced trade (i.e. no appropriation of surplus from the pre-capitalist sector by the capitalist sector), the pre-capitalist sector's industrial sector will have shrunk by *roo* (whence the term 'de-industrialisation'). This will have entailed an income deflation in the pre-capitalist sector, and the export of primary commodities to the capitalist sector (in this example food, but in actual fact all sorts of products which the tropical land mass devoted to food production can otherwise produce). The two forms of income deflation we have discussed so far are additive in their effects.

## II

A hallmark of income deflation is that even as it restricts demand in the 'outlying regions' for the commodities produced there, it *ipso facto* also restricts their production, not just of the commodities it does not require (in the above example, artisan products) but even of commodities it does take away (in the above example, food). Land-augmenting investment and technological progress, the scope for which is, as we have seen, in any

case limited in the regime of 'sound finance', even becomes unnecessary, as the capitalist metropolis can meet its requirements of such commodities through income deflation. And since such income deflation squeezes the peasantry and petty producers in the Third World (the squeeze on the petty producers in turn increasing the demand for land for leasing in, and hence the magnitude of land rents, to the detriment of the peasants), whatever incentive there may have been for such producers for raising output is snuffed out. The result is absolute impoverishment of the Third-World population, uneven development between the two segments of the world economy, and stagnation or even decline of output in the Third World, all of which were visible during the colonial period.

The Third-World states that came up after decolonisation not only broke with this pattern of income deflation, but even undertook land-augmenting investment and technological progress, and a number of measures supporting the peasants and petty producers, in their respective economies, all of which broke with the stagnation in their traditional sectors. While this meant that the requirements of metropolitan capitalism could be met through a rise in the output of these commodities, which did not even necessarily entail increasing supply price (at given money wages) because of the land-augmenting investment and technological progress being undertaken by the post-colonial Third-World states, the absence of income deflation *left open the scope for a rise in commodity prices and hence an undermining of the value of money in the metropolis*. This is exactly what happened at the beginning of the 1970s when world commodity prices rose sharply.

This increase is often interpreted incorrectly. The interpretation goes as follows: the persistent US current account deficit, on account *inter alia* of its maintaining a string of military bases all around the globe, meant, under the Bretton Woods system where the US dollar was ordained to be 'as good as gold', that other countries were forced to hold on to the dollars pouring out of the US. This outpouring became a torrent during the Vietnam War, and France under President De Gaulle became unwilling to hold dollars any more. It demanded gold instead, which forced the suspension of the dollar-gold link and the subsequent collapse of the Bretton Woods system. This collapse created panic

among speculators who, suddenly denied a secure monetary form of holding wealth, moved to commodities, causing the world-wide commodity price explosion. This interpretation in short sees the price explosion only as a temporary panic reaction.

A more plausible explanation however is as follows. In the context of the generally high levels of aggregate demand maintained through state intervention in metropolitan capitalist economies, including above all through high US military spending, escalating expenditure on the Vietnam War gave rise to a state of excess demand, especially for primary commodities; since the scope for imposing income deflation on the 'outlying regions' did not exist as in colonial times, this pushed up their prices, which the speculative factors underscored by the first interpretation further aggravated. The commodity price explosion in short was the inevitable denouement that capitalism, enfeebled by decolonisation which robbed it of its traditional weapon of income deflation against Third-World producers, faced in the post-war period. Post-war capitalism, though it kept up its level of aggregate demand through Keynesian demand management, did not have any means of keeping down raw material prices in the face of growing demands for such raw materials arising from accumulation, and hence warding off threats to the value of money. This fact was exposed in the early 1970s.

France's move to gold instead of US dollars then becomes explicable not as an act of intransigence on the part of President de Gaulle but simply as an expression of the 'debauching of the currency' that Keynes had talked about. And the weakness of the Bretton Woods system, in comparison with the Gold Standard, is then seen to consist in the fact that the latter was based on a colonial system which made possible the imposition of income deflation on the 'outlying regions', while the former was crippled by the fact of decolonisation, and hence a loosening of the bonds of imperialism.

The experience of the early 1970s incidentally clarifies an important point. Strictly speaking, wealth-holders would shift from holding money to holding commodities as wealth-form only when the expected price appreciation of commodities exceeds the sum of the carrying cost and the risk-premium on commodities. (The risk arises because nobody can be certain about the degree of

price appreciation, and because commodities are illiquid compared with money.) But a general belief among wealth-holders which has persisted for millennia is that the price of gold will never fall permanently compared with commodity prices, while currencies can be permanently devalued in terms of commodities. And gold itself has a relatively small carrying cost. Hence if wealth-holders expect a permanent rise in the money price of commodities (as they would in conditions of increasing supply price, with given money wages), then they will shift from money to gold. And an increase in the money price of gold because of such a shift would further strengthen expectations about a rise in commodity prices in general.

It follows that if there are some people who are either cavalier about risk-taking or have absolutely certain expectations that commodity prices are going to appreciate, then they will trigger an inflation whose very persistence will make others less scared of the risk of holding commodities or gold, and hence more willing to desert money as a wealth-form. Since such people will generally exist, one can say that metropolitan capitalist economies are always haunted by the fear of a 'debauchment' of currency; and the larger the edifice of money-denoted financial assets they have built up, the greater this fear is (which is why 'inflation-targeting' becomes an obsession in the current era of financialisation).

### **Money and the US dollar**

The undermining of the value of money which arises from developments in commodity markets expresses itself as a shift from money to gold. The fact that historically there have been very few episodes of currencies being destabilised because people actually hold vast amounts of commodities is therefore not surprising. First of all, any shift to commodities is countered by appropriate income deflation so that inflation and any associated shift to commodities are not actually allowed to persist. Secondly, the shift to commodities expresses itself as a shift to gold. Episodes of shifting from currencies to gold are plentiful, and the early 1970 provide one example; a good deal of Marx's writing on money is in fact concerned with such shifts.

The 'debauchment' of the US dollar, the leading currency of the capitalist world, in the early 1970s gave rise to a drive to re-establish an international regime akin to what prevailed

in colonial times, which would re-open the scope for income deflation, and this brought forth the regime of globalisation under which we live today. Globalisation in other words represents a rolling back of the post-colonial situation where the peasants and petty producers of the 'outlying regions' obtained some reprieve from income deflation.

To say this is not to suggest some 'conspiracy theory'. Capitalism being a spontaneous system as opposed to a planned one, the ushering in of globalisation, and with it of an income-deflationary regime, was not some calculated measure. It arose through the functioning of the system itself: the inflationary episode of the early 1970s gave rise to a recession during which commodity prices, other than that of oil (which increased because of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), came down. But the recession contributed to the process of globalisation of finance (and the coming into being of an entity that has, appropriately, been called 'international finance capital'), which was under way in any case during the period of Keynesian demand management. International finance capital is the key entity behind the contemporary phenomenon of globalisation (Patnaik 2010).

It follows from this that the view that imperialism as a phenomenon persisted only before globalisation came into being, and has lost its relevance under globalisation, is the very opposite of the truth. In fact post-war decolonisation meant some loosening of imperialism, and the contemporary globalisation has actually strengthened its hold.

### III

How little this fact is understood can be illustrated with reference to an argument advanced by no less distinguished an economist than Paul Krugman. Krugman, who is a regular columnist of *The New York Times*, had argued in his column of 21 April 2008 that the state of excess demand in the markets of primary commodities in the early 1970s was overcome through supply adjustment, such as new oil-strikes in the North Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, and the entry of new land into cultivation. This however is not correct.

The resource crisis of 1972–75 was hardly overcome through supply adjustment. In the case of the most vital primary commodity, namely food grains, it was overcome not through any appreciable stepping up of

supplies, but through a severe compression of demand, and the latter happened through a fresh round of income deflation imposed over much of the world. The regime of 'globalisation' *inter alia* was a means of enforcing such an income deflation.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the total world cereal output in the triennium 1979–81 was around 1573 million tonnes for a population (for the middle year of the triennium, 1980) of 4435 million. For the triennium 1999–2001 the cereal output increased to around 2084 million tonnes for a population (for the middle year of the triennium, 2000) of 6071 million. This represents a decline in world per capita cereal output from 355 kg in 1980 to 343 kg in 2000 (FAO 2015). Given the fact that during this period per capita income in the world increased significantly, and given the fact that the income elasticity of demand for cereals (consumed both directly and indirectly via processed food and animal feed) is markedly positive (even if less than one), a stagnant or declining per capita cereal output should have spelled massive shortages, leading to a severe inflation in cereal prices. Such an inflation, since it would have occurred in a situation where the money wage rates in the manufacturing sectors around the world, to which manufactured goods' prices are linked, were not increasing *pari passu* with cereal prices, would have meant a shift in the terms of trade between cereals and manufactured goods in favour of the former.

### Third World, globalisation, and finance capitalism

But this did not happen. On the contrary, cereal prices fell in relation to manufactured goods prices by as much as 46 per cent over these two decades (Chakraborty 2011)! This suggests that the decline in per capita cereal output, in a situation of rising world per capita income, did not generate any specific inflationary pressures on cereal prices. The reason for this was the income deflation imposed over much of the world. It is this, rather than any supply increase, as Krugman (2008) suggests, that explains the absence of any specific trend-inflationary pressures in cereal prices (i.e. ignoring fluctuations) until recently. And this income deflation was imposed over much of the Third World via the phenomenon of globalisation.

There are at least three processes through which income deflation occurs over much of



the Third World in the era of globalisation (Patnaik 2008). The first is the relative reduction in the scale of government expenditure. Because economies caught in the vortex of globalised finance can be easily destabilised through sudden flights of finance capital, retaining the 'confidence of the investors' becomes a matter of paramount importance for every economy, for which their respective states have to show absolute respect to the caprices of globalised finance.

Finance capital in all its incarnations has always been opposed to an interventionist state (except when the interventionism is exclusively in its own favour). An essential element of this opposition has been its preference for 'sound finance' (i.e. for states always balancing their budgets, or at the most having a small pre-specified fiscal deficit as a proportion of the gross domestic product, or GDP). The argument advanced in favour of this preference has always been vacuous, and was pilloried by Professor Joan Robinson of Cambridge as the 'humbug of finance' (Robinson 1962). The preference nonetheless has always been there, and has become binding in the era of globalised finance, when states willy-nilly are forced to enact 'fiscal responsibility' legislation that limits the size of the fiscal deficit in relation to GDP. At the same time, this move towards 'sound finance' is accompanied by a reduction in the tax-GDP ratio, owing to tariff reduction and to steps taken by states competing against one another to entice multinational capital to set up production plants in their respective countries.

The net result of both these measures is a restriction on the size of government expenditure, especially welfare expenditure, transfer payments to the poor, public investment expenditure, and development expenditure in rural areas. Since these items of expenditure put purchasing power in the hands of the people, especially in rural areas, the impact of their curtailment, exaggerated by the multiplier effects which are also to a significant extent felt in the local (rural) economy, is to curtail employment and impose an income deflation on the rural working population.

The second process is the destruction of domestic productive activities under the impact of global competition, from which they cannot be protected as they used to be in the dirigiste period, because of trade liberalisation, which is an essential component of the neo-liberal policies accompanying

globalisation. The extent of such destruction is magnified to the extent that the country becomes a favourite destination for finance, and the inflow of speculative capital pushes up the exchange rate.

Even when there is no upward movement of the exchange rate and not even any destruction of domestic activity through the inflow of imports, the desire on the part of the getting-rich-quick elite for metropolitan goods and lifestyles, which are necessarily less employment-intensive than the locally available traditional goods catering to traditional lifestyles, results in the domestic production of the former at the expense of the latter, and hence to a process of internal 'de-industrialisation' which entails a net-unemployment-engendering structural change. This too acts as a measure of income deflation.

The third process through which income deflation is effected is a secular shift in income distribution against the *producers of primary commodities* because of the increasing hold of a few giant corporations in the *marketing of those commodities*. This has the effect of curtailing the consumption demand of the lower-rung petty producers owing to the income shift towards the higher-rung marketing multinational corporations. Globalisation thus unleashes income deflation, which curbs excess demand pressures and keeps commodity prices in check, and hence the value of money intact, exactly as happened in the colonial period.

#### IV

The preservation of the value of money in the metropolis however requires something more in addition to income deflation in the 'outlying regions' which ensures the availability of supplies to the former without an increase in supply price of commodities at given money wages (or money incomes of producers) in the latter. This additional requirement is that the *money wage itself should not go up in the 'outlying regions'*. In other words, apart from reduced absorption of commodities in the 'outlying regions' it also requires that the wage-unit in the latter should remain stable. And this is ensured by the existence there of substantial labour reserves.

#### The reserve army in the periphery

The fact that capitalism requires a reserve army of labour was emphasised by Marx. This is both to keep the level of real wages

restricted for any given level of productivity, so that the rate of surplus value remains positive at all times, and also to instil work-discipline among the workers by threatening them with the 'sack'. The role that custom backed by force plays under feudalism in enforcing work-discipline is played under capitalism by the threat of dismissal and hence unemployment. And this threat remains real precisely because unemployment remains a real phenomenon.

But in addition to the reasons mentioned by Marx there is a further overriding need for labour reserves, which arises from the system's need to have a group of 'price-takers' who supply it with essential inputs but who cannot enforce money wage claims (or money income claims) even to maintain their *ex ante* income share. There is in other words the need for labour reserves for maintaining the value of money itself, and these labour reserves have to be quite substantial, so substantial that the workers located in their midst cannot even maintain their real wages in the face of a rise in prices, let alone push for an autonomous rise in their money wages (this argument is discussed at greater length in Patnaik 1997). The maintenance of such labour reserves has typically been in the 'outlying regions', where they surround petty producers producing for the metropolis (who therefore are forced to act as 'price-takers') and have been created and preserved by metropolitan capital.

The domination by metropolitan capital of its surroundings where petty producers are located and are drawn into producing for the capitalist metropolis, and where a substantial reserve army is maintained and income deflation is imposed to preserve the value of money and the entire edifice of finance erected upon it, is thus essential for its very existence. To what extent this domination, which is the essence of imperialism, is adequate to serve its requirements in the present era is a separate problem; indeed it is possible to argue alongside Rosa Luxemburg (though for reasons different from those that she cited) that with the development of capitalism it becomes increasingly difficult for such domination to act successfully as a stabilising factor for the system (Luxemburg 1963), but that is not the same as saying that the system ceases to have any need for such domination. Imperialism is as necessary today as it ever was; indeed, if anything, it is even more necessary today than ever before, because the

edifice of finance that capitalism has today is far larger than anything it has ever had. Once this fact is accepted, then profound implications follow from it for the nature, strategy, and tactics of the revolutionary struggle that has to be engaged in for transcending this system.

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## Colonialism and Jeremy Bentham

If the writings on colonialism and imperialism of the great utilitarian thinker Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) have not received the attention they deserve, this is largely the author's own fault since he left many of his most important essays on the subject unpublished in his lifetime. His ideas were often transmitted by his disciple James Mill, but usually without the subtlety and analytic penetration that can be found in the original manuscripts.

Bentham's early essays on colonialism were written against the background of the American and French Revolutions and then the Napoleonic Wars. Initially conservative in his political views, he became increasingly radicalised over time. He always believed that capitalism was fundamentally a benign and progressive system that ministered to 'the greatest good of the greatest number', but in the 1780s he came to the conclusion that the 'Old Colonial System' of tariffs, bounties, and monopoly chartered companies like the East India Company was damaging to economic development and benefited the elite 'Few' at the expense of the 'Many'. Later, he became concerned at the effects of the huge state expenditures of the French wars, and the power it gave elites to reinforce the thicket of patronage, privilege, and monopoly that British governments presided over. He feared that this web of elite power, known to hostile contemporaries as 'Old Corruption', was a threat to Britain's liberal constitution. and he then analysed colonialism in that context.

In his earlier writings Bentham could point to the fact that trade with the US increased rapidly after the Revolution as proof that colonialism, which he saw as the major cause of war and all the destruction that brought with it, was not necessary to economic success abroad. But (under the influence of Josiah Tucker, James Anderson, and Adam Smith), he began to emphasise the importance of domestic growth and to move away from the traditional assumption of what Smith called the 'mercantile' system that the domestic economy was perennially stagnant and growth was only possible through international trade reinforced by colonialism. Ignoring Smith's recognition of the importance of foreign trade in furthering division of

labour, he concentrated on the latter's dictum that industry and trade were limited by the extent of the nation's capital resources. He then hammered home the point that attempts to increase foreign trade artificially would misallocate resources by diverting them from their natural employments. In 1793, when trying to persuade the French to follow up their revolution by abandoning colonialism, he wrote:

TRADE IS THE CHILD OF CAPITAL ... while you have no more capital employed in trade than you have, all the power on earth cannot give you more trade: while you have the capital you have, all the power on earth cannot prevent you from having the trade you have ... If article after article you were driven out of foreign trade, the worst that could happen to you would be the being reduced to lay out so much more than otherwise you would have laid out in the improvement of your lands. ('Emancipate Your Colonies!' 1793, in Schofield et al. 2002: 411–412)

Like Smith, Bentham believed that agriculture was fundamentally the most productive industry. If foreign trade disappeared entirely this would simply mean that capital would be diverted into agriculture and that, according to Bentham in the 1790s, had an almost unlimited capacity for expansion. Full employment could be taken for granted. 'Provisions, the produce of agriculture, constantly and necessarily produce a market for themselves by encouraging marriage and population increase and it is impossible that you can have too much agriculture.' Hence his conclusion that 'the loss of the colonies, if the loss of the colony trade were the consequence of the loss of colonies would be so much gain to agriculture' ('Colonies and Navy' 1790?, in Stark 1952–54: vol. 1, 216–218).

In the 1790s then, Bentham went much further than Smith in his belief in the marginality of foreign trade, the uselessness of overseas possessions, and the potential self-sufficiency of the domestic economy. At the turn of the century he repeated his views but with some reservations that rather undermined his position. Foreign and colonial trade, he now admitted, increased the variety of commodities in Britain and allowed 'the making of tea, coffee and chocolate breakfasts instead of the meat and ale that

contented Queen Elizabeth'. He also conceded that founding a colony increased the wealth of the world though he still insisted that the mother country had the expense of founding it without getting any major benefits. The most significant concession, no doubt made with Malthus's *Essay on Population* (first published in 1798) in mind, was his admission that 'taking futurity into the scale', colonies could help to drain off the population surplus that threatened 'a great diminution of relative opulence' within a century. ('Methods and Leading Features of an Institute of Political Economy (including Finance) Considered not as a Science but as an Art' 1801–04, in Stark 1952–54: vol. 3, 353–355). Bentham seems to have stayed with this new view of the benefits of colonialism: his support late in life for Edward Gibbon Wakefield's plan to settle the white colonies, based on the assumption that this would relieve distress in the mother country and promote growth, strongly suggest that. It is worth noting, however, that Bentham always insisted that white-settled colonies like Australia should be as self-governing as possible. He also believed that if India benefited from exposure to British rule, then the government should largely be run by the locals.

His opinions on colonial governance were linked to his arguments about limiting the benefits that elites could gain from extending patronage by governing overseas territories. For, despite changing his opinions about the value of British colonies in future, Bentham remained concerned with the negative effects the protective system could have on growth and, in particular, on the distribution of the benefits derived from possessing colonies. He examined these problems in detail in the early 1820s when advising Spanish liberals on how to prevent the imperial patronage in the hands of the monarchy from corrupting their fragile new liberal institutions and, in doing so, produced some of his most acute insights into the effects of colonialism. On the distribution of economic benefits, he reasoned that even if the amount gained by the elites was equal in monetary terms to that lost by the majority, the utility surrendered by the many, who were poor, was less than that gained by the already rich. But usually the monetary amount gained by the rich was less than that lost by the majority because the former gained by distorting the economy in ways that slowed

its growth and thus disadvantaged the whole nation ('Emancipation Spanish' 1821, in Schofield 1995: 226–227).

Apart from the military services, Bentham characterised the main winners from colonialism as a small but tightly organised web of interests centred on politicians and civil servants whose own position depended on empire. They controlled patronage and colonial business opportunities, and thus earned the loyalty of those who were dependent on favours or trade restrictions, or who hoped to gain from them in future ('Rid Yourself of Ultramarina' 1820, in Schofield 1995: 31ff.). These interests could control how information was presented to the public and play on the latter's ignorance and traditional deference to authority.

Bentham took this analysis further in a pamphlet of 1820 (which, unlike his other 'Spanish' writings, was published at the time) where he anticipated the modern analysis of rent-seeking behaviour by governments and monopolists and Olson's argument about the importance of distributional coalitions in arresting or stimulating economic growth, an argument that is implicit in most subsequent radical critiques though never again expressed with anything like the clarity or logical force that Bentham supplied (see Olson 1982).

The few who stood to gain from colonialism were, he argued, 'a compact, harmonising body; a chain of iron'. By contrast, the many who stood to lose were 'on every occasion an unorganised, uncombined body; a rope of sand'. The gains made by the ruling few were large in relation to their small numbers, while for any individual in the majority the losses were often 'too small to afford inducement to apply his exertions to the support of his trifling share in the common interest'. And even when the inducements to protest were large, the huge numbers involved and the fact that they were scattered across the nation usually meant that the organisation of the 'universal interest' was poor and action inevitably limited. Hence it was that '[t]he concentration of immense capital in single hands, great facilities for combination, and sometimes a union of both', furnishes 'a power of evil which is too commonly allowed to immolate the general good'. In addition, interest groups often succeeded by skilful use of propaganda and their ability to ensure that

the downside of what they proposed was not discussed. Hence there had grown up a mass of regulation and restriction that supported an interlocking set of vested interests so complex that, as 'custom covers it with its mantle' and 'habit gives it a fixed authority', so 'error and folly become immovable and immortal' ('Observations on the Restrictive and Prohibitory Commercial System' 1820, in Schofield 1995: 370–373, 375, 378).

In other discussions of who might gain and who lose from colonialism and war, Bentham's later analysis in essays which remained unpublished until the 1990s was also deeper and more acute than any of his radical successors; and his advice, though intended initially for Spanish liberals, applied equally well to any limited monarchy, Britain's included. Impressed by the tenacity with which the privileged pursued their self interest ('Rid Yourself of Ultramarina' 1820, in Schofield 1995: 135–137), and as his fear of 'Old Corruption' grew, his chief worry was that war and colonialism would increase the power of the monarchies and that they could use it to corrupt and disable the liberal assemblies that acted as a check on the latter. In unfolding his argument, Bentham sometimes looked at profit in its normal sense as monetary gain: but he also defined it, 'considered in its largest sense and taken in all its shapes' ('Emancipation Spanish' 1820, in Schofield 1995: 228), as anything that increased the power of the monarchy relative to the liberal element in government and thus tended to undermine the authority of the latter. Considering profit in this wider sense, Bentham argued that colonialism and the wars it generated offered a large number of benefits to elites that not only enhanced their incomes and their power, but simultaneously increased the delights that power brought with it. Much of that power, and the satisfaction it generated, came from the growth in patronage and the selling of offices that gains from colonialism allowed, all of which increased the monarchy's ability to attract persons to its side rather than the assembly's. But that ability to exercise patronage was also satisfying because of the psychological benefits that flowed from the flattery they induced; from the sense of well-being that came from having power over others; from the ability to promote persons to offices for personal reasons rather than to reward aptitude; and also from the openings that power gave to take vengeance on enemies or to block the progress of rivals. Power could

also be measured in terms of ease with which well-paid jobs could be done and the immunity that office sometimes conferred on those guilty of wrongdoing.

Bentham was also acutely aware of the fact that power brought prestige and that prestige, once achieved, attached itself to persons long after power was actually exercised. New sources of income and power gained via colonial wars and exploitation also provided new excuses for conferring what he called 'factitious dignity' through the award of titles and other honours which increased the esteem of successful elite members in the eyes of the public. Bentham argued that such honours were unnecessary: the Duke of Wellington would have acted as he did simply to preserve his own life. But he was forced to accept the popularity of these 'instruments of corruption' because 'So mighty is the force of these delusions of which titles and ceremonies are the efficient instruments, that hitherto the human reason has not anywhere been able to resist it' (Bentham 1820: 244).

As such, factitious dignity was a key part of a policy through which empire, and fighting to keep or extend empire, became a means for 'the sacrifice of the universal interest of the subject many to the particular interest of the ruling few' and threatened the destruction of the liberal elements of any governing structure.

The ruling elite's command of propaganda also helped their cause, as in their insistence that tariffs were necessary to prevent foreigners from harming the nation: 'and thereupon comes the parade of patriotism displayed, at a cheap rate, – at the expense of only a few pompous words'. Whereas in the 1790s Bentham had been willing to accept that government policy reflected 'the sincerity of honest delusion', by the 1820s he had concluded that it was driven by 'the perversity of corrupt intention' ('Observations on the Restrictive and Prohibitory Commercial System' 1820, in Schofield 1995: 367, 373–374). He became convinced that governments deliberately played upon the public's thoughtless nationalism and he bewailed the ignorance of the masses of their own interest. He did not entirely lose hope that a corrupt system might reform itself. For example, the cost of defending colonies might so increase taxation as to lead to serious unrest that could force the abandonment of empire. By the 1820s, however, he was sure that the best way to combat the Few and to give the Many a voice was a

democratic voting system that would ensure the victory of the 'universal interest' over the 'sinister' ones that were dominant in his time.

Bentham's early writings on colonialism are of considerable interest in their own right though they lack the subtlety of Adam Smith's work. Where Bentham really came into his own was in the 1820s when he was reinvestigating the effects of colonialism in the context of Old Corruption. At this point, both his analysis of the economic gains and losses from colonies, and his discussion of the social, psychological, and cultural benefits of having them, reached a level of acuteness unsurpassed by British critics of empire thereafter. His influence in his own time was limited by lack of publication, despite James Mill's attempts to popularise some of his basic ideas: but there is no doubt that his work has a great deal to offer historians of empire today.

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## Ecological Imperialism and the 21st-century Scramble for African Resources

At the beginning of the 21st century, the earth faces environmental crises of global proportions. Climate change, devastating loss of biodiversity, land degradation, and collapse of oceanic stocks demonstrate the extent of unsustainable human activity on an increasingly strained earth. It is also becoming clear that the benefits from such exploitation of the environment, and the burdens from the environmental degradation, are distributed with marked inequality across different social groups as well as between nations. Topics such as environmental justice, environmental inequality, and ecological debt have gained traction, particularly as the Global South witnesses the devastating consequences of a climate change driven largely by more industrialised countries.

In this context of global environmental crisis and environmental inequities, a reformulation of imperialism to more systematically include the environmental dimension becomes crucial. In my dissertation (Frame 2013) I argued that a discussion of ecological exploitation, whether of the Global South by the Global North or now increasingly of developing regions by emerging economies, necessitates the revival of a theory of imperialism. Conversely, theorists of imperialism must strive to integrate analysis of the most current environmental events into their theories. The imperialism of today is different from the imperialism of yesterday, not just because of changes in the global capitalist system and production relations but also because of changes in the earth's environment and humanity's relation to it. A useful theory of 'ecological' imperialism must allow us to grasp the relationship between the ever-expanding drive for capital accumulation and the ever-multiplying ecological concerns of today. It must grasp the relation between

capital accumulation and the appropriation of peripheral resources and sink capacity (capacity of the environment to absorb waste). Most importantly, it must contextualise these issues within the current, neo-liberal global political economic structures, and uncover the mechanisms that facilitate the continued exploitation of peripheral ecologies.

The 21st-century scramble for African resources, as some scholars have dubbed it, is at the nexus of these issues. Having emerged as a last bastion for mineral resources, timber, land and water sources, and fisheries, Africa has witnessed an influx of foreign investment in recent years. This trend has been facilitated by highly liberalised foreign investment regimes that are a result of historical contestation and conflict. Embedded in a global hierarchy of unequal power, resources as well as profit are flowing freely out of Africa, and the promise of trickle-down wealth is marred by poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation.

### **Economic integration and unequal environmental distributions**

Liberal political economy is grounded in the assumption that the expansion of market relations between the developed and developing world is mutually beneficial in terms of broad development goals as well as for the environment. Advocates of the free market and globalisation argue that international trade and foreign investment pose no inherent threat to developing countries' environments (Bhagwati 2003). Rather, a deepening of market relations between the developed and developing world is thought to promote economic growth and technological development. With the growth of technology and economic systems, lower-income countries can 'modernise' ecologically, and rising incomes generate the revenue needed for socio-political institutions that support sustainability. Without economic integration developing countries will most probably remain mired in poverty and resource-intensive economic activities, and will lack the means to adequately address their environmental problems. The assumption is that environmental losses associated with economic integration can be compensated with the economic gains.

In contrast, critical scholars note that environmental distributions among different

social groups are highly disproportionate, both within nations and between global regions. That is, in a world-system marked by inequities in wealth and power, certain social groups and countries benefit disproportionately from the use of ecosystem goods and services, while others suffer disproportionately from their depletion and associated waste. Observation of these environmental disparities has led some theorists to conceptualise economic integration as the mechanism through which ecosystem goods and services from one region of the world are asymmetrically transferred from one region to another. Ecologically unequal exchange (EUE) in particular has emerged as an important approach to conceptualising the causes and consequences of environmental inequalities at the global level.

Situated within a dependency theory and/or world-systems theory framework, EUE perceives the expansion of the industrial capitalist system, beginning with the European colonial conquest, as the origin of an international division of labour that has led to the current uneven global distribution of wealth, power, and associated ecological burdens. Like ecological economics, EUE conceives of all economic activities as embedded within the larger environment of the earth. In ecological economics, the economy is conceived as an entropic, 'metabolic' process, continuously drawing in low-entropy resources (input) and expelling high-entropy wastes (output). EUE reformulates its own conception of the world-system as characterised by core economies which draw upon peripheral economies as source (of low-entropy resources) and sink (of high-entropy wastes). EUE posits an asymmetrical transfer of resources between core and peripheral economies which leads to a systematic deterioration in the ecological situation of peripheral economies (with the associated social and economic losses) to the benefit of core economies (with the associated gains in high standards of consumption, capital accumulation, and technological advance).

The perpetuation of these uneven ecological burdens is predicated on the capacity of core industrial nations to engage in trade with peripheral nations that is fundamentally 'ecologically unequal'. In the literature, ecologically unequal exchange has been defined by Rice as 'the environmentally damaging withdrawal of energy and other natural resource

assets from the periphery and the addition or externalization of environmentally damaging production and disposal activities within the periphery of the world system. It constitutes both the obtainment of natural capital or the stocks of natural resources that yield important goods and services and the usurpation of sink-capacity or waste assimilation properties of ecological systems in a manner enlarging the domestic carrying capacity of industrialized countries to the detriment of peripheral societies' (2009: 221).

EUE, then, can be interpreted as an overall asymmetrical transfer of natural resources and sink capacity from peripheral to core countries underlying nominally equitable monetary exchanges (Hornborg 2011). This transfer of resources and sink capacity through the mechanisms of economic integration constitutes what Hornborg (2001: 35) refers to as 'the thermodynamics of imperialism' and provides the biophysical basis of accumulation.

Using a variety of sustainability indicators, including the ecological footprint and material flows accounting indicators for embodied pollution, among others, EUE theorists have sought to empirically examine the extent to which the global economy is marked by asymmetrical transfers of resources and/or sink capacity from peripheral regions to core regions. Much empirical research, both within the EUE research agenda and outside it (e.g. the UNEP 2011), has corroborated that through international trade many developed countries are able to shift their environmental burdens onto developing other countries –whether those burdens include unsustainable levels of resource use, the shifting of pollution and wastes, or inequitable use of global commons, such as the atmosphere (see Frame 2013 for an overview of the empirical work done on EUE, as well as an in-depth discussion of the methodological challenges to empirical measurement of EUE).

### **Towards a theory of ecological imperialism**

EUE figures prominently as a theory that directly links the issues of global environmental sustainability, economic integration, and ecological exploitation and inequality in a systematic way while providing the theoretical basis for empirical research. Yet, to the

extent that the world-system is characterised by EUE, it occurs within a global economy shaped by the demands of industrial capitalism, within the specifically capitalist mode of production, with definite social relations of production and a historically distinct class that derives both its wealth and its power from the accumulation of capital. Forms of resource exploitation most probably occurred under different modes of production. But in a global economy where the capitalist mode of production is dominant, the primary mechanisms through which EUE can occur – international trade and foreign investment – are ultimately the primary mechanisms of capitalist global economic integration and are conditioned by the demands of capital accumulation.

In terms of foreign investment in African resources, it is *capital* (generally from 'core' industrial centres but also increasingly from 'semi-peripheral' or emerging economies) that directly appropriates peripheral resources, conditioned by the drive for capital accumulation. Further, as I have written at length (Frame 2013), the appropriation of peripheral resources by First-World or emerging world capital demands an amenable political economic context, both in terms of global economic policy and within the peripheral country. One might therefore conceptualise *ecological imperialism* as, broadly, the subjugation of the economic, political, and/or social institutions of a (generally peripheral) country for the biophysical, metabolic needs of the (generally core or semi-peripheral) country, and as inextricable from the purpose of making such resources accessible and amenable (in the right quantities and for the right price) to the needs of capital accumulation. Clark and Foster (2009) appear to have been the first to employ the term 'ecological imperialism' in their work on the guano trade during the colonial era and ecologically unequal exchange, and Jason Moore (2001; 2003; 2005; 2011) has done important work theorising the links between the expansionary drive of capital accumulation and the subsumption of peripheral resources. I have attempted to contribute to this concept by further identifying what I consider some of the essential characteristics of ecological imperialism and to offer a concrete working definition (Frame 2013). What follows is a brief summary of the characteristics explored at length in my dissertation.



1. Ecological imperialism defined, broadly, as the subjugation of the economic, political, and/or social institutions of a (generally peripheral) country for the biophysical, metabolic needs of the (generally core or semi-peripheral) country, and inextricable from the purpose of making such resources accessible and amenable (in the right quantities and for the right price) to the needs of capital accumulation.
  2. Concerning the inner logic of ecological imperialism in the world-system, ecological imperialism as rooted in the expansionary tendency of capital, driven fundamentally by the endless drive for capital accumulation (discussed at length in Frame 2013).
  3. Ecological imperialism as occurring under capitalist relations of production, with classes broadly separable into the owners of the means of production and direct producers within core countries, and elites and non-elites within peripheral countries.
  4. Ecological imperialism as necessitating amenable political-economic contexts within the periphery. Within the periphery, this entails an ongoing process of 'continuing primitive accumulation', whereby peripheral resources are privatised and made accessible in the right quantity and at the right price for capital accumulation.
  5. Ecological imperialism as hinging upon dynamics of unequal power and dependency within a hierarchical international division of labour in the world-system, as a historical result of colonialism and uneven development. Unequal power can be economic, political, military, ideological, and so on, and can be manifested in a large variety of ways, for example through direct policies (such as foreign direct investment (FDI) regimes in Africa, as will be discussed), structural economic characteristics (example, Value-Added (VA) tends to congregate in core, not peripheral countries), or even more indirect channels of dependency, such as peripheral dependence on technology and conceptions of development.
  6. In terms of resource transfer, ecological imperialism as occurring through two primary mechanisms: international trade and foreign investment (though illegal activities such as smuggling can occur, and under colonialism, transfer occurred through direct occupation of land or resources). It cannot really be called imperialism if hypothetical country A decides to give hypothetical country B resources in solidarity, for example, even if such a transfer results in EUE.
  7. Ecological imperialism as resulting in some sort of negative socio-ecological impacts for the peripheral country. Ecologically, for example, this could be in terms of the draining of resources and/or the degradation of sink capacity; socially, it could include dispossession of land or resources, or health issues related to pollution. The draining of resources here includes the draining of non-renewables or the use of renewables in an unsustainable manner. On the sink side, ecological imperialism can result in degradation of sink capacity, pollution, waste, and so on. Ecological imperialism can also occur through non-trade mechanisms where usurpation of the global commons, such as the inequitable usage of global atmospheric sink capacity, is uncompensated for. Overall, ecological imperialism allows for displacement of environmental burdens outside core/semi-peripheral national borders.
  8. Ecological imperialism as historically contingent, mutable, and unfolding dialectically in the form it takes according to a number of factors, including (a) resistances within the periphery, such as internal struggles, domestic class conflict, or anti-imperial struggles, and (b) changes in the metabolic needs of imperialist nations, whether due to technological changes, geopolitical considerations (e.g. competitive capital in Africa), or ecological considerations, and so on.
- One could also generalise that ecological imperialism has a tendency to produce certain internal socio-political characteristics within the peripheral country, as such characteristics are conducive to the operation of ecological imperialism. Such characteristics can be thought of as 'internal supportive structures' to ecological imperialism, and often result in a mal-developed state plagued by high levels of inequality and social conflict over resources. Such features include:
1. Lack of democratic control over resources; instead resources tend to be controlled by

- a peripheral elite, either a bureaucratic elite associated with political power, domestic elites associated with capital, or some combination thereof;
2. Elite or foreign investment collusions and overlap of interests;
  3. Conflict of interests with the non-elite peripheral citizenry;
  4. Social conflict arising from conflict of interests between elites and non-elites.

### **Ecological imperialism and the 21st-century scramble for African resources**

Roughly half a century has passed since the wave of decolonisation across Africa, and excepting perhaps a brief period during the post-independence era, foreign powers continue to occupy a dominant role over African resources. Today, foreign affiliates account for virtually all non-artisanal production in metals and minerals in countries such as Mali, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, Gabon, Ghana, and Namibia among others. In oil and gas, foreign affiliates account for over half of the production on average in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNCTAD 2007). The first decade of the 21st century has witnessed a virtual scramble for the totality of African resources, including its water supplies, timber, fisheries, minerals, and fossil fuels, with tens of millions of hectares of land already leased to foreign investors. The proximate cause for this 'new scramble for Africa', as some scholars have dubbed it, is high commodity prices. The deeper causes include the tension between a growing global capitalist economy and a world of finite natural resources and, importantly, the outcome of a historical struggle that has made African ecologies both cheap and accessible.

As noted above, I conceive of ecologically imperialism as rooted in the expansionary tendency of capital, which is driven fundamentally by the endless drive for capital accumulation, a dynamic that has been discussed at length elsewhere (Clark and Foster, 2009; Frame 2013; Moore 2001; 2003; 2005; 2011). I have also argued that ecological imperialism necessitates an amenable political-economic context within the periphery, which entails an ongoing process of 'continuing primitive accumulation' whereby peripheral resources are privatised and made accessible in the right quantity and at the right price for

capital accumulation. Nature, as the ecological Marxist O'Connor (1998) pointed out, is a politicised, contested sphere, a point often overlooked in apolitical discussions on sustainability and development. Who holds control over, holds access to, and gains profit from peripheral resources reflects the outcomes of historical contestations of power. The neoliberal policies that currently govern the integration of African ecologies into the global economy are an outcome of such contestation, policies that I have suggested undergird a form of continuing primitive accumulation, or, as some scholars put it, a 'neoliberalization' of nature (Heynen 2007).

During the post-independence era, Africa and much of the Third World engaged in concerted efforts to increase their sovereignty over and rents from their resources. This era of economic nationalism is scarcely mentioned in mainstream discussions on African development and environment, or is often dismissed as a period of inefficient and failed alternative economic models. But from the perspective of political ecology, this era and the subsequent transition to neoliberalism are critical to understanding the dynamics of continuing primitive accumulation. Drawing on an environmental reading of Polanyi, I have termed this economic nationalist era a 'countermovement' posed by the Third World against the subsumption of its resources by the international capitalist system (Frame 2013). Polanyi (1957) argued that the dynamics of 19th- and early 20th-century society were governed by a double movement: the self-regulating market economy expanded continuously, but this movement was met by a countermovement checking the expansion in particular directions. Such a countermovement was vital for the protection of society, though ultimately incompatible with the self-regulation of the market, and thus with the market system itself. This countermovement was manifested through a great variety of forms, which, Polanyi argued, were due to the broad range of the vital social interests affected by the expanding market mechanism. In particular, the countermovement consisted in checking the action of the market in respect to specific factors of production; labour, land, and money.

What is significant about Polanyi's insight is that it captures an ongoing dialectic of movement and countermovement. It demonstrates how accumulation as a dynamic,

unfolding process through time and space is shaped by and responds to social resistance. Already implicit in Polanyi's own work, this concept of countermovement can be broadened to countermovements against an expanding global market. This would include various resistances against the current era of globalisation, as other theorists utilising Polanyi have pointed out (Mittelman 1998). It could also include many of the developmental policies enacted in the mid-20th century by developing countries in their quest for protection from the vicissitudes of the international market and national sovereignty. While the developmental state was far from a uniform phenomenon – ranging across varieties of import substitution, state capitalism, and Marxist-Leninist states, among others, all with varying ideologies and motivations, political systems and social institutions – the major point is that many of the states did not leave important sectors of the economy to the regulation of the market, while the whole of the neoliberal project was oriented towards the removal of these obstructions.

Like much of the Third World, after decolonisation post-independent African countries found themselves politically liberated but in a state of economic dependency and underdevelopment, a situation that the former leader of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah characterised as 'neo-colonial' (Nkrumah 1966). In pursuit of greater economic sovereignty, African leaders undertook the restructuring of their economies along developmentalist lines. *Laissez-faire* capitalism, being the ideology of the former colonial powers, was questioned or rejected by most African states, and various forms of socialism and state capitalism were implemented (Thomson 2000). In the 1960s Third-World countries, with African countries among the most vocal, began to challenge the power of transnational capital and their neocolonial situation under the aegis of economic sovereignty. Central to this issue of economic sovereignty was sovereignty over their own natural resources, which was manifest in a series of events from the 1960s to the mid-1970s. Such events included numerous state expropriations of foreign-owned natural resource industries (and industries in the tertiary sector), the formation of primary commodity cartels such as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and sets of proposals that voiced Third World grievances put forth through the United Nations platform.

The New International Economic Order (NIEO) was in many ways the apex of collective demands by Third-World countries demands for sovereignty over their resources and increased returns for their resource exports. For example, the NIEO demanded that each state should be entitled to exercise effective control over these and their exploitation with means suitable to its own situation, including the right to nationalisation or transfer of ownership to nationals. This right was seen as an expression of the full permanent sovereignty of the state. The NIEO Charter demanded that no state should be subjected to economic, political, or any other type of coercion to prevent the free and full exercise of this inalienable right. Further, all states, territories, and peoples under foreign occupation, alien and colonial domination, or apartheid were to be entitled to the full compensation for the exploitation and depletion of natural resources and all other resources of those states, territories, and peoples. It also demanded the right for developing countries to regulate and supervise trans-national corporations (TNCs) operating within their territories, and the right to implement measures regulating TNCs in accordance with plans of national development.

Fatefully, such efforts of the Third World to regain the sovereignty over resources lost during colonialism coincided with a period when access to energy and raw materials became crucial to the developed world's economic machinery. In fact, the years 1972–74 witnessed a shortage of many primary commodities, especially those of strategic importance in high-growth industries, such as petroleum, bauxite, and phosphates (Girvan 1976). As the Third World controlled the supply of a number of important fuels and raw materials and also absorbed some 25 per cent of exports, its demands for a more equitable international economic system became increasingly potent (Lozoya 1980). Not surprisingly, economic nationalism as signified by the expropriations, the growing number of primary commodity cartels, and sets of proposals such as the NIEO, was not received well by the developed countries. Even before the NIEO, Northern hostility to the increasing economic nationalism and perceived threat from the Third World was apparent (Girvan 1976). The main issue was simple to understand: at a time when the developed countries became crucially dependent on

various resources from the periphery, the push for greater returns for their exports and full sovereignty over their own resources ran directly counter to the concerns of consuming countries to retain assured access to foreign supplies at reasonable prices (Bergstein 1973).

What followed on the wake of the economic nationalist era of the 1960s and 70s has been written about extensively elsewhere. Because of a complex convergence of factors, both internal and external, developing countries across the world fell into crippling levels of debt and were forced to undertake extensive structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). By the 1980s, economic nationalism in Africa and in much of the Third World had essentially collapsed, and these societies were to undergo an extended series of radical structural adjustments, realigning their economies according to the principles of *laissez-faire* capitalism, comparative advantage, and increased external integration. Under economic nationalism, sovereignty over natural resources and the capacity to regulate TNCs were perceived as central to economic independence and the end of neocolonialism. Under the neoliberal reforms, Third-World ecological resources were once again made accessible to the demands of capital accumulation, as lingering obstructions enacted during the developmentalist era were removed one after the other, and Africa's traditional colonial role as exporter of raw materials within the international division of labour was reinforced. The Third-World counter-movement, born from the contradictions engendered by the expansion of the world capitalist system, was replaced by the neoliberal counter-counter-movement in a context of economic and political crisis.

Aside from reinforcing an export-led growth path based upon comparative advantage as exporters of natural resources, the other pillar of the neoliberal SAPs involved creating the conditions favourable to opening up the country for foreign capital through privatisation and various incentives to attract multinational corporations. Even now, attracting FDI continues to be promoted as integral to development and economic growth. The International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) argue that FDI is central to increasing the foreign exchange of low income countries and

avoiding further build-up of debt. Underlying these arguments are the assumptions that FDI will bring stable capital inflows, greater technological know-how, higher-paying jobs, entrepreneurial and workplace skills, and new export opportunities (OECD 2002). Overall, the new policies were designed to repeal policies enacted during the era of economic nationalism, but the results shifted power, resources, and profits to the side of foreign investors (Frame 2013).

The policies created to attract foreign investment include both multilateral treaties as well as a host of bilateral treaties. They also include country-specific restructuring of foreign investment regimes, such as radical restructuring of tax regimes and other policies regulating foreign investment. Externally, African countries are bound by a host of multilateral and bilateral treaties that restrict a developing country's capacity to regulate the behaviour of foreign firms for development objectives. Trade-related investment measures (TRIMs), for example, cover a broad variety of developing country economic activity, and countries that are members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) must satisfy the performance requirements of TRIMs (Wade 2003). The central aim of TRIMs is to provide a safe haven for Western investments with favourable domestic conditions. In terms of developing countries' capacity to regulate the behaviour of foreign firms for the purpose of development objectives, Wade (2003) argues that TRIMs restrict the right of a government to carry through policies that favour growth and technological upgrading of domestic industries and firms. Scholars have therefore argued that the WTO outlaws key investment regulations that were once crucial to many countries' development strategies (Shadlen 1999). Even more stringent are bilateral investment treaties (BITs), which have been proliferating throughout the developing world since the early 1990s. The obligations from TRIMs are not nearly as comprehensive as the provisions contained in BITs. Bilateral investment treaties require host governments to lift even more restrictions on foreign firms and to give even more concessions, in return for better access to US or other powerful party markets (Shadlen 1999).

Additionally, since the 1980s the World Bank has promoted a process of liberalisation, deregulation, and privatisation under the auspices of economic growth, which

has resulted in the creation of new regulatory frameworks for mining in Africa. The reforms have certainly created a more favourable environment for foreign investors, but critical scholars and activists charge that these reforms have potentially undermined norms and standards in areas of crucial importance for social and economic development, as well as the protection of the environment in the countries concerned (Akabzaa 2001; Campbell 2003; Curtis and Lissu 2008). Overall, reforms emphasised creating a stable legal and fiscal framework, including mining codes, contractual stability, a guaranteed stable fiscal regime, and channels for profit repatriation. In return governments are expected to receive increased rents generated in the mining sector (UNCTAD 2005). However, in recent years such policies have come under criticism for failing to promote economic growth and alleviate poverty (ibid.). With the current scramble for African resources and a concurrent commodity boom that has resulted in robust world market prices for African metals, scholars and policy makers are especially criticising the tax regimes of resource-rich countries. For example, the Africa Progress Report of 2013, written by the Africa Progress Panel chaired by Kofi Annan, states that 'aggressive tax planning drains the public purse' (Africa Progress Panel 2013).

The environmental and social consequences of the new scramble for Africa have been far from laudable. The scramble for African fossil fuels and strategic metals and minerals has been associated with corruption and lack of democracy, the dispossession of local communities in oil-producing areas, and environmental despoliation (Southall and Melber 2009). Africa also accounts for 41 per cent of world reserves of cobalt, 56 per cent of diamonds, 34 per cent of gold, 10 per cent of oil, 12 per cent of chromites, 53 per cent of phosphate rock, and a number of other important resources (UNCTAD 2012). Africa's minerals are of enormous economic and strategic importance. To begin with, Africa holds about 18 per cent of the world's recoverable uranium resources, and the demand for uranium has increased dramatically in recent years as it is the key raw material in nuclear energy production. While Western companies remain predominant, China is becoming an increasingly significant actor and is competing, especially

with Russia, for deals in Namibia and Niger. These include the actual or potential takeover of Western operations (Southall and Melber 2009). Coltan, from which the metals columbium and tantalum are extracted, is another key strategic resource, vital for electronic equipment such as mobile phones. Of known global tantalite resources 80 per cent are found in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Like oil, both uranium and coltan have been associated with conflict and environmental degradation. A regional scramble for coltan helped to fuel civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1998 to 2003, and involved eight African militaries at its height. Uranium mining has also been associated with pollution and violent conflict in Niger over the distribution of rents (Southall and Melber 2009). While a popular position is to blame the corruption of local elites for all of Africa's woes, in reality there exists considerable evidence of collusion between local elites and foreign investors (Africa Progress Panel 2013), which I argue is an essential internal supportive characteristic of ecological imperialism, alongside lack of democratic control over resources (Frame 2013).

Africa is also at the heart of the global land-grabbing trend. Land and water for agriculture are increasingly becoming commodified and accessible to the global market. Despite the orthodox contention that land is plentiful and under-utilised in Africa, land grabbing is often associated with the dispossession of land from local communities and the deprivation of livelihoods. There are a number of factors driving the land grabbing in Africa and elsewhere in the periphery, but primarily, in a global context of shrinking resources, developed and emerging economies are seeking food, water, and energy security outside their national boundaries (Smaller and Mann 2009).

Behind the scramble for land in Africa is a global struggle for water. In general, land deals in Africa involve large-scale, industrial agricultural operations that consume large amounts of water. Land grabbing in Africa concentrates around the continent's largest river and lake systems. The dispossession of African water supplies reflects the larger global ecological crisis involving water shortages; it is predicted that in the near future, water will become the single most important physical commodity-based asset class. In this context, many corporations are rushing

to sign land deals that give them wide-ranging control over African water, especially when African governments are almost giving it away (GRAIN 2012). Further, the massive land deals could rob millions of people of their access to water and deplete much of the continent's most precious fresh water sources. Ecologically, nearly all land deals are located in major river basins with access to irrigation, and they often occupy fertile and fragile wetland, or else are in more arid areas that can draw water from major rivers (GRAIN 2012).

African forests have long been targeted for foreign harvesting, and deforestation remains a serious problem today. It is estimated that 4 million hectares of forest are lost in Africa each year, representing twice the world average rate of deforestation. The Worldwide Fund for Nature estimates, for example, that at current rates of deforestation Congo-Brazzaville's forests will be two-thirds gone by 2050 (Carmody 2011). European companies, under generous concessions granted by African governments, dominate the logging sector, though much logging is done illegally. Exports primarily flow to southern Europe, though China is rapidly becoming a major destination for timber (Southall and Melber 2009). Overall, it is largely Euro-American consumption that is driving the demand for tropical timber, and often European and American companies are involved in the deforestation. This recurring dynamic, central to ecologically unequal exchange, means that while European and American consumers benefit from deforestation in Africa, local forest-dwelling communities suffer the losses.

Over the past 25 years, the global trade in fish and fish products has sharply increased, and around 50 per cent of world's fish exports come from developing countries (Carmody 2011). For Africa, the growth of industrial fishing by foreign fleets has contributed greatly to the depletion of local fish stocks along the continent's coastlines. To satisfy the external demand for fish, the continent exports around US\$2.7 billion worth of fish annually. Western Africa in particular is increasingly supplying fish for Western Europe, Russia, and China (Carmody 2011). However, as with most of Africa's resources, while foreign interests and consumers benefit from the exploitation of Africa's fisheries, the local people suffer as foreign fleets

have overtaxed fishing stocks. As a result, many fishermen become poorer, with some fishing sectors in decline, while the bulk of profits flow to foreign interests. Further, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fleets, mainly from Europe and the Far East, fish within African territorial limits, operating with de facto impunity since few coastal states have capacity to impound such intruders (Southall and Melber 2009).

## Conclusion

From a political ecological perspective, the orthodox interpretation of African economic nationalism as little more than an inefficient failure is too reductionist to capture the totality of conflicting interests that this era has contained. While economic nationalism has been criticised across the political spectrum, its decline in Africa and replacement by neo-liberal policies has meant the removal of obstructions to the subsumption of Africa's resources in terms amenable to the accumulation of capital and the metabolic needs of core and, increasingly, emerging economies. Such 'obstructions' to capital have included the very mechanisms that African countries sought to use to gain resource sovereignty and improve their terms of trade, with the ultimate aim of increased economic independence after an era of colonial subjugation. If we conceptualise ecological imperialism as the subjection of peripheral political, social, and economic systems for the metabolic needs and needs of capital accumulation, a case can be made that historically ecological imperialism has been the norm in Africa since the colonial period, with a brief contestation during the era of economic nationalism.

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## Food and Imperialism

### Introduction

Issues of food and land have always been central to both exploitative systems and to the fightback against them: peasants have been held in thrall to landed property relations, ruling classes justified themselves as organisers of farming, revolutions often demanded 'bread and land'. In one sense, the situation under imperialism merely gives specific form to contradictions stretching back to the origins of class society.

But in another sense, capitalism fundamentally changed things, in ways essential to our understanding of imperialism.

Previous agrarian structures, however exploitative, had safeguarded a sphere of self-sufficiency, localism, and grassroots autonomy. Some lands were held in common, and even more importantly, knowledge was a commons: farmers experimented, shared, and transmitted experience; seeds and animals were selectively bred and a broad spread of different strains maintained as genetic material for future experimentation; most people consumed what they produced and there were few 'food miles'. With capitalism, in the metropolitan countries, common lands became

'enclosed', people lost their livelihoods and were forced to migrate to towns. The new urban proletariat then had to be fed, which forced the rural economy to raise productivity of both labour (a shrinking proportion of the population engaged in farming) and of land (having reached the limit of enlarging the cultivable surface through deforestation, land had to be farmed more intensively). For colonies it was even worse: they were super-exploited for cash-crop production and exposed to famine.

One question persistently haunts capitalism/imperialism: in order to keep revolution at bay, urban-industrial populations must be fed somehow. Early on, Thomas Malthus warned that food supply would never keep pace. And although at certain periods this has been repressed by a modernist propaganda of scientific omnipotence, underlying anxieties resurface. Hunger currently afflicts at least an eighth of world population (FAO 2012); mostly in the global South, but in the North, too, austerity policies, which respond to crisis by prioritising the interests of the rich, leave working people hungry.

A big question therefore arises: Given the existence of this food insecurity, is it merely a distributional problem? Amartya Sen's argument (Sen 1982) is appealing from an anti-imperialist standpoint because it highlights exclusion and inequality: there is indeed plenty of food 'around' today, it simply doesn't reach those in need, partly because so much is wasted – estimated at 30–50 per cent of what is produced (IME 2013) – and partly because some sectors overconsume and poor people lack entitlements.

However, it could be a fatal error to assume that the current form of food 'plenty' is sustainable into the future. Food is genuinely insecure; not, however, as Malthus thought, because it is *absolutely* impossible to produce enough but rather because capitalism and imperialism are set on a course diametrically opposed to the only viable way this could be achieved. In order to understand why, I will briefly sketch a conceptual framework, building especially on the work of Marx and Malcolm Caldwell.

### Conceptual framework: the fundamental basis of imperialism's food crisis

The impact of capitalism was not just to change the ownership of land, but also to



start treating farming as an offshoot of industry. Initially, this was particularly the chemical industry, synthesising fertilisers – in place of natural composting and manures – to supply nitrogen (derived from a fossil-fuel feedstock), potassium, and phosphorous. The results of this bid to conjure away the Malthusian spectre were to prove disastrous; its impact was however *delayed*, ‘exported to the future’, to become fully apparent only in the longer term.

In this respect, Marxism successfully predicted what capitalism has today become. Engels thus warned in general terms that ‘Each victory ... [over nature] in the first place brings about the results we expected, but in the second and third places it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel the first’ (Engels 1970: 74); and Marx, more specifically, that ‘all progress in capitalistic agriculture is a progress in the art not only of robbing the laborer, but of robbing the soil, as well; all progress in increasing the fertility of the soil for a period of time is progress towards ruining the lasting sources of that fertility’ (Marx 1954: 506). It should therefore have come as no surprise that the 20th century revealed a law of diminishing returns in chemical fertiliser application (Carlson 2005: 100): statistics show a fivefold increase of fertiliser inputs for only a twofold increase of cereal yield per hectare in the 50 years up to 2010 (H.M. Government 2011: 79). And only in the 21st century have we witnessed the full effects of the export to the future of the climate effects generated by emissions from the food system.

One interesting general definition of imperialism might be: the era in which latent contradictions of capitalism rise to the surface and the mode of production begins to unravel. The case of food would illustrate this well.

As a result of treating agriculture like industry and forgetting that it is part of nature, food became not just a *condition* for capital reproduction (feeding the urban proletariat so they can work in industry), but part of it, a major site of accumulation and more recently of speculation by finance capital.

In this context, Caldwell’s contribution was to link circuits of accumulation/exploitation to a loss of quality or structure; that is, an increase of entropy. It thus becomes possible to represent, and to some extent quantify, imperialism through its flows of energy

(Caldwell n.d.), in particular in relation to the food chain – which both consumes and provides energy – a challenge Caldwell was beginning to undertake (Caldwell 1977) prior to his untimely death in 1978. Specifically, his notion of ‘protein imperialism’ – taking the meat industry as a case – depicts a process, at the same time both a degradation of nature, and an exploitation of the global South by the world-system’s parasitic core.

If we bring together Caldwell’s insights with those of Marx, adding in recent scientific developments around soil and its relationship to climate, we can succinctly explain the workings of this loss of quality as follows. In nature’s cycles the ‘waste’ of one process serves as an input to another (de Rosnay 1979). With capitalism, there comes a ‘rift’ in these metabolic loops, a realisation fundamental to Marx’s argument and developed in an interesting way by Bellamy Foster (Bellamy Foster 2009). Because of this rift, we could say the loops become ‘unplugged’: for example, water, sewage and compostable solid waste are not ploughed back. Waste products then become ejected; however, these ejecta don’t just disappear, they feed back into the system, only now in a destructive rather than constructive form, primarily in the shape of climatic disturbance through the disruption of temperature regulation in the wider earth system.

A key manifestation of this entropy is the loss of the soil itself (cf. Montgomery 2007). As a result of natural evolution, a healthy soil is a complex system possessing its own metabolism, a symbiotic interaction of mineral and organic components, worms, micro-organisms, fungi and bacteria (Bourgignon and Bourgignon 2008), which in turn forms an integral part of the carbon cycle regulating temperature in the wider earth system. Only when capitalism broke these cycles did soil-structure begin to be lost, a development which is arguably the fundamental basis of today’s crisis. The interaction with climate is key: a healthy soil sequesters carbon, and in the same process augments its fertility (Lal 2004). Today, through capitalism/imperialism’s metabolic rift, the soil loses carbon, a loss which then feeds back through the greenhouse effect in the form of extreme weather events.

Having defined the above conceptual framework, we can now fill in some details of the history of food and imperialism.

## From colonialism to neo-colonialism and the Green Revolution

The imperialist era witnessed great strides both in the technical and organisational scope of capitalism. R&D, driven by both corporate interests and state military research, developed apace, with huge effects on farming. Chemical fertilisers were now complemented by pesticides and herbicides, mechanisation took off, farms gave way to plantations while agribusiness became just another facet of capitalism, notably in the factory farming of animals. The energy demands were immense, at least 10 calories being required to produce one calorie of food, and the entropy this released being expressed in CO<sub>2</sub> and methane emissions.

These developments in turn had big political implications: they raised the possibility of new forms of imperialism through food.

While the idea of ruling a people through their food is not new (witness British dominance in Ireland), the vast new scope of agribusiness in all its ramifications took this to a qualitatively new level which happened to coincide, in the second half of the 20th century, with both the Cold War and decolonisation. The crucial role of food in the international politics of that period is not always appreciated, and I would argue that control over the food system was actually a critical condition for the transition from direct rule to neo-colonialism: it's safe to decolonise if you control how people are fed. And this in turn laid the foundations for succeeding forms of food imperialism.

A key approach was to arm-twist countries of the South to espouse 'development' strategies dictated from the North. In the pre-neo-liberal 'modernisation' phase (till about 1980), policies pushed by people like Walt Rostow (a development economist doubling as US psy-ops mastermind) presented traditional societies as 'backward' where they were able to rely on the produce of their fertile land (Rostow 1958: 159). In order to escape this 'backwardness', they were instructed to industrialise rapidly, which would mean extorting, somehow, a massive food surplus from the countryside (to feed the urban population) even though investment was all flowing into industry. The result could only be to undermine food autonomy in the South, which is exactly what happened with lasting results.

Rostow's role might suggest this was all a conspiracy, which is partly true, but at the

same time it is essential that we do not lose sight of the structural dimension of the imperialist era, an area where we can continue to learn from dependency theory. After all, the strategy of squeezing farmers to feed the city found a certain basis, too, in Soviet policy (Amin 1981), and proved seductive to populist nationalist regimes with a semblance of anti-imperialism – Egypt under Nasser being just one case. Mao Zedong in China was one of very few to realise that such an approach would be disastrous for development, including that of industry (Mao 1977: 286). As Amin showed, in contrast to a theoretical closed-economy model where the proceeds from exploiting farmers would remain within the national economy, accumulation circuits are in reality global (Amin 1974): any surplus extracted from the Southern agricultural sector therefore tends to flow to the core. I would argue that many lessons of the dependency school still apply (Biel 2000), and the global food chains, which impose such horrific exploitation on Southern rural dwellers (Patel 2008), can still be understood as expressions of accumulation on a world scale. It should be noted, too, that dependency implies its opposite: a delinked model in which national development serves agriculture in the first place (Amin 1980: 144 ff.). Here, too, the dependency school merits recognition as an antecedent of the food sovereignty movements which we will discuss below.

By starving its rural sector of investment, a country would depend on imports, either of food itself or of agricultural technology. With respect to the former, a pattern was introduced, which persists to this day, through which parts of the imperialist core where agribusiness productivity is very high become major staple food exporters to the South, often displacing indigenous staples (such as sorghum) in the process. Cold warrior Henry Kissinger spoke openly of using 'food as a weapon' (Linear 1985); and in his secret National Security Study Memorandum of 1974 (NSSM 1974), he advocated that food aid be tied to population reduction, thus revealing the Malthusian undercurrent beneath the surface modernist triumphalism.

If imports of food itself became a major tool of imperialist control, we could say this even more of technology imports.

The paradigm for this was the Green Revolution, a programme – beginning in the 1940s but enjoying its heyday in the 1960s –

to push hybridised ‘high-yielding varieties’ (HYVs) of rice and wheat. What is fascinating about the Green Revolution is the structural evolution within imperialism itself as it explored and refined an interaction between power politics, corporate profit, and scientific research. As with GMOs later, HYVs were bred specifically to ‘require’ high inputs of the very chemicals (fertiliser, pesticide, etc.) and machinery manufactured by the corporations which sponsored it (Glaeser 1987). And because F<sub>1</sub> (first generation) hybrids from two parent strains do not reproduce true to type, Southern farmers were left dependent on the seed supplier. One of the worst results was to make global food security dependent on an extremely narrow range of crops and strains. Pre-capitalist systems had always made a point of reproducing the widest possible variety of strains, because each has its own evolved forms of resistance (to pest, disease, weather) which may prove vital in future unforeseen circumstances. Through the Green Revolution, much of this genetic variety, along with traditional staples, disappeared; the result being an extreme lack of resilience which now leaves the world tragically exposed to 21st-century climate challenges.

### The neo-liberal phase

While the Cold War/decolonisation phase set the tone for much of what followed, the advent of neo-liberalism around 1980 introduced further major qualitative changes.

Since its origins, imperialism has had a dual character: from early capitalism it inherited the notion of expanding international trade, through a process where each country should specialise in sectors where it supposedly enjoyed ‘comparative advantage’; this would mean scrapping any form of localism or self-sufficiency, and create scope for exploitation through unequal exchange. However, in reality, imperialism remained strongly statist and security-obsessed. This found many expressions, such as national industrial policies, but nowhere more so than in food. In the First World War, Britain used food sanctions to starve Germany; in the Second World War, Germany sought to retaliate, and imperialism retains an autarkic streak pulling against the ‘free’ trade discourse: definitions of food security as an offshoot of national (military) security persistently trump definitions in terms of the

well-being and livelihoods of communities. During the Cold War, the UK discreetly raised its food self-sufficiency to a point where (in the early 1980s) 95 per cent of indigenous-type food was locally grown (Barling et al. 2008: 11).

The neo-liberal era revolutionised this picture with a massive increase of global food trade and a further reduction of local and national self-reliance. Alongside dependent food production for local consumption in the South (à la Green Revolution), development orthodoxies were now tweaked, forcing Southern countries – notably through World Bank/IMF Structural Adjustment – to seek niche agricultural export markets; and as a way to control these niche exports, buyer-driven chains took shape, dominated by core supermarkets. This of course intensified Southern dependence on staple food imports, since if you are growing cash crops you won’t be growing for local consumption.

Complementary to World Bank/IMF tyranny, there occurred the final phase of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT Uruguay Round) and its transition to the World Trade Organisation (WTO): by the early 1990s food was at last brought fully within the sphere of globalised trade, undermining the scope for countries to protect themselves, for example by combating dumping or imposing food safety rules. In effect, because state powers in relation to food were weakened in the South relatively much more than in the North – where agricultural protectionism and subsidies remain rife – the subservience of the former greatly increased.

Besides its provisions directly addressing food, GATT/WTO also brought in something of even more massive significance to food imperialism: Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). By this, the knowledge commons were ‘enclosed’ by private property rights, enforceable internationally. In essence, we could say, just as the Green Revolution had facilitated a ‘safe’ decolonisation, TRIPS now removed the risks from freeing up food trade by entrenching corporate control over agricultural technology and genetic resources. Notoriously, corporations embarked on a field day of patenting organisms which are the fruits of both nature and of painstaking selective breeding over millennia by traditional farmers.

Currently, mainstream propaganda spares no effort to convince the world that GM is

the future. In this sense, GM seems an extension of the Green Revolution, and in fact the corporate interests and institutions forged during that period are still active. Thus, the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR), effectively run by the World Bank, still quietly co-ordinates global research agendas (Alston et al 2006: 326–327). It is interesting to note that, in contrast to the genetic uniformity of crops which are forced on farmers, corporate interests require variety of germplasm as a basis for their own experimentation – hence a new form of food imperialism led by CGIAR in collaboration with the Global Crop Diversity Trust (CGIAR 2013) over genebanks, including the Svalbard Global Seed Vault (‘doomsday vault’), a massive frozen seed repository sponsored by the Gates Foundation.

The question of whether GM is simply Green Revolution Mark II raises, however, important issues. There have been immense developments in the sciences during the imperialist period, some of which can have great progressive potential; but, of course, besides being generally driven by militarism, even civil applications under corporate control often encapsulate the most reactionary tendencies of capitalism, as the case of agriculture illustrates only too well. But could this science be used in a different and progressive way under popular control? In the case of the Green Revolution, since there is nothing wrong with hybridisation per se and the problem was entirely the imperialist goals it served, this argument would probably apply. A similar argument might be made about GM, but in this case there is a strong counter-argument, namely that the approach which reduces the functioning or evolution of the organism as a whole to the individual gene is intrinsically misguided (Goodwin 1994; Ho 1998; Noble 2006; Shapiro 2011). This will be an important future issue for anti-imperialist movements.

### The food crisis of the 21st century

The ecological context, more specifically that relating to food and agriculture, is indispensable to any understanding of capitalist crisis as a whole (Perelman 1987). Since about 2007–08, capitalism/imperialism has evidently been sick, the finance crisis being just one expression. In part, this sickness reflects the exhaustion of a particular accumulation

regime, and food, like everything, is dragged into this. But the food crisis also proceeds from its own intrinsic, and much deeper logic, which would in no way be alleviated even if capitalism were eventually, in a narrower sense, to discover a new accumulation regime (in itself improbable – cf. Biel 2006). From a technical angle, we may analyse three factors to explain this: first, diminishing returns from chemical inputs, to which the system responds by a *fuite en avant* towards ever madder scientific fixes; second, the loss of the soil itself, a loss of structure which is equivalent to an increase in entropy, graphically illustrated by dust storms now sweeping many regions; third, climatic factors, themselves a reflection of the unleashing of carbon which in a natural system would be sequestered in the soil: these include localised extreme heat, water-loss, erosion etc. and more generally the increasing frequency of extreme events.

An era of grave food insecurity – manifested most notably in wildly fluctuating prices – therefore began around 2007–08, which in the deepest sense reflected a qualitative, step-level change in the above factors. Although this food crisis was fundamentally distinct from the structural economic crisis with which it happened to coincide, the latter latched onto, and magnified, it in the worst possible way. And through this interaction, two key characteristics identified by imperialism theory assert themselves: parasitic finance capital and militarism.

A case which illustrates both these facets is land grabs. While in one respect a continuation of colonial practices (which reflects a broad unity running right through the history of exploitation), a highly specific contemporary form of land grabbing began to define itself (Rice 2009). On the one hand (the aspect linked to militaristic definitions of food security), there were grabs of tracts of land in the South, particularly Africa, carried out by states as a reflection of resurgent nationalist reflexes; on the other, grabs by speculative capital, partly because (with other investments now insecure) land is the surest value; partly because, as food runs out, this is a way to hedge other risks. These processes perfectly illustrate a wider trend whereby imperialism parasitises the insecurity it itself causes (Biel 2012).

The historic link between hunger and social unrest therefore returns to plague the system,

highlighted by recent research wherein academics warn the US State Department (Lagi et al. 2011) to take seriously a strong statistical correlation – evident since the watershed of 2007–08 – between high food prices and social unrest. The ruling interests' fear of this scenario then further intensifies the headlong rush to risky technologies like GM, both as a temporary fix to stave off revolution by providing the food which conventional chemical-based agriculture (plagued by diminishing returns) can no longer do; and to deepen still further the core's stranglehold over technology.

### Counter-imperialist struggles over land and food

But the correlation of hunger with unrest misses the key point: what really counts is not 'unrest' but struggle. The thing which probes the reality of imperialism most profoundly is always struggle against it, which we will now briefly discuss.

Crisis has proved the catalyst for a new generation of social movements, to which food is central (Holt-Giménez and Patel 2009), and these are not merely reactive to food insecurity, but look forward to strategic alternatives. They thus take up the challenge issued at the very outset of the imperialist era by Peter Kropotkin (Kropotkin 1892), that revolutions must make it their central task to feed the people.

In one sense, these new movements are a prolongation of peasant-based national liberation or landless struggles which have persisted from colonialism through the Cold War/neo-colonial era and beyond.

But what changed has been, first, a sense of the systemic importance of food in structures of dominance; second, a commitment to realistic and convincing alternatives: for in order to respond meaningfully to Kropotkin's challenge, it cannot be enough just to proclaim an intention to deliver food security, you must say *how*. The precursors of this new consciousness go back some way: we could cite the leadership of Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso in the mid-1980s, who not only castigated food imperialism in his speeches, but, in a constructive spirit, collaborated with Algerian/French organic agriculture pioneer Pierre Rabhi to develop concrete alternatives, premised both on self-reliance and sustainable technical practices.

We may say that a qualitative step came in the second half of the 1990s, of which two

examples can be given: the Indian Farmers' Movement against the GATT/WTO rules, which at its height mobilised hundreds of thousands on issues of intellectual property, something which had never been seen before; and the Zapatistas in Mexico, who not only critiqued the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) – among whose many disastrous effects has been its assault on Mexicans' nutrition – but also posited, both in theory and practice, the issue of autonomy in a radical new way, one which was to influence profoundly thinking on food independence. While the main focus of these struggles was in the global South, food-related fightbacks by working people in the North were complementary (Carlsson 2008) and introduced interesting features.

Such movements soon gave rise to the notion of 'food sovereignty' (Rosset 2009), which came to prominence at a meeting of the grassroots umbrella organisation La Via Campesina in Mexico in 1996. Parallel to this, 'food security' has been given a more radical expression in the form of the Right to Food, particularly in the hands of the progressive UN Special Rapporteurs Jean Ziegler and Olivier de Schutter.

Food sovereignty, while not being contradictory to the Right to Food, takes it into new territory. It contains an element of state sovereignty, which is logical given the WTO's drive to smash all national barriers restraining corporate interests. But the most interesting and innovative aspects concern grass-roots autonomy. As Michel Pimbert says, referencing the work of Ivan Illich, food sovereignty reflects a fightback against a dominant trend to 'replace non-marketable use-values with commodities by reshaping the social and physical environment and by appropriating the components that enable people to cope on their own' (Pimbert 2009: 3). It is therefore about people recapturing the power to do things independently. The Indian version, for example, draws on Gandhian notions of *swaraj* (self-rule) which is as much about community self-reliance as about conventional sovereignty in a state-centric form.

The usefulness and validity of the term 'food sovereignty' is itself up for debate (Yale University 2013). But in any case, whatever the popular movement decides to call it, the essence of a commitment towards communities reclaiming the equipment to determine their future will not go away. In this sense, the

food issue is now, and will continue to be, a rallying-point for struggles against imperialism more generally.

The urgency lies in the fact that the current food system is not only socially unjust – which would be reason enough to challenge it – but has also exhausted itself ecologically. So a new farming practice must mean fundamental changes both in landholding and farming technique. In this sense, we could consider agroecology the practical ‘wing’ of food sovereignty/autonomy.

Agroecology signifies a commitment to a new agricultural science, one which recognises that methods of farming cannot be separated from socio-institutional change. It thus addresses both institutional dimensions (structures of autonomous local power) and technical ones (agricultural practices which act in harmony with natural processes and restore the soil). The intrinsic principle linking the two is that both proceed by unleashing the creative forces of self-organisation (emergent order) in complex systems, of which both society and the soil are examples.

In an institutional sense the guiding principle is commons, applied both to property relations (e.g. in land) and to creating a co-operative approach to knowledge and technique, which will facilitate the invention of a new paradigm. While such principles have always been around in peasant struggles, they are qualitatively deepened in today’s movements, notably by an infusion of indigenous perspectives and ecofeminism; they thus explicitly break with capitalist/imperialist attitudes to the natural world and our relationship with it. In the words of the People’s Agreement of Cochabamba, ‘Humanity confronts a great dilemma: to continue on the path of capitalism, depredation, and death, or to choose the path of harmony with nature and respect for life’ (PWCCC 2010). The definition of commons becomes in this case less a form of ‘ownership’ – of land, genetic resources or ideas about farming technique – and more one of stewardship.

In the first place, agroecology recognises that grass-roots experimentation and popular knowledge systems are science, and are indeed its foundations because they offer a way of reconnecting with traditional sustainable practices. At the same time, research institutes and laboratories will have an indispensable role. In this respect, Cuba provides a valuable example, where research institutes

offer practical high-tech support for grass-roots experimentation (Rosset 1996). In the Cuban case, the degradation of the soil has been seriously addressed (Gersper et al. 1993), and there is evidence that a Marxian approach to science – holistic and less reductionist – has been key (Levins 2005). It is therefore not just a question of freeing agricultural R&D from corporate agendas – which would be the minimum requirement – but more profoundly of a recognition that complexity and holism are both the creative edge of ‘official’ science and the central principles of traditional knowledge, and can therefore be the unifying principle between the two. Self-organising systems look in the direction of autonomy and robustness in response to system perturbations (Heylighen 2008), which will in fact be the only possible human response to the acute climate challenges of the future.

In all these respects, the imperialism of food is already beginning to generate its opposite.

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## Food and the International Division of Labour

There have always been many vital reasons for a significant interest in the study of food. Starvation (and its continuation by other means such as famines), social determinants of obesity, the question of national 'food security' or people's right to 'food sovereignty' and the need for agricultural surplus as a prerequisite of any kind of economic development are a few of the many topics of significant interest. This well-founded interest and wide range of topics are nevertheless not enough to establish any evident link of food with imperialism, nor with the main question of this essay: the international division of labour. Yet, let us recall that the question of food has been part of states' agenda since the early days of colonialism and, as we will see, a concern of the students of imperialism since the very beginning of its theorising.

A single issue, terms of trade, (sometimes known by its acronym NBTT, for net barter terms of trade), has dominated the debates about food and the international division of labour in the 20th century. It is only recently that new perspectives and other topics have been debated at reasonable length. We will begin by summarising early views on this issue in the works of Kautsky as a first critical approach to the 'agrarian question'. Then we will move from this and other subsidiary remarks in the formulation of the classical theories of imperialism to its predominance in the first formulation of the concepts of centre and periphery in the thought of Latin American structuralism and its long-standing influence in dependency and world-systems theories. We will present a summary of the enormously wide empirical and theoretical questions and criticism raised about the structuralist formulation. Finally, we will briefly review the renewal of the agenda on the question of food and the international division of labour as seen, for example, in the study of global value chains and food sovereignty.

### Kautsky: food production in transition

While trying to lay out the foundations of how to understand the process of the expansion of



capitalism's social relationships in the countryside and its various tendencies and counter-tendencies, Kautsky (1988) formulated several systematic observations on agriculture in the international division of labour. First of all he noted that the last quarter of the 19th century had involved a change in the terms of trade of agricultural products. Despite these being favourable to agriculture up until 1870, Kautsky observed that the movement has been reversed since then and proposed that this was the consequence of the expansion of industry. It should be noted that this was at odds with what classical and neo-classical economists alike expected, due to diminishing returns in the production function of primary products. Kautsky's explanation was an early insight into the idea that competition in the world market operates by articulating different modes of production. For Kautsky, the deterioration of food's terms of trade stemmed from its prices not being determined by costs of production under regimes of simple commodity production. Instead, prices were formed below those costs as a desperate response by agriculturalists to state tax pressure and indebtedness (by-products of militarism and national debt under imperial rule). This in turn could be sustained over time because most food producers did not depend on wages for their subsistence but rather on their own production (and were thus subject to over-exploitation). Kautsky predicted that people in colonial countries thus became vulnerable to the outbreak of famines after integration into the vortex of world competition, a measure of whose power and atrocity is blatantly illustrated by the image of countries exporting food while their farmers starve. On the other hand, European producers faced productive reorganisation as a consequence of competition. Landowners had to convert their production to manufacturing activities: breweries, sugar factories, and distilleries became common in the countryside. Thus, Kautsky expected that the growth of agro-industries would become centralised and concentrated. In other words, the industrialisation of agriculture left smallholders even more bound to the monopsonist power of capital, leading them to become serfs of industrial capital.

In sum, what stems from Kautsky's masterpiece is a picture of food production as a residual pre-capitalist production that is facing strong transformation with worsening

terms of trade (though presumably transitionally) as the system moves quickly towards agro-industrialisation.

### The Prebisch/Singer hypothesis

Almost half a century later, Latin American Structuralism (also known as *cepalismo* after CEPAL, the Spanish acronym for the Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe [Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean]) also began by ascertaining that the terms of trade vis-à-vis manufactures were worsening for food and other primary products in which developing countries had a major interest. This was the basis for a theoretical framework intended to bolster a development strategy that sought to replace imports with the production of value-added goods domestically, which would entail a long-term widening and horizontal integration of manufacturing industry. Their 'manifesto' (Prebisch 1949) proposed an innovative view attributing the ongoing changes after the 1930s to a response to the new international situation, in sharp contrast to the dominant neo-classical interpretation that assumed there were no alternatives to primary export-led development. It understood the moment as a long catastrophic conjuncture for economic growth. Structuralists interpreted this crisis of export-led development (something they termed *desarrollo hacia afuera*, and whose limits and social drawbacks they took the opportunity to criticise) as a positive transition towards internally oriented urban-industrial development (*desarrollo hacia adentro*) that opened up the opportunity for a reshaping of the international division of labour. Their proposal was to further support this transformation of world trade with the help of the state in order to overcome backwardness and income inequalities by sponsoring a project of industrialisation.

But if this was the context that these theories originally attempted to explain, their enduring influence went well beyond these initial parameters. The question of the deterioration of terms of trade of agricultural products (and other primary products) is at the core of Structuralist ideas, as well as those of Dualism which posits that the world can be divided into a 'centre' of industrialised countries and a 'periphery' of primary products exporters. Their key policy proposal presupposed the idea of unequal exchange as well: a

framework to advance late industrialisation in order to overcome under-development.

Against the neo-classical narrative of comparative advantage, Structuralists popularised the hypothesis of the deterioration of the periphery's terms of trade, named ever since the Prebisch/Singer Hypothesis, after Prebisch (1949) and Singer (1950). Defined as the ratio between the unit prices of exports and imports, the terms of trade decline when the relative price of the country's imports increases. Besides highlighting the obvious pressures that this situation places on the current account (exacerbating a trade deficit), Structuralists also attempted to verify the empirical validity of the hypothesis that relative prices have been constantly moving against peripheral countries, understood as primary producers since 1870. The shift from agricultural prices to national trade was not the only difference with Kautsky: the causes of adverse terms of trade were grounded on quite different arguments. Instead of resorting to the articulation of pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production, they proposed the concept of structural heterogeneity and pointed towards the structure of the periphery's international trade.

Structural heterogeneity is the second level of Dualism in *cepalino* thought. Structuralists argue that the centre and periphery have different production structures arising from a certain historically constructed international division of labour. The periphery has 'another economy', in the sense that it is supposedly governed by a different set of rules (Love 2005). At the same time, the productive structure of the centre is assumed to be homogeneous, whereas the periphery suffers from structural heterogeneity; that is to say, dualism on an international scale is replicated within the peripheral countries. Structural heterogeneity is defined mainly in terms of productivity: homogeneous countries have highly productive sectors all across the economy, whereas in peripheral countries a 'modern pole' coexists alongside 'primitive sectors whose productivity and income per capita are probably comparable to those that prevailed in the colonial economy or even in the pre-Columbian era' (Pinto 1970). High productivity is usually restricted to a small enclave dedicated to agricultural or other primary exports, generally owned by foreign capital, and to a large extent isolated from the rest of the economy. Thus, there are few potential

spillovers from 'progress' within the 'modern pole'; for instance, profits are expatriated via imported luxury goods or remittances. Structuralist ontology thus begins by dividing the world system into centre and periphery, and then further applies this dualism to the internal dimensions of peripheral countries.

The deterioration of terms of trade was explained both from supply and demand sides. In the former, structural heterogeneity implies a situation characterised by high rates of long-term rural (and urban) unemployment in which many producers subsist on small-scale food production. This in turn exerts a pressure on wages that ultimately prevents redistribution of productivity improvements in the peripheral modern sector and thus unit costs fall, allowing a transfer of productivity gains to the buyers; that is, to the centre. From the demand side, the story is better known: a disparity in income elasticities of imports in centre and peripheral economies favours the increase in prices of products produced by the centre. As the periphery exports food and other primary products while importing luxury goods, any rise in the income of the periphery leads to an increase of the demand of imported goods and a further deepening of its imbalances. At the same time, the centre improves its balance of payments, even as its income rises. Union pressures in industrialised countries contribute as well to this price distortion mechanism. This dynamic, together with the oligopolistic protection of the rate of profit, prevents a decline of manufactured products' price proportional to the constant rises in their productivity. Cardoso's correct inference of this statement, namely that in ECLAC's view, agents of production 'manage, by virtue of their politico-organizational strength, to obstruct the operation of the [international] market' (Cardoso 1977: 12) shows the causal hierarchy behind their reasoning: at the core of structuralist thought, institutions are conceived in a normative fashion as separate from (and above) social relationships of production and exchange (see Grigera 2013).

Latin American Structuralism inspired a few other traditions that departed from ECLAC's thought in different ways. One was Dependency Theory, a more revolutionary break with free-trade liberalism. For Dependency, not only were terms of trade uneven for food exporters, but this was in turn creating a wicked class structure in the

periphery: the domestic bourgeoisie was becoming a *comprador* class, a lumpen bourgeoisie that was unable to lead national development. The only way out of this perverse structure of the international division of labour was a socialist revolution that would unlink from the world market or heavy state intervention.

### Critiques and alternatives to the Prebisch/Singer hypothesis

This characterisation of the trends in terms of trade was rejected both on theoretical and empirical grounds. Neo-classical economists were first in advancing a strand of critique against Structuralism. Viner (1951) argued that because of an economic law – ignored by structuralists – that technology would advance most rapidly in the manufacturing sector relative to agriculture, terms of trade should, *pace* the structuralists, actually favour agriculture in the long term. Viner's line of argument would later be quite closely replicated by Baumol (1967), regarding the relative prices of manufacturing and services, a process that came to be known as 'Baumol's disease'. Criticism of structuralism stemming from Marxism, on the other hand, often pointed out the lack of relevance of physical quantities to understanding the nature of (international) exchange; that is, to the difficulties in accounting for labour differences. Thus, terms of trade is not to be expressed in physical quantities but in exchange value terms; that is to say, according to amounts of abstract labour for each kind of commodity.

These critiques were acknowledged and partially answered, but showed the quite different theoretical influences behind structuralism and Dependency Theories. While structuralists engaged in a deeper reformulation of international trade theory that further departed from neo-classicism's comparative advantages premise mainly on its empirical inadequacy, some dependency theorists tried to reconcile their findings with Marxist thought. One such attempt was an alternative to the idea of declining terms of trade: 'unequal exchange' that stemmed from a strong imbalance of wage levels between centre and periphery and equalising of rates of profit. The unequal exchange hypothesis implied that value was transferred to the centre not just in the export of primary products but rather with any kind of commodity. For

instance, Marini (1973) reconciles the law of value with unequal exchange through the idea of over-exploitation; that is to say, a wage level consistently below the cost of reproduction of labour power. For Marini, this situation could be sustained in the long run due to the existence of a large relative surplus population (ultimately a product of structural heterogeneity). Others in turn questioned the applicability of the law of value for the international market. They showed that Marx's writings on international trade (despite being incomplete) acknowledged the theoretical possibility for unequal exchange of labour and exploitation in international exchange. For instance, Marx in *Theories of Surplus Value* argued that in the world market 'the law of value undergoes essential modification. The relationship between labour days of different countries may be similar to that existing between skilled, complex labour and unskilled, simple labour within a country. In this case, the richer country exploits the poorer one, even where the latter gains by the exchange' (Marx 1975: 105–106; for a recent review see Itoh 2009).

Along with these discussions on the causes of declining terms of trade, the debates on the pertinence of statistical data and ultimately on the actual empirical existence of such a tendency were quite important as well. First, the data originally used by Prebisch to rest his statistical case measured the terms of trade of under-developed countries against the United Kingdom only, so it was argued that it could not serve as a proxy for industrial countries as a whole, as Prebisch intended. Then, these statistics mixed food and other primary products imported by the centre that where sourced from the periphery and the centre itself, valuation was inconsistent (imports where valued cost insurance freight [CIF], i.e. including insurance and freight charges, whereas exports were expressed in free on board [FOB] values, that is to say free of any shipping costs) and price indexes could not properly account for quality changes in manufactures over time. The choice of base years was also subject to controversy, as the 'secular' deteriorating trend was not to be confirmed but from 1870–1940 and with a smaller magnitude than what Prebisch originally suggested (Spraos 1980). Extending the analysis beyond those years resulted in a trendless pattern. Moreover, after 2000, a significant improvement occurred in the terms

of trade of food and other commodities, thus reopening the question of how to explain both the deterioration of the relative prices of food between 1870 and 1940 and the contemporary reversal of this trend.

### The contemporary agenda

Over the past three decades, a renewal of the agenda within political economy has brought new analysis of food and the international division of labour that finally moves beyond the debate on terms of trade. The perspective of global value chains (GVC) applied to food products, the political debate over 'food security' and 'food sovereignty', and the encompassing approach of the political economy of food are amongst the most relevant.

Even though global supply chains have been part of business and management concerns for a long while, it is only since the early 2000s that the concept of GVC has become popular among academic analysis of the global organisation of industries and their value chains (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz 1994; Gereffi and Lee 2012). As a loose prescription of how to describe the multiple dependencies behind a single final product and a concern on where surplus is accumulated, the application of GVC in the case of food products has led to varying results and conclusions. These range from cases where (in line with a general world-systems perspective) profit concentrates in the centre (such as the contemporary coffee chain; Ponte 2002) to others where peripheral countries have or had strong market power, were prime pricemakers, and developed cutting-edge technology in production (see Topik et al. 2006).

The question of 'food security' has served both to reveal the multiple tensions behind the international division of labour and as a tool for many developed countries in reshaping it. Defined as the right of states to determine food policies and intervene in food systems, under the sponsorship of several international organisations (such as the World Bank or United Nations), a detailed analysis of risks and possible shortages of the food provisioning systems and research on improvements to food productions was developed. 'Food security' served other purposes as well, such as defending the controversial subsidies to local agriculture in Europe and North America during GATT and WTO negotiations.

With a different emphasis, the international peasant movement Via Campesina has countered 'food sovereignty' with the idea of 'food security' by focusing on the decisions of those who produce, distribute, and consume food as opposed to the market and corporations. They have justly criticised the impact of the 'Green revolution' that increased crop yields without resolving the multiple situations of hunger and starvation and the 'food from nowhere' regime (Bové and Dufour 2001), though at the expense of romanticising non-corporate agrarian production.

Finally, the analysis of 'food systems', as complex, distinct systems of provision (whose uniqueness is presupposed on the significance of organic factors, the structural position of agriculture and household, and the persistence of articulation with non-capitalist forms of production) has been the trademark of the literature on the 'political economy of food'. Among other issues, the idea of a strict separation of agriculture and industry has generated several debates crucial to understanding the picture of the international division of labour behind structuralist and Dependency Theories. This view (that could be traced to classical economists) associated a strong agricultural sector with the impossibility of development. That was, for instance, the apparently inoffensive opening of Kautsky's *The Agrarian Question* (1988: 13): 'With the exception of a few colonies, the capitalist mode of production generally begin its development in towns, in industry'. Whether capitalist social relationships have completely disintegrated agriculture as a distinctive non-commodity production rumbles on after more than a century of debates about the nature of food production and its relation to industry.

Overall, after almost a century dominated by a static view of the international division of labour, where food production was associated with under-developed non-capitalist countries with adverse terms of trade, a new scenario is re-opening both new perspectives that transcend its theoretical assumptions and a contemporary and historical reappraisal of its actual patterns.

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## Food, Imperialism, and the World System

Humanity is part of the Earth's constantly changing ecological system. Settled agriculture has involved an attempt to subordinate 'nature' to human needs and wants in order to supply us with food, raw materials (especially for clothing), and fuel. But throughout recorded history some people have gone hungry while others have feasted. Even today, perhaps +/-15 per cent of the world's population suffers from hunger-related malnutrition. This finds expression in their reduced life expectancies, susceptibility to illness and diseases, and an abject quality of life. Famine has involved a more intense and periodic worsening of this situation leading to mass starvation, epidemic disease, a large rise in mortality, a fall in the birth rate, and mass migration in search of food and security.

Crises of subsistence, dearth, and famine have also existed throughout recorded history. Thomas Malthus famously argued that famines are a natural check on population growth; they are 'the last, the most dreadful resource of nature ... [which] ... levels the population with the food of the world'. (Malthus 1992/1798: 42) Neo-Malthusianism was a dominant way of thinking about famines in the 19th and early 20th centuries and it is still found in popular discussions. But in historical and scientific analysis it has been displaced. Malthus and his followers tended to overestimate the rate of population growth and underestimated the expansion of the food supply within modern capitalism. Beyond this there is now widespread recognition that the growth of population, the growth of the food

supply, and food distribution are all moulded by how society is organised, whether on a local or global scale.

If the food supply has seemed to be a problem, this has been partly because of what we eat and how we eat it; partly because of how we produce food; and partly because of how we distribute it. This has been analysed in terms of a succession of food regimes based on structures of production and consumption built around the changing forms of power of the advanced states. A focus on socio-economic forms, modes of production, and their different priorities is also necessary for a real understanding of famine dynamics when there is a catastrophic failure in a system. Famine, wrote Michael Watts, is 'an environmental crisis [that] not only probes the darkest corners of environmental relations, but throws into sharp relief the organisation and structure of social systems' (Watts 1983: 352).

In pre-industrial societies most of the population was rural and employed in agriculture. Today, in the most advanced countries, less than 2–3 per cent are employed in agriculture. In the previous two centuries, world population increased some 6–7 times but agricultural output grew some 10 times. This was made possible by rising productivity, which enabled the most advanced societies to become urban-industrial-service ones. On a global scale, too, the world's population became predominantly urban around 2000. But the gains in the world's poorer regions have been less impressive. On one estimate, some 11 million people in 2000 worked in agriculture in the most advanced countries. In the poorer countries, which contain most of the world's population, some 1.3 billion (US) got their living directly from agriculture.

There has been a tendency for some to romanticise the pre-capitalist and pre-colonial past and to picture the development of capitalism from the 16th century onwards as disrupting ecological equilibrium. This view has been caricatured as a model of Merrie

England, Europe, Africa etc. But the evolution of human society beyond the hunter-gatherer stage involved the unequal control of the means of production, the development of social classes, and conflicts over any surplus. Pre-capitalist subsistence crises could therefore be serious, reflecting a dynamic interaction between humans, their forms of social organisation, and the environment. There is more support for the argument that pre-capitalist societies did evolve some ways, albeit varying ones, to enable them to try to reduce (but not eliminate) the risk of famine, and that these societies also had some customary mechanisms to try to reduce some of the consequences of famine when it broke out.

With the development of capitalism as a mode of production, the organisation of agriculture became more sophisticated but also more contradictory. This makes the analysis of agriculture an important part of the wider discussion of capitalism and imperialism. Although output increased, in the short to medium term, the development of capitalism created new patterns of production and trade that undermined traditional support mechanisms. This has led to the argument that over the last few centuries the world has seen first an intensification of famines, and then their retreat. This, the argument continues, is to be explained by the particular historical evolution of capitalism and the changing forms of imperialism and colonialism within it. In the longer run major famine appears to have disappeared, save in areas of political turmoil. But new issues have arisen. With rising incomes has come a 'nutrition transition' involving a diet of higher value meat, dairy, vegetable, and fruit foods. This is straining production capacity. Food is also now highly processed. No less, if malnutrition and a daily struggle for food marks the lives of one part of the world's population, others struggle with obesity and everywhere clear class gradients continue exist in what is eaten, in what form, and how much of it.

Global food consumption per head, 2005–07 (kg per person per year, FAO Data)

	Population million	Cereals	Meat	Milk and Dairy	Cereals All uses	Daily Total Calories
Developed	1,351	167	80	202	591	3,360
Developing	5,218	155	28	52	242	2,619
World	6,569	158	39	83	314	2,772

### Agriculture and the global division of labour

From the 16th century onwards a global capitalist economy gradually developed based on an unequal geographical division of labour. Economic, political, and military power enabled the most advanced countries to seek to determine the opportunities available for development on the periphery. In this division of labour the poor countries (for a period as colonies then as independent countries known variously as the 'underdeveloped world', 'the Third World', the 'developing world', 'the South', the 'emerging markets', and so on) produced and continue to produce lower value goods which they exchange for higher value goods and services produced in the core. Until the late 20th century this division of labour led to their exporting foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials and importing manufactured goods. The table below shows the dominance of agricultural goods in poor countries' exports before the Second World War.

In the late 20th century, some countries (and most notably China) began to produce and export more basic industrial goods, but agriculture remains important and now many of these poorer countries import subsidised Western agricultural exports creating even more distortion in the role of agriculture.

Throughout history, most trade has been between advanced countries, although the precise share has varied. In the colonial era some 70–75 per cent of Europe's imports came from other European or advanced states and some 70 per cent of exports went to these states. The rest of the world has always been involved in the smaller part of world trade and this remains the case today. Indeed, despite the predictions of mainstream economists, most international trade in agricultural goods has also tended to be between the more advanced countries. This is not to say, however, that some businesses in the

advanced economies have not had a strategic dependence on certain foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials produced in the poorer countries.

With the arrival of Columbus in the Americas, a process of 'ecological imperialism' was set in motion. With European penetration (and sometimes ahead of it in the case of diseases), new plant and animal species were transferred and established themselves as part of the agricultural economy. Many of the foods that we think of as growing 'naturally' in different countries are in fact a product of such a diffusion, structured in no small part by food and raw material needs set at the core of the evolving global system.

In the Americas (and later Australia and New Zealand), the indigenous population was reduced in number and economically marginalised by European settlers. In the Spanish colonies, land grants enabled those favoured by the monarchy to establish large *latifundia* alongside smaller-scale forms of agricultural settlement. In the Caribbean and the southern US, plantations were developed to supply sugar, tobacco, and cotton to the Atlantic economy. In the 17th and 18th centuries, some Europeans migrated as free men and women but many went as indentured servants and labourers. But the major part of the plantation labour force was made up of black African slaves and their descendants. Some 9.6 million were transported between 1451 and 1870 with the highest numbers in the 18th century. Free agriculture in North America, which became more important during the 19th century, tended to involve grain and livestock production.

While slaves, tobacco, sugar, and cotton dominated the trade in the Atlantic in the 17th and 18th centuries, to the east it was the high-value spice and silk trade pioneered by the Portuguese, but then controlled for a long period by the Dutch, that was the initial means of a closer link between East and West.

Commodity composition of Third-World exports (%), 1830–1937

	1830	1912	1937
Agricultural raw materials	29.9	34.7	39.9
Food stuffs	47.2	50.2	46.3
Drugs	7.9	3.9	1.7
Metals	7.0	2.8	3.2
Manufactured	8.0	8.5	8.9

## European expansion, colonialism and agriculture

In the 19th century a more extended and deeper global economy developed in which the balance in agricultural trade and production shifted. While some early colonies gained independence in the Americas, there was a new round of colonial conquest so that European rule reached its peak in the first half of the 20th century. The number of colonial subjects rose from some 205 million in 1830 to 725 million in 1930 – around a third of the world's population with 75 per cent of these colonial subjects in Asia and 20 per cent in Africa. But establishing economic influence and political control on the ground took some time, especially when formal colonial rule was established by drawing lines on maps in European capitals. What some call the 'imperial high noon' lasted a relatively short time, from 1918–39. In the 1930s, in particular, the economic crisis encouraged the imperial states to look to tie their colonies more closely to the 'mother country'.

From the early 19th century to the Second World War, Britain was the world's leading colonial power. But its role was distinctive. As early as the 1800s, agricultural employment had fallen to less than 40 per cent and by 1851 Britain was 50 per cent urban. By the 1900s, agriculture provided only some 10 per cent of employment – a share that would fall to less than 1 per cent a century on. Agricultural output rose consistently, but by the 1900s Britain was importing over 70 per cent of its food needs; a dependence on global agriculture that no other major economy had at this point. Britain's ties with its formal and informal colonies were very close. In the mid-19th century, John Stuart Mill described Britain's colonies less 'as countries, carrying on an exchange of commodities with other countries, but more properly as outlying agricultural or manufacturing establishments belonging to a larger community' (Mill 1940/1848: 685). In many other advanced states, domestic agriculture would continue to play a more prominent role in the food supply system until the second half of the 20th century.

Trade in the global economy, subject to significant shorter-term variations, has historically tended to grow faster than production. In the 19th century, the crude estimates available suggest that trade may have risen from 3 per cent to 30 per cent of output. This was

made possible by improvements in communications and transport, economic reorganisation, and the increasing commoditisation of production. But the trade of the colonial countries started from lower levels and grew slightly less fast and more unevenly than world trade. Nevertheless, by the late 19th century, the first multinational agricultural businesses had emerged linking the different parts of the food chain and helping to supply and mould changing food-consumption patterns in the advanced countries.

In thinking about the development of the wider food supply system in the colonial era it is normal to divide the world into three zones. Within Europe (to the north in Scandinavia, to the east as far as Siberia, and to the southern shores of the Mediterranean), a heavily agricultural semi-periphery developed exporting grain, fruits, and dairy products to Western Europe. Here could be found differing mixtures of landed estates run by more or less modernising aristocracies and a mass of peasant producers, themselves divided into richer, middle and poor peasants, the latter struggling to resist decline into a landless class.

A second zone was made up of areas of European settlement; initially the Americas but then also Australia and New Zealand. Forms of slavery and unfree labour migration continued to be important into the 19th century. Some 160,000 'convicts' were transported to Australia between 1787 and 1868 to create a new labour force there. But free labour movement became more important for these areas. Some 44 million migrated from Europe between 1821 and 1915. Alongside the traditional plantation crops of the Americas, the production and trading of grain, animals, and dairy products became increasingly important, assisted by developments in communications and shipping. The area under crops in Europe and these regions of European settlement doubled between 1850 and 1930 as frontiers were pushed outwards. These regions had the most sophisticated forms of agriculture, with the highest levels of agricultural exports per head, and relatively high levels of per capita income. This stimulated new patterns of food consumption. The high per capita income in late 19th-century Canada and the US is well known, but Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay too had relatively good per capita incomes based on their



agricultural export trade to Europe and not least the United Kingdom.

The third zone was made up of the largely tropical colonies in Africa and Asia acquired in the 19th century. Here agriculture was much less directly focused on meeting imperial needs. The larger part of food production continued to be subsistence or for local markets, and most colonies had relatively small shares of output going into international trade. Europeans saw themselves having a civilising mission in which the imposition of more advanced liberal market economic processes was central. The scale of the consequent disruptive impact is highly contested. Some colonies had high levels of exports per head; for example, Malaysia, Sarawak, and Mauritius. But in many, exports per head were very low. In the cases of India (a formal British colony) and China (formally independent but prey to European influence), exports per head were tiny even though overall these countries were important to the international economy. But the fact that some more advanced sectors were created did help to define the wider political economy of the colonies.

Commercial exploitation of agriculture in these states involved the creation of cash crops. Where continuous cropping was possible and some capital larger inputs were needed, commercialisation involved the creation of plantations under settler control or management. This included the production of goods like tea, coffee, some palm oil, and raw materials such as rubber. Where crops were annual and capital inputs smaller, cash cropping took the form of peasant farming, as in the production of cocoa and groundnuts. Here, risk was pushed onto the shoulders of the peasant household and this encouraged a degree of self-exploitation to survive. In both instances, however, to create the basis for commercialisation the traditional forms of land ownership and labour had to be undermined to create a more market-based system.

The dynamic of colonial accumulation was uneven. Crop acreage expanded (on one estimate by 70 per cent in these regions between the 1850s and the 1930s) more slowly than in more advanced regions. Output grew but productivity was low and its growth less impressive. Another sign of the weaker integration was the limited infrastructure development, it being designed to secure political rule and to get agricultural goods and other raw

materials to the ports rather than to lay the basis for sustained development. By 1930, Latin America had only 13 per cent of the world's railways, Asia 11 per cent, and Africa 5 per cent.

It was once common to talk of an economic dualism between a backward, traditional sector and a more modern 'enclave'. More radical accounts recast these arguments in terms of social formations, perhaps combining different modes of production. The practical difficulty is to understand how different forms interpenetrated, directly and indirectly, rather than existed side by side.

There were also other flows that were important in this third zone. In the Indian Ocean and Pacific, the 19th century also saw the development of a growing trade in rice. Migrant labour moved too, especially from India and China. Trade in agriculture-based drugs was also important; not just tobacco but for a period a high-value trade in opium under British control. This helped to open up the Chinese economy and laid the basis for some still-surviving multinationals as well as feeding the general process of accumulation.

From the late 19th century until the late 20th century, political discussion of the problem of agriculture, colonialism, and imperialism was bound up with what was called 'the agrarian question'. Given that industrial capitalism characterised the smaller part of the world, radicals focused on whether 'the peasantry' could be an agent for political and social change either independently (or led by intellectuals) or as part of a worker-peasant alliance led from the towns. But the peasantry, described by some as 'an awkward class', proved an ongoing political and theoretical problem. There was a widespread agreement that land reform had to be part of a process of rural change. This took place in a number of countries in the 20th century, sometimes from above, sometimes pushed from below. But, even where it had a positive impact, it did not realise popular hopes and create the basis for sustained rural prosperity.

### **Famine and European capitalism**

In Europe, the heartland of the early capitalist economy, subsistence crises gradually disappeared as incomes rose, agricultural output increased, and it became possible to import food from other regions and states. Famine disappeared first in Southern and Western

Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. On the European periphery, however, major famines occurred in the 19th century including Ireland and Finland in the mid-century and Russia from 1891–92. By this point, these economies were already part of the wider global capitalism. While some starved, food was exported and governments tended to watch fatalistically for fear of disrupting what many at the top saw as a natural correction of population to the means of subsistence. The famine in Ireland from 1845, when a million died and another million migrated (reducing the population from 8.2 to 6.5 million between 1841 and 1851), is often seen as a paradigmatic case for the debate over the relation of famine to capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism.

In the 20th century, mass famines did occur in Europe, especially in Russia in 1921–22, 1932–33, and 1946–47, but these were more clearly linked to war and state policies, though these too can be argued to have had their roots in the deeper political economy of global capitalism.

### **Famines and European expansion and control**

European expansion from the 16th century onwards began to integrate the Americas, Africa, and Asia into an evolving capitalist world economy. In the sixteenth century, the biggest changes were in the Americas where conquest and the spread of ‘old world’ diseases had a catastrophic effect on local populations. Estimates are more or less speculative but all point to huge population losses. But most attention in famine history has been devoted to the impact of informal and formal imperialism and colonialism in the two centuries after 1750. China escaped formal subjugation but its economic development was disrupted by successive wars and crises in which competing European interests played a role. Elsewhere, in Asia (but not Japan), and in Africa, formal colonisation took place in the 19th century. Where the incorporation of new regions into European empires involved the deployment of force and plunder, this often provoked immediate famine crises. These were an indirect product of the disruption of conquest but also a direct product of military action. The extent to which colonial armies deliberately destroyed crops and agriculture to enforce their domination is often not appreciated.

The colonial stage of integration into the global economy and its imperial subsystems was more systematic though still uneven. Commercialisation and new forms of taxation threw more risk onto the weaker sections of the rural and urban populations in many colonies. This increased their vulnerability in bad years. The worst period came in the late 19th century when, as Mike Davis puts it, ‘there is persuasive evidence that peasants and farm labourers, became dramatically more pregna- ble to natural disasters after 1850 as their local economies were violently incorporated into the world market’ (Davis 2001: 288). Harvest problems intensified in Africa, India, and China, creating major famines in the late 19th century. Within some colonies there could also be shifts in the areas affected. In his study of famines in Zimbabwe, Iliffe argued that ‘whereas early colonial famines centred where the European impact was least, later colonial scarcity concentrated where the European impact was greatest’ (Iliffe 1990: 79).

After the First World War, the scale and frequency of famine in most (but not all) colonies diminished. As in Europe, most 20th-century famines have been a product of war and political action in existing or newly decolonised states (e.g. India, 1942–43; China, 1958–62; parts of Africa, 1960s–1980s; North Korea, 1995–2000).

### **Analysing famines**

Deaths in famines are hard to estimate because famines have tended to occur in societies whose weak administrative structures are disrupted further by a famine crisis itself. There are also political pressures to understate. In the great Indian famine of 1876–78, the governor of Bombay said there were 150,000 dead but an official enquiry said 5 million. In other cases, critics of regimes have been accused of exaggerating the scale of famine deaths. Population losses (deaths plus the fall in the birth rate) are more speculative too. But crude estimates suggest that in the 19th century some 100 million might have died in famines and in the 20th century some 70 million. These are huge numbers but they are less than the cumulative impact of premature mortality from everyday hunger and disease. They are also less than those who died in wars but, given the close links between war and some famines, drawing too clear a line between them is not sensible.

Accounts of colonial famines seek to integrate a number of elements. There is the manner of incorporation of formal and informal colonies into the global economy; there is the scale and nature of their subsequent vulnerability to external shifts. There is the longer-term issue of the creation of new forms of land rights and the creation of wage-labour relations as well as the greater degree of commercialisation and specialisation involved in rural life. There is also the disruption of traditional forms of customary protection and moral economy in favour of colonial state policies based on a market political economy.

Here the work of historians interacts with that of other social scientists and, not least, economists. Amartya Sen (1981) has been especially influential in undermining both Malthusian accounts and those which attribute famines to simple market failures. Sen argues that the problem is not the lack of markets but the way that they function to reduce the purchasing power of some (reducing what he calls 'entitlements' to food) while enabling others to command a greater share of the food supply. The normal functioning of the market price mechanism can therefore be a key part of the famine process. Sen's radical critics regret that he incorporates too many of the assumptions of conventional economics, but his analysis of the contradictions of markets has been important in both undermining earlier arguments 'from within' and encouraging the view that active policies of income support can help deal with famines.

### The internal nature of famines

If the causes of famine are rooted in global and social inequalities, so too are its processes. Famine victims tend to be the poorest as they have least access to food and are most susceptible to the diseases that accompany famine crises. The Cooper Memorandum (1881) on Indian famine said that 'If the famine mortality in 1879 be tested it will be found that about 80 per cent of the deaths come from the labouring classes, and nearly the whole remaining 20 per cent from the cultivators owning such minute plots of land as to be hardly removed from labourers' (Ambirajin 1976: 8–9). It then dismissed these victims as a class 'low in intellect, morality and possessions'. This class nature of the famine process has been confirmed time and again (and

is supported by Sen's analysis of who gets what). Amongst the poor the victims then come disproportionately from the very young (especially babies who have been weaned) and the old. The one peculiarity is that in some instances adult women have been found to have had higher survival rates than men. Whether this is because the texture of household relations is more nuanced than accounts often suggest or because women have better biological, individual, and collective ways of coping remains unclear.

The term 'famine victim' is itself controversial. People do not wait passively to die. They struggle to survive but are forced to make 'tragic choices'. Survival involves various household strategies. These include looking for work, scavenging, selling off less important possessions. The balance between animals and humans shifts in favour of the humans. As hunger intensifies it then becomes necessary to sell off (in a more or less structured way) tools, animals, and land with the most irrevocable decisions left till last. When this fails, survival then might involve fleeing as refugees to escape death or to find it in new places if the gamble to migrate does not work.

Part of our difficulty in understanding this is that outsider accounts tend to veer between the sensational, stressing how famines bring out the worst in human beings (abandonment, murder, and cannibalism), to accounts that stress fatalism and passivity to other accounts which focus on 'coping' by co-operation and mutual aid.

Recovery is also part of the famine process. Demographic recovery may be quick. A famine not only increases the death rate, it reduces the birth rate. Marriage rates fall, sexual activity diminishes as the human body weakens, conception is harder, spontaneous abortions and stillbirths more frequent and infant mortality (often unrecorded) rises. But with increased nutrition, marriage and birth rates can rise quickly and the death rate falls to pre-famine levels. But some health analysts speculate that the human body continues to carry the hidden scars of famine in later life, and is reflected in development problems and susceptibility to later disease and diminished life expectancy. Little is known about any long-term 'psychological' and ideological wounds.

Famine processes involve winners as well as losers. Someone must buy the land,

animals, tools, and possessions that are sold. In the process, buyers increase their relative position and status. At the macro level, Mike Davis has stressed the contribution of famine to a larger global process of proletarianisation on the one side and accumulation on the other. 'The great Victorian famines were forcing houses and accelerations of the very socio-economic forces that ensured their occurrence in the first place' (Davis 2001: 15). But we have too little knowledge of how this might have worked at particular times and in particular places and what was done with the different possessions that some gained from the dispossessed.

### Famine policies

The recognition of the role of policy in famine has led to claims that famines involve acts of genocide. But few non-fascist governments appear ever to have seriously willed the death of part of their own population. Culpability arises rather because other priorities have helped cause famine and created the justification for doing too little too late to deal with famine once it occurs. One common factor has been a reckless determination to accept a degree of rural suffering as part of the process of development; an idea brutally expressed in the late 19th-century Russian comment that 'Even if we starve we will export grain'. (Figes 1996: 158) In war, too, victory at all costs has meant a willingness to risk famine for parts of your own population (apart from imposing hunger on your enemy through blockages etc.); something seen in the notorious Bengal famine of the Second World War.

'Other priorities' have also helped mould weak policy responses. In the 19th century, responses were further constrained by the economic thinking that saw famine as a

necessary correction and all but the harshest forms of relief as a disruption of the market mechanism; a situation evident in both Ireland and India.

### Development of the modern global food system

The Second World War disrupted the existing colonial ties, and aspirant imperial powers in the form of Nazi Germany and imperial Japan briefly attempted to create new agricultural hinterlands for themselves. Although the older colonial ties were re-established after 1945, decolonisation came fast from 1948 to the 1970s, by which point only a number of smaller European colonies were left. This helped shift the global food regime from one built around European colonialism to one, from the 1950s to the 1980s, structured by US policy and the Cold War. Then, from the late 1980s, another shift took place to an increasingly (but still largely US-dominated) neo-liberal corporate regime.

Before 1945, only Japan of the peripheral countries had managed to achieve a degree of sustained industrial growth. After 1945, Japan, along with many European states, modernised agriculture, industry, and their wider economies. Then, in the late 20th century, some newly industrialising countries in Asia began to follow them, significantly reducing the role of agriculture in their own economies.

This was possible because after 1945 there was a massive but uneven growth of agricultural output. Land devoted to agriculture globally increased from 1.2 to 1.5 billion hectares. Forests have been cut down to grow grains for humans and animal feed, a necessary step as richer people consume a higher share of their diet as meat. But the main cause

Increase in population, calorie supply, and agricultural production (FAO Data)

	World		Developed		Developing	
	1961/1963	2005/2007	1961/1963	2005/2007	1961/1963	2005/2007
Population Million	3133	6569	1012	1351	2140	5218
Cereals (million tonnes)	843	2,068	500	904	353	1,164
Meat (million tonnes)	72	258	52	109	20	149
Daily energy supply index	100	100	134	121	84	94

of the output growth was 'the green revolution': a combination of specialised breeding of grains and animals to increase yields, and the intensification of agriculture with the use of equipment, energy, chemicals, and water. Ecological problems and the high inputs involved mean that there are serious doubts about the possibility of projecting this model indefinitely into the future to meet the needs of a larger global population with higher incomes.

In the global South as a whole, the rural economy became ever more closely tied to a wider global economy dominated by rich states and their agri-businesses. Neo-liberal policies, pushed by the powerful capitalist states, focused on opening up agricultural markets but, with agricultural production heavily subsidised in the dominant economies, this created further problems in the global South. These policies continue to involve the use of the 'visible hand' of the state to encourage a continuing process of 'accumulation by dispossession'. The exact pattern that has emerged varies by region and country but the general tendency has been towards an intensified commercialisation and commodification of land, labour, and capital in the countryside, and more high-level food processing, especially for urban consumers.

The global food system is now often described as an hourglass with large numbers of farmers at the top and large numbers of consumers at the bottom but linked by narrow channels controlled by a small number of agribusinesses. These agribusinesses have grown at a national and regional level, pushing aside local actors and co-operatives. But they have also increasingly come to be dominated by global transnationals. These (e.g. Monsanto) control inputs like equipment, seed, fertilisers, and other chemicals. They involve wholesale traders, sometimes called the 'invisible giants' of the global economy who buy up most of the world's harvest of major crops (Cargill, Bunge, Archer Daniels Midland). There are the global food processors and manufacturers (e.g. Kraft, Unilever) and more recently we have seen the rise of global supermarket chains which not only dominate retailing in many countries but now also control parts of the food-supply chain as well (e.g. Walmart, Tesco, Carrefour). This has also involved the development of different forms of contract farming which directly tie producers at the bottom end of the food

chain to companies and consumers at the top. With this concentration, it is not surprising that perhaps one-third of global agricultural trade now takes place as intra-company trade. 'There isn't one grain of anything in the world that is sold in a free market. Not one! The only place you see a free market is in the speeches of politicians,' said the CEO of Archer Daniels Midland in the 1990s (Patel 2008: 99).

Some countries continue to develop with strong agricultural sectors. Brazil is now a major food exporter of red meats, coffee, corn, and soybeans. But more rapid growth in much of the developing world has more often led to these economies becoming net importers; a trend that is likely to grow with the current structure of production and distribution. Subsistence forms of agriculture have been pushed to the margins of the rural economy and many poor countries now export specialised agricultural products to the advanced ones (fruits, vegetables, flowers etc.). But they have become net importers of more basic grains, often from subsidised production in the advanced countries.

Within countries, the process of rural dispossession has reduced the numbers of peasants both relatively and absolutely. There is significant debate about the extent to which 'a classical peasantry' still survives as a class. In the countryside, landless labourers live alongside small-holding households whose family members are forced to engage in off-farm work to keep the household going. They do this either by working on bigger farms or in local trades or by migration to the towns, often joining the burgeoning informal economies that characterise southern cities. These processes help to increase the reserve army of labour but do not lead to sustained industrial growth. They also impact in new ways on internal rural and household relations, including the role of women, rural community support networks, consumerism etc. as well as on forms of social action and political perspectives.

The unequal command of food supplies in the global system is generating new issues or a reformulation of old ones. 'Food security' is a problem for those with little food but also for richer states, including developing ones. China moved ahead of the US as a food importer in 2012, for example. There is a growing interest from both the Middle East and China in land deals in Africa. These are,

in part, a product of concerns about future food availability. This has led to speculation that new forms of agri- and food-based imperialism will mark the 21st century in the ways that they have marked previous centuries.

In the second half of the 20th century, the evolution of international agencies began to allow the monitoring of famine threats and some forms of inter-state international aid began to develop. Non-governmental organisations began to take up the question of famine. The Save the Children Fund was created in the aftermath of the First World War. Oxfam was created during the Second World War. At the end of the century, famine was taken up as a global issue by pop stars and the music industry. But some governments saw such interventions as foreign interference. Others argued that if national priorities were distorted, so too were global ones. In the late 1980s, when famine hit Ethiopia, the resources devoted to dealing with mass starvation there are estimated to have been less than 0.01 per cent of global military expenditures.

Today it is commonly argued that, compared to the past, only smaller-scale local famines are possible. But endemic hunger marks the life of a significant minority of the world's population. In the future, food demand will rise, partly because of global population, which will peak sometime in the next century, and partly, perhaps, because of rising incomes. The capacity of global agriculture to meet this as well as the global sustainability of an even more intensive industrialised agriculture is far from assured. Problems will also worsen if the current patterns of consumption based on meat consumption, high levels of food processing, and the move into bio-fuels etc. are maintained.

The likely scale of food problems in the future is disputed but, as with persistent hunger and famines in the past so in the future, endemic hunger cannot be seen as natural. It arises as an organic part of the way that the global capitalist economy has been and is organised. One political manifestation of this has been the return and likely persistence of food riots as those at the bottom of the system have protested against shortages, price rises, and speculation, and have looked towards a different and more moral economy for food production and distribution.

Capitalism therefore continues to develop as a contradictory system. But these

contradictions take a dynamic form in which the one constant is capitalism's inability to equalise relations between person and person, state and state, and the countryside and the town. In a global population of 7 billion, the world's poorest people and those most affected by hunger are often those closest to the production of food.

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## Gender and Violence

Gender-based violence has exploded globally. Reports covering wide-ranging acts of violence against women have populated social media and policy debates. These reports, mostly prepared by women's groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), United Nations agencies, and supranational agencies such as the World Bank or human rights organisations, speak to the persistence and/or (re)emergence of interpersonal and structural forms of violence against women on a global scale. The public outrage and the efforts of courageous women globally to stop violence have had limited impact on its eradication. Paradoxically, the perseverance of gender-based violence is taking place in the context of the explosion of feminist knowledge and activism on this topic (see Lentin 1999; Steger and Lind 1999; Weldon 2002). It appears that the more we know about violence against women and the more inventive we are in our strategies to stop it, the more it (re)appears in all aspects of women's lives. Thus, the key question remains: What social relations (re)produce, sustain, or at times adjust, violence against women? We may also ask: How should we make sense of the incomprehensible acts of killing, raping, harassing, or defacing girls and women in public or private spaces; or comprehend the burden of discrimination, inequality, displacement, dispossession, war, occupation, or militarisation on women? In addressing these questions, imperialism appears as the core co-ordinating force of a wide range of social, political, and economic relations. This analytical framework calls for a leap in

our understanding of imperialism and its co-constituent relations with patriarchal and racialised capitalist structures of power. This analysis treats imperialism not as an abstract category, but rather as capitalist social relations which is profoundly classed, gendered racialised, and globalised, and understands it as a set of complex and contradictory social relations with very tangible impacts on women's lives locally and globally.

In this essay, the concept of imperialism is historicised as a feature of capitalism formed in the course of transition from its commercial, laissez-faire to the current monopoly stage based on finance capital, leading to enormous concentrations and expansions of power in economy, politics, culture, and ideology. Imperialism is thus not understood as a spatial/geographical thing, but as a set of complex social relations where local and global structures of power continuously influence and (re)shape each other. To put it differently, imperialism is an intricate system of capitalist accumulation, one that is neither the simple sum of its parts nor a purely geographic phenomenon, but rather constitutes a complex network of relations with its own systemic dynamics. However, imperialism should not be reduced to 'capitalism on a world scale' or 'globalisation'; nor is imperialism the same thing as colonialism. Violence, in this essay, includes both individual and structural forms, and is a universal form of gender power relations with the propensity to develop particular characteristics in different spaces and places based on norms, values, traditions, cultures, modes of social relations, and historical epoch. In this sense, imperialism subsumes elements of capitalist patriarchies universally but transforms them relatively, considering the particularity of each situation.

Building on Zillah Eisenstein's groundbreaking anthology *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism* (1979) and Maria Mies's influential work on *Patriarchy and Capital Accumulation on a World Scale* (1986), there are two core arguments in this essay. First, there is global violence against women, to the extent that we can claim there is a 'war-on-women' (to evoke the imagery of 'war-on-terror' or 'war-on-drugs'). This is not a 'cultural' war, though cultural differences enact violence on women differentially. In other words, and to stress, culture per se

is not the root cause of violence. Eisenstein proposed that to grasp the origin and the function of modern capitalist patriarchy, we should approach 'the mutual dependence of capitalism and patriarchy' dialectically. She wrote, 'Capitalist patriarchy, by definition, breaks through the dichotomies of class and sex, private and public spheres, domestic and wage labour, family and economy, personal and political, and ideology and material conditions' (Eisenstein 1979: 23). Mies, following Eisenstein almost a decade later, argued that the origin of contemporary violence against women is in capitalism; however, it manifests specific enough characteristics to set it apart from the violence women experienced under slavery or feudalism. She wrote (Mies 1986: 169):

In the centers of the capitalist market economies, the expropriated men were turned into the new class of 'free' wage-earners, who own nothing but their labour power. But as owners of their labour power, they formally belong to the category of bourgeois 'free' citizens, who are defined as those who own property, and who can thus enter into contractual relationship with each other on the basis of the principle of exchange of values equivalent. Therefore, the proletarian men could be seen as historical subjects, as free persons ...

The women, however, have never been defined as free historical subjects in a bourgeois sense. They themselves, their whole person, their labour, their emotionality, their children, their body, their sexuality, were not their own but belonged to their husband. They were property; therefore, following the formal logic of capitalism, they could not be owners of property. (emphasis all in original)

The notion of 'property' in Mies's articulation is crucial for our understanding of the (re)production of violence against women in imperialist capitalism. In this sense 'property' means the logic of capital to own women's labour power and women's bodies as the reproducer of one's own labour power and the human species (for an intensive theoretical discussion of capitalism, women, labour power, work and reproduction, see Barrett 1980; Dalla Costa and James 1973; Ebert 1996; Federici 2012; Fortunati 1989; James 2012; Weeks 2011). At the core of current imperialist forms of

violence against women is the intensification of the scale of propertied women's bodies and sexuality that require further explication.

My second core argument is that capitalism has enormous power to organise and institutionalise violence against women through mechanisms of consent and force. This dual characteristic of capitalism forces it to enter into a symbiotic relationship with other social forces (nationalist, religious, and racialised patriarchies) to create, sustain, and perpetuate violence against women. The specific imperialist forms of violence against women are largely entrenched in this collusion and are exercised at the levels of the state and civil society. Therefore, more than other social formations, violence against women in imperialism is structural and ideological with global reach. In other words, imperialist forms of violence are *violence of scale and violence of intensification*.

The scale and intensity of violence under imperialist capitalism has connected the struggle of women for justice and freedom globally. It has also reawakened feminist-anti-imperialist consciousness and the need for international solidarity to a level unprecedented in the history of capitalism. The two main sections of this essay will highlight women's global experience with violence in state and civil society, and will conclude with women's contemporary challenges in building a platform for global resistance against patriarchal imperialism.

### Imperialism and the 'war-on-women'

I use 'war-on-women' as a metaphor to capture the extent of imperialist forms of violence against women. The imperialist 'war-on-women' is masculinised, militarised, and culturalised. It is happening in the state, the market, and civil society; in short, it is structural and ideological. The discussion in this section is organised under two broad categories of 'state' and 'civil society' with the full understanding of interconnectedness of these two spheres of social relations where they reinforce and (re)produce racial, sexual, and class power relations. Therefore some level of repetition and overlapping of ideas is to be expected under these categories.

### State violence

The emergence of capitalism created major transformations in the division of labour



worldwide. During the 'primitive accumulation' of the early stages of capitalism in Western Europe and its colonies, agrarian labour, usually under conditions of serfdom, was separated from the means of production and transformed into wage labour. This process replaced the rural subsistence economy based on production-for-use with the capitalist economy of production-for-value. This new mode of production appropriated and transformed the sexual division of labour, and thus thrived on the accumulation of value through slavery and women's labour and reproductive power. At the same time, the population of indigenous hunting-and-gathering societies found in Africa, the Americas, Oceania, and other territories was transformed into slave labour and appropriated directly, especially in the British and Spanish colonies of the Americas (Bhavnani 2001; Federici 2004, Linebaugh and Rediker 2000; Midgley 1998; Mies 1986; Smith 2005).

The international system in the imperialist era is full of contradictions between imperialist powers and colonised countries/peoples, between major imperialist powers and minor ones, even between continents, Europe and Africa, rich and poor countries. The organising of this international system is rooted in violence, including the two World Wars, which started in Europe. Women participated in these wars, but they were also raped and turned into 'comfort women,' for instance in Japan, to satisfy the demands of patriarchal nationalism and the sexual desire of patriarchal militarism (Enloe 2000; Soh 2009; Tanaka 2009).

Feminist theorists have argued that the capitalist state or nation states are patriarchal systems where the exercise of state power is also the exercise of masculine structural violence and coercion through which women are oppressed and exploited (Bannerji 1999; Jayawardena 1986; Jayawardena and De Alwis 1996; Joseph 2000; Moghadam 1994; Narayan and Harding 2000; Smith 2005; Walby 1992; Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989; Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999). The patriarchal capitalist state consists of institutions such as the military, police, prison, and law, which enable the state to institutionalise and organise forms of violence against women. Through the functioning of these institutions, the capitalist state gains the monopoly of violence (INCITE n.d.). Let us consider, as an

example, the imprisonment of women in the US. Browne and Lichter show that in the early history of the US imperialism, women were imprisoned for failing to conform '... to cultural norms of the feminine ideal' (Browne and Lichter, 2001: 613). They argue that most of these women were under the age of 25 and their crimes included "moral offenses" such as stubbornness, idleness, disorderly conduct, serial premarital pregnancies, keeping bad company, adultery, and venereal disease. Women and girls also were punished for being sexually molested or raped' (ibid.). Reporting the result of a study that Browne and Miller conducted in the 1990s at New York State's Maximum Security Prison for women, they observe that (ibid.: 618):

... the majority of incarcerated women in this setting had suffered severe violence, sexual attack, or sexual molestation prior to their incarceration. Women in the study were an average age of 32; about half were African American, one-quarter were Hispanic, and 13% were White non-Hispanic. Over two-thirds (70%) had been severely assaulted by at least one caretaker during childhood, over half (59%) had been sexually molested before reaching adulthood, and nearly three-quarters (37%) had been physically assaulted by an intimate partner. Three-quarters had been the victim of physical or sexual attacks by non-intimates as well. When all forms of violence were combined, only 6% of these women had not experienced physical or sexual assault over their lifetime. (emphasis in original)

Other studies have similar findings. The same pattern of a masculine patriarchal law-enforcing mechanism is being experienced by Aboriginal women in Canada. They comprise 4 per cent of the total population, but they comprise 34 per cent of the prison population (Canadian Human Rights Commission Report 2003). This number increased by about 90 per cent in one decade between 2002 and 2012. Women's incarceration is an instance of state structural violence, which is an integral part of capitalist sex, class, and race relations (Sudbury 2005).

Women's bodies are the source of instantaneous profit making on a global scale (Chin 2013; Jeffreys 2009; Kempadoo 2005;

Kempadoo and Doezema 1998). Joni Seager shows topographically and statistically that the global sex trade is a multi-billion dollar industry (Seager 2003: 56). She argues '[T]he global sex trade is sustained by astounding levels of coercion, torture, rape and systematic violence' (ibid.). She also presents us with the astonishing statistics: 'An estimated 50,000 women are trafficked into the USA each year', 'Up to half a million women and children are thought to be trafficked into western Europe each year', and 'Prostitution and sex trafficking represents 2% of GDP in Indonesia and 14% in Thailand' (ibid., 57). Commoditisation of women's bodies is a privilege of power. It is exercised by males individually, such as by committing rape at home or on streets. It is also institutionalised, such as rape of women prisoners by prison guards and police or rape of women in refugee camps (Global Migration Group 2008; United Nations 2013). Massive displacement, forced migration, and sex trafficking of women as a result of military and economic aggression have created a catastrophic level of poverty where women are becoming new slaves (Elshtain 1987; Giles and Hyndman, 2004; Hynes 2004; Martin 2005; Meintjes et al. 2001; Nikolic-Ristanovic 2000; Skjelsbæk 2001; Women, Law and Development International 1998). Seager states that 'The poorest of the poor are women' and they 'not only bear the brunt of poverty, they bear the brunt of "managing" poverty: as providers or caretakers of their families, it is women's labour and women's personal austerity that typically compensate for diminished resources of the family or household' (Seager 2003: 86).

Poverty is also racialised: women of colour, migrant and refugee women, native women, black and Latino women, in particular in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, will constitute the majority of the estimated 1 billion people living in extreme poverty in 2015 (World Bank). To comprehend the racialisation and commoditisation of women's bodies, it is important to remind ourselves of the inner contradictory logic of patriarchal imperialism. It has the enormous power to absorb en masse women's labour power to onset global accumulation of wealth, but simultaneously disempower women, cheapen their labour power, enslave their bodies, and create a global condition of precariousness for them where their bodies are dispensable and

disposable (Bales 1999; Butler 2004; Feldman et al. 2011).

Imperialist wars serve the purpose of reinforcing and realigning patriarchal, racialised, and colonised capitalist forces. A distinctive feature of imperialism is its dependence on war and militarisation as a mechanism to (re) produce itself and sustain its global hegemony. Imperialist wars in recent decades have penetrated all spheres of life from economy to schools, to borders, refugee camps, culture, and entertainment (Cole 2006; Eisenstein 2007; Moser and Clark 2001; Riley et al. 2008). Women and girl children have suffered greatly in the most complex and contradictory ways by wars. In the decade of the 1990s, the world also witnessed the genocide in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where rape, forced pregnancy of women, sex trafficking, and forced prostitution became part of the machinery of war. Feminist ethnographical studies show that women in war zones are regularly harassed and assaulted on their way to fetch water, get food from the market, or reach the headquarters of international humanitarian aid services where they are often forced to give their bodies to receive food (Moser and Clark 2001; Women, Law and Development International 1998). The horrific atrocities committed against women under the conditions of war lead us to conclude that imperialist wars are symbolically and literally fought on and over women's bodies. Women signify land, nation, culture, ethnicity, religion, and community to be captured, controlled, covered, or securitised. They are the 'honour' of the nation and culture; they are the property. They either save or betray the community through the conduct of their body and sexuality as ascribed by the patriarchal and racialised rule.

The Western imperialist powers involved in the former Yugoslavia's war in the 1990s, after intense legal wrangling, finally recognised the systemic use of rape as a 'weapon of war' against women in Bosnia Herzegovina (Giles and Hyndman 2004). As women in Bosnia Herzegovina, Africa, Palestine, and other war-ravaged regions were struggling with the aftermath of the war in refugee camps and more and more became the head of household or widowed, or were pulled into informal war economy, the imperialist powers were preparing for other wars. This time, though, women were used to justify war. To 'liberate' women in Afghanistan and Iraq and to

install 'democracy' in the Middle East became the imperialist *raison d'être* to further plunder the region (Abu-Lughod 2002; Chishti 2010; Hirschkind and Mahmood 2005; Russo 2006; Stabile and Kumar 2005). The 1991 and 2003 US wars on Iraq and the 2001 attack on Afghanistan were, much like those of the colonial past, in pursuit of economic, military, and political interests of European and US imperialist powers (Klein 2007). Not surprisingly, imperialist wars helped the re-traditionalisation, re-tribalisation, and re-primordialisation of these societies (Mojab 2010). In other words, the imperialist wars and occupation created conditions in which the tamed feudal and religious patriarchal forces, which had been suppressed by the emerging capitalist, nationalist, secularist, and modernist states since the early 20th century, were resurrected and (re)emerged with a vengeance. However, the presence of foreign occupying troops, lack of security, violation of human dignity, the rise in poverty, government corruption, in short the disappearance of the *social* in its totality, unleashed the force of patriarchy and legitimised the fierce controlling, disciplining, and punishing of women and girls by internal/native and external/foreign patriarchal forces (Al-Ali and Pratt 2009; Zangana 2007).

The purpose of citing prison, poverty, and war as forms of state violence is to make visible the scale and intensification with which capitalist patriarchy has gendered, racialised, and sexualised its imperialist domination. The hegemonic relations are established through the dual mechanism of consent and coercion. The capitalist patriarchal order utilises ideology, culture, and law to hold up the weight of its structural violence. For example, patriarchal capitalism has the capacity to execute legal reform to ameliorate gender, race, and class differences. In 'essence', though, the legal reform 'formalises' state violence through legitimising the dominance of the patriarchal, sexualised and racialised class in power. In other words, the ruling class has monopolised the state, in particular its instruments of political suppression and the legal system. This reality raises a serious consideration for the feminist anti-imperialist and anti-violence strategy: Is this colossal power reformable? If it is, would not legal reform inevitably lead us back into the very framework of the system which is fundamentally the cause of women's oppression

and exploitation? To confront white-male hetero-normative dominance in the institutions of the state or in the military, some feminist activists and scholars have proposed 'feminisation' of these institutions. These debates undoubtedly have slightly improved gender, sexual, and racial discrimination, but one may argue that they have failed to eliminate violence but have added women, people of colour, and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) persons to the hierarchy of these institutions. Cynthia Enloe's study of the militarisation of women's lives raises an important quandary: Do we make the military more equitable or do we militarise equality by legislating the rights of racial and sexual minorities to the military (Enloe 2000). To better grasp this dynamic (that is, the elasticity and proclivity of capitalist patriarchy to reform), let us think through its function within civil society.

### Civil society and violence

Feminist theories have clearly shown that much gender violence is also committed outside the sphere of the state; that is, in civil society. Yet the state mediates and regulates patriarchal violence against women (Fraser 1997; MacKinnon 1989). Civil society encompasses a wide array of social and ideological structures such as family, Church, media, and education. Contrary to the liberal notion of civil society as a 'third space' mediating between state and market, I understand it as an embodiment of racial, class, and gender power relations with strong ties to both the state and market. Therefore, civil society is not an autonomous space, free from the exercise of patriarchal capitalist forces. In the private sphere of home, Seager argues, 'Women suffer cruelties,' and 'For millions of women, the home is the most dangerous place they could be' (Seager 2003: 26). The Canadian Women's Foundation reports (Canadian Women's Foundation 2013: 2):

On any given day in Canada, more than 3,300 women (along with their 3,000 children) are forced to sleep in an emergency shelter to escape domestic violence. Every night, about 200 women are turned away because the shelters are full ... . As of 2010, there were 582 known cases of missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. Both Amnesty International and the United Nations have called upon the Canadian

government to take action on this issue, without success ... . In a 2009 Canadian national survey, women reported 460,000 incidents of sexual assault in just one year.

A similar pattern emerges in other regions of the world to the extent that the United Nations' 2010 *The World's Women* reports on violence against women as a universal phenomenon which appears in the particular forms of physical violence committed by intimate partners, sexual molestation and assault, femicide, and female genital mutilation (United Nations 2010). The report, addressing the role of media, argues 'Images in the media of violence against women – especially those that depict rape, sexual slavery or the use of women and girls as sex objects, including pornography – are factors contributing to the continued prevalence of such violence, adversely influencing the community at large, in particular children and young people' (United Nations 2010:127). Other studies also indicate a strong link between pornography and sexual abuse and marital rapes (Bergen 1998). Hearn suggests that '...virtual violences in intimacy through ICTs, such as forced use of pornography, use of pornography with children, digi-bullying, cyberstalking, internet harassment, "happy slapping", threatening blogging ... use of sex dolls, sex robots and teledildonics creates further possibilities for violence and abuse' (Hearn 2013). The point of reiterating, albeit briefly, the result of some of the statistical or analytical studies on forms of violence committed against women in the sphere of home, or on internet and media, is to show the boundless patriarchal capitalist attempt to enslave women's bodies and sexuality. The issue to consider is not only the matter of spatiality of violence (that is, private/public or state/market/civil society spheres), it is rather the scope and intensity of the imperialist 'war-on-women' globally.

Let us consider a different setting for the exercise of 'ideological' or 'cultural' violence against women. The imperialist wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were conducted primarily through high-tech military assault. However, the imperialist powers, led by the US, also undertook a cultural and ideological invasion through expansive 'post-war reconstruction' projects with 'democracy promotion' as its ideological core (Mojab 2009; 2011; Mojab and Carpenter 2011). The training of women to 'manage' and reassemble the society in

ruins, and funding their activism in a variety of NGOs, replicated the historical process of co-opting social movements through funding mechanisms and reinventing racist, colonialist, orientalist, and imperialist feminist praxis (Amos and Parmar 2005; INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence 2007; Naber 2013). Imperialist feminisms entered the scene of 'post-war reconstruction' with goals to 'liberate' and promote 'democracy' through 'women empowerment'. Their function is to legitimise militarised imperialist foreign policy based on the accumulation of wealth by dispossession. More significantly, they realign the foreign and domestic policy on controversial matters such as morality, family, sexuality, or women's reproductive rights. The renewed imperialist feminist tendencies in the last few decades have achieved three main goals. First, they have transnationalised religious-fundamentalist patriarchy. Second, they have relativised, localised, pragmatised women's struggle against patriarchal capitalism. Finally, they have discredited feminism globally and thus made the building of a revolutionary and internationalist feminist anti-imperialist project an insurmountable task. Financial, political, and ideological dependency on imperialist feminism have contributed to a culture of spontaneity, corruption, class animosity and rivalry of masculine-capitalism among women's organisations and activists. More significantly, they have depoliticised, institutionalised, bureaucratized, and fragmented the women's movement to the extent that the struggle against feudal-religious-capitalist patriarchy, or women's resistance against militarisation and securitisation, has been limited to vacuous human rights discourse and reform of legal structure. This point will be further expanded below.

In this context, military experts in collaboration with some political scientists and anthropologists produced new literature arguing for a closer link between 'post-war reconstruction' projects, civil society, and humanitarian-aid efforts with the armed forces (Natsios 2005). The *U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (with a foreword by David H. Petraeus, James F. Amos, and John A. Nagl and with an introduction by Sarah Sewall) attracted huge interest when it was published in 2007. In 2008, it was downloaded 2 million times (see Biddle 2008: 347–350). In the history of the academic publishing

industry, it was the first time that a university-based publisher had published an army manual. The seeds of the idea of the collaboration of military and civil society were cultivated in the Bush Administration National Security Strategy (released in 2002), in which ‘development’ was one of the ‘three strategic areas of emphasis (along with diplomacy and defense) ...’ (Natsios 2005: 4). The release of this document drew attention to the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the major player in the ‘post-war reconstruction’ projects in Afghanistan and Iraq. Based on the strategy of ‘defence, diplomacy, and development’, in the same year (2002) the Bush Administration announced an umbrella programme of reform called the Middle East Partnership Initiatives (MEPI), covering the area from Morocco to Pakistan. Zaki Salime argues that ‘MEPI followed a political rationality of “soft” reforms through enhancement of citizen-entrepreneurship, women’s empowerment, and capacity building of “civil society,” as a means to uproot “terrorism” and spread “democracy”’. She contends that MEPI, ‘has also mobilized funds to support NGOs and provide training for women, youth, entrepreneurs, and political players’ (Salime 2011: 215, 218; Salime 2010). Thus, ideas of civil society, and NGOs, in particular women’s NGOs, were promoted as venues for establishing capitalist democracy, in which the absolute rule of the patriarchal state would be realigned with the absolute rule of the patriarchal market/privatisation and capitalist ‘democracy’ to strengthen the condition of oppression and exploitation for women (for a comprehensive critique of the NGO-isation of women’s movement in Palestine post-Oslo peace process, see Abdo 2010; Hanafi and Tabar 2003).

The position of women is varied within and between different societies, and while there is certainly more that we need to learn about the extent of atrocities committed against women in each society, there are two arguments to be made. First, the state response to demands of women for a safe, equal, free, and just life are protracted over decades. Weldon, in her cross-national comparison study of democratic governments’ response to violence against women writes, ‘Although some national governments reformed rape laws or began funding shelters in the mid-1970s, many countries did not begin to address the problem of violence against women until the

latter half of the 90s, and many more only in the first half of the 1990s’ (Weldon 2002: 19). She emphasises that without a strong women’s movement, this level of policy and legal reform would not have been achieved (2002: 61). In the ‘Introduction’ of the influential anthology *The Color of Violence* (Women of Color Against Violence 2006: 1), we read:

However, as the antiviolence movement has gained greater prominence, domestic violence and rape crisis centers have also become increasingly professionalized, and as a result are often reluctant to address sexual and domestic violence within the larger context of institutionalized violence. In addition, rape crisis centres and shelters increasingly rely on state and federal sources for their funding. Consequently, their approaches toward eradicating violence focus on working with the state rather than working against the state. (emphasis in original)

The allusion to ‘professionalization’ and ‘working with the state’ above are significant for this discussion. Critical feminist studies show that the co-opting of women’s movements within the state and international institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and UN-based gender agencies, or other philanthropic foundations since the 1970s have depoliticised, institutionalised, bureaucratized, and fragmented women’s movements worldwide. The imperialist agenda of import/export of patriarchal networks, networks that include corporations, NGOs and humanitarian agencies, religious institutions, military and security forces, and cultural organisations have transnationalised capitalist patriarchy in such a way that there is little escape for women.

Second, since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack against the US, and the subsequent wars in the Middle East and North Africa, in some significant respects imperialist wars have interconnected and interrelated the oppression and exploitation of women in ways unparalleled in history. They have revived and realigned pre- and post-colonial tribal, religious, national, and sectarian grievances, disputes, and conflicts throughout most of Asia and Africa. Religions have taken a central stage in public lives, and thus secular space is shrinking globally (Amireh 2012; Moghissi 2013). Religious doctrines, from

Islam to Christianity, Judaism, or Hinduism, are governing women's bodies, sexuality, and gender relations. Regimes of 'gender apartheid' are established in Saudi Arabia (since its inception in 1932), in Iran (1979), Afghanistan and Iraq (2003). Women's rights are continuously violated which include their right to property, inheritance, child custody, or free choice in marriage, reproductive rights, education, employment, travel, and a life free from sexual harassment at home, schools, workplaces or on the streets. The widespread rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, 'honour killing', or humiliation and degradation are embedded in the social relations and the prevailing religious and cultural practices that women experience daily (Bennoune 2013; Reed 2002). Religious groups have joined forces to stop, protract, and reverse the outcome of more than a century of women's resistance against patriarchal and colonial capitalist domination. The alliance of religious forces at the UN-sponsored global conferences on women since the 1970s (Mexico, 1974; Copenhagen, 1980; Nairobi, 1985; Beijing, 1995) has dragged down the demands of women to safe and free access to abortion, contraception, and the right to same-sex marriage. The notions of 'culture' and 'diversity' have been evoked in these settings by the state representatives to legitimise the rule of 'local', 'particular' patriarchy. The logic of 'cultural authenticity' and at times anti-Western or anti-imperialist rhetoric is being used by the state and civil-society sector to preserve the right of the particular nation state to misogynistic religious practices.

A characteristic of today's imperialism is the convergence of its domestic and international relations. For instance, 'War-on-Terror' is an instantiation of the overlap of domestic and international forms of co-dependency in surveillance, racialisation, incarceration, or policing. The cyclical crisis of capitalist economy since the 1980s has incorporated surveillance, security, and incarceration into public policy (Feldman et al. 2011). There is an emphasis on disciplining and punishing the public, in particular women, youth, aboriginal peoples, poor, and people of colour, through such mechanisms as 'War-on-Terror' or 'War-on-Drugs'. Angela Davis argues that the 'Prison Industrial Complex' is a new addition to the 'Military Industrial Complex' (1998). The disciplining apparatus of the state is extensively privatised, militarised, and has

turned the securitisation and incarceration of people into profit. The migrant and refugee women, the sex trafficking of women, raising wired borders between the US and Mexico or building 'separation walls' in Israel and 'normalising' the right of the state to securitise citizens in border crossing or in schools are forms of racialised and genderised violence (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2009). 'War-on-Terror' policy absorbs public resources and (re)forms the crisis of patriarchal capitalist economy through the process of privatisation. 'War-on-Terror' is a violent model to inscribe law and order in 'lawless' capitalist-imperialist social order where, as Colin Dayan suggests, 'law is a white dog' (Dayan 2011). She traces the legacy of slavery in the contemporary US supermax prison facilities and shows the way the legal system on matters such as torture and punishment prepared the way for abuses committed by the US in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay prisons (ibid.). The policy has shifted attention from the state responsibility for human security to 'terrorism' and thus has targeted women, racialised, sexualised migrants and refugees mostly fleeing conflict zones.

Women are fiercely opposing and struggling against this complex network of patriarchies. Their resistance, courage, and resiliency are extraordinary. They have joined armed forces, and engaged in armed struggles, are combatants, suicide bombers, refugee camp social workers, community organisers, peace activists, refuseniks, humanitarian aid workers, leading protests and marches, and much more. The point is that they are not 'victims'; they participate, protest, dissent and resist in order to put an end to imperialism and its violence.

### **Anti-imperialism: A revolutionary feminist rupture**

Women and girls, day and night, go through the world frequently guarded against physical, sexual, emotional, cultural, religious, or economic assaults. They carry these burdens throughout their lives. Capitalism has produced a complex network of patriarchies to facilitate the accumulation of capital and to maintain social control. Capitalist patriarchy has conflictual and contradictory relations with women. Women are a social force to be managed and engaged with, but they are also to be controlled, punished, and disciplined.

When analysed deeply, one can see remarkable homogeneity in the 'gender project' of patriarchal imperialist order, despite its apparent diversity. Imperialist patriarchy has fragmented women's movements globally and has forced them to become donor-driven; the two forces of fundamentalism and imperialism are driving the global 'gender project', though opposing each other to divert attention away from the struggle around the oppression and exploitation of women. The two belligerent forces of imperialism and fundamentalisms are forcing women into a framework of patriarchal family roles, motherhood, morality and decency, nationalism, and cultural practices to reinforce gender violence. They have transnationalised the apparatuses of punishment and control of women's bodies and sexuality through instruments such as 'War-on-Terror', 'War-on-Drugs', torture, and surveillance.

Under these conditions, some theorists claim that imperialism is in the process of transforming into a new regime called 'Empire', characterised by eroding national borders and a dissolving nation-state system, which will leave the imperial(ist) order without leaders or centre (Hardt and Negri 2000). This is an optimistic, 'post-imperialist' scenario in which sovereignty is de-territorialised, leaving room for increasing mobility of labour, fluidity of capital, on-going migration, and organising on an international level. In this context of the 'withering away' of the nation state, human beings are said to be able to realise the dream of building a world that will turn its back on pillage and piracy and move towards equality and justice. However, developments in the first decade of this century point in a different direction. Although the world order is in a situation of flux, capitalist states today, as in the past, combine the need to cross national borders (for purposes of accumulation) with the urge to maintain spheres of influence (through war and occupation).

The global scene is messy and chaotic. We can conclude that the global explosion of violence against women coincides with the heightened finance capitalism in the past three decades, and remarkably resembles the globalised violence against the whole of humanity. At the core of current imperialist forms of violence is the intensification of the socialisation of production and the private appropriation of (re)production. At stake is building a global women's movement that

can relinquish itself from the restraining forces of reformism, relativism, essentialism, and pragmatism, and set a stage for a renewed revolutionary social transformation.

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## Imperialism, Uneven Development, and Revolution: The Example of Amilcar Cabral

It is important for us to identify the new victims and the new victimizers in the neo-colonial era – for we do not live in a post-colonial era as the postmodernists claim. We must struggle together both locally and globally. The local struggle must be combined with global or international struggle and solidarity. We must fight on all fronts .... We must carry on a continuous resistance, a continuous dissidence, which will forge the way to a better future for the peoples of the world. (Nawal El Saadawi 1997)

The masses are the torch-bearers of culture; they are the source of culture and, at the same time, the one entity truly capable of preserving and creating it – of making history. (Amílcar Cabral 1973)

The paralysis and inconsequentiality of post-colonial theory and criticism concerning globalised capitalism are so patently clear as not to warrant rehearsing again the objections of Aijaz Ahmad (1995), Arif Dirlik (1997), Neil Lazarus (1999), and others (see Schulze-Engler 1998; Stummer 1998). The charges range from the discipline's fetishism of textuality and its corollary metaphysics, its sly if civil evasion of 'contemporary imperialist practices' (Davies 1998: 23), to what Benita Parry calls the 'elective disaffiliation' of post-colonial critics 'from the variable articulations of an emancipatory politics' (1998: 48). This is not just because this genre is devoted to specialised studies on widow-burning or British colonisation of the Indian subcontinent, Australia, Canada, and South Africa (Ashcroft et al. 1989). The explanation is more than theoretical or discursive. Robert Young, the editor of the new magazine *Interventions: The International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* put his finger on its symptomatology: 'The rise of postcolonial studies coincided with the end of Marxism as the defining political, cultural and economic objective of much of the third world' (1998: 8–9). This diagnosis is more wishful thinking than a factual statement. To be sure, the 'Third World' as a homogenised entity never claimed to elevate Marxism as its all-encompassing objective; no one does this, anyway. Another agenda lurks in the background.

Post-colonialism seems to require a post-Marxism as 'supplement', a prophylactic clearing of the ground (Loomba 1998; Moore-Gilbert 1997). What is meant by post-Marxism or the 'end of Marxism' is really the reconfiguration of the international class struggle between the imperial metropolises and the revolting masses of the periphery. It signifies the end of the bourgeois national project initiated by the Bandung Conference led by Nehru, Nasser, and Sukarno (Ahmad 1995) and its project of plural national-liberation trajectories (Denis 1982). This project of post-colonial states modernising on the basis of anti-communism and pragmatic philosophy, reliance on Soviet military support and

cynical playing of the 'American card', collapsed with the bankruptcy of most neo-colonial regimes that succumbed to World Bank/IMF 'structural adjustment programs' and conditionalities.

Post-colonial normativity inheres in its claim to discover complexity and difference hitherto submerged by totalising axioms. The principle of uneven and combined development, as adumbrated by Marx and Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, and others in the socialist tradition, renders all the rhetoric of ambivalence, syncretism, and hybridity redundant. But this principle has been ignored or neglected because a linear teleological narrative of social evolution has been ascribed to classical Marxism, conflating it with ideas of unidirectional progress and developmentalism from Jean Bodin to W.W. Rostow and the gurus of modernisation theory (Patterson 1997). I want to elaborate on this distortion of Marx's position because it functions as the crucial basis for arguing the alternative rationality of unpredictable social change offered by post-colonial theory. The metaphysical idealism underlying post-colonial dogma, its hostility to historical materialism (the dialectical theory of comprehensive social transformation), and its complicity with the 'New World Order' managed by transnational capital can be made transparent by juxtaposing it with Marx's thesis of an uneven and unsynchronised process of development in specific social formations.

In essence, the most blatant flaw of post-colonial orthodoxy (I use the rubric to designate the practice of Establishment post-colonialism employing a post-structuralist organon) lies in its refusal to grasp the category of capitalist modernities in all its global ramifications, both the regulated and the disarticulated aspects. A mechanistic formula is substituted for a dialectical analytic of historical motion. Consequently, in the process of a wide-ranging critique of the Enlightenment ideals by post-colonial critics, the antithesis of capitalism – proletarian revolution and the socialist principles first expounded by Marx and Engels – is dissolved in the logic of the global system of capital without further discrimination. The obsession to do away with totality, foundations, universals, and systemic analysis leads to a mechanical reification of ideas and terminology, as well as the bracketing of the

experiences they refer to, culminating in a general relativism, scepticism, and nominalism – even nihilism – that undercuts the post-colonial claim to truth, plausibility, or moral high ground (see Callinicos 1989; Dews 1995; Habermas 1987).

A typical exercise in repudiating a historical materialist approach can be seen in Dipesh Chakrabarty's objection to the institutional history in which Europe operates as 'the sovereign theoretical subject'. Modernity – 'the meta-narrative of the nation state' – is understood as European imperialism in collusion with 'Third-World' nationalisms. What is at stake is the question of a history of India written from the subaltern (peasantry) point of view. Chakrabarty calls for 'radical critique and transcendence of liberalism (i.e., of the bureaucratic construction of citizenship, modern state, and bourgeois privacy that classical political philosophy has produced)', a call that he believes finds resonance in Marx, post-structuralism, and feminist philosophy (1995: 386). While he seeks to provincialise Europe by demonstrating the limits of Enlightenment rationalism (its coercive violence suppressed the heterogeneity of other cultures and civilisations), he also rejects cultural relativism and nativist histories.

Chakrabarty's obsession is to unmask, demystify, or deconstruct the themes of citizenship and the modern state as though they were permanent, transhistorical, and ubiquitous. In the end, Chakrabarty negotiates for a compromise which he labels a 'politics of despair': 'I ask for a history that deliberately makes visible, within the very structure of its narrative forms, its own repressive strategies and practices, the part it plays in collusion with the narratives of citizenships in assimilating to the projects of the modern state all other possibilities of human solidarity'. His intent is to unfold a radically heterogeneous world 'where collectivities are defined neither by the rituals of citizenship nor by the nightmare of "tradition" that "modernity" creates' (388). Not to worry. The dreams of repressed subalternity in India and elsewhere await a Foucauldian genealogical excavation that the group of elite academics like Ranajit Guha, Partha Chatterjee, Gyan Prakash, and Gayatri Spivak have already begun. On the other hand, the status quo of existing property relations and asymmetries of actual power relations (articulating class, gender, locality, religion) in India remain untouched.

### Remembrance as prophecy

Central to the post-colonial malaise is the belief that history or historical narratives of colonised peoples by Europeans have been permanently damaged, hence they are useless for recovering native or indigenous originality. Eurocentric knowledge (whether expressed by Cecil Rhodes or Joseph Conrad, by Black Elk or Fray Bartolome de las Casas) can never disclose the truth about the colonised. Following Lyotard, only local narratives can have validity from now on. Unless post-colonial historians naively believe they can return to a past where local narratives of tribal groups ran parallel and never intersected, the notions of locality and place are unintelligible outside of a wider global space from which they can be identified. What is missing in the critique of Eurocentric history is a dialectical comprehension of such relations – the relation between Europe and its Others – that precisely constitute the problem of one-sidedness, falsity, distortion, and all the evils that post-colonials discern in modernity (including Marxism as a peculiarly European invention). Parallel or coeval modernities need to be theorised within a differentiated, not centralised, ontology of determinate and concrete social formations if we don't want to relapse into essentialising metaphysics.

In 1878, Marx wrote a letter to a Russian journal that complained of a certain tendency that mistakenly elevated his hypothesis about capitalist development in Western Europe to a 'suprahistorical theory'. He wanted to correct the misapplication to Russia of his notion of the transition from feudalism to capitalism given in *Capital*: the emergence of capitalism premised on the expropriation of the agricultural producers can occur only when empirical preconditions exist. Russia will tend to become capitalist only if it has transformed the bulk of the peasantry into proletarians. Marx explains that this did not happen in Roman times when the means of production of the plebeians or free peasants were expropriated; they became 'not wage workers but an idle mob more abject than those who were called "poor whites" in the southern United States'; after this, there appeared not a capitalist but a slave mode of production. Marx objects to his critic's attempt to generalise the hypothetical conclusion of his empirical inquiry:

[My critic] absolutely insists on transforming my historical sketch of the genesis

of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophical theory of the general course fatally imposed on all peoples, whatever the historical circumstances in which they find themselves placed, in order to arrive ultimately at this economic formation that ensures, together with the greatest expansion of the productive powers of social labor, the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon. (It does me both too much honor and too much discredit.) [Here follows the instance of the Roman plebeians.] Thus events that are strikingly analogous, but taking place in different historical milieux, lead to totally disparate results. By studying each of these developments separately, and then comparing them, one can easily discover the key to this phenomenon, but one will never arrive there with the master key of a historico-philosophical theory whose supreme virtue consists in being suprahistorical. (Marx 1982: 109–110)

Now, it is clear that events cannot be judged in themselves apart from the historical milieu, and that there is no ‘master key’ to unlocking all phenomena – which is not to say that one doesn’t need some schematic framework or methodological guidelines for gathering data, testing and evaluating them through some principle of falsifiability or verification, and finally formulating general albeit tentative observations. I think Marx was not disclaiming the validity of the notion of primitive accumulation he outlined, nor the scheme of historical development enunciated in the ‘Preface’ to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859). The fundamental insight on the contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production, manifest in class struggles and in the global phenomenon of uneven development, has served as a fertile *problématique* or framework of inquiry – paradigm, if you like – in which to raise questions and clarify problems of social change and historical trajectories.

There are at least two examples in Marx’s theoretical practice that evince a sensitivity to the heterogeneous and disparate motions of diverse collectivities. The first deals with the subject of the Asiatic mode of production, which departs from the teleological assumptions of Marx’s theory of transition from the ancient and feudal to the capitalist

mode of production. No necessary succession is implied in the unfolding of the transition sequence. Because the socio-economic specificity of Asiatic society has led to a notion of despotic, stagnant, and arbitrary societies quite inferior to the dynamic Western counterparts, the notion has become problematic and controversial. Karl Wittfogel’s book *Oriental Despotism* (1957), which examined the hydraulic economy of China and diverse societies under a centralised ‘patrimonial’ bureaucracy (inspired by Max Weber’s studies), however, became a weapon in the Cold War against Stalinism.

Marx and Engels first became interested in investigating non-European societies when they engaged in journalistic criticisms of British foreign policy in 1853. They noted that despotism and stagnation characterised certain societies where the state management of public works (irrigation) predominated together with the self-sufficient isolated village community, as in ancient China. Later on, in *Grundrisse*, Marx emphasised the fact of the communal ownership of land by autarchic communities, the stable basis for the social unity embodied by the state. In *Capital*, Marx presented the Asiatic mode as one way in which the social product is communally appropriated; this system is founded on the social relations of the self-sufficient village anchored to the unity of handicrafts and agriculture. The ‘secret of the unchangingness of Asiatic society’ rested on the absence of private property (which precluded the rise of social classes as agents of change) and the simplicity of production methods. It is of course questionable how autonomous self-sufficient villages could coexist with the powerful interventions by centralised absolutist states whose origin also needs to be elucidated.

From a Weberian perspective, the stationary Asiatic mode displayed a lack of civil society and the dominance of a centralised state apparatus. Some scholars have claimed that Marx and Engels justified the ‘progressive’ role of British imperialism in creating private property in land and thus destroying the stationary Asiatic mode. This modernising effect, carried out through the railway system, free press, modern army, and means of communication (all technological determinants incorporated into social relations) has been used to apologise for if not legitimise imperial expansion as the only way of exploding

an otherwise immutable and backward social formation. Here is Marx's own 'apologia' for British rule in India written for the *New York Tribune* (25 June 1853) in Marx's original English:

England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindustan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is: Can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England, she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution. (Marx and Engels 1959: 480–481)

Faced by the 'cunning of Reason' (to use the Hegelian phrase), Marx counsels us to put aside 'whatever bitterness the spectacle of the crumbling of an ancient world may have for our personal feelings' because we, tutored in Enlightenment wisdom, are also aware of the advances made possible by imperial cruelty: the destruction of barbarian egoism, the Oriental despotism which 'restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies' (1959: 480). Post-colonial sceptics condemn this narrative schema as reductive and positivistic. To my mind, however, it is the most graphic triangulation of opposites, a cognitive mapping of ruptures and contradictions that epitomises the genuinely dialectical vicissitudes of history apprehended by Marx in his survey of historically specific milieus and concrete conjunctures.

The other example catalysed by the discovery of the Asiatic mode of production is the possibility of a non-capitalist road to communism exemplified by Russia in the 19th century. In the midst of revolutionary struggles in Russia, Marx revised his early conception of Russia as 'semi-Asiatic' and examined the nature of the Russian *mir* or commune. Could it provide the foundation for socialism or arrest its advent? Marx and Engels held that it could, provided that capitalist relations of production do not strangle the whole countryside and that working-class revolutions in Europe would coincide with any vast social change in Russia. Plekhanov disagreed with this, but it only proved that there is no

deterministic and unilinear paradigm, or an evolutionary mechanistic formula that would dictate how stages of development would unfold. It was Stalin who decreed in 1931 that Asian societies were subsumed under the categories of slavery or feudalism, thus pursuing the path of Western European development from primitive communism and then sequentially to slave, feudal, capitalist, and socialist stages. But, of course, that is not the end of the story.

It was the return of a serious concern with non-European routes to modernity in the 1960s (such as the Asiatic mode and the Russian commune) that spurred discussions over dependency, uneven development, and underdevelopment, world systems theory, the specificity and complexity of 'Third-World' societies, and African socialism. The theoretical liabilities of Orientalism incurred by the Asiatic mode have been spelled out by Bryan Turner: 'its theoretical function was not to analyse Asiatic society but to explain the rise of capitalism in Europe within a comparative framework. Hence Asiatic society was defined as a series of gaps – the missing middle class, the absent city, the absence of private property, the lack of bourgeois institutions – which thereby accounted for the dynamism of Europe' (1983: 36). Nonetheless, the notion functioned as a heuristic tool that Marx deployed to eliminate any teleological determinism or evolutionary monism in his speculative instruments of historical investigation.

On the pivotal significance of these socio-economic formations, Eric Hobsbawm calls attention to its implicit thesis of human individualisation through the historical process, via exchange conceived in terms of reciprocal interactions. It is in the course of demarcating the precapitalist *Formen* – before full-fledged commodity production set in – that Marx revealed his commitment to an emancipatory if utopian vision. Whether in ancient Greek and Roman, Asiatic, or Germanic versions, these tribal communities contrasted favourably with the bourgeois epoch because 'man always appears ... as the aim of production, not production as the human goal ...'. Marx continues: 'In fact, however, when the narrow bourgeois form has been peeled away, what is wealth if not the universality of needs, capacities, enjoyments, productive powers, etc. of individuals, produced in universal exchange?' In effect, the totality of human development,

'the absolute elaboration of his creative dispositions' and human powers signifies a 'situation where man does not reproduce himself in any determined form, but produces his totality' (1965: 84–85). Informed by this synthesising impulse in which dealienation of labour becomes the aim of revolutionary praxis, Marx's method of historical specification does not degenerate into the disintegrating, anomic reflex that vitiates post-colonial discourse. Marx's empathetic understanding and interpretation of the past in their uniqueness, which post-colonial hermeneutics inflates into an axiom of incommensurability, does not preclude a synoptic, all-encompassing apprehension; in fact, it presupposes that stagnant and paralysing continuum that, as Walter Benjamin (1969) puts it, must be blasted apart to release the forces of change.

It is in this context that Marx seized the moment of 'the break-up of the old village communes' in India by British imperialism as a disastrous event pregnant with its contrary. It is progressive in the sense that it releases or unfolds human potential. On the other hand, Marx believed (in a letter to Vera Zasulich in 1881) that if the Russian village commune (*mir*) were left free to pursue its 'spontaneous development', then it could be the point of departure for 'social regeneration in Russia'. This shows that Marx, far from being a unilinear determinist, posited the dialectical-materialist view that the peasantry can acquire a communist consciousness, depending on which aspects (the collectivist or privative) of the *mir* would be enhanced by a changing historical environment (Levine 1978: 175). This anticipates what Mao, Cabral, and others have recognised in appraising the conjuncture of forces in any contested situation, namely, 'the sovereignty of the human factor in revolutionary warfare' (Ahmad 1971: 147).

George Lichtheim reflects that Marx's ideas on the various forms of social metabolism which are crystallised in different stages of society illustrates the modes in which humans individualise themselves through the historical process of 'evolving various forms of communal and private property; that is, various ways of organising his social intercourse with nature and the – natural or artificial – preconditions of work .... The forcible disruption of the Indian or Chinese village community by European capital completes the process by rendering it truly

global' (1967: 85). In any case, a revolutionary Marxist position does not prescribe a causal monism or a freewheeling causal pluralism. Gregor McLennan has summed up succinctly the dialectical imperative of the Marxist approach: 'Structural principles must be complemented by, or even include, notions of individual action, natural causes, and "accidental circumstances".... Nevertheless, material and social relations can be long-term, effective real structures that set firm limits to the nature and degree of practical effect that accident and even agency have' (1981: 234). In other words, Marxism views the world not as a closed totality but as an 'open, structured whole, with irreducible differences' (Haug 1984: 16) comprehended dialectically, mindful of the play of contradictions.

I have dwelt at length on this topic because of the post-colonial critic's insistence that the method of historical materialism is fatally compromised by its Enlightenment provenance. If Marx is a Eurocentric apologist for the 'civilising mission' of imperialism, then we should have nothing to do with his indictment of capitalism and advocacy of socialist revolution. It might be instructive to note that the charge of Eurocentrism levelled against Marx does not permit a nuanced and rigorous appraisal of his critique of bourgeois philosophy; the polemic of Eurocentrism does not distinguish the nature of capitalist modernity as a specific epochal form, one which is constituted by the complex, uneven relation between coloniser and colonised. Capitalism disappears when all of modernity, both positive and negative elements, becomes ascribed to a geopolitical region (the metropole vis-à-vis the periphery) that cannot be divorced from the world-system of which it is an integral part.

Samir Amin has perspicaciously described the historical genealogy of Eurocentrism in the drive of capital to subordinate everything to exchange value, to accumulation, hence the need for standardisation. But this drive to uniformity also precipitates its opposite, unequal accumulation or impoverishment of the masses. For Amin, the most explosive contradiction generated by transnational capital inheres in the centres/peripheries polarisation and its corollary, the 'imperialist dimension of capitalist expansion' (1989: 141). Post-colonial affirmation of cultural difference, or the interstitial and syncretic by-products of the centre/periphery dynamic, evades a critique

of economism and reproduces itself as an inverted Eurocentrism that cannot resolve the crisis of inequality. A genuine universalism cannot emerge from incommensurable and provincialised cultures, no matter how valorised as singular or cosmopolitan; the impasse can be broken only by a national popular-democratic breakthrough instanced by national liberation struggles.

### Sublimating contradictions into heterogeneity

It is not exorbitant to state that today all social relations and practices, as well as the process of social transformation, labour under the imperatives of accumulation, competition, commodification, and profit-maximisation. Post-colonial paradigms of hybridity and ambivalence are unable to offer frames of intelligibility that can analyse and critique the internal contradictions embedded in the neo-liberal reality and ideology of the 'free market.' Driven by a pragmatic empiricism, post-colonialism cannot offer a frame of intelligibility for a 'cognitive mapping' of all those historical trends that marked the breakdown of developmentalism, modernisation theory, and other theoretical solutions to the crisis of monopoly capital from the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 up to the scrapping of the Bretton Woods agreement and a unitary monetary system. As many have noted, post-colonialism, its logic and rhetoric, coincides suspiciously with the anarchic 'free market' and the vicissitudes of finance capital on a global scale. Bound by its problematic, the post-colonial critic cannot even entertain the crucial question that Amin poses: 'how can we develop the productive forces without letting commodity relations gain ground?' (1977: 101).

There have been many explanations for this inadequacy and limitation. Amin (1998) locates it in post-colonialism's rejection of modernity, the Enlightenment narrative of emancipation and convivial democracy. The excesses of instrumental reason are ascribed to the teleology of progress instead of the logic of capitalism and its presuppositions (private property, entrepreneurship, wage labour, technological improvement, laws of the market). The conflation of the ideals of Enlightenment with the telos of utilitarian capitalism and its encapsulation in the historiographic fortunes of modernity has led to a

sceptical, nominalist conception of subjectivity and agency. Disavowing modernity and the principle of collective human agency (humans make their own history under determinate historical conditions), post-colonialism submits to the neo-liberal bourgeois cosmos of fragmentation, individualist warfare, free-playing decentred monads, and a regime of indeterminacy and contingency. This ironic turn damages post-colonialism's claim to liberate humans from determinisms and essentialisms of all kinds.

I think the fundamental error may be traced to two sources whose historical matrix I have alluded to earlier. We have, first, the inability to conceptualise mediation or connections in a dialectical manner, substituting instead a seriality of differences whose equivalence or solidarity remains unpredictable; and second, entailed by the first premise, the incapacity to conceive of the conjunctural moment of society as inscribed in the uneven or unequal development of the world-system. Uneven development involves the inescapable polarisation of the world into peripheral and central economies, tied with the intrinsic contradiction between labour and capital and the international division of labour whose boundaries were laid by the history of European colonialism and later by finance or monopoly capital. Why theorise mediation and uneven development in a precise historicised fashion? Because our intent is to 'master' and so escape the 'nightmare of history and to win a measure of control over the supposedly blind and natural "laws" of socioeconomic fatality' (Alavi 1982). As Fredric Jameson suggests, historical reconstruction, 'the positing of global characterisations and hypotheses, the abstraction from the "blooming, buzzing" confusion of immediacy, was always a radical intervention in the here-and-now and the promise of resistance to its blind fatalities' (Jameson 1998: 35).

From a historical-materialist perspective, the dynamic process of social reality cannot be grasped without comprehending the connections and the concrete internal relations that constitute the totality of its objective determinations. Several levels of abstraction have to be clarified, among them the relation between the knowing subject and the surrounding world (both nature and the built environment), knowledge of which is desired. Truth in this tradition comes from human practice, the intermediary between



consciousness and its object; and it is human labour (knowing and making as a theorised synthesis) that unites theory and practice. As Lenin puts it, everything is mediated and connected by transitions that unite opposites, 'transitions of every determination, quality, feature, side, property, into every other' so that 'the individual exists only in the connection that leads to the universal' (1963: 132). The reciprocal interaction of various levels of formal abstractions has been elaborated by Bertell Ollman (1993) under the categories of 'metamorphosis' and contradictions. These levels of abstract mediation, however, need to be transcended into their concrete manifestation without necessarily succumbing to the one-sided immediacy of empiricism or pragmatism. Otherwise, what Fabian (1983) calls the allochronic orientation of Eurocentric thought with its taxonomic, non-coeval representation of Others would continue to prevail.

What is required next is to confront the second-order mediations which are historically specific and transcendable; namely, the market, money, private property, the transformation and subordination of use-value to exchange value. These are, in short, the sources of alienation and perversion of what Meszaros calls 'productive self-mediation' of individuals in social life. Alienation on the level of national struggle can only be resolved in the colonised people's conquest of full sovereignty, 'the socialisation of the principal means of production' (1983: 13) and reproduction in a socialist transformation. Indeed, it is these historical phenomena of alienation and reification that post-structuralist thought hypostatizes into the nihilism of modernity, converting mediation (transition) into serial negation and occluding its prefigurative, transformative phase or aspect (Lukacs 2000). Contradiction, sublation, and over-determination do not figure as meaningful concepts in post-colonial theorising.

Without a concept of totality, however, the notion of mediation remains vacuous and useless. All determination is mediation, Roy Bhaskar reminds us in his magisterial study *Dialectic* (1993). Totality in its historical concreteness becomes accessible to us in the concept of uneven development, and its corollary ideas of overdetermination (or, in Samir Amin's thought, 'underdetermination'), combined development in the coexistence of various modes of production in a specific social formation, or in another

framework: Wallerstein's world-system mapping of periphery and core societies. We have come to accept as a commonplace the differential rhythm of development of societies, the uneven pace due to presence or absence of cumulative growth in the use of production techniques, labour organisation, and so on, as reflected in Marx's inquiry into Russia and Asia as mentioned earlier. It is indeed difficult to explain how the old imperial polities of Britain and France were superseded by Germany and the US, and how West Germany and Japan have occupied dominance today.

Uneven development results from the peculiar combination of many factors which have marked societies as peripheral or central (Lowy 1981; Novack 1966). In many societies shaped by colonial conquest and imperial domination, uneven and combined development is discernible in the co-presence of a modern sector (usually foreign-dominated or managed by the state) and a traditional sector characterised by precapitalist modes of production and ruled by merchant-capitalist and feudal/tributary ruling classes. In these peripheral formations, we find a lack of cumulative growth, backward agriculture limited by the lack of an internal market, with the accumulated money capital diverted from whatever industrial enterprises there are into speculative activities in real estate, usury, and hoarding (Mandel 1983). This unsynchronised and asymmetrical formation, with variations throughout the post-colonial geography of post-Second World War ex-colonised countries, serves as the ideal habitat for 'magic realism' and wild absurdist fantasies (Borges, Cortazar), as well as all those cultural expressions and practices described as hybrid, creolised, syncretic, ambivalent, multiplicitous, and so on, which post-colonial theory and criticism have laboured so hard to fetishise and reify as permanent, ever-recurring, and ineluctable qualities (San Juan 1998).

In my view, this historical conjuncture of uneven and combined development can only be grasped by a dialectical assessment of imperialism such as those propounded by Gramsci, C.L.R. James, Walter Rodney, Amílcar Cabral, and others in the Marxist-Leninist tradition. It was Lenin who remedied the classical limitation of the Second International and the social-democratic parties by integrating in his idea of world revolution the revolt of the industrial

working class in Europe with the mass uprisings of colonised nations, as well as peasant revolts against landowners. Lenin's post-1914 writings – the Hegel Notebooks, the article 'The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-determination', etc. – theorised how the 'particular' of national liberation movements can, under certain conditions, become the road to the universal of socialism. In this discourse, mediation assumes the form of contradiction between oppressed peoples in the colonies and oppressor nations. As Kevin Anderson argues, 'Lenin's theory of imperialism has become dialectical in the sense of pointing not only to the economic side of imperialism but also to a new revolutionary subject arising from within global imperialism: national liberation movements' (1995: 142). Unless we can improve on Lenin's theory of national liberation with its processual or dialectical materialist method, we will only be indulging in post-colonial verbal magic and vertiginous tropology that seems to be infinitely reproduced by a delirious 'otherness machine' (Appiah 1991: 356).

### Portuguese imperialism begets its antithesis

As for the concrete translation of the Leninist tradition into situated historical praxis, I can only allude to the brilliant and enduring example of Amílcar Cabral and his achievement. In what way does Cabral supersede the mechanical version of decolonisation as a valorisation of interstitiality, syncretism, and transculturation?

A few key features of Cabral's thought need to be underscored. Cabral's theory of national revolution is a creative application of Marxism as a dialectical theory of action in which history generates the unforeseen within the parameters of what objectively exists. Cabral understood the Marxist insight that 'the process of history seeks itself and proves itself in praxis' (Lefebvre 1969: 162). He theorised national liberation in his concrete milieu (the Portuguese colonies of Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde islands) through the paradigm of interacting modes of production in history. Cabral insisted on the centrality of the level of productive forces as the 'true and permanent driving power of history' (1973: 42). Imperialist rule deprived the colonised peoples of agency, the vocation of shaping their own history. Since imperialist domination

negated 'the historical process of the dominated people by means of violently usurping the free operation of the process of development of the productive forces, the goal of decolonisation is 'the liberation of the process of development of national productive forces' (43). The struggle for national liberation is not simply a cultural fact, but also a cultural factor generating new forms and content in the process (1979: 211).

For Cabral, culture is the salient or key constituent of the productive forces. Culture becomes the decisive element in grasping the dialectic of subjective and objective forces, the level of productive forces and the production relations, as well as the uneven terrain of class struggles: 'Culture is simultaneously the fruit of a people's history and a determinant of history, by the positive or negative influence which it exerts on the evolution of relationships between man and his environment, among men or groups of men within a society, as well as among different societies' (41). But Cabral urges a concrete differentiation of tendencies and possibilities: 'Nor must we forget that culture, both as a cause and an effect of history, includes essential and secondary elements, strengths and weaknesses, merits and defects, positive and negative aspects, factors both for progress and stagnation or regression, contradictions, conflicts .... Culture develops unevenly at the level of a continent, a "race," even a community' (210, 212). If liberation is an act of culture, it is also a struggle to shape a richer culture that is simultaneously 'popular, national, scientific and universal' (212).

Framed within the problematic of a non-linear narrative, Cabral conceives of national liberation as a wide-ranging transformation of the combined political, economic, and cultural institutions and practices of the colonised society. It is not narrowly culturalist or merely superstructural because culture refers to the 'dynamic synthesis of the material and spiritual historical reality of a society'. In a broad sense, it is the recovery of specific African forms of subjectivity, a 'regaining of the historical personality of the people, its return to history through the destruction of imperialist domination'. This recovery is staged as a popular cultural renaissance with the party as the chief pedagogical agency wielding the 'weapon of theory', the organised political expression of a mass, national-popular culture in the making. This

renaissance occurred in the praxis of the liberated zones controlled by the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) where the culture-changing processes of criticism and self-criticism, democratic discussion, teaching and learning from the participants, and so on were encouraged and institutionalised. This will recall Marx's dialectical thesis of an alternative to unilinear evolutionism of the Russian village commune: if the subjective force of the peasantry acquires consciousness and organised identity, the objective situation can be transformed in a liberatory direction (Marx 1971/1850–52). In the context of the African Gold Coast, C.L.R. James formulated this Marxian thesis as the objective process of the 'movement of a people finding themselves and creating a new social order', the basis of unity being the actual conditions in which the people live (1992: 351).

Cabral was called by his people *Fundador da Nacionalidade*: Founder of the Nationality, not Founder of the Nation. According to Basil Davidson, this is because 'the nation was and is a collectivity and necessarily founds itself, but [Cabral was the] founder of the process whereby this collectivity could (and does) identify itself and continue to build its post-colonial culture' (1986: 39). Cabral also believed that 'the dialectical nature of identity lies in the fact that it both identifies and distinguishes' (1979: 208). Seizing the strategic initiative, Cabral exhorted his comrades and fighters to engage in a double and totalising task cognisant of the uneven cultural and ideological strata of the geopolitical terrain:

Every responsible worker and every militant of our Party, every element of the population in our land in Guinea and Cape Verde, should be aware that our struggle is not only waged on the political level and on the military level. Our struggle – our resistance – must be waged on all levels of the life of our people. We must destroy everything the enemy can use to continue their domination over our people, but at the same time we must be able to construct everything that is needed to create a new life in our land. (quoted in Cohen 1998: 44)

Cabral combined national and social elements into an insurrectionary movement in which the partisan unit, no longer a local

entity but a 'body of permanent and mobile cadres around whom the local force is formed' (Hobsbawm 1973: 166), became the germ of the 'new life', the embryonic nationality becoming the nation.

Developing certain themes in Fanon, Cabral's Marxism is unique in concentrating on the potential nation as 'a form of revolutionary collective subjectivity' mediating actual classes, sectors, and groups into a 'nation-for-itself' that can reclaim the 'inalienable right of every people to have their own history' based on its right to control 'the process of development of national productive forces'. Cabral located the roots of this subjectivity in the cultural resistance of the masses which was 'protracted and multiple ... only possible because by preserving their culture and their identity the masses retain consciousness of their individual and collective dignity despite the vexations, humiliations and cruelties they are exposed to' (1979: 209). It is that notion of integral 'dignity' that lies at the centre of Cabral's 'weapon of theory'. As Timothy Luke acutely remarked, Cabral valued the 'emancipatory forms of collective subjectivity' in the colonised subjects and so promoted 'the politically organised and scientifically rationalised reconstitution of the traditional African peoples' history-making and culture-building capacities' (1990: 191). Cabral urged his activists: 'I am asking you to accomplish things on your own initiative because everybody must participate in the struggle' (quoted in Chaliand 1969: 68). Cabral's originality thus lies in his recognising that the nation-in-itself immanent in the daily lives of the African peoples can be transformed into a nation-for-itself, this latter concept denoting the peoples' exercise of their historical right of self-determination through the mediation of the national liberation movement, with the PAIGC as an educational organising force that seeks to articulate the national-popular will.

Contrary to post-colonial speculation, Cabral's project is the making of a nation in the course of the anti-imperialist struggle. Comprised of numerous ethnic groups living apart, highly fragmented with over a dozen languages, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde did not fulfil the orthodox qualifications of a nation laid down by Stalin: 'a stable community of people formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in the

common culture' (1970: 68). Cabral's exceptional contribution consists in articulating the nation-in-process (of transition from potentiality to actuality) in the struggle against Portuguese colonialism. The project of the party he founded, the PAIGC, aimed to generate national awareness by mass mobilisation of the peasants in conjunction with the petty bourgeoisie, the embryonic proletariat, and the declassed youth. Through skilful organisation and painstaking ideological education, the PAIGC converted the cultural resistance of the tribal villages into a dynamic and formidable force capable of defeating a technologically sophisticated enemy.

Cabral began from the paradoxical phenomenon of the indigenous petty bourgeoisie beginning to acquire a consciousness of the totality by comparison of the various parts of colonised society. He exhorted the petty bourgeoisie to commit class suicide in order to coalesce with the peasantry (the workers constituted a tiny minority; a national bourgeoisie did not exist); but Cabral had no illusions that such alliances would spontaneously firm up in a post-colonial environment. He stated shortly before his assassination on 20 January 1973: 'You know who is capable of taking control of the state apparatus after independence .... The African petty bourgeoisie has to be the inheritor of state power, although I wish I could be wrong. The moment national liberation comes and the petty bourgeoisie takes power we enter, or rather return, to history and the internal contradictions break out again' (quoted in Davidson 1969: 134). Cabral's insight warns us of the dangers of reifying post-colonial culture as an interstitial, ambiguous space of contestation devoid of any outside from which critique can be formulated. Contradictions persist even in transitory class alliances (the famous unity of opposites in Lenin's discourse), hence the need to calculate the stages of the struggle which demand strategic mutations and tactical alterations, while keeping in mind a constant theme: 'the masses keep intact the sense of their individual and collective dignity' (Cabral 1973: 69). The axiom of uneven and combined development rules out such post-colonial assumptions of contingent heterogeneity and incommensurable disparities of individuals that ignore mass native cultural resistance. Cabral upheld the anti-post-colonial belief of the 'supremacy of social life over individual life', of 'society as a higher form

of life' (1979: 208), which in effect contradicts the neo-Kantian attribution of moral and rational agency to bourgeois individuals, a criterion that 'postpositivist realists' (Mohanty 1995) and assorted eclectic deconstructionists espouse.

Notwithstanding the resurgence of armed anti-imperialist insurgency in 'Third-World' neo-colonies like Colombia, the Philippines, and Mexico (Chiapas), the moment of Cabral might be deemed irretrievably remote now from our present disputes. However, the formerly subjugated peoples of colour grudgingly acknowledged by Western humanism (following Kant's axiom of rational autonomy and Adam Smith's notion of the 'free market') cannot be simply pacified by reforming capitalism's international division of labour. The post-colonial cult of the Leibnizian conceit (Harvey 1996), in which alterity and marginality automatically acquire subversive entitlement, has carried out the containment of Marxist ideas and ideals of national liberation by an aestheticising manoeuvre analogous to what Neil Larsen discerned in cultural studies: 'a subtle transfer of emancipatory aims from the process of objective social transformation to the properly "cultural" task of intervention in the "subject"-forming play of discourse(s)' (1995: 201). But as long as capitalism produces uneven and polarising trends in all social formations, there will always exist residual and emergent agencies challenging the reign of 'the law of value' and post-modern barbarism (Amin 1998).

We cannot of course return wholesale to the classic period of national liberation struggles indexed by the names of Nkrumah, Cabral, Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevarra, Fanon, and others. My purpose in bringing up Cabral is simply to refute the argument that historical materialist thinking is useless in grasping the complexity of colonialism and its aftermath. Would shifting our emphasis, then, onto studying the subaltern mind remedy the inadequacies and limitations of post-colonial theory? I might interpolate here the view of two Australian scholars – Jon Stratton and Ien Ang – who believe that the limits of the post-colonial/diasporic trajectory can be made up by the voices of the indigenous and the subaltern within the context of the 'relativisation of all discursive self/other positionings within the Anglophone cultural studies community' (1996: 386). This intervention in the site of textual-discursive representation is salutary,

but the problem of articulating a counter-hegemonic strategy focusing on the 'weak links' (where the IMF/World Bank's 'structural conditionalities' continue to wreak havoc) remains on the agenda. For it cannot be denied that within the hybridising, syncretic, borderless milieu of the post-colonial episteme one encounters, without much uncannily afterthought, 'the still globally culturally hegemonic realm of the USA' (King 1995: 117).

Finally, I want to situate post-colonialism as a symptomatic recuperation of finance capital, at best the imaginary resolution of contradictions between exploited South and exploiting North, within the altered geopolitical alignments of the world-system (Wallerstein 1995).

The 'Third World' was a viable conceptualisation of the nationalist bourgeois struggles that led to the independence of India, Ghana, the Philippines, Egypt, Indonesia, and other nation states after the Second World War (Hudis 1983). The classic post-colonial states created the Bandung coalition of non-aligned states which gave a semblance of unity to the 'Third World'. However, US hegemony during the Cold War continued until the challenge in Vietnam, Cuba, and elsewhere. The last expression of 'Third-World' solidarity, the demand for a 'New International Economic Order' staged in the United Nations, came in the wake of the Oil Crisis of 1973; but the OPEC nations, with their political liabilities, could not lead the 'Third World' of poor, dependent nations against US hegemony. Notwithstanding the debacle in Vietnam and the series of armed interventions in the Caribbean and elsewhere, US world supremacy was maintained throughout the late 1970s and 1980s by economic force. This mode of winning consent from the 'Third World' used monetarist policies that caused lower export earnings and high interest rates, reducing these polities to dependencies of the IMF/WB and foreign financial consortia. The defeat of the 'Third World' bloc in 1982 allowed the US-led Western bloc to exploit 'international civil society' into a campaign against global Keynesianism. From 1984 to the 1990s, however, global Reaganomics, the instability of the financial markets, the fall of the dollar, worsening US deficit, etc. posed serious problems to the US maintenance of hegemony over the Western bloc. Despite the success, and somewhat precipitous collapse, of the Asian Newly-Industrialising Countries, the

'Third World' as an independent actor, with its own singular interests and aspirations, has virtually disappeared from the world scene. What compensates for this disappearance is post-colonial theory and criticism whose provenance owes much more to finance capital than has heretofore been acknowledged or understood, a disappearance masked by the carnivalesque regime of simulacra and simulations that, despite its current hegemony, fails to repress, I dare say, the labour of the 'old mole' burrowing underground. Wherever neo-colonialism (Woddis 1972) prevails, the ideal and practice of national liberation will continue to thrive.

E. San Juan, Jr

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## Indigenous Peoples and Imperialism

'Imperialism' has been defined in a number of ways. Irrespective of the definition employed, however, the phenomenon described is inseparable from the colonial subjugation of indigenous peoples on what has long since become a planetary basis. Indeed, without the subjugation of indigenous (or 'aboriginal') peoples, more aptly characterised as First Nations, imperialism in any of its modern forms would have been not only impossible but inconceivable. As Shuswap resistance leader George Manuel observed more than 40 years ago, the Earth's several thousand First Nations comprise a Fourth World, and its near-total subjugation has been the veritable bedrock upon which all three of the other 'worlds' delineated at the 1955 Bandung Conference were constructed. In the Bandung formulation, the First World consisted of the industrially advanced capitalist/imperialist powers situated primarily in Western Europe, North America, and Japan; the Second World comprised the Eurasian socialist bloc countries, which were construed as being anti-capitalist and therefore inherently anti-imperialist; and the Third World was composed of the First's Afro-Asian colonies and former colonies (Latin America was grafted onto the basic schema, post hoc). The formulation is noticeably different from that embodied in the 'three worlds theory' later propounded by Mao Zedong, wherein

the US and Soviet Union comprise the capitalist/imperialist First World; Western Europe and Commonwealth countries, as well as Japan, all of them imbued with a 'dual character', comprise the Second; and the Third World is made up of the remaining countries (states), each of which is construed as being fundamentally anti-imperialist (on the Maoist formulation, see Melkote and Merriam 1998: 10). It follows that perfecting the contemporary imperial edifice of globalisation is contingent upon continuation and intensification of Fourth-World subjugation.

Invariably, the effects of the subjugating process have been genocidal, both in terms of the coerced and often compulsory cultural emulsification of aboriginal societies and, not infrequently, the outright physical liquidation of indigenous populations (either through direct killing, imposition of what Raphaël Lemkin termed 'slow death measures' [1944], or a combination of the two). As Davis and Zannis (1973: 19–20) observe, 'slow death measures' are delineated in the so-called Secretariat's Draft of the 1948 Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, largely prepared by Lemkin, as systematic deprivation of adequate nutrition, clothing, housing, sanitation, and medical care, especially in combination with forced labour or other debilitating physical exertion. Imposition of such measures typically arises in the context of the perpetrators' expropriation of the victimised population's land-base, natural resources, and attendant economy. Hence, the dissolution and ultimate disappearance of Fourth World peoples, at least in the sense that they've traditionally understood themselves to be such, and often in terms of their biological existence as well, must be seen as integral and inherent to colonialism, thence imperialism, a reality entirely consistent with Lemkin's original conception of genocide:

By 'genocide' we mean the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group .... Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings .... It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of [eradicating] the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of

the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group .... Genocide has two phases: one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor ... Denationalization was the word used in the past to describe the destruction of a national pattern. (Lemkin 1944: 79–80)

Lemkin goes on to explain that he believes the word 'denationalization' to be 'inadequate to describe the phenomenon he is discussing because: (1) it does not connote destruction of the biological structure; (2) in connoting the destruction of one national pattern, it does not connote the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor; and (3) denationalization is used by some authors to mean only deprivation of citizenship' (80). Following Lemkin's definition (having literally coined the term, one suspects that he above all others knew its meaning) it is impossible to contest Sartre's 'controversial' conclusion that colonialism is inherently genocidal (Sartre 1968). In this respect, it matters little whether a particular imperial system or project is associated more with the 'civilizing mission' ascribed by Lewis Feuer to imperialism's 'progressive' variant, or with what he refers to as the 'regressive' objectives of conquest, unadorned material exploitation, and/or repopulation ('settlement') of forcibly-acquired territories with racially-preferred 'breeding stock'. Feuer offers 'the Alexandrian, Roman, British, French, and Dutch' empires as examples of 'progressive imperialism' which supposedly 'elevates living standards and cultural life ... brings education and the arts to its more backward areas [and] establishes a universal rule of law and security of person'. As examples of 'regressive imperialism', he points to 'the Nazi variety and, in several respects, the Mongolian and Spanish' (Feuer 1986: 4). Insofar as the impacts upon Fourth-World nations have been virtually indistinguishable



over the long term, such distinctions are ultimately cosmetic or, perhaps more accurately, deliberately obfuscatory. Invoking Sartre once again, 'there are neither good nor bad colonists: there are colonists' (Sartre 2001/1957: 51).

It may be this inconvenient truth, more than anything else, that explains why the significance of Fourth-World subjugation, despite its clearly foundational location within the architecture of colonialism/imperialism, has been consistently neglected in currently predominating theorisations and analyses of the imperial phenomenon as well as attendant anti-imperialist discourse. Decolonisation of Fourth-World nations and concomitant resumption of their genuinely self-determining existence(s) find no place within any 'reasonable' paradigm of liberation. Correspondingly, consideration of such questions has been largely relegated to the realms of historical interest or delineations of 'minority rights' whenever it has not been avoided altogether. Hardt and Negri's *Empire* (2000) is instructive. In the entirety of its 400-page text (there are also 78 pages of notes and index), 'Native [North] Americans' are the only indigenous peoples characterised as such, and, apart from a passing reference on p. 177 to 'genocidal wars' having been waged against them by the US, are discussed only in a four-page span (pp. 169–172). Here they are depicted only as a transient barrier to US territorial expansion 'from sea to shining sea' during the first century of the country's existence. Presumably, the authors believe that this barrier was ultimately overcome through total extermination, leaving Native North Americans no less extinct than the carrier pigeon, since they offer no hint in their discussion of the subsequent evolution of US imperialism that it might be in any sense contingent upon the ongoing subjugation of indigenous peoples and expropriation of their resources within what the US claims as its domestic territoriality. The misimpression thus conveyed is strongly reinforced, moreover, by their unequivocal (and erroneous) assertion that indigenous peoples were from the outset, and by implication remain, 'outside the Constitution as its negative foundation: in other words, their exclusion and elimination were [and are] essential conditions for the functioning of the Constitution itself' (170). In *The Sorrows of Empire*, to offer another

prominent example, Chalmers Johnson acknowledges that the 'real' beginning of US imperialism can be dated from 1898 (as Hardt, Negri, and many others have contended) only if 'one [is] willing to regard the lands of Native Americans and Méxicans as essentially uninhabited' (2004: 190), but the insight is otherwise unremarked. Moreover, in a later book, *Dismantling the Empire* (2010), Johnson effectively nullifies the insight itself by making no mention whatsoever of Native Americans, thereby leaving a distinct impression that the continuing subjugation of Fourth-World nations within the US is to be viewed as something other than an integral part of its imperial construction. So, too, Andrew Bracevich's *American Empire* (2002), while in Niall Ferguson's *Empire*, expansion of the US to continental proportions merely 'implied colonization' of Native North America (2003: xii). Scores of comparable examples (a few of them deployed hereinafter) might as readily be cited.

While such deficiencies have prompted the emergence of a parallel literature devoted to explicating the facts and implications of Fourth-World colonisation, the mainstream of anti-imperialist thinking, notwithstanding the undeniably high degree of sophistication it often displays in other respects, has thus remained distinctly ungrounded, an elaborate castle not so much built on sand as suspended in mid-air. This literature has burgeoned over the past 40 years, and now includes such mature and expansive works as Lauren Benton's *A Search for Sovereignty* (2010), Anthony J. Hall's *American Empire and the Fourth World* (2004), Anthony Pagden's *Lords of All the World* (1995), and Robert A. Williams's *The American in Western Legal Thought* (1990), to name but a handful. At one level, the result has been a considerable amount of self-contradiction within anti-imperialism's theoretical/analytical corpus; at another, we have seen the widespread embrace of prescriptions for 'liberation' which, whatever else might be said of them, would in their fulfilment embody consummation of Fourth-World genocide on a planetary basis.

### The state

Although, globally, it assumes a vast array of forms, the sociopolitical organisation of indigenous societies is unified by the absence of the sort of centralisation of

authority and concomitant concentration of power characteristic of the state. Fourth-World nations are 'stateless', not because they have never attained the capacity to enter into statist trajectories, but rather, as Pierre Clastres concluded, because they have consciously set themselves 'against the state', typically developing complex sets of relations actively precluding consolidation of socioeconomic and political hierarchies and attendant structures of juridico-bureaucratic rationalisation and coercive enforcement. Clastres worked closely with the Aché (whom he unaccountably refers as 'Guayaki,' a colonial term meaning 'rabid rats') of present-day Paraguay, and they figure centrally in his book *Society Against the State* (1974). For that reason, his work has been misconstrued/misrepresented as focusing exclusively on 'hunter-gatherer societies'. In actuality, as he explained at length (1974: 62–82), the term itself is essentially a misnomer, accurately applicable to only a very narrow range of peoples, with the great majority of those thus labelled either deriving some often substantial portion of their subsistence from agriculture, or having demonstrably done so in the past. As he observes, even the Achés, 'who are [now] pure hunters and nomads of the forest, gave up cultivating corn towards the end of the sixteenth century' (69). That this abrupt abandonment of agriculture/retreat to the forest was precipitated by Spain's establishment of Asunción in 1537, and the steady spread of settlers and Jesuit missions throughout Guayaki territory, seems rather obvious. It should be noted that, as was detailed by Mark Münzell (1974), Norman Lewis (1976), and others around the time Clastres's book was published, Paraguay commenced an 'informal' campaign to exterminate what remained of the Guayakis, often using machetes rather than guns as a means to avoid incurring the expense of ammunition. Survivors, mostly children, were sold into the country's still-thriving slave market. In many instances, the decision to do so arose from direct experience, an unknown but substantial number of First Nations having experimented with statism to varying extents and found its anticipated benefits sufficiently outweighed by its costs that they elected to dismantle whatever state apparatus had been created. A prime example is that of the sprawling Mississippian ('Mound Builder') culture which began to emerge somewhere

around 1000 CE and within two centuries encompassed most of the eastern half of what is now the US. By the latter point, Cahokia, its capital city, located near present-day St Louis, Missouri, had reached a population of perhaps 40,000 (equal to London's and considerably larger than Rome's at the time), a matter reflecting an extraordinarily high degree of agricultural attainment. The increasing concentration of political authority and resultant socioeconomic stratification attending the process were apparently deemed unacceptable to the bulk of the populace, however, and by roughly 1350, the residents of Cahokia had dispersed, resuming the 'tribal' identities and decentralised lifestyles they had led prior to its rise. The pattern of dismantlement thereafter spread throughout the remainder of the culture and was still ongoing in some areas at the time of the initial European invasions, c.1550–1650.

In contrast, although statism and imperialism may often function symbiotically in terms of consolidation and refinement, the formation of empire requires a state. This has been true since establishment of the earliest known imperium (that of Assyria, c.2500 BCE) and includes the 'empires' attributed to the Maya, Inca, México (Aztec), and other First Nations, albeit in many such cases the term may well be misapplied. Mayan civilisation, which originated at least as early as 2000 BCE and existed in its 'classic' form from approximately 250–900 CE, attained an astonishingly high level of cultural sophistication, including not only flourishing agricultural and trading economies, but, among other things, written language and a system of mathematics incorporating the concept of zero and enabling them to apprehend extremely complex numbers (seven-digit primes, for instance) without the aid of computers, to measure time more accurately than was possible in Europe until the later 19th century, and thus to achieve a remarkably precise understanding of astronomy. Although the civilisation was both sustained and expansive, eventually incorporating virtually all of the distinct peoples indigenous to the Yucatan and contiguous areas of what is now Mexico, as well as present-day Belize, Guatemala, and western Honduras in their entirety, it never exhibited the 'centre' ('metropole') indicative of imperial order. Rather, it seems to have consisted of a number of 'mini-empires', somewhat resembling city-states, bound together mainly

by the development of cultural affinities, and a broader range of trade relations. Even that arrangement appears to have ultimately proven to be too sociopolitically/economically stratifying, as dismantlement of its statist structures commenced at some point in the 10th century CE and was largely completed by the Mayapan revolt of 1450 (well before the Spanish invasion). The Tenochtitlan-centred Aztec Empire (Tenocha) of present-day Mexico comes much closer, although it was never a true territorial empire. Its power extended as much by trade as by military force, and was maintained as much by intermarriage and diplomacy as by coercion. It was, moreover, relatively short-lived, having been established through the 'triple alliance' of 1427 and destroyed by the Spanish invasion of 1519. Whether its statist structure would have eventually been dismantled by the Méxicas themselves will thus remain unknown. The Incas perhaps came closest to establishing a genuine imperialist system, although the inception of their empire, centred in what is now Peru, dates from 1437 and, like Tenocha, was effectively destroyed by the Spanish less than a century later. We are thus left with the same unanswerable question regarding the Incan state. While the effects of statism/imperialism on the Fourth World have been negative from the outset, however, their inherently genocidal dimension did not become fully apparent until the advent of the modern state through a process initiated by the coronation of Charlemagne as 'Holy Roman Emperor' in 800 CE.

While, to quote Voltaire, the resultant territorial/governmental 'agglomeration' was 'neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire' (2014/1756), its establishment triggered the invention of Europe, otherwise known as 'The West', both geographically and culturally. Notwithstanding the title conferred upon Charlemagne by Pope Leo III, the term 'Holy Roman Empire' originated in 1254 and was applied to his domain only retrospectively. From its capital, situated not in Rome but in the small Frankish city of Aachen, the Carolingian dynasty Charlemagne founded forcibly expanded its dominion outward in all directions so that by 814 CE it encompassed everything south of present-day Denmark to a point about halfway down the Italian peninsula, and from the present French/Spanish border in the West through Carinthia in the East. The western half of the area was for the most part encompassed within the

prefiguring Frankish kingdoms of Neustria, Burgundy, and Austrasia, which Charlemagne essentially inherited upon receiving the imperial crown. Aachen was situated in Austrasia, its location central to the empire after its initial phase of eastward expansion. It should be noted that a rather similar, but always separate, prefigurative process had commenced in Britain as a result of Anglo-Saxon invasions during the 5th and 6th centuries. It would not be until the Norman conquest of 1066 that a dynamic comparable to that unleashed by Charlemagne made its appearance, however. By 870 CE, the empire's eastward thrust had reached the far side of Moravia, a push that was relentlessly pursued by the Carolingians' successors over the next several centuries, prompting the conceit that those presiding over the European subcontinent were 'entitled' to anoint their realm not merely 'a continent in its own right' but, ultimately, 'the Continent' upon which the world was centred. As Davis observes, 'This may come as a severe shock to Conservatives in Great Britain's Parliament and to other European traditionalists who have strong views on Europe's cultural superiority. But, sorry folks ... Europe, including the British Isles, is simply a large western peninsula of Asia' (1992: 129). Indeed, although Europeans had by then been describing their land-base as such for centuries, Lewis and Wigen point out that Europe's supposed (and entirely arbitrary) geographic demarcation from Asia was not identified as the Ural Mountains until 1730 (1997: 27–28). Suffice it to say that, geographically speaking, the existence of a 'European continent' is purely invented.

Politically, the Carolingian Empire consisted of several relatively autonomous states (the number changed over time, and always included a welter of duchies, city-states, and other subdivisions), the heads of which were invariably confirmed through professions of fealty to both the emperor and the papacy. This in itself was unremarkable. The Carolingians were unprecedented, however, in the emphasis they placed on attacking the core spiritual beliefs from whence the plethora of 'tribal' peoples whose territories were incorporated into the various states, and thus the empire, derived their distinct cultural identities. They imposed instead the unitary doctrines of Western ('Roman', 'Latin', 'Catholic', or 'Occidental') Christendom. This was in stark contrast to earlier/other

empires, which were by and large content to extract various forms of tribute from those they conquered or otherwise colonised without stripping them of their cultural identities or imposing their own. There was no effort on the part of the Mongols to 'convert' non-Mongols into Mongols, for example, or of the Méxicans to absorb tributary peoples into their own culture. Quite the opposite, in fact. The late Roman Empire was perhaps an exception in that, having adopted Christianity as its official religion, it set about imposing it upon the very peoples targeted by the Carolingians. The result, of course, was that the infuriated 'barbarians' promptly sacked Rome, forcing the imperial centre eastward to Constantinople. Each state was thus distinctly imperial in its internal construction as well as its external allegiances and ambitions.

For two centuries, beginning in 1096, the culturally genocidal synthesisation of European identity set in motion by the 'Carolingian Renaissance' was reinforced and advanced at a steadily accelerating rate by the organisation of a series of nine papally ordained 'Crusades' pitting Western Christendom against both its Eastern counterpart (Byzantium) and their mutual theological rival, the 'Eastern' religion of Islam, which predominated in Christianity's Levantine 'Holy Land'. In 1147, a series of 'Northern Crusades' was also launched against the eastern Baltic Slavs (from the Latin word *sclavus*, meaning 'slave'), while yet another, known as the Reconquista, was undertaken on the Iberian peninsula to wrest it from Islamic control. The First Crusade was authorised by the Council of Claremont in 1095 and the last was undertaken in 1291. The last of the Northern Crusades ended in 1290, and, by 1294, the Islamic dominion in Iberia, which had once extended to roughly the present French/Spanish border, had been reduced to the area around Grenada (Grenada itself was not 'reconquered' until 1492). It will be noted that, while the Reconquista has always been framed as a contest between 'The East' (signified by Islam) and 'The West' (signified by Western Christendom), the Iberian peninsula is in fact the most westerly portion of the European landmass. Even in the figurative sense of the theological distinctions, the contrivance of an east/west dichotomy was from the outset nonsensical, given that both religions, based as they are on the same pre-existing Hebraic text (the 'Old Testament'), originated

in exactly the same place. The nuances of scriptural interpretation by which Western Christendom distinguished itself from Eastern (Byzantine) Orthodoxy were, moreover, in no small part derivative from Islamic interpretations.

The heads of each state and substate were responsible for mustering and leading the forces necessary to mount these protracted campaigns, a matter which, while solidifying the authority vested in statist rulers, served to inculcate an increasing sense of commonality among troops drawn from the multiplicity of tribal cultures/societies encapsulated within each state's boundaries. Amplified by the harsh realities of combat once battle was joined, this preliminary outlook rapidly cohered into a genuinely collective sense of 'us', a term whose meaning yields itself only in contradistinction to 'them'. Self-evidently, 'us' consisted exclusively of those 'on our side', while 'them' was not only 'other' but by definition 'the enemy'. From there, it was but a short step to the perception that while 'we' (of The West or 'Occident') were fully human, 'they' (the 'Others' of 'The East,' also referred to as the 'Orient') were less so, perhaps of another species altogether.

The sheer virulence manifest in this seminal 'crusader mentality' would seem to have arisen from a deep-set and abiding sense of cultural inferiority among the subcontinent's élites; the very name 'Europe', after all, derives from the Phoenician word *erub*, meaning 'darkness' or, some would say, 'ignorance'. This, in turn, unleashed a compulsive and sustained drive by the West to compensate by asserting its 'rightful' ownership not only of such material 'property' as might be possessed by others, but, as will be discussed below, of their intellectual attainments as well. Most Semitic languages contain variations; the Akkadian *erebu*, Arabic *maghreb*, and Hebrew *ma'ariv* are examples. For obvious reasons, neo-Aryanist scholars prefer to believe that it originated in a combination of the Greek words *εὐρύς* and *ὄψι/ὄπ-/ὄπτ-*, ostensibly meaning 'wide-gazing'. Since, as Martin Bernal demonstrated in the third volume of his magisterial *Black Athena*, Greek terminology was to a large extent based on Phoenician prototypes, however, the neo-Aryanist argument is vacuous at best. It was amidst this snarl of pathology that, as Lumbee legal scholar Robert A. Williams Jr. has demonstrated, the conceptual template

upon which the West would thereafter define its relations with all Others, indigenous peoples in particular, was forged. Williams dates this to the mid-13th-century commentaries of Pope Innocent IV on Innocent III's *Quod super his*, completed in 1209 (1990: 13–15).

That the mentality involved has lost none of its original substance or lethal intensity over the near-millennium that has elapsed since the medieval Crusades is abundantly apparent in Hitler's framing of the German bid to establish an eastern empire during the 1940s, as well as the cogency with which Aimé Césaire, among others, subsequently linked the Hitlerian framing to Western colonialism/imperialism as a whole. He aptly observed that Hitler was belatedly reviled by Europeans, not for 'crimes against humanity', per se, but instead for 'the fact that he applied to Europe colonialist procedures which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the coolies of India [and] the blacks of Africa' (Césaire 1972/1955: 14). Insofar as they were then struggling mightily to maintain their overseas empires, or at least substantial portions of them, he continued, countries like Britain, France, Portugal, and the Netherlands (all loudly condemning of the 'Nazi horror') were themselves busily 'chewing on Hitler's vomit' (ibid.). Through it all, the West's peculiar version of the state, formed, maintained, and continuously refined on the basis of internal colonialism, has been instrumental, indispensable to the evolution of European imperialism in each of its phases and typologies. By the late 20th century, only a handful of Europe's multitudinous indigenous peoples (notably, the Basques [Euskadi] and Sámis [pejoratively known as 'Lapps']) remained sufficiently in touch with their autochthonous traditions to struggle for resumption of a self-determining existence on that basis. As American Indian Movement (AIM) leader Russell Means once put it when arguing that indigenous peoples, no less than others, are entitled to exercise the right of self-determination:

For Europe to colonize the whole planet, it first had to colonize itself. At this point, Europeans have been colonized for so long, and so thoroughly, that they've actually forgotten the fact of their own colonization. Since it's hard to imagine being more colonized than that, it seems to me

that Europeans are the ones most desperately in need of decolonizing.

### Imperial reach: Phase 1

From at least as early as the First Crusade, the West harnessed itself to the task of fabricating what was purportedly 'its own' civilisation, self-anointedly superior to all others, through a peculiar mode of cultural imperialism against Others. This initially devolved upon a form of what might be best characterised as intellectual cannibalism wherein the Western intelligentsia systematically credited itself with the achievements of Eastern (primarily Islamic) philosophers, mathematicians, and scientists, while denying that those whose knowledge was thus appropriated had either produced it or were culturally capable of having done so. With respect to mathematics, for instance, although the word itself derives from the Arabic term 'al-jabar', Western scholars have historically (and routinely) attributed invention of the algebra to the Greek Diophantus, during the 3rd century CE. In fact, the algebraic method was conceived in its modern form by the Persian polymath Ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī around 820 CE (Boyer 1991: 229, 234). Indeed, as Jacques Sesiano makes clear, many of the 'brilliant innovations' credited to Europe's later mathematicians were outright plagiaries of much earlier discoveries by their Islamic counterparts; for example, the theorem attributed by the West to Nicholas Copernicus in 1543 is virtually identical to 'Tūsī's Double', a theorem published by a Persian, Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī, in 1247. Copernicus also plagiarised the work of a 14th-century Syrian predecessor, Abu'l-Hasan ibn al-Shātir, to such an extent that al-Shātir is sometimes referred to as the Pre-Copernican Copernican. Similarly, 'Viète's Laws' of numerical analysis, supposedly discovered by the Frenchman François Viète during the 16th century, were lifted from al-Tūsī; so, too, the 'Ruffini-Horner method' of computing the derivative of polynomials, supposedly devised by a pair of Europeans during the late 18th century; 'Wilson's Theorem', credited to the Englishman John Wilson in 1770, was already employed by the Arab mathematician Ibn al-Haytham ('Alhacen') by 1000 CE. Such illustrations of the West's claiming Islam's mathematical knowledge as the product of its own 'intellectual tradition' are seemingly endless,

extending not just to algebra but to such rarefied domains as calculus, trigonometry, non-Euclidian geometry, and number theory. Even the numerals, together with the attendant concepts of zero and decimal fractionation, essential to Europe's eventual mathematical sophistication, were swallowed whole from 'Eastern' Others. One result (particularly as regards the plagiarism of Ibn Sīnā ['Avicenna'], Ibn Rushd ['Averroës'], and others among Islam's Aristotelian philosophers) has been the West's conjuring of a proud 'history' which it falsely claims originated in the classical culture of ancient Greece. In actuality, as John Mohawk observes:

The West had no direct intellectual connection whatsoever to the thinkers of classical Greece: important works of the ancient Greeks had largely disappeared from the [Western] world by the second century. Aristotle's writings were already rare by the first century .... Pope Gregory the Great ordered the library of Palatine Apollo burned and forbade laymen to read even the Bible. Jerome, an early father of the Church, boasted that the classical authors were being ignored; in 398 [C.E.] the Fourth Council at Carthage forbade [even] Church leaders to read them. Young monks bragged of their ignorance of classical writings, and books and libraries were systematically destroyed. John Chrysostom, a father of the Greek [or Eastern Orthodox] Church, declared his satisfaction that all trace of the writings and philosophy of antiquity had disappeared under the early hegemony of the Christian Church. (Mohawk 1970: 67, 70)

Much the same procedure was/is evident in such less rarefied fields as architecture, engineering, agriculture, and medicine, with concepts, crop types, and technologies developed in the Islamic East ingested wholesale under the guise of being 'invented' by the West. Kirkpatrick Sale, for example, has argued that a 'new rationality' signified by the appearance of such technological marvels as the public clock, eyeglasses, paned glass windows, paper, the printing press, and (most of all) guns and gunpowder during Europe's 'High Renaissance' enabled its unparalleled outward thrust, beginning in the mid-15th century. In reality, such rationality was 'new' only to the West; every one of Sale's examples,

and many others besides, had appeared much earlier in The East. Public clocks were in use in Baghdad by 750 CE, and in 797 Hārūn al-Rashīd, the city's calif, is known to have presented an especially elaborate one to Charlemagne. Eyeglasses, the invention of which is credited to the Florentine Salvino D'Amato in 1284, were already being worn in China by 1260. High-purity, clear, colourless glass was first produced by Abās ibn Fīrnā, an Andalusian Berber, c.850 (he developed both quartz-based and silica-based methods of making it), while Islamic artisans had perfected the techniques of making stained glass and assembling paned windows at least a century earlier still. Paper was invented in China around 105 CE, where it was developed to near perfection before the techniques of making it, together with ink, were passed along to the Persians during the 8th century, and thence to the West during the 13th. The printing press (or, more accurately, moveable type) was developed by China's Pi Sheng in 1041, about four centuries before Gutenberg. Although there were efforts during the 13th century to credit Roger Bacon with inventing gunpowder, it had by then been known in China for some five centuries and was 'discovered' by the West only by way of Islam. It may be that Europeans discovered the process of 'corning' gunpowder during the 1420s, thereby making it more reliable and easily transportable, but without Islamic chemists having perfected techniques of purifying saltpetre c.1240 there would have been no weapons-grade powder to corn. As was recorded by the Bishop of Léon, cannons were already in use by Muslim forces during the Battle of Seville in 1248, while the first known use of such weapons by Europeans came nearly a century later during the 1346 Battle of Crécy.

Even Islamic institutions were copied, universities and hospitals being but two salient examples. The world's first university, al-Qarawiyyan ('Karaouine'), was established in present-day Morocco in 859 CE. The second was Egypt's al-Azhar, founded in 972 CE, followed by Persia's seven-campus Nizamiyya system, centred in Baghdad, which was developed during the 11th century. The West finally got in the act with establishment of the University of Bologna in 1088, and the Universities of Paris and Oxford in 1096. Revealingly, the mandate of the Bolognese undertaking was from the outset to glean

knowledge from 'the more advanced countries' (i.e. those of The East). Even such standard scholarly practices as peer review were simply lifted from Islamic prototypes. Similarly, the world's first hospital (*bimāristān*) was established in Baghdad in 805 CE, thereafter proliferating rapidly throughout the Islamic world. Europe's first was founded by the French king Louis IX shortly after his return from the Seventh Crusade in 1254 (he'd inspected Muslim medical facilities during his stint in the East). European medical practices and technologies remained reliant upon those long-since developed in Islam for the next several hundred years, with Ibn Sīnā's 14-volume *Canon of Medicine* (*Al-Qanun fī al-Tibb*), completed in 1025, still in use as an instructional text for training medical aspirants at the Sorbonne until the mid-19th century.

Nonetheless, by the early 1400s it had become obvious that Europe lacked the capacity to penetrate the 'Near Eastern' barrier presented by Islam, thereby securing either ports on the Red Sea or overland access to the broad range of much coveted goods (most famously, silk, tea, and spices) produced in the 'Far East' (i.e. Cathay [China] and India [Hindustan]). The goods were for centuries moved over the 4,000-mile Silk Road, originating in eastern China, traversing the 'Middle Eastern' domain of Persia, and terminating in the Levant. Goods produced in India were transported north along routes intersecting the Silk Road at various points. Trade was conducted all along the way, with the result that at best a small portion of the initial loads were still available for acquisition by European traders (through Muslim brokers) by the time they arrived in the eastern Mediterranean. Cutting out the Islamic middlemen obviously stood to substantially increase both the profit margins of Venetian and other European commercial enterprises and the quantity of goods available in the West. If anything, the reverse was true, given that the Islamic Ottoman Turks had launched a sustained northward drive into the Balkans in 1365 and would seize the Byzantine capitol of Constantinople in 1453, an advance unhalting until they'd reached Vienna a century later. Hence, in 1434, the Portuguese set out to find a water route to the Far East by circumnavigating Africa. The expedition failed to accomplish its mission (the Cape of Good Hope was not rounded

until 1488) but it did succeed in establishing the first European toehold on sub-Saharan Africa's Atlantic Coast. Quite unexpectedly, this opened up a very different source of wealth with which to build the West's then embryonic economies.

Over the next four centuries, the lucrative trade in black chattel slaves inaugurated by the Portuguese, and subsequently participated in by the Spanish, English (later British), French, Dutch, Danes, and various of their settler colonies/states, precipitated the forced, permanent removal of some 20 million Africans from their homelands, with untold millions more killed while resisting enslavement or by the rigours attending the forced marches by which they were moved from inland locations to coastal 'port factories'. There is considerable and ongoing dispute over the numbers. Hence, contrary to the assertions of many European/Euro-American scholars, there is no 'scholarly consensus'. I've taken the generally accepted figure of 15.5 million slaves having arrived in the 'New World' (of whom roughly one-third did not survive initial stints in 'seasoning camps' in the Caribbean), added a further 2.5 million who did not survive the so-called Middle Passage across the Atlantic, and yet another million who perished while being held at European-owned/-garrisoned 'port factories' along the African coast while awaiting shipment (Elmina, Bonny, and Benguela in particular) and simply rounded off the sum to arrive at 20 million. By some estimates, a roughly equal number of people died while resisting capture in the interior or during forced marches to the port factories. This would make the total impact of the Atlantic slave trade upon Africa's indigenous societies about 40 million. The sheer scale of the losses incurred by indigenous African societies from Senegambia in the north through present-day Angola in the south during the Maafa (as the Atlantic slave trade is known in Kiswahili, meaning 'great disaster'), left them forever devastated, unable in the aftermath to regain either their original cohesion or the levels of material security their economies had provided. It should be noted that the impact of the West's transatlantic trade in black slaves was to an extent exacerbated by a complicated Islamic trade in the same 'commodity' lasting from roughly 650 to 1950 CE. While the volume of the latter is sparsely

documented, the closest studies to date suggest that it was conducted in a far less intensive fashion and on a noticeably smaller scale than was its European counterpart; i.e. somewhere between 3.5 and 10 million sub-Saharan Africans were enslaved by Muslims over a period of more than 13 centuries. The sources of black slaves for the Islamic trade, moreover, were primarily the Sudan and Africa's east coast. Its effects thus exhibit little overlap with those attending the transatlantic trade. That said, it is worth mentioning that one reason the scale of Islamic commerce in black flesh was much smaller than that of the West (at least until the 19th century) was that there was less demand. Muslims were as inclined to enslave Slavs and the 'white' peoples of the Transcaucasus (especially Georgians and Circassians), as well as Western Christians, as blacks. There are at present no reliable estimates of the numbers at issue apart from Robert Davis's recent study, in which he concludes that perhaps 1.25 million slaves taken from the West were traded/held in North Africa alone between 1530 and 1780 (2003). Based upon that limited sample, it seems reasonable to suggest that, overall, the Islamic market may have been satiated through the enslavement of rather more whites than blacks.

This outcome was effectively ensured through a more insidious process wherein African leaders were selectively co-opted through formal, albeit duplicitous, recognition by the participating Western powers as 'legitimate heads of state' in their own right. Invariably, the quid pro quo demanded was that in exchange for European support vis-à-vis regional rivals (as well as steady supplies of guns, munitions, liquor, woollens, and other manufactured goods) the African participants would facilitate the trade by providing copious numbers of captives taken from other peoples. Thus were the prototypes of what would become Westernised state structures implanted on 'the Dark Continent', a circumstance in itself foreclosing upon the prospect of restoring pre-existing modes of sociopolitical and economic organisation when 'the shameful trade' finally ended during the mid-19th century. Meanwhile, as has been documented by Walter Rodney, among others, the profits accrued by the British alone were sufficient to underwrite England's late-18th-century 'Industrial Revolution' in its entirety.

## Imperial reach: Phase 2

Since millions of black slave labourers were neither needed nor desired in Europe itself, the vast influx of developmental capital attending the Occidental trade in their flesh was contingent upon a second factor. Word of Vasco de Gama's arrival in Calcutta by way of the Cape having not reached Europe until 1497, Spain had commissioned Cristóbal Colón (the surname literally translates as 'coloniser') to seek an alternative route to the Far East by sailing due west (i.e. to circumnavigate the globe itself). The result, of course, was that in October 1492 the 'Great Navigator' made landfall on a large island half-a-world away from where he thought he was and promptly pronounced himself successful. While Colón was never aware of it, he had stumbled upon the outer reaches of an entire hemisphere, much of it well-populated and sustaining a multiplicity of thriving cultures, the existence of which had previously been unknown to the West. The 'West' is used here strictly in the sense of its contrivance. Certainly, the Norse (resident then and now to the western edge of the Asian landmass) had established settlements in present-day Labrador and Newfoundland roughly five centuries before Colón's celebrated 'Voyage of Discovery', and, having subsequently explored both southward and inland, cannot be characterised as having been 'unaware' of North America's existence. Nor could the Basques, who are known to have been fishing off the coast of Newfoundland for at least a century before Colón set sail. There is also strong evidence of a West African presence in Mexico long before its 'discovery' by the Spanish, as well as a distinct possibility that the indigenous Guanches of the Canary Islands, exterminated by the Portuguese during the 15th century, had originated in the Americas and traversed the Atlantic from west to east.

Having secured the title of governor, Colón returned in 1493 to the island he'd christened Española (present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic), situated in a body of water he depicted as 'the Caribbean Sea' (the word 'Carib' translates as 'cannibal'). In his journals, Colón habitually insisted that indigenous peoples with whom he'd had no contact were 'Caribs' (a label with which all non-Arawakan native cultures of the Caribbean basin remain afflicted to this day). Here, he was simply employing an already



common Euro-supremacist trope whereby the 'savagery' of Others was signified by allegations of their supposed cannibalism. In actuality, as was demonstrated by William Arens in *The Man-Eating Myth*, there has never been tangible evidence that anthropophagy was/is an integral feature of any culture. Nonetheless, there remains a strain of scholarship (referred to as 'cannibology') obsessed with proving the opposite. There, Colón established the prototype of the plantation economies that would predominate throughout not only Spain's but all European colonies in the Caribbean and appreciable portions of both North and South America until the late 19th century, in many areas until much later (in some, it lingers still). This entailed the wholesale and intensive use of slave labour to clear previously uncleared land and cultivate certain crops highly valued in the European 'mother countries' (primarily sugar, cotton, tobacco, coffee, and cocoa, but others as well) in increasingly massive quantities, milling and refining them as needed. Much of the land was of course already in cultivation before the European invasion(s), and was simply reallocated to the growing of commercial crops rather than foodstuffs. The policy quite predictably induced mass starvation among the indigenous peoples whose fields were thus expropriated even as they were harnessed to such heavy labour as cutting cane and clearing additional acreage.

Initially, indigenous peoples were enslaved en masse for such purposes, forced to perform heavy labour under conditions so harsh that entire populations died in astonishingly short periods. Of Española's indigenous Taínos, who by the contemporaneous estimate of Bartolomé de Las Casas had numbered perhaps 3 million in 1493, fewer than 100,000 remained alive by 1500, when Colón was recalled to Spain, and by 1550 they were 'extinct'. It should be noted that during the 1960s, Sherburne Cook, Woodrow Borah, and other scholars of the so-called Berkeley School concluded that Las Casas's estimate was, if anything, far too low, i.e.: that the Taíno population of Española may have numbered as many as 8 million when Colón first arrived. The same pattern was everywhere evident as the Spanish rapidly expanded their dominion on the continental landmass of this 'New World' to include everything from Péru in the south to what they called California in the north. In Péru, for example, as historian David Stannard recounts:

[B]etween a third and a half of the annual quota of coca workers died as a result of their five month service in the fields and those who did survive, and the fewer still who lived out the remainder of the year, had only the next round of work to face in the coming season .... Within a century following their first encounter with the Spanish [in 1528], 94 to 96 percent of [the indigenous Andean peoples'] once-enormous population had been exterminated; along their 2000 miles of coastline, where once 6,500,000 people had lived, everyone was dead. (1992)

Stannard acknowledges that a large proportion of these deaths were caused by 'measles, mumps, typhus, influenza, diphtheria, scarlet fever, and haemorrhagic smallpox', European-imported diseases to which America's indigenous peoples had no prior exposure and a correspondingly low level of acquired immunity. To his great credit, however, he refuses to follow the now fashionable practice of invoking Alfred Crosby's (1986) 'virgin soil' hypothesis as a basis upon which to dismiss the staggering toll as 'unintended and inadvertent', thereby exculpating both the particular colonisers involved and the West more generally. Instead, he observes that in view of the grotesquely debilitating conditions imposed upon enslaved indigenous populations in the Americas, their resistance to disease would have been reduced to the point that they would have died by the millions no matter how many generations of acquired immunity they had inherited. Certainly, as evidenced by the catastrophic rate of disease mortality suffered by Slavic slave labourers under the Nazis, this was the case with 20th-century Europeans.

As such 'extermination through work' depleted what had begun as substantial indigenous populations in region after region, a spiralling demand for replacements spawned a significant, and far too little remarked, trade in American Indian slaves captured in the hinterlands, which was sustained until the mid-18th century (in some areas until much later). Rather perversely, under the circumstances, a seldom remarked factor contributing to indigenous population decline was the export of native people for sale in European slave markets. While data in this connection is sketchy, Jack Forbes (1992) has documented the sale of some 4,000 in

Seville alone between 1493 and 'the early 1500s', and estimates that as many as 30,000 were owned in Spain by 1700 (some portion were likely sent to the Canary Islands, a Spanish colony). The Portuguese owned thousands more, not only in the mother country but also in the Azores, while the market in Antwerp, supplied mainly by Dutch slavers until 1650, attracted purchasers of still other thousands from as far eastwards as the Hapsburg (Austro-Hungarian) Empire. All told, an overall estimate of 50,000 or more seems quite reasonable. Beginning in the mid-16th century, however, the preferred method of replenishing the ranks of slave labourers increasingly became importation of black chattel from Africa's Atlantic coast, a process justified on the basis of scriptural interpretation (i.e. a reading of the biblical story of Ham which led to the conclusion that blacks 'lacked souls', were therefore non-human, and should thus be deemed 'natural slaves' [in an Aristotelian sense]) and, correspondingly, there arose the preliminary formulations of what would become known as 'race law' and an arc of 'racial science' culminating in eugenics during the 20th century. Ironically, the best-known 'Aristotelian' depiction of black subhumanity was/is probably that of the Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas, while successfully arguing (during his celebrated debate with Juan Ginés de Sepulveda at Valladolid in 1550) to the opposite effect with regard to the peoples indigenous to America. This, in turn, unleashed what Patricia Williams has aptly described as an 'alchemy of race and law' throughout the West, as well as the pursuit of 'scientific' (biological) explanations for supposedly innate differences between 'races' which ultimately crystallised in eugenics, an 'empirical' doctrine founded in England during the 1880s, virtually hegemonic within the US intelligentsia from 1910 to 1930, and most thoroughly applied by the Nazis between 1932 and 1945. Following the Second World War, eugenics research has been continued under such rubrics as 'social biology', and governmental policies have been influenced accordingly.

The growth of the transatlantic slave trade paralleled the steep decline of the native population throughout Iberian dominions in the Americas, peaking during the 18th century, a period in which more than half of all blacks were imported (i.e. about 8 million). Although the first African slaves arrived on

Española in 1502, less than 5 per cent of the trade's total volume is estimated to have occurred by 1600, during which period indigenous peoples were still available in sufficient numbers to satisfy demand. As the effects of indigenous population decline became increasingly pronounced during the 17th century, the trade expanded accordingly, with a further 16 per cent of its total volume dating to the period 1601–1700. During the 18th century, with the hemispheric indigenous population having been reduced by upwards of 90 per cent, the trade surged dramatically, with more than half of total volume having been carried out between 1701 and 1800. A further 28 per cent of total volume dates from the 19th century, despite the British and US bans on the international trade in 1808 (Brazil continued to import black chattel until the late 1880s, as did the Spanish colony of Cuba). The US ban was rather cynical, since, as Henry Wienczek has recently shown, 'America's favorite slaveholding philosopher of freedom' Thomas Jefferson had already realised that by outlawing importation while retaining the domestic system of slavery the value of each slave already in the country (and all who could be 'bred' from them) would be driven sharply upwards, thereby greatly increasing the real and potential wealth of owners such as himself. Jefferson also pioneered the monetisation of slaves, thereby allowing their conversion into capital. This had the effect not only of hollowing out the societies indigenous to much of the western and central sub-Sahara, but of greatly confusing the newly contrived racial nomenclature assigned by the colonisers to the remnants of indigenous peoples surviving in the New World. As Renápe/Lenápe historian Jack Forbes (*ibid.*) has shown, the inclusion of both indigenous Americans and black Africans within the slave-labour forces maintained on most plantations over spans of several generations produced what might be properly termed 'red-black peoples' in many regions. Since persons of 'mixed-race' were automatically denominated as being other than 'Indio', the physical eradication of the New World's indigenous peoples was augmented by the residue's being thereby 'defined out of existence'. It has been argued that the Spanish term 'Indio' derives not from Christóbal Colón's belief that he had reached the 'Indies' (now Indonesia, although he was actually looking for Cippangu [Japan]) but

from his original description of the Taínos as being 'una gente en Dios' ('a people in God'). Be that as it may, under the legal codes effected throughout Spain's New World colonies and Portuguese Brazil, it was applicable only to 'full-blood' Indians while all others were defined as being something else, depending on their specific 'racial admixture'. Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz lists two dozen terms formally assigned to different combinations and 'degrees' of 'red-black-white' descent (1974: 129–130). Although the biolegal construction of 'Indianness' was rather simpler in the Anglophone colonies of North America, and subsequently the US (all those born of 'red-black admixture' were defined as black, those whose pedigree included white lineage as well were cast as 'coloured') there were/are roughly 30 colloquial terms employed to classify different biracial and triracial combinations. Examples of the latter include 'Croatan,' 'Melungeon,' 'redbone,' 'buckhead,' and 'brass ankle'.

The drive to extinguish indigenous cultural identity was further reinforced by a process of what the Osage scholar George Tinker has termed 'missionary conquest', wherein priests and others dispatched by the papacy for such purposes offered 'salvation' to people severely traumatised by the devastating of their societies, but only on condition of their abandoning their own spiritual beliefs in favour of Catholicism's 'one true God', pledging fealty to an Iberian Crown, and seeking to emulate their colonisers' ways of life. For a full half-century, beginning with the promulgation of Juan López de Palacios Rubios's *Requerimiento* in 1513, such comprehensive Westernisation was in fact compulsory throughout the Spanish New World dominions, on pain of death or enslavement. The law, derived from Pope Alexander VI's 1493 Bull *Inter Caetera* extending Church authority over the whole of the New World, was typically read to indigenous people by a priest in untranslated Spanish. It specifically required them to 'acknowledge the Church as the Ruler and Superior of the whole world, and the high priest called Pope, and in his name the King and Queen ... our lords, in his place, as superiors and lords and kings of these islands and this [land] ... and that you consent and give place that these religious fathers should declare and preach to you'. It then informed them that, 'if you do not do this ... we shall powerfully enter into your

country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can'. It thereupon concluded with a pronouncement of self-absolution, asserting that any 'deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their Highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who come with us'. As secular law, the *Requerimiento* was a bald attempt at post hoc justification, given that mass enslavement of 'Indios' had already been underway for 20 years on Española, and there had been no shortage of attendant slaughter. Although it was officially repealed in 1566, the law had by then largely accomplished its purpose and would in any event continue to be invoked for another 50 years. While nothing so straightforwardly draconian appeared in Portuguese colonial law, missionary practice in Brazil was essentially the same.

In any case, the insatiable demand for slaves, whether indigenous to America or to Africa, was fuelled by more than the plantation system alone. There was to be sure an infrastructure to be built; fortifications, cities and towns, roads, mills, refineries, and port facilities, all of which required the investiture of heavy labour in massive quantities, and all of which proliferated with remarkable rapidity throughout the Spanish New World colonies in particular. And then there were the mines. From 1503–1660, Spain took some 185,000 kilos of gold and 16 million kilos of silver from its New World possessions (a quantity three times greater than the precious metals possessed by the West as a whole in 1500); while, during the 18th century, the quantity of gold arriving in Lisbon from Brazil 'exceeded the total volume ... Spain had taken from its colonies in the preceding two centuries'.

In terms of sheer magnitude, this sudden influx of wealth to Iberia, and thence the West more broadly, was utterly unprecedented. Initially, it accrued all but entirely from the Spanish plunder of the superbly crafted gold and silver jewellery and ornamentation ubiquitous throughout both the Méxica and the Inca domains, but, as these sources were

quickly exhausted, the labour-intensive turn to mining of the metals began almost immediately. While rich veins of ore were found in hundreds of locations, that unearthed from the Cerro Rico site at Potosí, in present-day Bolivia, was by far the most spectacular. Between 1556 and 1783, in addition to tens of thousands of indigenous people (*mitayos*), some 30,000 black slaves were 'expended' in the course of bringing 41,000 metric tons of silver up from the depths of that one mine, reputedly 'enough ... to make a bridge from the tip of the Cerro to the door of the [Spanish] royal palace across the ocean'.

All told, as Eduardo Galeano has noted, the quantities of gold and silver at issue were in themselves more than sufficient to have underwritten the West's vaunted industrial revolution, not only in England, but in its entirety. Such industrialisation did not occur in Iberia, however. Galeano (1973: 33–42) sketches the process through which the vast quantities of gold and silver simply washed through or past Spain, expended by the Crown on the acquisition of arms and manufactured goods produced by 'lesser' peoples to the north (mainly those of the Low Countries and westerly Germanic states), thereby financing development of their industrial base. While lavish expenditures on luxury goods temporarily allowed the 'Spanish nobility [to enjoy] living in a contra-historical Middle Age', such imperial 'delirium ... simultaneously sealed the ruin of Spain', a matter signified by a drastic decline in Iberia's domestic productive capacity during the first century of its vast New World empire (e.g., of an estimated 14,000 looms operating in 1550, roughly 400 remained operational 50 years later). Nor was this all. At the time of Colón's 1492 'discovery', roughly two-thirds of all vegetable foodstuffs now commonly consumed by humanity were under cultivation in the Americas and nowhere else. Many of these (corn, beans, and potatoes are prime examples) do not exist in nature, and had come into being only as the result of extensive hybridisation by the broad array of native peoples whose economies centred on farming them. Acquisition of these three crops, especially the potato, rapidly transformed European agriculture, allowing the West to attain an otherwise inconceivable level of nutritional stability even as the cultures that had created and thrived on them were systematically pushed beyond the bare margins

of subsistence and otherwise annihilated. Potatoes became a staple of the Western diet (albeit, only a handful of the 3,000-odd varieties developed in Péru prior to the Spanish invasion were cultivated in Europe), an eventuality resulting not least from the plant's general hardiness and the fact that its average yield of about 50,000 pounds per acre was considerably greater than most Old World crop types. Beans, the yield of which varies by type but is nonetheless substantial, added an important protein component lacking in potatoes. The effect of corn was somewhat more indirect in that it was grown mainly to feed livestock. Nonetheless, since corn is a richer grain with a per acre yield about three times greater than that of wheat and other Old World alternatives, its cultivation underpinned a substantial increase in meat proteins and animal fats available for consumption by average Europeans.

The dazzling cornucopia of additional items introduced to the Western diet by way of invading the New World, ranging as they did from 'chillies to chocolate', afforded it not only an inestimably greater nutritive balance but also a diversity now enshrined as Spanish, Italian, French, and other distinctive 'national cuisines'. To get the idea, one need only try and imagine what Italian cuisine would be like without tomatoes, peppers, beans (apart from garbanzos and favas), squash (especially zucchini), chocolate, and vanilla, none of which was known to the West until its invasion of the Americas. The idea of noodles (pasta) was, of course, lifted from China, while coffee (espresso) was introduced by Islam. Other products of indigenous American knowledge cannibalised by their Western colonisers were no less valuable. These included such pharmacological marvels as quinine, ipecac, coca, arnica, witch hazel, and petroleum jelly, to name but a handful of the more important, as well other medicinal knowledge, including cures for scurvy, intestinal worms, goitre, headaches, and constipation. Quinine is used both to treat and as a prophylactic against malaria. Ipecac cures amoebic dysentery, and, in a milder dosage, is still prescribed as an emetic. Coca is mainly known as a stimulant (especially as the base from which cocaine is made) but is also highly effective in treating altitude sickness. Arnica remains a popular remedy for pain and swelling attending sprains, while witch hazel is widely used to relieve

the ache of strained muscles. Petroleum jelly is perhaps the most commonly used skin ointment in the world today. All but quinine were used by America's native peoples for the purposes indicated prior to the arrival of Europeans, and they discovered its utility in treating malaria shortly after the invaders introduced the disease to the New World. Although it is seldom acknowledged, the West still very much relies upon the level of medicinal knowledge native Americans had attained long before the European invasions. Kelp, for example, was used by the Incas to cure goitre and remains the essential ingredient in drugs prescribed for the condition. Similarly, the indigenous headache remedy contained a close relative of today's aspirin (i.e. acetylsalicylic acid). The bark of a shrub used by California's indigenous peoples to cure constipation contains properties 'modern science' has been unable to synthesise or improve upon; the bark itself remains the active ingredient in all laxatives common in the West. As with quinine, the cure for scurvy (acute deficiency of Vitamin C) offers an especially clear example of Europe's cannibalisation of indigenous knowledge. To these must be added a range of medical/surgical techniques and technologies such as rubber tubing and syringes (indeed, rubber itself), completely unknown to the Old World. The Méxicas had by the early 16th century developed especially advanced surgical techniques, documented by the Spanish as including a method of repairing broken bones closely resembling what is now termed 'medullary fixation' (i.e. inserting a rod to reinforce the repair) unequalled by Western surgeons until the 20th century. Méxica surgeons were also adept at removing tumours, are known to have successfully performed cranial surgery, and employed scalpels allowing greater precision than anything available in the West until lasers came into use. Their practice, moreover, was based on one of the more accurate apprehensions of human anatomy in the world. The broader Méxica practice of medicine (which included dentistry) was divided into specialisations, prefiguring the adoption of a similar arrangement in the West by about three centuries. Probably the most significant medical insight Méxica and other indigenous physicians imparted to their Western counterparts (albeit the notion was fiercely resisted by the West until the early 19th century) was the importance of sanitation and personal

hygiene in preventing disease. (Europeans at the time the New World invasion began, and for a consider period thereafter, routinely dumped raw sewage into the street and actually believed that bathing *caused* certain illnesses, often living their lives without once cleansing their bodies.)

The intellectual cannibalism apparent in the West's earlier remarked attribution to itself of Islamic knowledge has in some ways been even more pronounced with regard to that obtained from America's indigenous peoples. The anti-malarial properties of 'chinchine', as quinine was known in the West until 1820, was, for instance, 'discovered' by the Countess of Chinchona only by virtue of her having been the first European treated with the drug by Inca physicians. Similarly, the cure for scurvy was not 'found' by the British naval officer James Lind during the 1780s; the cure, as he contemporaneously recorded, was shown to the French explorer Jacques Cartier by the Wyandots in 1535. Nor was ipecac 'discovered' in Brazil during the 1600s' or its use in curing 'the flux' (amoebic dysentery) first revealed by the Dutch physician Helveticus in 1688. Rather, it had long been employed for that purpose, and in mild doses as an emetic, by peoples indigenous to the Amazon Basin when they taught the Portuguese its uses, c.1550.

In the same vein, the Venetian polymath Fausto Veranzio was not, as Wikipedia would have it, 'the first' to design a suspension bridge in his 1595 *Machina Novae*. Spanish conquistadors began reporting the existence of such bridges, and not infrequently attaching sketches, shortly after their 1532 arrival in Péru, where native engineers had designed and constructed more than 200 of them in the course of completing the Incas' 25,000-mile road system. Veranzio's design was of a structure not only bearing a remarkable resemblance to those already conceived and built by the Incas, but specifying use of the very same materials. Actually, Veranzio offered two variations of the design in *Machina Novae*. The first was of a rope and wood construction virtually identical, both in form and materials, to that of the Incas. The second was of a type developed in China as early as 300 BCE, utilising exactly the same engineering principles, but substituting iron chains for the primary ropes. The Incan and Chinese variations were apparently developed independently of one another (at least there was no known interaction between the two civilisations).

In any case, Veranzio credited neither. Any number of additional illustrations might be offered, and a few will be mentioned below, but it should for the moment be sufficient to observe that 'Irish' potatoes were never Irish (albeit, it will in fairness be noted, that it was the English colonisers, not the colonised Irish, who coined the term).

### Imperial reach: Phase 3

Establishment of Iberia's New World empires during the early 16th century, and shortly thereafter those of the French, English, Danes, Swedes and Dutch (even the tiny Duchy of Courland sought to join the parade) made possible the realisation of the West's imperial ambitions on a planetary scale. The Iberian New World dominions derived from Pope Alexander VI's Bull *Inter caetera* of 1493, which purported to divide it between them. Hence, Portugal's empire in the Americas was lodged in Brazil, while Spain's encompassed the rest of South America, all of Central America and present-day Mexico, more or less all of the present-day continental US west of the Mississippi River and as far north as Oregon, plus Florida and most of the Caribbean islands. Brazil declared itself an independent empire in 1822, and Portugal, after an unsuccessful effort to contest the matter militarily, conceded the point in 1824. (Brazil, from which Uruguay separated in 1828, remained officially an empire until a coup d'état led to its becoming 'a dictator-led republic' in 1889.) Meanwhile, a series of wars of independence in 'New Spain' (i.e., Mexico, including the northern half seized by the US in 1848) and Spanish holdings in South and Central America, waged from 1810–22, led to Spain's formal relinquishment in 1836 of its continental New World empire as a whole, and recognition of the newly formed states of Gran Columbia (from which Venezuela separated in 1830, and Panama in 1903), Ecuador, Chile, Péru, Bolivia, Paraguay, the United Republics of Rio de la Plata (later Argentina), Mexico, the Central American Republic (the provinces of which later separated, becoming Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Costa Rica). Thereafter, all that remained of Spain's empire in the Americas were the colonies of Cuba and Puerto Rico, both of which were seized by the US in 1898. Puerto Rico remains a US colony at present.

The dominion of 'New France' was proclaimed in 1534 with respect to an area initially encompassing the present-day Canadian province of Québec as well as the area then referred to as Acadia, which included present-day Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. By the early 17th century, however, French territorial claims had dramatically expanded its 'Upper Country', extending northward to surround the southern half of Hudson's Bay and westward to a point beyond Lake Winnipeg (in present-day Manitoba), while the two compartments of 'Louisiana' extended southward from the Great Lakes to encompass the entire Mississippi River basin (broadly defined). Nova Scotia and 'Prince Rupert's Land', the area around Hudson's Bay, were ceded to England in the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, and the balance in the Treaty of Paris a half-century later. The only French colony in South America, Guiana, was established in 1602 and remains an 'overseas department' of France at present. In the Caribbean, France established the colony of St Domingue (now Haiti) on the western third of Española in 1664, but lost it to Toussaint Louverture's successful slave revolt in 1791. Meanwhile, it had also taken control of the Lesser Antilles in their virtual entirety, retaining three of the islands (Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Marie-Galante) as overseas departments even now (another island, St Barthélemy, is currently designated as being part of the French 'overseas collectivity'). England's first move towards forging an empire in the Americas came in 1583, with its chartering of the colony of Newfoundland (headquartered at the trading port at St John's, established in 1520). This was followed in 1586 by the launching of a failed effort to establish a colony, to be known as Virginia, at Roanoke (in present-day North Carolina). The 'Lost Colony', as Roanoke is known, was redeemed in 1607, when the Virginia Colony was successfully established at Jamestown. In 1620, the Plymouth Plantation was founded to the north (i.e., at a point roughly equidistant between Virginia and Newfoundland) and merged with the subsequently established Massachusetts Colony in 1691. Meanwhile, an area around Plymouth still known as 'New England' had been filled in by establishment of the Province of Maine in 1622, the New Hampshire Colony in 1623, the Connecticut Colony in 1633, the Rhode Island and Providence Plantations (present-day Rhode

Island) in 1636. South of New England, the 'Maryland Province' was founded in 1634, New York and New Jersey Provinces were ceded to England by the Dutch in 1664, and Pennsylvania Province was established in 1684 (with Delaware Colony splitting off in 1704). South of Virginia, the Province of Georgia was founded in 1670, the colonies of North and South Carolina in 1710. At that point, English colonies encumbered the entire Atlantic coast of the present-day US north of Spain's colony of La Florida (established c.1559–65), as well as a small portion of that in what is now Canada. All of 'New France' was then ceded to England under the 1763 Treaty of Paris, thus expanding its purported dominion to encompass virtually all of North America east of the Mississippi River. In turn, the British were compelled to relinquish all claims to territorial sovereignty south of Canada in the 1783 Treaty of Paris, by which it recognised US independence, while Canada remains part of the British Commonwealth. England's other New World holdings were relatively small, consisting primarily of the Caribbean islands of Barbados (1625), Nevis (1628), Monserrat (1623), the Bahamas (1648), Anguilla (1650), Antigua and Barbuda (1666), Jamaica and the Caymans (1670), and sometimes St Kitts and St Lucia (beginning in 1623). Anguilla, Monserrat, and the Caymans remain British 'overseas territories' at present. A small enclave on Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast, declared an English protectorate in 1655, was maintained for over a century, but Britain's only actual colony in Central America, 'British Honduras', was not established until 1862. It gained independence as Belize in 1973, but remains part of the British Commonwealth (as do Antigua, Barbuda, Nevis, St Kitts, Jamaica, the Bahamas, and several other Caribbean islands). Apart from Greenland, which it claimed in 1721, the Danish New World empire consisted only of the Caribbean island colonies of St Thomas (established in 1671), St Jan (now St John, established in 1718), and St Croix (purchased from France in 1733). The 'Danish West Indies', as they were known, were sold to the United States in 1916, and are now referred to as the 'US Virgin Islands'. Dutch imperial adventure in the Americas began with construction of Fort Nassau (present-day Albany, New York) in 1614, followed by the more ambitious trading centre of New Amsterdam (present-day New

York City) in 1625. In 1655, 'New Netherland', as the colony was called, expanded by absorbing the colony of New Sweden to the south, but was ceded to the British in 1667 under the Treaty of Breda. In exchange, Britain ceded to the Dutch its settlements in Surinam (now Suriname) which, together with the Caribbean islands of St Maartin, Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire, became the Netherlands' longest-held New World possessions. The Courinans tentatively established the colony of 'New Courland' on Tobago in 1654, but were shoved aside by the Dutch five years later. They regained control of the island in 1660, but abandoned it in 1666. Unsuccessful attempts were made in 1668 and 1683 to renew planting operations before the Duchy finally gave up altogether, selling its interests to the Netherlands in 1689. Without the abrupt and massive infusion of wealth in the form of precious metals, to say nothing of profits accruing from the trades in African slaves and plantation-produced commodities, Europe would have lacked anything near the wherewithal necessary to rapidly refine certain of the technologies it had acquired from Islam, armaments in particular, thereby gaining an ever increasing advantage in its drive to dominate Others. These 'tools of empire', as Daniel Headrich termed them (1981), would prove decisive, affording the West a capacity to dictate terms to the world that remains unrelinquished.

Of similar importance were the crops acquired in the Americas. Regularisation and exponential expansion of the transatlantic trade as well as that with India and China, exploration of the vast reaches of the Pacific, meeting the burgeoning requirements attending maintenance of a seaborne military presence across far-flung regions, all were heavily contingent upon the West's ability to provision ever larger numbers of ships with such non-perishable staples as dried 'navy' beans. Still more significantly, the tremendous improvement in Western agricultural productivity following the introduction of New World crops enabled an unrivalled population growth in Europe. Estimated as having been about 73 million in 1492, the number of Europeans nearly tripled over the next three centuries, reaching roughly 200 million by 1800, while that of India grew from 110 to 190 million during the same period, China's from 185 to 295 million, Africa's remained constant at about 100 million, and that of

America's indigenous peoples essentially collapsed, plummeting from 100–125 million to around 15 million.

By 1850, the population of Europe had reached 250 million, and thereafter it really began to grow, mushrooming to 468 million by 1914. From 1850 to 1900, an average of 400,000 people per year were exported from Europe to an array of settler colonies/states. By 1914, the number had reached a million per year, and a third of the planetary population was of European descent. The extent of the West's increasingly gross overpopulation made the exporting of 'surplus' people something of a priority from the beginning of the 19th century onward, allowing it to undertake a process of 'replenishing the earth' through the establishment of settler colonies/states in which indigenous peoples were/are literally replaced on what had been their lands, having either been exterminated entirely or their numbers reduced to the point that the remnants were soon buried beneath an overburden of Europeans. This, it should be noted, was precisely the model adapted by the Nazis for application in Eastern Europe under their notorious Generalplan Ost (General Plan East) in 1941. Therein, a third of the resident Slavic population was to be rapidly exterminated, a third driven from the vast area intended for repopulation by Germans, and the remaining third reduced to serving as slave labourers.

In the US portion of North America alone, there were more than 4 million white settlers and 1 million black slaves by 1800, figures that rose to approximately 67 million and 9 million, respectively, during the 19th century. After 1865, blacks in the US were, at least in a formal sense, no longer slaves. Although it is a common misconception that the huge mass of settlers arriving in the US during the 19th century were mainly English and (Scottish-) Irish, by far the largest number were German. The indigenous population of the Canadian portion of North America has been estimated to have been as high as 3.5 million when European colonisation commenced. According to a comprehensive government tally undertaken in 1875, there were fewer than 160,000 surviving, and by 1900 the number had dropped to 101,000. The settler population, on the other hand, had reached about 5 million in 1800.

British colonisation of Zimbabwe began in 1890, with the construction of Fort Salisbury

(present-day Harare), and white settlers began to arrive shortly thereafter. By 1927, a point at which the number of settlers had yet to reach 44,000 in the still new colony (named 'Rhodesia', after Cecil Rhodes, the British imperialist who had chartered its establishment) and despite there being upwards of 3 million indigenous Africans within its boundaries, the implementation of a white supremacist order was complete. In 1965, the settler minority (by then 308,000, as opposed to nearly 8 million blacks) unilaterally declared independence from Britain, thereby, after constitutionalising white rule in 1968, converting Rhodesia into a fully fledged settler-state. Meanwhile, the indigenous population, which still numbered perhaps 1 million at the beginning of the century, had been reduced to less than a quarter of that by 1890. Much the same pattern prevailed in other Anglophone dominions, notably Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii, as well as Ibero-American settler-states such as Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. Variations on the theme, wherein permanent settler rule was meant to be permanent despite the white population remaining much smaller than that of the subjugated, were also evident in French colonial Algeria, the Dutch/British Cape Colony (South Africa), and British Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and elsewhere. The first British (penal) colony in Australia, New South Wales, was established in 1788, at which time the indigenous population was about 750,000. By 1900, the 'aborigines' had been reduced to 93,000 (with one native people, the Palawas ['Tasmanians'], having been completely exterminated) while the population of mostly British settlers had grown from fewer than 6,000 to over six million. The Maori population of Aotearoa (New Zealand) numbered some 200,000 in 1800, at which time there were 50 Europeans in the islands (which were proclaimed a British colony in 1840). By 1900, there were fewer than 40,000 surviving Maoris, while the settler population had reached nearly 1 million.

The Kanaka Maoli (indigenous Hawaiian) population is estimated to have been as large as 800,000 when the British first visited the islands in 1778. By 1898, the year it was annexed as a US 'territory' (i.e. colony), the number of indigenous people had been reduced to fewer than 40,000, while the population of non-Kanaka Maoli had risen to over 150,000. The latter figure is somewhat



deceptive, however, as the 'settlers' were predominantly Japanese and Chinese imported during the 19th century by a small group of white missionaries cum planters, mostly to provide cheap labour on their sugar plantations. In 1893, the planters, backed by the US military, overthrew Hawai'i's constitutional monarchy and established the so-called Republic of Hawaii, with themselves in charge. Following annexation, the white population surged to more than 100,000 by 1940, while that of the Kanaka Maoli, including those of mixed ancestry, rebounded to about 64,000.

Argentina holds the dubious distinction of being second only to the US in terms of the number of European settlers (6.6 million) imported during the 19th century. Concomitantly, its indigenous population, conservatively estimated at 300,000 at the onset of Western colonisation, had been reduced by something in the neighbourhood of 90 per cent by 1900 (data in this regard is quite sketchy). Uruguay is unique in that it is the only country on the continental landmass(es) of the Americas to claim that, apart from a small number of *mestizos* (mixed-bloods), its indigenous population had been completely eradicated by 1800. It is thus populated entirely by European settlers. By 1800, the non-indigenous population of Brazil consisted of about 1.5 million mostly Portuguese European settlers and a slightly greater number of black slaves. By mid-century, a further 2 million or more slaves had been imported from the sub-Saharan, while the white settler population had grown to roughly 3 million. As the slave trade became increasingly problematic thereafter, the emphasis shifted and more than 2 million additional European settlers, predominantly Italian, were imported during the last quarter of the century (a further 2 million had been imported by 1930). Meanwhile, the remarkably diverse indigenous population, reflecting at least 188 distinct languages, had been reduced by an estimated 95 per cent (i.e. from 6 million or more at the beginning of Portuguese colonisation to roughly 250,000 in 1900). In the process, three-quarters of the societies known to have existed in the 16th century, including major agricultural complexes along the coast, had been rendered extinct.

France colonised Algeria in 1830. Nearly a million *Pieds-Noirs* had 'permanently' settled in Algeria by 1960, about 800,000 of whom

returned to France after the colony's hard-won independence two years later. While they never outnumbered the Muslim population (about 85 per cent of which was/is Arab and the rest indigenous Berbers ['Moors']), which numbered nearly 23 million in 1960, the settlers' subjugation of the 'natives' was sufficiently harsh and degrading as to be characterised as genocidal by Sartre. Algeria's official estimate is that some 1.5 million Algerians were killed by French troops and *Pieds-Noir* militias during the colony's war of national liberation (1956–62), and that millions more had perished as a result of French-imposed deprivations during the preceding 125 years of colonial rule.

What became South Africa began as the Dutch Cape Colony in 1652. The colony was ceded to Britain in 1814, and the Boers (Dutch settlers) promptly moved northward to form both the Orange Free State and the Republic of Transvaal (known as the Boer Republics). Following the second Boer War (1899–1902), Britain merged the three entities as the Union of South Africa in 1910 and granted its independence in 1931. The Republic of South Africa, as it was renamed in 1961, was from the outset specifically constituted as a settler-state. While whites (Dutch and English combined) never exceeded 13 per cent of the country's population, they maintained absolute control over its power, property, and wealth under the legally codified system of racial hierarchy known as apartheid. The indigenous (black) population, which comprised three-quarters of South Africa's 40.6 million people in 1990, was excluded from government, consigned to 13 per cent of the land (divided into 'Bantustans', or 'Black Homelands', as they were also called), and generally subjected to conditions of abject poverty until 1994, at which point a sustained and mounting black insurgency led to the end of *de jure* white rule.

Without quinine, of course, the prevalence of malaria throughout the tropics would have precluded the flowering of European overseas colonialism in its 'classic' form, not only in much of Latin America, but also South and South-East Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, demand for the drug, obtainable only from the bark of the Andean cinchona tree, led to the literal theft of seeds and cuttings from Péru and Bolivia during the early-to-mid-19th century and establishment of what would become well over a hundred cinchona

plantations on Java and other islands in the 'Dutch East Indies' (now Indonesia), and scores of others in the British colonies of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and India. The Dutch naturalist Justus Hasskarl smuggled cinchona seeds out of Péru in 1852, sprouted them, and established the first plantation on Java two years later. Plantations there were by far the most successful, and by the end of the 19th century Java accounted for 90 per cent of the international trade in cinchona bark, while the quinine factory at Bandung was the world's largest producer of the drug itself. The British continued limited production in northern India, but most planters in Ceylon had converted to growing tea by 1900. The French also attempted to establish cinchona plantations in several locales, and to some extent succeeded in Indochina (as they called the area encompassing what are now Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), but never managed to produce enough quinine to meet the needs of their personnel in the colony itself. Not only did the wholesale conversion of substantial areas to the cultivation of cinchona seriously undermine the traditional economies of peoples indigenous to such areas (especially Java's Bawean and Baduis) but the increasing availability of quinine made possible a considerable acceleration in the establishment of plantations devoted to raising other cash crops, thereby obliterating such economies altogether.

European colonisation of the African interior, with all its devastating impact on the proliferation of societies indigenous to the region, already badly damaged as many of them were by the ravages of the slave trade, was never viable until quinine became widely available during the late 1860s. This set off the 'Scramble for Africa', culminating in the Berlin Conference of 1884–85 (also known as the 'Congo Conference'), during which Europe's imperial powers essentially divided the continent among themselves, partitioning its entire landmass into colonial compartments (the 'Belgian Congo', 'French Equatorial Africa', 'British Kenya', 'Spanish Morocco', 'Portuguese Angola', 'German South-West Africa', and so on) with consequences that continue to plague Africa's Fourth-World nations to this day.

Following Charles Goodyear's supposed discovery of 'vulcanisation' in 1839 (actually, the Quechuas of Brazil and Péru were already employing the process long before

the Spanish invasion), and especially after John Dunlop unveiled the pneumatic tire in 1888, rubber became another major factor. Although variants can be found in landofia vine native to equatorial Africa, as well as the Assam (ficas) tree in South-East Asia, the term 'rubber' refers to the sap of the helvea tree, found only in Amazonia prior to 1550 (less preferred cousins, the Manihot and the Castilleja, are native to Central America and southern Mexico). 'Vulcanisation' is simply the mixing of sulphur into heated rubber to increase its elasticity and durability while eliminating its natural surface stickiness and substantially reducing its odour. Having thus processed the material, which they called *caoutchouc*, the Quechuas (as was recorded by the Spanish during the 1530s) used it not only in making the earlier mentioned medical devices, but rain-proof ponchos, shoe soles, balls and other children's toys, tie-down ropes akin to what are now called bungee cords, and a number of other items. As the rise in demand shifted from dramatic to explosive with the advent of motorised vehicles during the final decade of the 19th century, little overstatement is embodied in the observation that Belgium's King Leopold transformed his vast 'Congo Free State' into a gigantic rubber plantation. Prior to 1890, rubber production was an exclusively Brazilian enterprise, entirely dependent upon the tapping of wild trees. Total output at the time of Goodyear's 'invention' was less than 30 tons per year. By 1900, Brazil's output of 'wild rubber' had reached 26,000 tons, and would peak at 35,000 tons in 1920, but demand vastly outstripped its capacity. In the latter year, world production totalled slightly over 310,000 tons, nine-tenths of it accruing from newly established rubber plantations in Central Africa and South-East Asia. It is often contended (incorrectly) that rubber production in the Congo accrued from the native landofia vine rather than the Brazilian helvea tree. While output was initially dependent upon landofia (both wild and cultivated), that was so only until much higher yielding, but newly planted, helveas reached the age at which they could be tapped (typically six to seven years). By 1906, more than 600,000 acres had been converted into helvea plantations and the proportion of total rubber product attributable to landofia was both greatly diminished and rapidly declining. It is also worth mentioning that by the same year some 250,000 cocoa plants were under cultivation,

in expectation of establishing cocoa plantations in the near future. Other cash crops originating in the New World which were also being grown in appreciable quantities, again with an eye toward expansion, included vanilla trees, cinchona trees, and coca.

Entire peoples in the colony's interior were conscripted as forced labourers under conditions rivalling those imposed by the Spanish and Portuguese upon indigenous Americans more than three centuries earlier, and with entirely comparable results: by 1903, the colony's black population, which had numbered over 20 million in 1885, had fallen to barely 8.5 million (a near two-thirds reduction in less than 20 years).

In Malaya (now Malaysia), while the effects were far less lethal, the indigenous Malays and Senois were completely dislocated and in a sense lost beneath an avalanche of labourers imported from China and India (they comprised nearly 70 per cent of the colony's population by 1910) as the British converted two-thirds of the peninsula's cultivated land into rubber plantations. By 1920, Malaya's output totalled half of world rubber production, a proportion diminished over the next several years by the rapidly expanding share claimed by the Dutch East Indies, where some 875,000 acres (mostly on Java and the east coast of Sumatra) had been used to establish even larger-scale plantations. The French, too, cashed in on the boom, although somewhat belatedly, converting upwards of 500,000 acres into rubber plantations in the colony it called Indochina during the 1920s. More specifically, the plantations were/are situated in Cochinchina, the most southerly portion of Vietnam. Output reached 60,000 tons in 1939, but by then this came to only 5 per cent of global production.

Other New World crops placed in cultivation, plantation-style, in the West's African and Asian colonies included tobacco and vanilla. Although the vanilla tree is native to Central America, and is still grown there for commercial purposes, the former French colony of Madagascar now provides 80 per cent of the world's supply. Between vanilla plantations and logging operations, the island's biologically unique habitat has been in large part devastated, with predictable effects on the indigenous Malagasy peoples. By 1550, commercial production had begun earnest, both in Brazil and on a number of Caribbean islands. While neither was indispensable to

Europe's expansion in the manner of cinchona, or to the evolution of its technology in the manner of Brazilian rubber trees (helveas), both were/are quite profitable and thus figure not insignificantly in the ever increasing concentration of global wealth in Western hands. More important, however, was the proliferation of the plantation mode of agriculture itself, pioneered with sugar cane in the Caribbean and Brazil during the 16th century, adapted to other crops in various American locales during the 17th, and thereafter imposed by the colonisers in every quarter of the world. By the mid-19th century the number of plantations in African, Asian, and Pacific colonies was mounting steadily, growing everything from coffee and tea to sugar and bananas, cotton, jute, hemp, indigo, coconuts (copra), an array of spices (the list is all but endless) mainly, though not exclusively, for consumption by the West. While the first sugar plantation was established by the Portuguese on Madeira, in 1452, and in 1484 Spain had established a second in the Canaries, the idea did not really take hold until the first harvest on Española in 1501. The Portuguese began planting along the Brazilian coast in 1516. It has been argued that the rapidly rising demand for iron gears to equip the hundreds of cane-milling operations springing up in both areas was among the more significant stimulators of the Industrial Revolution in its early phase. It seems noteworthy that, although data exists with respect to particular crops in specific colonies, there has been no effort to compile an overall tally of the acreage ultimately taken up by plantations in Europe's overseas colonies. Extrapolating from the information discussed in this essay (pertaining to rubber alone in the Congo, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and Indochina), the total runs into the scores of millions.

The impact was fundamentally the same from place to place. Every acre converted to plantation usage was either an acre taken out of cultivation for purposes of sustaining the colonised populace or an acre from which all natural vegetation was cleared. In the first instance, the result was invariably a rise in malnutrition suffered by the overall population (hunger, often to the point of genuine famine, became conditions endemic to the Third World); in the second instance, the result was eradication, or at least constriction, of the environments upon which

Fourth-World lifestyles were/are inherently dependent. The latter circumstance was greatly exacerbated by the fact that felling trees as a means of opening up plantation acreage had the collateral effect of creating a market for 'exotic tropical hardwoods', prompting the emergence of industrial logging operations in many colonial and 'post-colonial' settings.

As ever larger expanses of virgin forest have been systematically destroyed for commercial reasons, huge tracts have often been 'developed' through the bitterly ironic expedient of establishing monocultural (and thus ecologically sterile) tree plantations, offering the illusion of having been 'reforested' while providing none of the biological diversity and attendant benefits of the original habitat. Not only are plantation trees of a single variety, planted in rows, kept free of underbrush and other animal habitat, but they are often of fast-growing softwood species alien to the locales in which they are planted. They are thus an integral component of the 'ecological imperialism' famously described by Crosby (1986), although perhaps not in quite the manner he intended. Well before the end of the 19th century the process of environmental devastation precipitated by the global reach of European imperialism (in 1913, the West controlled about 60 per cent of the world's landmass, a proportion peaking at roughly 85 per cent in 1935) was also beginning to accelerate in the colonies as a result of the large-scale mining of copper, tin, zinc, chromium, manganese, tungsten, and other minerals rendered valuable by the intensifying industrialisation and spread of new technologies in the 'advanced' societies of Europe and their settler-state offspring. Just as gold and silver from the New World funded the West's industrial revolution during the 17th and 18th centuries, its continuing industrial/technological advancement has since the late-19th been utterly dependent upon access to minerals from the Third World. While many vitally important materials simply do not exist in Europe, they were abundant in the colonies. To offer a rather spectacular example, the Katanga region of Central Africa, about the size of California, is endowed with a third of the world's known cobalt 'reserves', 10 per cent of the copper, and rich deposits of zinc, tin, lead, chromium, manganese, coltan, cadmium, germanium, and uranium, as well as gold and silver.

The generalised and pronounced underdevelopment of economies throughout the colonies which would be the driving force behind Third-World revolutions during the second half of the 20th century was approaching its zenith. The term 'under-development' is typically used to describe situations in which colonisation has prevented the economies of those colonised from reaching the level of development they might be reasonably expected to have attained without colonial impositions. Another meaning, however, is that the effect of colonisation has been to push the economies of those colonised to levels lower than those they had attained at whatever point(s) the colonial impositions began. Insofar as the latter seems more accurate, it is the meaning intended here. For Fourth-World nations, the situation was still more acute. In region after region, indigenous peoples were being literally 'pushed into the rocks' ('like the beasts of the forest into the stony mountains', as Thomas Jefferson put it in 1812). In the words of anthropologist Thayer Scudder 170 years later, they were ultimately left with 'no place to go' other than into the gaping maw of sociocultural and all too frequently physical extinction (1982). Scudder's book took as its focus the effects of forced removal (to enable the stripmining of coal) on traditional Diné (Navajo) shepherders from the Big Mountain area of the Navajo and Hopi reservations in present-day Arizona. In other studies, he drew entirely similar conclusions with regard to the impact of 'development' on the Gwembe Tongas in Zambia as well as Fourth-World peoples in other parts of Africa. Florence Shipek (1988) focuses on the 'Mission Indians' of southern California, but the dynamic she describes affects hundreds of indigenous societies, worldwide.

### Conceptual adjustments

The emergence and eventual consolidation of Europe's overseas empires necessitated a number of adjustments, both conceptual and structural, to the West's relationships with regard to both the astonishingly diverse profusion of cultural/racial Others it was encountering, and, internally, among the assorted components of which it was composed. In the main, the approaches taking to addressing the two sets of issues were symbiotic. This is to say, the process of defining itself with greater precision, thereby confirming

the 'facts' of its innate superiority and consequent entitlements (within the collectivity of its own mind, at least) required that the West engage in a far more complex elaboration upon themes concerning the mythic contrasts distinguishing it from Others which had been evolving since the time of the First Crusade. Conversely, the Other could be defined only in contrast to the often imaginary attributes of the West. Each half was thus instrumental in completing its opposite.

Conceptually, the first matter to be confronted was that, since by no conceivable geocultural definition could sub-Saharan Africa or the Americas be construed as embodiments of anything 'Eastern', the traditional nomenclature of East/West dichotomy had been left in tatters. It has been suggested that the problem was eventually resolved through the terminological adjustment of describing Others as 'non-Western', although what that might possibly mean without the existence of the West is rather mystifying, as is the answer to the question of how there might be anything called 'the West' without a corresponding 'East'. The upshot is that nothing really changed. The West has not only clung tenaciously to the term as the primary terminological signifier of its identity over the past five centuries, but, with the advent during the 19th century of what Edward Said termed 'Orientalism', it had become demonstrably more obsessed than ever with culturally demarcating itself from the East. Correspondingly, to the extent that they've not simply been invisibilised, other non-Western societies have been subsumed within the peripheral rubrics of exoticism and anthropology.

A still more vexing issue, perhaps especially in view of the hubris with which the term has been increasingly larded, remained (and remains) how to define what, exactly, was/is meant by 'the West'. While the Carolingian notion of it being synonymous with Western Christendom was at least coherent, desires to also use the term as a synonym for 'Europe', and for Europe to be defined as a continent, derailed the whole idea. Since pursuit of the latter ambition required that the line along which it could be claimed that Europe was geographically demarcated from Asia be situated rather far to the east (several proposals were entertained before the Urals were more-or-less settled upon), such manoeuvres entailed incorporation of Eastern ('Russian')

Christendom in its entirety, to say nothing of several Muslim khanates, thereby leaving the original cultural paradigm in a shambles. Actually, the line ultimately selected as 'geographically' dividing Europe from Asia is considerably more tortuous. While the north/south trending Ural Mountains constitute the principle east/west boundary, there is a gap of several hundred miles between their southernmost extent and the Caspian Sea. Here, the line of demarcation follows the Ural River to the point at which it empties into the latter. The shore of the Caspian is then followed as far as the Caucasus Mountains, at which point the line turns almost due west, following the crest of the mountains until reaching the Black Sea. At that point, the northern shore of the latter is followed in a generally westward direction until ending at the Strait of Bosphorus. Hence, the whole of South-West Asia (i.e. the bulk of 'the East', as originally construed by 'the West') lies to the west of the supposed eastern boundary of 'continental' Europe.

Efforts to resolve the muddle have continued apace since the 16th century, in many ways accelerating during the 19th and 20th centuries, before a Cold War political consensus emerged to divide West from East at the so-called iron curtain (i.e. along roughly the line established by Charlemagne 1,100 years earlier). Earlier in the 20th century, however, a cultural conception became widely embraced wherein Germany was viewed as being of a 'central European' (and in many depictions vaguely 'Asiatic') character. Perhaps instructively, the notorious German geopolitical theorist Karl Haushofer, a favourite of Hitler and a major influence on Nazi strategic thinking vis-à-vis Eastern Europe, was a leading exponent of this formulation. So, too, however, were such prominent anti-Nazis as the acclaimed aestheticist/novelist Thomas Mann and geographer Hans Weigert. Assuming that all parties actually believed that the landmass of 'Europe' extended as far eastwards as the Urals, and they claimed to, the proposition that Germany might be in any sense 'central' to it is bizarre. Given that in this construction, never really abandoned, Iberia is held to have been irredeemably tainted by the East through several centuries of Moorish occupation, and that Italy is suspect on similar grounds, the West might be seen as consisting of France, England, and the Low Countries alone. That the 'logic' of such a definitional narrowing

has been rejected by many of those excluded should go without saying. Hence, conceptions of 'the West' remain as much a hodge-podge as ever.

So, too, have corresponding efforts to nail down the non-European dimensions of the East. The Ottoman invasion/colonisation of the Balkans so thoroughly destabilised the time-honoured schema wherein the East was envisioned as 'naturally' partitioning itself into a Levantine 'Near' (often including Egypt), a Chinese 'Far', and a 'Middle' encompassing everything in between, that at some point the 'Near East' simply disappeared. It was briefly argued that it might be construed as the Balkan peninsula itself, but, in view of Western pretensions to a 'Greek heritage', the proposition was never really viable. Amidst much grappling with this conundrum, however, the Levant was somehow recast as being part of the 'Middle East', a term subsequently expanded to include all Islamic territories from the Maghreb to the Ganges (but not the Balkans). The eastern boundary of the 'Near East' was always rather ambiguous, but is generally construed as ending in present-day Iraq. In some iterations, not only Egypt but Ethiopia were also included. 'China' was a vague term, all but invariably including Korea and Japan, as well as portions of Manchuria and Mongolia. Some iterations of the 'Far' East included some or all of South-East Asia as well. The 'Middle' East began with Persia (present-day Iran) and stretched at least as far as the Ganges. More often, all of India was included, and sometimes Tibet and part of South-East Asia as well. It should be noted that such demarcations did not pertain to most of Asia's central and northern expanses, all of which were subsumed under such vacuous designations as 'Great Tartary' and 'Siberia' (apparently a combination of the Turkic words *su* and *bir*, meaning 'water' and 'wild land'). The definitional quandary presented by the Ottoman Empire has never been satisfactorily resolved. Rather, its Anatolian heartland (present-day Turkey) continues to be referred to as 'Asia Minor' and treated as an area distinct from the Middle East. Indeed, despite its retention after 1918 of only a minuscule enclave around Istanbul on the Balkan peninsula, Turkey remains classified as a 'Eurasian' country. Moreover, it has been a member of the Council of Europe since 1949, of NATO since 1952, of the Organisation for

Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) since 1973, of the Western European Union (WEU) from 1992 until the organisation was disbanded in 2011, of the 'Western Europe' component of the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG) at the UN since 1961, and is currently in the process of negotiating its admission to the European Union. Clearly, Turkey identifies itself as being integral to the West and, while it meets none of the normally applicable geocultural criteria, the West has for political reasons been at least situationally accepted it as such. The outcome is thus the ludicrous spectacle of an 'East' that has only a 'Far' and a 'Middle', the latter extending westward to North Africa's Atlantic coast, an area further west than the most westerly part of the West. The only parts of Europe further west than the Atlantic coast of Morocco are Iceland and the west coast of Ireland, a British colony not usually considered part of the West *per se*. Even without this problem, the fact remains that without both a beginning and an end there can be no 'middle' to anything, including 'the East'.

Despite its inability ever to achieve either clarity or consistency with respect to its supposed geocultural parameters, and less still those it wished to assign to the East, the West nonetheless set about reworking the theological tenets initially underpinning its professed superiority to and consequent right of dominion over Others in secular form. While there were many facets to this elaborate undertaking, it culminated in the Hegelian philosophy of history, set forth towards the beginning of the 19th century, wherein, through a selectively crafted theory of 'progress', it was 'rationally determined' that the cannibalised edifice of 'Western civilisation' embodied the very pinnacle of human attainment. Against this 'universal euro yardstick' all other cultures could be (and not only were, but *are*) measured, the extent of their ostensible inferiority to the West quantified, charted, and arranged in a hierarchy. Suffice it to say that the range of factors Hegel elected to consider in formulating the theory was vastly exceeded by the number of those he ignored. Absolutely no attention was paid to the prospect that a given culture, or even the majority of cultures, might have substantive (i.e. perfectly 'rational') reasons for not wishing to enter into the trajectory of what he termed 'progress'. Such matters as the need to maintain ecological equilibrium never entered into

the Hegelian calculus. In effect, he cherry-picked the data to obtain the desired result.

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## Indigenous Peoples and Neo-Extractivism in Latin America

One year after the conclusion of US president George W. Bush's second term in office, James Cameron's 2009 film *Avatar* struck a chord with viewers from both the developing and developed worlds. From the first indigenous president of Bolivia

(Aymara coca-grower and labour organiser Evo Morales) to Western scholars of social science and environmental studies (Hage 2011; Taylor 2010), the story of the confrontation between the indigenous Na'vi on the richly vegetated planet of Pandora and their imperialist invaders in search of mineral resources proved widely resonant. However, as Ecuadorian human rights activist Luis Saavedra has recently explained, rarely has this confrontation between indigenous and non-indigenous people ended as heroically as depicted in *Avatar* (Saavedra 2013). The romanticised encounter between the technologically advanced but militaristic 'West' and the materially impoverished but spiritually attuned 'Rest' is a fiction long lamented by indigenous communities (DeLoria 1998) and brutally belied by the recent intensification of violent conflict over natural resource extraction in Latin America that has led to growing accusations of imperialism on the part of primarily Canadian, Chinese, and American transnationals (Bebbington 2012; Gordon and Webber 2008; Sassen 2010).

According to the Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America (OMCAL), worldwide mineral exploration expenditures have increased tenfold since the 1990s. During the period from 1990–2001, four of the top ten destinations for mining investment in the world were in Latin America, and in the 2000s alone mineral investments quadrupled (Bebbington 2012; Bridge 2004;). Vast swathes of national land in countries such as Peru, Chile, Colombia, and Guatemala have been opened to transnational mining companies through lenient tax codes and promises of windfall profits and maximum royalties, leaving some countries with more than 50 per cent of their land in the hands of foreign mining companies (Veltmeyer 2013: 89). One of the many downsides of this opening-up is that there are more than 195 mining conflicts currently active in Latin America. Driven in part by a surge in global demand for electronics, and having already depleted many of the world's most profitable reserves of good quality ore, major industry players such as BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto, Goldcorp, Barrick Gold, and Newmont are moving into ever more remote locations where reserves are harder to extract, less concentrated, closer to drainage basins, at significantly greater geological depths, and surrounded by more fragile ecological systems (Canel et al. 2010).

A disproportionate number of these territories are also home to indigenous communities, particularly in places like Peru and Chile which, in 2012 alone, registered 34 and 33 such conflicts respectively. One of the most brutal of these conflicts took place on 5 June 2009 in the Amazonian town of Bagua in Peru, when a coalition of indigenous and non-indigenous activists blockaded a highway to register their anger over not being consulted about an oil concession in their territory, a situation that is increasingly common following the Garcia Government's decision to privatise much of the countryside in 2008 (Bebbington 2009). By the end of the day, ten local protestors and 23 policemen were dead and scores of others were injured. While not all such conflicts have ended as tragically as that in Bagua, indigenous, human rights, and environmental activists have faced growing criminalisation and other forms of state and corporate-sponsored violence over the past few years everywhere from Guatemala's goldfields to Chile's copper mines. According to the Foro de los Pueblos Indigenas Minería, Cambio Climático, y Buen Vivir (Forum of Indigenous Mining Communities, Climate Change, and 'Good Living'), convened in Lima in 2010, the exploitation of mineral resources in Latin America has reached unprecedented levels. Similarly, the London-based human rights group Minority Rights Group International issued a 2012 report warning of the intensification of the resource scramble which is affecting nearly all the world's 370 million indigenous people. Nowhere is this happening more than in Latin America, home to 40 million indigenous peoples (Walker 2012). Borrowing from Karl Marx's description of the late 17th- and early 18th-century processes of 'primitive accumulation' that transformed English subsistence farmers into wage-workers, growing numbers of scholars have followed David Harvey in conceptualising this latest round of corporate 'land grabbing' as a form of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey 2005; Gordon and Webber 2007; White et al. 2012). Unlike the 'accumulation by exploitation' that provided the impetus for much of the mid-20th-century labour organisation and subsequent nationalisation of the mining industry in countries such as Bolivia and Argentina, 'accumulation by dispossession' refers to the wave of water and land privatisations begun in the 1990s that has forced

growing numbers of indigenous communities from their ancestral territories. It is in large part as a result of these 'land grabs' that many scholars have returned to the category of imperialism which, just two decades ago, had begun to seem outmoded.

For the first time in more than two decades, in the early 2000s, imperialism made a dramatic comeback across the social sciences as political liberals (Ferguson 2008) and neo-Marxists (Hardt and Negri 2000; Harvey 2005) alike penned tracts about the re-emergence of US-led empire. While the former approved of this ostensibly benign successor to the British Empire, recognising a new role for the US as a 'global moral leader', the latter remained sharply critical, worrying about the increasingly de-territorialised conglomeration of multinational companies that seemed poised to extract additional value, labour, and primary commodities from peripheral territories in the service of what Leslie Sklair has called 'the transnational capitalist class' (Sklair 2002). Following the 1990s when the ecumenical buzzword 'globalization' had largely eclipsed the class-based terminology of imperialism that had characterised the work of critical scholars of development in the post-Second World War period, the precise meanings, dynamics, agents, and social processes of 21st-century imperialism came to be widely debated in Latin America and beyond (Grandin 2006; Robinson 2006).

The concept of imperialism has a long and varied history in Latin America, waxing and waning in relation to cycles of anti-colonial struggle and subsequent military and economic 're-colonisation'. Following the term's regular invocation by the 19th-century independence fighters in their struggle against both Spanish and US colonialism (from Simón Bolívar in the 1820s to José Martí in the 1890s), imperialism began to be used systematically by scholars to analyse the region's uneven integration into the global economy in the first decades of the 20th century. On the heels of the 1898 Spanish-American War, which inaugurated the only period in American history when the US obtained overseas territories, this was a period of intense monopoly power on the part of US corporations and a period when 'imperialism' was on the lips of both supporters and opponents alike. While supporters such as Theodore Roosevelt enthusiastically celebrated the fact that 'expansion has been the law of our

national growth', less sanguine observers sought to expose how the colonial extensions of the former European empires had laid the groundwork for the continued subjugation of the now formally independent countries of Latin America (Johnson 2004: 29). No longer subject to Spanish rule, these countries found themselves 'protected' by the paternalistic Monroe Doctrine (1823) which prohibited further European involvement in the region. At the same time, however, they also found themselves subject to increasingly direct economic and military intervention on the part of the US. Primarily because this was a period characterised by a substantial expansion of US corporate involvement in export-led development in Latin America on the part of firms such as Standard Oil, historians have dubbed the period between 1850 and 1930 the 'second conquest' of Latin America (Grandin, 2006; Topik and Wells 1998). As private corporations in the extractive sectors moved more and more aggressively into Latin America, it was small-scale agriculturalists, itinerant miners, and indigenous communities who bore the brunt of this expansionism. Despite high levels of foreign investment and company promises to deal with the 'social question' by 'modernising' living facilities, inculcating North American work ethics, and providing relatively high salaries, the extractive enclaves overseen by US companies often left the countries of the region either economically stagnant or considerably worse off. This was particularly evident in increased alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and other forms of familial dislocation occasioned by the development of extractive enclaves (Klubock 1998). Between 1822 and 1964, US troops were sent to the region 36 times to quell nationalist uprisings, many of them in opposition to the expropriations of US companies (Banerjee 2009: 7).

The beginning of the Cold War ushered in what promised to be a significantly less imperialistic era in US–Latin American relations. As President Harry Truman famously announced in his 1949 inaugural address:

Guarantees to the investor must be balanced by guarantees in the interest of the people whose resources and whose labour go into these developments. The old imperialism – exploitation for foreign profit – has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic

fair-dealing. (quoted in Grandin 2006: 161)

Despite these promising words (echoes of which we find repeated in contemporary discourses of 'corporate social responsibility' in the mining sector), by the 1950s, scholars of Latin America were already beginning to identify the new forms of US-led imperialism they saw unfolding around them. In the two decades between 1950 and 1970, as decolonisation struggles swept across Africa and Asia and nationalist leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement rose to power on explicitly anti-imperialist platforms, development economists opposed to the modernisation paradigm began to write about 'informal imperialism' or 'the imperialism of free trade' (Gallagher and Robinson 1953). Inspired by Rosa Luxemburg's argument that imperialism was the 'direct result of the expansion of the capitalist mode of production into pre-capitalist modes of production', and that periodic crises of capitalist accumulation structurally necessitated the ongoing colonisation of pre-capitalist spaces and modes of life, dependency theorists such as Andre Gunder Frank (Frank 1967) and world-systems theorists like Immanuel Wallerstein (Wallerstein 1974) argued that the 'core' industrialised capitalist countries had systematically under developed the countries of the 'periphery' (Topik and Wells 1998: 23). In perpetual search of cheaper raw materials, lower labour costs, and better terms of trade, North American companies not only failed to bring the promised 'modernisation' to the countries in which they operated (these theorists argue), but they were, in fact, responsible for their deepening poverty and instability. As well as facilitating a net loss of profits to the northern economies, they sharply exacerbated tensions between the city and the countryside, rural and urban, indigenous and non-indigenous. Despite the fact that most of the countries with sizeable indigenous populations (including Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru) were able to maintain some rights to communal landholding throughout this period (largely owing to variously aggressive efforts at agrarian land reform), indigenous labourers remained subject to ethnic stereotypes that resulted in their double exploitation at the hands of both foreigners and national elites. Frequently construed by export-oriented *criollo* elites as

subhuman, insufficiently modern, the bearers of 'traditional values', or otherwise culturally backward, they were repeatedly condemned for holding the region back from a fully fledged capitalist take-off.

And many of these dynamics began to worsen in the 1980s. This was a period described by development economists as the 'Lost Decade' and characterised by two central and overlapping processes of what could justifiably be called US imperialism: the first economic and the second military. First, as a more or less direct result of the structural adjustment programmes (SAPS) instituted by the major global lending organisations headquartered in Washington, DC (the International Monetary Fund [IMF] and the World Bank), economic growth slowed and even declined across the region. Between 1980 and 2000, GDP rose 6 per cent per person (in comparison to 75 per cent per person during the period 1960–80; Johnson, 2004). The international financial institutions (IFIs) lent millions of dollars to countries throughout the region on the condition that they 'adjust' their macro-economic policies to facilitate reduced or eliminated trade barriers, diminished capital controls, the privatisation of national industries, and the reduction of state subsidies for agriculture and health. With the controversial and still-debated exception of Chile, the effects of these policies were largely disastrous for indigenous communities, which saw their livelihoods decimated as local markets became flooded with heavily subsidised agricultural imports and extractive companies, lured by the promise of near 100 per cent repatriation of profits, moved in to rapidly take control of formerly nationalised industries (Gill, 2000; Gledhill 2004). The second and equally lethal process was the intensification of long-standing US-backed wars against 'communist insurgents' in which hundreds of thousands of indigenous peoples lost their lives in places like Guatemala and El Salvador. Committed to stemming the red tide of communism and protecting the freedom of free trade throughout the hemisphere, the US actively funded military regimes such as the right-wing Contras in Nicaragua and the Ríos Montt dictatorship in Guatemala, often more or less explicitly in the service of the interests of big business such as United Fruit (Nelson 1999). By the early years of the 1990s, 75,000 people had lost their lives in El Salvador and more

than 200,000 people, mostly Mayan, were dead as a result of the 'scorched earth' campaigns in Guatemala.

Despite the fact that indigenous communities have long mobilised in opposition to the demands of both colonial capitalism and US imperialism, it was not until the 1990s that indigenous people organising for political, economic, and cultural rights gained significant ground throughout the region (Yashar 1998). The beginning of the 1990s witnessed an unprecedented mobilisation of indigenous peoples in opposition to both the structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and free-trade agreements such as the 'Free Trade Agreement of the Americas' that aimed to both further liberalise their economies and abolish critical protections for communal landholding (such as Article 27 of the Mexican constitution). The immediate symbolic impetus for this mobilisation was the 1992 quincentenary of the arrival of the Spanish colonisers. During that year, indigenous peoples rose up in the streets in country after country demanding an end not only to the macroeconomic policies of the World Bank and the IMF since the 1980s, but to what they called the 500 years of 'genocidal subjugation' since the arrival of Christopher Columbus. From the Spaniards to the Americans to their own national elites at whose hands they had long suffered the racism, classism, and cultural discrimination of 'internal colonialism', their dispossession, they argued, had been one of unbroken imperialist expropriation. As Eduardo Galeano and others have shown, it was the original incapacity of the Spaniards to understand the use-value of gold (rather than simply its exchange-value) that led to the first pillage of the continent, with enough metal extracted by the end of the 17th century to build a bridge across the Atlantic (Galeano 1971). From the infamous 16th-century Bolivian mines at Potosí to the privatisations of the mining sector in the 1990s, 'extractive imperialism' has been at the centre of nearly every stage of this expropriation (Veltmeyer 2013). While in the early part of the 20th century it was primarily surplus labour that was extracted from mine workers (both indigenous and non-indigenous), by the late 1990s it was the natural resources themselves that were of greatest interest as mining jobs became increasingly reserved for highly skilled foreign labourers (Petras and Veltmeyer 2014). As Saskia

Sassen has observed: 'One brutal way of putting [this] is to say that the natural resources of ... good parts of Latin America count more than the people on those lands count as consumers and as workers' (Sassen, 2010: 26). In response to this increasingly direct invasion of their territories, and emboldened by the passage of key international legislative frameworks such as ILO Convention 169, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Inter-American Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, indigenous federations in places such as Ecuador and Bolivia began to powerfully rise up throughout the 1990s, successfully ousting a number of the national administrations that had most egregiously permitted the foreign expropriation of their 'national patrimony' (Becker 2011; Sawyer 2004).

The result of much of this mobilisation throughout the region has been the extension of cultural, educational, and linguistic rights to indigenous minorities or what Charles Hale has called, 'neoliberal multiculturalism' (Hale 2002). However, this extension of cultural rights has frequently been accompanied by an active undermining of substantive political and economic rights. In particular, governments have refused to acknowledge the rights of indigenous self-determination, including the right not only to 'free, prior, and informed consultation' (FPIC) about mining activities in their territories, but 'free, prior, and informed consent' over whether those activities go forward in the first place. In most countries, despite some constitutional recognition of 'pluri-nationality' or 'pluri-culturality', governments have been reluctant to surrender their rights to decision making about critical national resources, often maintaining direct control over sub-soil resources. Private companies in the mining sector are increasingly involved in corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts that they hope will offset the more environmentally damaging of their practices (and indeed, a small consulting industry has cropped up around CSR in the mining industry). At the same time, however, many of these same companies have also been actively involved in the writing of highly investor-friendly country mining codes that undermine indigenous rights (most vividly in countries such as Colombia) and advocating free-trade agreements that both break up communal

landholdings and mitigate against indigenous decision making about extraction (Canel et al. 2010; Hogenboom 2012; Li 2011).

It was at least in large part as a result of these contradictions that the mid-2000s saw a substantial shift in power across the region toward what many scholars call 'post-neoliberal governance' (MacDonald and Ruckert 2009), as radical-populist regimes rose to power in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela on explicitly anti-imperialist platforms, and more moderate governments like Brazil and Argentina nationalised key industries that had formerly been privatised. As states took control of their natural resources (nationalising the oil industry in Venezuela, assuming ownership over natural gas in Bolivia, and insisting on significant windfall taxes and royalties from mining companies in Ecuador), the prices of primary commodities soared and with them the capacity of these '21st-century socialist' administrations to invest in social and material infrastructure, robust programmes of redistribution, and an expanded public sector. In addition, in both Bolivia and Ecuador, constitutions were approved that explicitly rejected the models of limitless capitalist growth assumed by most neoliberal economists and that advocated instead indigenously inspired conceptions of living more harmoniously with a more diverse set of human and non-human others. Despite these gestures toward more economically just and ecocentric post-neoliberal polities, however, the governments of the region have continued to be accused of what Eduardo Gudynas calls, 'a new extractivism' (Gudynas 2010).

From Morales's radical-left MAS (Movement For Socialism) party in Bolivia to the more centrist administration of Ollanta Humala in Peru, national governments that have enacted some of the most far-reaching post-neoliberal policy transformations are at the same time engaging even more aggressively than their neo-liberal predecessors in extractive projects over which indigenous communities have little control. The result has been sharply intensifying confrontations between indigenous communities and the nation states of which they form a part. Indigenous federations like the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) in Ecuador and the National Council of Ayllus and Markas of Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ) in Bolivia have turned against their own governments which, in response,

have moved to criminalise their protest. Historically, most of the movements against mining have been movements against 'accumulation by exploitation' led by ethnically mixed trade unions which have agitated for higher wages, better working conditions, and an increased voice for workers in decision making (Bebbington et al. 2007). While such mobilisations continue around mines like La Escondida in Chile, the battlefields have increasingly shifted to the more remote territories of indigenous nationalities, a move that has been accompanied by a marked resurgence in cultural and racial discrimination. As former president of Peru, Alan García argued in 2009: 'Enough is enough. These peoples are not monarchy, they are not first-class citizens. Who are 400,000 natives to tell 28 million Peruvians that you have no right to come here? This is a grave error, and whoever thinks this way wants to lead us to irrationality and a retrograde primitivism!' (Bebbington 2009: 13). In the years since, indigenous peoples have increasingly been turned against by both the leftist administrations they helped to elect and by large numbers of the non-indigenous poor who have been the main beneficiaries of the new redistributive programmes. They increasingly find themselves in a paradoxical position: symbolically exalted in national constitutions for their alternative development models while at the same time constructed as 'infantile environmentalists', enemies of national sovereignty, or allies of foreign NGOs when they try to actually put those models into practice. To the 'socialists of the 21st century' who are in power in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador, these alliances testify to a new kind of imperialism in which indigenous communities are deeply implicated: not the imperialism of free trade, but the imperialism of NGO-led conservationist environmentalism.

Despite, then, considerable continuities in the dynamics, methods, and agents of 'extractivist imperialism' over the preceding centuries, there are also considerable changes that will inevitably demand more nuanced theorisation in the years to come. At least four of these changes are worth mentioning by way of a conclusion. First, with the decline of US global hegemony, the dominant players in the mining industry in Latin America are no longer overwhelmingly from the US, but increasingly Chinese, Canadian, and, though to a significantly lesser degree, Australian.

After more than a century of US-orchestrated economic and military imperialism throughout the region, the beginning of what many are already calling 'the Asian Century' is heralding a shift toward significantly less binary models of extractive influence that are just as frequently South–South as they are North–South. Second, as Robinson has similarly pointed out in his critique of models of imperialism that remain too closely tied to outdated 20th-century models of a nation-state-based global geopolitical order, not only are these regional blocs shifting, but the nature of the relationships between state, capital, and non-state (NGO) groups is undergoing dramatic change. New alliances between state-owned extractive industries, foreign investors, and both conservationist and business-oriented NGOs make it increasingly difficult to talk about unified or coherent sets of political actors. Third, with the shift to the left that began in the early 2000s, discourses of imperialism are being wielded by Marxist-inspired presidents in ways that depart significantly from the strongly class-based and US-focused anti-imperialist projects characteristic of the Latin American left throughout most of the 20th century. As part of these shifts, in many South American countries, environmentalist strands of indigenous thought and practice have been re-envisioned as the products of imperialist intervention on the part of foreign NGOs, the result of which has been a deepening of splits within indigenous movements between those who support and those who oppose extractivist development. And finally, the iconic image of anti-imperialist opposition to foreign control over extraction is arguably no longer the mestizo male mineworker or trade unionist of the mid-20th century, but the indigenous woman. Although women have historically played central roles in Latin American social mobilisations throughout the 20th century (e.g. the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina), over the past decade indigenous women like the Defensoras de la Pachamama in Ecuador have played increasingly visible roles as opponents of mining projects, often paying the price in death threats from extractive companies or time spent in jail. After more than 500 years of foreign-dominated extractivism (colonial, republican, nationalist, neo-liberal, and now post-neo-liberal), it is these women who have emerged as the central voices of resistance to 21st-century

'accumulation by dispossession'. While the sanitised encounters depicted in *Avatar* may little resemble the actual confrontations ongoing throughout the hemisphere, it is clear that the struggles over natural resource extraction in Latin America will only intensify in the years to come, and that the imperialism to which they bear witness urgently demands more nuanced theorisation.

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## Labour Imperialism

Labour imperialism is the concept that has been developed to describe one labour movement dominating or seeking to dominate the labour movement of another political community, and is overwhelmingly based on analyses of the international activities of the American Federation of Labor, both before and after its 1955 merger with the Congress of Industrial Organizations, creating the AFL-CIO (hereafter styled Labour). Although sometimes used interchangeably with 'trade union imperialism' (e.g., Thomson and Larson, 1978), 'labour imperialism' is the more encompassing term as it includes working with militaries and other right-wing forces, including right-wing labour organisations, while 'trade union imperialism' limits itself to dominating unions.

This essay explains the concept of labour imperialism. It begins with a theoretical discussion and then focuses on findings from empirical research. It next discusses three periods of research findings to illuminate the processes by which this conceptualisation has developed, and then presents Kim Scipes's argument about the role of American Nationalism in the development of US labour imperialism. It discusses the work of the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center with the US Government's National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Finally, it discusses efforts within the American labour movement to challenge this labour imperialism of the AFL-CIO.

### Theoretical discussion

Building on the work of Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1989), Kim Scipes (2010b) discusses the former's conceptualisation of imperialism, and extends it to certain acts by labour, which Nederveen Pieterse does not. Importantly, Nederveen Pieterse's conceptualisation goes beyond that of the Marxists, and he argues that, 'imperialism is domination extended across political community borders' (Scipes 2010b: 467). Scipes explains:

A political community usually refers to a nation-state; however, while including nation-states in this category, Nederveen Pieterse's understanding of imperialism extends beyond the nation-state level. He

recognizes that because of external domination during past history, groups who share common culture, traditions, languages, and political organization (i.e., 'political communities') may have been incorporated within the boundaries of other political communities. Examples of this include Native American nations being incorporated into the U.S., the Palestinians into Israel, the Kurds into Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq, and certainly this is also true of the indigenous people around the world. Thus, instead of ignoring these peoples or making them irrelevant by confining the understanding of imperialism to only nation-states, Nederveen Pieterse broadens the conceptualization of imperialism to include the domination of one political community over another, and this can exist within the current boundaries of a nation-state; these cross-political community border relationships are based on unequal power relations, with the stronger dominating the weaker.

Nederveen Pieterse also sees different levels of domination. Instead of just confining the concept to political communities, however, he recognizes different levels of domination, which can be at a super-state level and a sub-state level.

In other words, Nederveen Pieterse not only expands the concept of imperialism on a horizontal axis through broadening it to include domination across political community borders, but he also extends it vertically by including different levels of domination. It is in recognizing that domination can take place at a level below nation-state domination that allows Labour's across-political-community-borders domination to be included within the concept of imperialism. (468)

And finally, Nederveen Pieterse's conceptualisation is not economic. In addition to the Marxist claim that imperialism can be for economic gain (i.e. profit), he 'recognizes that imperial domination also can be implemented to achieve political power in the global realm, such as through geostrategic positioning, and through mobilizing and/or controlling social forces in other countries for the benefit of the imperialist force'. These, however, are often in combination, so 'the issue is not a dichotomous categorisation and choice between economics or politics, but rather is a search for

primacy at any one time and/or situation: in other words, economic motivations may be primary with political ones secondary, and in others, political control may be primary, and economic ones secondary' (468).

### Empirical findings

Scipes has applied this conceptualisation to theoretically understand the five sets of interrelated empirical findings on the AFL-CIO's foreign policy programme. This has shown that Labour has actively sought to dominate foreign labour movements since the early years of the 20th century under Samuel Gompers, and that it continues to do so today despite changes suggested in the early years of the [John] Sweeney Administration:

- Labour's foreign-policy leaders have worked to help overthrow democratically elected governments, have collaborated with reactionary, pro-dictator labour movements against progressive labour movements, and have supported reactionary labour movements against progressive governments (Scipes 2000: 12; see among others Andrews 1991; Armstrong et al. 1988; Barry and Preusch 1986; Bronstein and Johnston 1985; Buhle 1999; Cantor and Schor 1987; Carew 1998; Filipelli 1989; Hirsch 1974, n.d. [1975]; Hirsch and Muir 1987; Morris, 1967; Nack 1999; Radosh 1969; Schmidt 1978; Scipes 1986; 1990; 1996: 116–125; Scott 1978; Shorrock and Selvaggio 1986; Sims 1992; Snow 1964; Spalding 1984; Weinrub and Bollinger 1987; see also Barker 2011; Bass 2012; Cox and Bass 2012; Rahman and Langford 2014; Scipes 2004a; 2005b; 2005c; 2007a; 2007b; 2010a; 2010b; Sustar 2005).
- This dominative project is a product of forces within the labour movement, and not of external forces such as the US government, White House and/or the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (Scipes 1989; see also Andrews 1991; Briogi 2013; Carew 1998; Chenoweth 2013; Dower 2013; Filipelli 1989; Hughes 2011, 2013; Nack 1999; Scipes 2010a; 2010b; Stoner 2013; and Von Bülow 2013.)
- Labour's foreign-policy leaders have voluntarily chosen to be conscious actors in major initiatives by the US State (Carew 1998; Chenoweth 2013; Correa 2013; Dower 2013; Filipelli 1989; Hughes 2011; 2013;

- Scipes 1989; 2000; 2005a; 2005b; 2005c; 2007b; 2010a: 83–112; 2010b; Sustar 2005; Van Goethem 2013; Vergara 2013; Wehrle 2013).
- Labour imperialism has been carried out in union members' 'name' yet behind union members' backs, and Labour's foreign-policy leaders have refused to 'come clean' about past operations even when union members have advanced their request for information through established labour-movement processes and procedures (Hirsch 1974; Hirsch 2004; Scipes 2004b; 2005d; 2010a;
  - Labour activists have fought over the years in opposition to this domination (Battista 2002; Hirsch 1974, n.d. [1975], 2004; Hirsch and Muir 1987; Nack 1999; Scipes 1989; 2004b; 2010a: 69–82; 2012; 2014b; Shorrock 1999; 2002; 2003; Zweig 2005; 2014).

'In short, the range of operations in this effort to dominate labour globally has been extremely well-established, and has generally been referred to as "Labour imperialism"' (Scipes 2010b: 466–467).

Accordingly, the key word that we get from understanding 'labour imperialism' is domination.

### Literature review

Although the subject is not generally well known, there have actually been a considerable number of studies published on Labour's foreign policy over the years (this section is heavily based on Scipes 2010a: xxi–xxiv). The literature critically examining Labour's foreign policy (critical labour foreign-policy studies) has gone through three stages. These have included both exposés and analysis of Labour operations around the world, variously seeing factors internal to or external from the labour movement as being responsible for these operations.

The first stage, which began in the mid-to-late 1960s and continued into the late 1970s, began with a series of exposés. This period ended with George Schmidt's (1978) exposé of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) involvement in Labour's foreign operations, and Jack Scott's 1978 study of US Labour's operations in Latin America. Most important in this period, however, was Ronald Radosh's 1969 book *Labor and United States Foreign*

*Policy*, which tried to explain why Labour had such a terrible foreign policy. Radosh's claim was that Labour was acting as an agent of the US government, and that external forces were driving this reactionary foreign policy. Radosh's claim had a long-standing influence on the field of critical labour foreign-policy studies, in which for many years his claim of external forces operating in some form or another was accepted.

Critical labour foreign-policy studies entered a resurgent second stage in the mid-to-late 1980s, and this extended into the early 1990s. Stimulated by US government efforts to overthrow the revolution in Nicaragua, and to counter-act revolutionary processes in Guatemala and especially El Salvador, there was an explosion of interest in and publication of studies about Labour's foreign policy, especially in Latin America but elsewhere as well. This work paid off during the mid-1980s as the National Labor Committee was able to prevent the AFL-CIO leadership from endorsing President Reagan's apparent plan to invade the region (Battista 2002).

This second period was largely a period of exposé, and understanding of Labour's efforts greatly expanded. Like the first period, this one had a summarising book: Beth Sims's 1992 *Workers of the World Undermined: American Labor's Role in US Foreign Policy*, which tried to explain why these efforts took place, and why Labour's foreign policy had been so bad. She too focused on external forces, but with a more sophisticated effort. Sims focused on actors within Labour's foreign-policy 'establishment' and their ties with right-wing political networks, basically suggesting that Labour had been infiltrated and, because of the success of these efforts, had acted against its own efforts (see Scipes 1993 for a review of this important book.)

The third period, which continues today but which overlaps the end of the second one, begins with the publication of an article by this author on the origins of Labour's foreign policy (Scipes 1989). This author rejected the argument that external factors were responsible for Labour's foreign policy, and through a careful examination of the development of business unionism under Samuel Gompers, not only focused on internal factors but argued that Labour's adoption of business unionism in an imperialist country led to at least passive and, later, active support for

US imperialism (this article was updated in Scipes 2010a: 1–25).

Writing independently, four other authors subsequently came to the conclusion that internal factors were responsible for Labour's foreign policy: Ronald L. Filipelli (1989) studied US Labour's activities in Italy between 1943 and 1953; Gregg Andrews (1991) studied the role of the AFL in the Mexican Revolution; Anthony Carew (1998) studied the interjection of CIA funding in post-Second World War Labour operations in Europe; and David Nack (1999) focused on the role of internal conflict within the AFL between progressives and reactionaries around events in Russia beginning with the 1905 Revolution, and demonstrated how the reactionaries' victory then became a force in determining US foreign policy in response to the Soviet Revolution of October 1917. These four works, along with Scipes's 1989 piece, have conclusively established that Labour's foreign policy and operations are determined internally and not externally.

The third period has seen the emergence of a new twist in critical labour foreign-policy studies. Following John Sweeney's election as President of the AFL-CIO in October 1995, there was the hope that Labour would play a positive role internationally. Instead of just criticising what Labour has done, there were several articles published by people in or close to the AFL-CIO who argued for the need for international labour solidarity with workers around the world: see Banks 1998; Blackwell 1998; Figueroa 1998; Mantsios 1998; Shailor 1998; and Shailor and Kourpias 1998.

There has also been exposés of Labour's foreign operations in this third period, some historical and some contemporary. This author wrote about the affects of AFL-CIO operations in the Philippines during the 1980s (Scipes 1986; 1990; 1996), and in Chile in the early 1970s (Scipes 2000). Anthony Carew (1998) wrote about AFL efforts in Western Europe in the early post-Second World War years. Paul Buhle (1999) had some interesting insights into the historical development of Labour's foreign policy. James Ciment and Immanuel Ness (1999) wrote about the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and its role in funding current Labour operations. Douglas Valentine (1999) wrote about the role of drug trafficking in funding at least some of Irving Brown's

work for the AFL in Europe during the late 1940s. And Peter Rachleff (2000) wrote about Labour's efforts in Mexico during the late 1990s to undercut organising among railroad workers against privatisation.

However, the third period has also seen the intensification of efforts within the labour movement itself to challenge AFL-CIO foreign policy and operations. Scipes's 2000 piece – which revolved around a detailed account of Labour's operations in destabilising the democratically elected Allende Government in Chile in the early 1970s – was actually questioning whether Labour wanted to expand on John Sweeney's then more progressive approach to foreign policy, or revert back to the reactionary policies under George Meany and Lane Kirkland (Scipes 2000). Judy Ancel's (2000) response to this article supported Scipes's approach, and argued that we had to recognise that much of Labour's foreign policy was a result of trying to globalise business unionism.

However, Scipes has subsequently repudiated this idea of 'trying to globalize business unionism' as the motivating factor for Labour's imperialism:

What holds all of this together, what explains Labor's well-established history and contemporary activities described by the concept of 'labor imperialism'? It is argued here that the acceptance and propagation of Labor imperialism is an ideological construct. ... what has guided the Labour movement's foreign policy has been American Nationalism, the idea that the US is unequivocally the best country in the world, and that it should run the world.

... Labor imperialism flows from the belief in American Nationalism – which is based on race, empire and capitalism (Nederveen Pieterse 1989), and the superiority of the 'American' version of each. This is joined with Labor's conscious unwillingness to challenge the efforts of the US Government around the world. At the same time, Labor's foreign policy leaders attempt to impose American 'union beliefs' (as developed by a few key people) and business unionism on workers in other countries for the further well-being of the US Empire from US Labor's perspective.

In other words, Labor imperialism accepts capitalism, and has traditionally accepted race and empire. However, the [2004] actions of the California AFL-CIO have shown that business unionism can accept or reject race and empire; it does not automatically include race and empire. Therefore, the decision whether to accept race and empire is a conscious choice. The argument is that AFL/AFL-CIO Presidents Gompers, Meany, Kirkland, and Sweeney [and Trumka], and their foreign policy teams, have each accepted race and empire, usually at the expense of the US Labor movement [and workers throughout the developing world]. (Scipes 2010b: 473, emphasis in the original).

Where this can be most clearly seen is in the Solidarity Center's key participation in the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

### National Endowment for Democracy

Although the decision to work with the US government in its foreign-policy efforts was made and continuously reaffirmed by top leaders of the AFL-CIO – without ever telling most of its leaders or the rank-and-file members – it is notable that US trade unions have chosen to work with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) (see Robinson 1996; Scipes 2010a: 96–105).

Before going into details, it is important to note what NED is and is not. First of all, it has nothing to do with the democracy we are taught in civics classes, concerning one person-one-vote with everyone affected having a say in the decision, etc. (This is commonly known as 'popular' or grassroots democracy.) The NED opposes this kind of democracy. The NED promotes top-down, elite, constrained (or 'polyarchal') democracy. This is the democracy where the elites get to decide the candidates or questions suitable to go before the people – and always limits the choices to what the elites are comfortable with. Once the elites have made their decision, then the people are presented with the 'choice' of which the elites approve. And then NED prattles on with its nonsense about how it is 'promoting democracy around the world.'

The other thing to note about NED is that it is not independent despite what it claims *ad nauseam*. Operating from funds provided

annually by the US government, it was created by the US Congress and signed into US law in 1983 by President Ronald Reagan (that staunch defender of democracy). Additionally, its Board of Directors is drawn from among the elites in the US government's foreign-policy-making realm. Past Board members have included Henry Kissinger, Madeleine Albright, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Frank Carlucci, General Wesley K. Clark, and Paul Wolfowitz. Perhaps most notable among today's board members is Elliot Abrams of Reagan Administration fame.

In reality, NED is part of the US Empire's tools, and is 'independent' only in the sense that no elected presidential administration can directly alter its composition or activities, even if it wants to. Its initial project director, Professor Allen Weinstein of Georgetown University admitted in the *Washington Post* of 22 September 1991 that 'a lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA'. In other words, according to Professor William Robinson in his book *Promoting Polyarchy*, NED is a product of a US government foreign-policy shift from 'earlier strategies to contain social and political mobilisation through a focus on control of the state and governmental apparatus' to a process of 'democracy promotion' whereby 'the United States and local elites thoroughly penetrate civil society, and from therein, assure control over popular mobilization and mass movements' (Robinson 1996: 69). What this means, as I note in my 2010 book *AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers: Solidarity or Sabotage?* is that 'instead of waiting for a client government to be threatened by its people and then responding, US foreign policy shifted to intervening in the civil society of a country "of interest" (as defined by US foreign policy goals) before popular mobilization could become significant, and by supporting certain groups and certain politicians, then channel any potential mobilization in the direction desired by the US Government' (Scipes 2010a: 96).

Obviously, this also means that these 'civil society' organisations can be used offensively as well, against any government the US opposes. NED funding, for example, was used in all of the 'color revolutions' in Eastern Europe, is currently a factor in Ukraine as well as elsewhere, and continues to be used in Venezuela (Golinger 2014; Scipes 2014a).

How do they operate? The NED has four 'institutes' through which they work: the

International Republican Institute (currently headed by US senator John McCain), the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (currently headed by former US secretary of state Madeleine Albright), the Center for International Private Enterprise (the international wing of the US Chamber of Commerce), and the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS), also known as the Solidarity Center. The latter is the foreign-policy operation of the AFL-CIO, with Richard Trumka the head of its board of directors. The NED gives grants (allocated by the US Congress) to each of these organisations, both to fund their activities and for them to pass on to 'affiliated' organisations. Approximately 90 per cent of the Solidarity Center's budget each year is provided by the NED or other US government departments or agencies (Scipes 2010a).

As documented, ACILS was indirectly involved in the 2002 coup attempt in Venezuela by participating in meetings beforehand with leaders later involved in the coup, and then denying afterwards the involvement of the leaders of the right-wing labour organisation (CTV) in the coup, leaders of an organisation long affiliated with the AFL-CIO. The NED overall had been active in Venezuela since 1997 (Scipes 2010a: 56–66).

The NED and its institutes continue to actively fund projects in Venezuela today (this section is heavily based on Scipes 2014a). From the 2012 NED Annual Report, we see they had provided \$1,338,331 to organisations and projects in Venezuela that year alone: \$120,125 on projects for 'accountability'; \$470,870 on 'civic education'; \$96,400 on 'democratic ideas and values'; \$105,000 on 'freedom of information'; \$92,265 on 'human rights'; \$216,063 on 'political processes'; \$34,962 on 'rule of law'; \$45,000 on 'strengthening political institutions'; and \$153,646 on the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE).

Additionally, however, as found on the NED 'Latin American and Caribbean' regional page, NED has granted \$465,000 to ACILS to advance NED objectives of 'freedom of association' in the region, with another \$380,000 destined for Venezuela and Colombia. This is in addition to another \$645,000 to the International Republican Institute, and \$750,000 to the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

The irony of these pious claims for 'freedom of association' and so forth is that Venezuela

has developed public participation to one of the highest levels in the world, and has one of the most free media in the world. Even with massive private TV media involvement in the 2002 coup, the government did not take away their right to broadcast afterwards.

In other words, NED and its institutes – specifically including the Solidarity Center – are not active in Venezuela to help promote democracy, as they claim, but in fact, to act against popular democracy in an effort to restore the rule of the elite top-down democracy. They want to take popular democracy away from those nasty Chavistas, and show who is boss in the US Empire.

## Discussion

This labour imperialism has not gone unchallenged within US Labour. Activists challenging the AFL-CIO foreign-policy programme have met with significant success, most notably in California. The 25th Biennial California State AFL-CIO Convention in July handed a stunning rebuke to national-level foreign policy leaders of the AFL-CIO at their state convention in San Diego.' Over 400 representatives of the state's almost 2.5 million organized workers, about one-sixth of the labour federation's membership, adopted the 'Build Unity and Trust Among Workers Worldwide' resolution. (Scipes 2004b)

However, when taken to the 2005 national convention of the AFL-CIO, this resolution was not even allowed to be discussed on the floor, much less voted upon (Scipes 2005d). This challenge has not risen since to this level of direct contestation.

While he admits that activists have been unable to win the AFL-CIO Executive Council to this position, Scipes argues that, nonetheless, the dominant narrative has been so challenged that the cultural groundwork has been laid for an 'alternative globalization movement [to emerge] in labor', although whether it will do so remains to be seen (Scipes 2012).

Interestingly, within Labour, the work of USLAW (US Labor Against the War) has developed on the ground somewhat in parallel to the efforts of those challenging labour imperialism as a whole, which have been organised by the Worker to Worker Solidarity

Committee (WWSC). However, USLAW has developed far beyond the WWSC, and been considerably more successful (Scipes 2012; see Zweig 2005; 2014).

As a result of labour activists' growing opposition to the AFL-CIO's foreign policy program, what appears to be the result of internal differences within the AFL-CIO and especially among staff members within the International Affairs Department, and efforts such as US Labor Against War, the Solidarity Center has carried out some progressive projects, perhaps most notably in Central America and in the Dominican Republic, as well as in Iraq and Bangladesh (see Scipes, 2010a: 73, 218, endnotes 12 & 13; and Armbruster-Sandoval 2013; see also Kumar and Mahoney 2014; Rahman and Langford 2014; Zweig 2014).

However, while unable to yet confirm, it appears to this writer that the Solidarity Center has made some internal decisions regarding its projects around the world, perhaps classifying them into areas strategic and non-strategic to the US Empire, and allowing progressive projects to take place in the non-strategic areas or strategic areas (such as Iraq) where considerable pressure from within the labour movement to do good things has been developed. As far as this author knows, there have been no detailed published reports by the Solidarity Center of their operations in the former Communist-led states in Eastern Europe or Russia, nor in oil-producing countries around the world, especially in the Middle East, nor have there been any reports by independent researchers about their efforts in many parts of the world.

Thus, while I am glad to know they are doing some things in some places that are progressive or at least not totally detrimental, as long as the Solidarity Center is integrally tied to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) – see Scipes, 2010a: 96-105 – then the charge of engaging in labour imperialism, regarding the overall program, remains. See also Barker, 2011. For an in-depth study of the Solidarity Center's operations from 2002-09, see Bass III, 2012. See also Scipes, 2014a.

Nonetheless, a collection published in 2013 (Waters and Van Goethem, eds. 2013) appears to be a political challenge to the 'labor imperialism' school. Focusing on AFL and AFL-CIO efforts during the Cold War, they suggest a more nuanced analysis of AFL-CIO

operations. However, while contributing some additional empirical research, close examination shows that they affirm the point made by writers within the labour imperialism school since 1989: that this labour imperialist foreign policy has emerged from within the labour movement. Their enhanced nuance is really over a 'straw person' argument: they argue workers have resisted AFL-CIO domination, yet no-one, to this author's recollection, has argued otherwise. Ironically, while trying to weaken the 'labour imperialism' school, this collection actually strengthens its claims (Scipes 2014c).

## Conclusion

This essay has established theoretically and empirically the concept of labour imperialism. It has placed AFL-CIO operations under the auspices of the National Endowment for Democracy. Further, it has discussed some of the impact that challenges to this labour imperialism have had upon the AFL-CIO leadership, including some efforts by the AFL-CIO to support workers overseas, especially in areas non-strategic to the US Empire or in strategic areas where significant Labour support has been built by activists, as USLAW has done with Iraqi labour activists.

The AFL-CIO leadership has painted itself into a corner. They have shown so little leadership at home in the US that the labour movement today represents only about 11 per cent of all workers – in the private sector, it is below 7 per cent (lower than in 1900). As shown at the 2013 National Convention, they are (desperately) seeking outside allies to bolster their power and impact. The problem they face is that activists in other movements know about their foreign operations, and many are reluctant to join in what is euphemistically referred to as the 'AFL-CIA'. The choice the leadership will have to confront – probably sooner than later – is this: Do they continue to support the US Empire (whose leaders are actively trying to disembowel Labour's power at home), or do they reject the US Empire so they can join other social and political movements here and abroad, and offer a real option to working people? Stay tuned.

Kim Scipes

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## Land Grabs, Imperialism, and Anti-Imperialism in Africa

### Introduction

The capture of African indigenous land was one of the first acts of imperialism, leading Africans to found movements such as the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society. While coercion was the usual approach adopted by international forces and their comprador local allies, the claim that such land capture would ultimately ensure to the benefit of locals has remained a core logic, as has the international character of the process now regarded as 'land grab'. It is a phenomenon for which mainstream economics is poorly equipped to analyse. A Marxian framework is a better alternative, even if that too requires modification (Obeng-Odoom, 2015).

The aim of this essay is, therefore, to adapt a Marxian framework in placing the land-grab discourse within global capitalist dynamics and imperial networks. It conceptualises land grab around the imperialist notion of primitive accumulation and expanded reproduction. While the debate around this subject has been cast into a simplistic

binary of whether or not land grab is tantamount to imperialism and over-emphasis on the newness of land grabbing as argued in international relations scholarship (see Margulis 2012), a synthesis of the current state of knowledge undertaken from a historical materialist perspective clearly shows that there are several similarities between old enclosures and current land grabs; for example in terms of displacement and hence changes in property relations, but also several points of dissimilarity. Indeed, there are new actors, motives, and processes that do not, for example, generate jobs in the industrial sector as old enclosures did. The land grab–imperialism nexus in Africa is therefore better framed as a ‘variety of imperialism’.

Thus, rather than restrict our analysis to ‘enclosures’, based on the assumption that contemporary processes are simply a progression from and modern manifestation of primitive accumulation in Britain which is being extended to partially capitalist spaces of the world, or confine our discussion to the ‘newness’ of the phenomenon, this essay frames land grabbing as part of the dynamic dialectic processes of accumulation by dispossession and expanded reproduction that are fundamental to the working of capitalism but in ways that sometimes mimic former enclosures but do not exactly follow the paths of the past.

The essay begins with a conceptual discussion of imperialism and anti-imperialism. This background provides a framework through which it discusses empirical examples. The illustration is not exhaustive. It is, instead, limited to land grabbing and imperialism in Africa, where the phenomenon is most advanced and most pervasive. However, the analyses developed are relevant to other regions, especially Latin America where recent research has also revealed growing number of cases of land grabs (Alonso-Fradejas 2012; Barlanga 2012; Borrás et al. 2012; Galeano 2012; Urioste 2012; Wilkinson et al. 2012).

### Imperialism and anti-imperialism

As other essays in this work show, imperialism is a slippery concept. The old notions of imperialism offered by thinkers such as Lenin were organically linked to colonialism and the thirst for continuing profit. Later conceptions, such as those offered by Rosa

Luxemburg, suggesting that without external markets capitalism would falter, were notably criticised by the African Marxist political economist Amin Samir as too simplistic and not very attentive to imperialism itself. To Samir (1977: 108–109), imperialism means more than the expansion of capitalism, and it is distinctive for intensifying uneven development. It generates a labour aristocracy in the centre and leads to the erosion of backward areas at the periphery constituted by small and medium-scale economic activities that are not competitive. It is typified by the ascent of monopoly capital in the core areas of the world system and the suppression of weaker classes at the periphery. This classical definition is offered by other Marxists, too. They are tied to notions of globalisation and internationalisation. Two commentators writing for the *Review of African Political Economy* put it succinctly as that ‘bring imperialism back into the globalisation debate’ (Bush and Szeftel 1999). So, there is a strong connection with global expansion of capitalism. But imperialism is not just about capitalism expanding on a global scale. It is, instead, about domination of foreign control. The ‘foreign’ in the hegemonic process can be by the state or other supranational bodies. There are those who contend that the state has withered due to globalisation and hence imperialism is mainly by other political economic actors such as transnational corporations. A second view positions US power as imperialist and focuses greatly on American expansionism and Zionism. A third holds that imperialism remains mainly in the domain of interstate conflict and rivalry (Dunn 2009: 306–317). This third view is currently the most dominant and is styled as the new imperialism literature (Robinson 2007). David Harvey is a chief advocate of it, emphasising in his book *The New Imperialism* (Harvey 2003) interstate rivalry and how this leads to domination. It has a ring of the classical core–periphery analysis to it and it powerfully shows change and continuity in imperialist processes by highlighting the continuity of ‘primitive accumulation’ in ‘accumulation by dispossession’. Yet its artificial separation of politics from economics and the placing of one sphere as economic and the other as political have drawn sharp criticism (Brenner 2006; Dunn 2009; Robinson 2007).

To Robinson (2007), contemporary imperialism is broader and multipronged. It is

certainly capitalism on a world scale, but the domination is by multiple actors within different class fractions within and without the territory of domination. Power here is diffused rather than wielded mainly by the nation state or the transnational corporation. Similarly, the boundaries, if any, between the economy and the polity are blurred. There is a co-dependence and each sphere has elements of the other while the two are also fused together. But, the hallmarks of imperialism remain ever evident despite the substantial changes in the form or the process. These are empire building, territorial expansion, the alloy of faraway markets previously unarticulated to centres of power, and domination of the weak by the strong classes within an expanding but highly exploitative world system which is frequently portrayed as good for the exploited. Messianic features often imbue the imperialist self-belief in being on a form of holy mission for the good of all (Dunn 2009: 121–127; Stilwell 2012: xviii), although the source of the right to embark on such a pilgrimage of honour is not made explicit. This epoch of imperialism in Africa is a third type, rather different from the two earlier versions recently analysed by Zack-Williams (2013) for the *Review of African Political Economy*. According to Zack-Williams, the first epoch (1875–1945) covered the period of colonialism and fits of independence, and the second epoch was typified by imperialism without by a formal coloniser (1940s and 1950s–1990s). The present imperial process (2000–) is therefore distinct from the old forms of imperialism.

However, like earlier forms of imperialism, the contemporary iteration is organically linked to resistance of various kinds which can be called anti-imperialism, as other essays in this book show. But unlike past forms of anti-imperialism, which emphasised only a workers' revolution, the present struggles are multifaceted, taking the form of various acts of discontent (Moyo and Yeros 2005), not all of which are in the nature of social movements.

Regarding land grabs within an imperialism–anti-imperialism framework is long overdue. However, the question to ask is what forms they take, and of which variety of imperialism and anti-imperialism they may be. These are empirical questions and so necessarily require that we examine examples on the African continent where the process has been most evident. Besides, dialectical materialism, the

approach most widely used to inform analysis of imperialism of whichever variety, is historically specific and places emphasis on praxis (Marx 1990: 17–25). This essay loosely follows that orientation, and will therefore entail concrete examination of material experiences.

### Land grabs: scale, uses, processes

The control of land has a long history going back to the days of the land enclosures in Great Britain. Yet the fencing and control of common land continued in the 19th-century colonial era with attempts to declare most indigenous land *terra nullius*, with varying consequences which included displacements and the formation of protest movements such as the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society of Ghana. The post-colonial era saw a continuation of colonial land policies and later so-called 'land reforms' sometimes related to structural adjustment programmes, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where the reaches of the market were extended to widen property relations in land. Such neo-liberal land reforms, which are essentially neo-colonial law making because they are inherited forms of previous policies, have continued to commodify land tenure in the global South (Alden Wily 2013; Moyo and Yeros 2005; Njoh 2013).

Since 2007–08, large tracts of land have been leased to foreign and local interests for periods sometimes as long as 99 years. When GRAIN, the global NGO, first reported this surge in large-scale land acquisition in 2008 (Alden Wily 2012; Borras and Franco 2012), the initial estimates given were 2.5 million ha of land. Subsequently, the World Bank updated the figure to 56 million ha around 2010. Now the figure seems to be around 71 million ha (International Land Coalition 2012).

These figures are likely to be conservative and of indicative value only because a substantial number of land deals go unreported, are shrouded in secrecy, and do not make it as far as collation by any central body. Furthermore, some of the countries offering deals have done no proper scientific mapping from which any categorical claims can be made. In the case of South Sudan, for example, one deal was said to be for 600,000 acres in Lainya, but cross-checking shows that the county of Lainya is itself only 340,000 ha in extent (Pearce 2012: 45). More fundamentally, to date, a definition of land grab has remained elusive. The Food and Agriculture

Organisation attempted a three-criterion definition in which land grab is said to have occurred only if a transaction in land covers over 1,000 ha, involves foreign governments, and leads to food insecurity. However, this definition has been rejected as parochial and misleading, as it says nothing about the amount of capital that is used in tilling the land and restricts the consequences of land grab to food insecurity (Borras et al. 2012).

While some of the leased land has been put to the development of recreation complexes and other parts to the development of nature reserves, most land-use change has been of four kinds: from food cultivation for local consumption to food cultivation for export; from food to biofuel production; from non-food to food cultivation; and from non-food to biofuel production (Borras and Franco 2012). These changes are not always clear-cut. In Agogo, Ghana, for example, one transnational land lease entered into by ScanFarm started as jatropha land lease, but the lessees changed the originally agreed use to food production. Sometimes, farms also have different land uses simultaneously (Wisborg 2012). According to International Land Coalition (2012: 4), 78 per cent of land leases are used for agricultural production, with biofuel production taking about 75 per cent of the agricultural category. The rest are for mineral extraction, forest conservation, and tourism.

In addition to 'physical land', water has also been grabbed for the purpose of irrigating the land. In Senegal, a 400,000-acre deal with Saudi Arabia is close to River Senegal which will be the source of irrigation (Pearce 2012: 33). In South Sudan, the new government seems to be negotiating a deal to send water to Egypt by preparing to allow Egypt to construct a canal to channel water from the Nile around the giant Sudd Swamp, which is the second largest swamp in the world and the site of great wildlife diversity and pasture. The canal will enable the Nile to deliver more water to Egypt, much of which currently evaporates from the swamp during its year-long journey (Pearce 2012: 49). Under international law, host countries must generally undertake to provide water to investors as without water the investors cannot fully benefit from their investment. In turn, governments may be sued if, say, in the process of supplying water to their citizens, they are unable to satisfy international private interests (Pearce 2012:102–103).

The identity and methods of the land grabbers vary greatly. Countries, state corporations, private interests, missionaries, NGOs, and universities are all involved. International interests dominate, although there are local actors involved in land deals, too. Unlike pre-2007/8 land leases, the current lessees come from within and without the West, including from countries such as South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and India which have been prominent in land purchases. 'Traditional' land grabbers such as the UK have remained active, too. Three main methods have been used to obtain land leases, namely negotiations with: central government without consulting local government and local chiefs; local chiefs without consulting central and local government and local communities; central and local government and local elites, including chiefs, but without consulting other elders in the communities. The triggers or factors influencing success and failure of negotiations are mainly religious affinity, whether indigenous title is recognised, national governments' business policies, and level of development (Maconachie and Fortin 2013; Pearce 2012; Schoneveld et al. 2011). Also, rich governments improve their chances of seeking land deals by investing in the dilapidated infrastructure of poorer countries in return for land. That is evidently what for a while was going to happen in Kenya where the government of Qatar was to build a billion-dollar port facility in exchange for 100,000 acres of irrigated land on Lamu Island (Pearce 2012: 36).

The role of the global financial institutions, such as the World Bank, has been shadowy, consigned to carrying out studies to identify vacant land such as *Rising Global Interest in Farmland. Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* (World Bank 2010). Also, they have favoured the registration of titles to make it easier to trade in land. On the part of investors, the financial power houses have offered huge loans, others have directly invested, and many more have offered guarantee and investment advice. Glossy magazines have been produced as has an aggressive campaign to encourage people to invest.

### **The many posited motives, but Common 'improvement' logic**

Since the actors vary, specific reasons for obtaining large tracts of land vary too. For some, it is investment; for others, it is food

security or sustainable energy development. These reasons are not unconnected. For example, for those who look at investment, they are doing so mainly because the food and energy issues make demand for certain crops higher and hence investment in land is promising. Thus, it is possible to be 'ethical' and rich at the same time, so the argument goes. There are those who stress green growth and for them buying out indigenous owners who destroy the natural environment is a way to attain sustainable development. Neo-liberals have used a discourse of 'economic development' to support the varied motives of land grab. That is, land grab, from the perspective of neo-liberals, is a win-win situation where poor people can be helped while investors help themselves. Land grab, advocates claim, will lead to agricultural modernisation, mechanisation, and hence development in Africa. For neo-liberals, it is a win-win situation where more food will be produced, more jobs will be created, more investment will flow, and more mechanisation will take place (Collier 2009).

This line of reasoning is familiar. Colonisation was even posited as good for the colonies. As one commentator at a banquet to end slavery observed:

Men's destiny lies in the South ...To fashion a new Africa, to make the old Africa amenable to civilization – that is the problem. And Europe will solve it. Go forward, the nations! Grasp this land! Take it! ... Change your proletarians into property-owners! Go on, do it! Make roads, make ports, make towns! Grow, cultivate, colonize, multiply! (quoted in Rist 2008: 51, exclamation marks in original)

The ardent supporter of colonialism Cecil Rhodes once noted that 'we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must be imperialist' (quoted in Uzundu 2010: 1).

However, it is not entirely correct to say, as some activists have suggested (Alden Wily 2011), that land grab is the same as colonialism and imperialism. Unlike the experiences in the colonial era, where North–South imperial land relations dominated, as we have

seen, the current land grab phenomenon includes South–South deals too. Also, the modus operandi is not always the same. Now obtaining land is mainly through markets; in the past it was mainly through force or *faux* negotiations. To Peluso and Lund (2011: 668), what is new about recent dynamics is the tilling of land for 'new crops with new labour processes and objectives for the growers, new actors and subjects, and new legal and practical instruments for possessing, expropriating, or challenging previous land controls'. To these, as we have seen, it may be added that these recent changes are accompanied by tensions to do with acquiring bodies of water and natural reserves in ways previously unknown – a twist respectively referred to as 'water and green grabs' (see e.g. Fairhead et al. 2012). So, rather than simply positing a new colonialism, it can be argued that there are historical continuities and discontinuities. However, on the basis of an analysis of the posited benefits, losses, and resulting questions, we shall argue that contemporary land grabs are best understood as a particular variety of imperialism.

### Posited benefits, losses, and hard questions

In some cases, land grabs have created employment, increased food production, introduced modern equipment in agricultural processes, and increased the circulation of foreign currency in local and national economies. But, to a greater extent, they have displaced large households and populations, created inequality and food insecurity, and dispossessed large sections of the indigenous population of their land (Mwakaje 2012). However, these benefits and costs are not equally borne by different classes.

How to analyse costs and benefits can be done in many ways. One method is to compare the aims and claims of the projects. Another approach is to use the concept of opportunity cost; that is, the cost of the alternative forgone in order to experience land-use change.

Using these methods to analyse the existing evidence, examples abound of projects which have given fewer than the claimed benefits. For instance, jatropha companies in the Pru district in Ghana provide 120 low-income jobs (US\$50/month) for 780 ha of land leased out. While employees like their jobs for the

security of income flow, they see that it is better as a complement rather than as a substitute (Schoneveld et al. 2011). In Ethiopia, the Daudi Star Agri has employed only about 12 per cent of the number it promised to do. Where some benefits have accrued, in opportunity cost terms, these have been fewer benefits accruing to the people who have lost their land. In Togo, for a lease of 2,700 ha of land for 99 years, Global Greenleaf Plc (Greenleaf Togo) has created only 600 jobs (Stadia Trustees 2011: 2), and '[a]t the plantation site villages ... their inhabitants are being helped to relocate to the edges of the plantation or to areas set aside for the locals' (Stadia Trustees 2011: 4). Here, even where jobs have been created, as in Ghana, the people have lost control of their labour. That is, they have shifted from being self-employed to being employees.

Further, there is a creeping tendency to squeeze the control of seeds out of the hands of local farmers and hence make them further dependent on agro business capital. According to Greenleaf Global Plc, in Ghana, early maturing breeds of maize (maturing in 110 days) produced by scientists were going to be used by Greenleaf Global, and for the jatropha plantation in Togo, jatropha seeds were sent from Ghana, (Greenleaf Global Plc 2011). The role of Togolese farmers as seedlings cultivators was thus done away with. While the use of genetically modified seeds and imported varieties may be economically efficient, the gradual disempowerment of farmers by making their skills redundant raises important political-economic concerns.

Evidence also abounds of poor labour conditions on the new farms arising from land use change and dwindling job prospects. In the case of Ghana, for instance, people in the Pru district have got jobs but have failed to obtain leave to enable them to do community work. In Kenya, the agro-missionary entity, Dominion, has failed to give proper medical treatment to workers injured while working (Pearce 2012). The jobs created on the new farms, especially those for the locals with little education, have a tendency to dwindle in number with time when the jobs for which they are qualified are no longer available, as is openly admitted by agribusinesses in Ghana (Schoneveld et al. 2011). There are already signs that engineers, scientists, and other high-profile agri-professionals are preferable

to common labourers. Most agribusinesses tout the impressive array of professionals in their teams, and local expertise is hardly valued or it is valued up to the point that it no longer yields sufficient business (Pearce 2012). Related to this is the lack of expertise in host regions and the imported labour from Egypt, especially, but also elsewhere. In one case, a Dubai-based finance group is paying \$100 million for one farmer from the US to develop similar American-type farming in Tanzania (Pearce 2012: 36).

The claims that land-use change brings modernisation and food security are equally problematic. Most produce is sent out of the host countries unprocessed. In the few cases of mechanisation, this has come at a cost to the environment as large amounts of natural reserves are destroyed, as found by Schoneveld et al. (2011) in Ghana and Makwaje (2012) in Tanzania. Also, most food grown locally is exported. For instance, Greenleaf Global PLC planned exporting 70 per cent of the maize it produced locally (Greenleaf Global PLC 2011).

It is not that investment in land has created no benefits; rather that these have been unevenly distributed. Chiefs in countries where customary law is recognised often directly benefit from land deals. In Ghana, chiefs typically compare the benefits from land deals with how much donation they get from settler farmers. Government officials too benefit, and in some cases government officials are used as consultants by some agribusinesses (Schoneveld et al. 2011). In the Bombali and Tonkolili districts of Sierra Leone, the Swiss firm Bovid Agroenergy has invested in a 50-year lease of a large lot of 57,000 ha and changed its use from food production to an export-oriented biofuel project. In so doing, it has expedited de-agrarianisation forces that have put most small-scale farmers out of work and spat them into agribusiness apparatus making them wage labour. While land grab for biofuel production has given some jobs to some individuals, most are only casual labour whose wages are much lower than they were made to believe and a lot more have been rendered jobless (Maconachie and Fortin 2013).

Companies and investors obviously earn a lot more profit, which explains their growing interest. According to Agri Capital Ltd. (2012), a London-based firm investing in Sierra Leone, there was a 16.2 per cent return on investment in its first year of harvest in



January 2011, and a promised 7 per cent increase in land value. Most companies pay little or no taxes. Most of these companies get tax waivers, so governments hardly benefit from tax revenues. Indeed, it seems the government of Ghana exempted Greenleaf Plc from corporate taxes for ten years (Greenleaf Global 2011). Also, because most of the investors are from countries outside the land-grab area, most of the returns are repatriated to foreign lands. Indeed, in most of the land deals, there are no restrictions on capital flight. In turn, the countries from which the investors originate benefit, while the host countries remain primary producers.

Investors do not benefit equally, of course. Some investors are swindled and obtain little or no rewards for the risks they take. An example is the case of Greenleaf Global Plc which was operating in Ghana and Togo. Investors sunk £8.2 million into land deals with the promise that they would receive a return of about 20 per cent within 12 months when, in fact, no careful prior analysis had been made. Also, the company had claimed it had had a bountiful harvest in 2010 and paid huge returns to investors when, in fact, no such thing had ever happened. In the end, the company was rendered insolvent (Insolvency Service 2012).

The distribution of losses is also uneven. Settler farmers have missed out more than native farmers. For instance, in Ghana, settler farmers are the first targets to lose land. Also, ethnic minorities are left worse off. In Ethiopia, people from the lowlands, historically opposed to the government, lose more of their land than those on the highlands (Makki 2012). Furthermore, the distribution of losses is gendered. Women in Ghana experience the losses differently to men because land often regarded by men as fallow is used by women to grow some vegetables, so when these fallow lands are grabbed women lose out. Given that women do most of the water fetching, outsiders grabbing water lengthens the journey time for them. Similarly, the journey time for looking for firewood seems to have lengthened. While, private agribusinesses claim that such lengthening was already happening after years of destroying their own environment (Schoneveld et al. 2011; Wisborg 2012), evidence from Tanzania disputes such claims (Mwakaje 2012). Curiously, these differential impacts are not creating major conflicts, resistance, or riots, as some Marxist analyses might lead us to expect. Part of the

reason is the influence of chiefs. Chiefs are seen as 'owners' or all-knowing in most African countries where the chieftaincy institution remains. Another reason is the feeling by settler farmers that they have no rights anyway. A third reason is a feeling that the benefits will come in the future. A fourth is that people feel land deals involving the government must be good. Heavy policing is yet another reason, and the divide-and-rule tactics used by governments create cracks within the ranks of people who have missed out on the so-called benefits of land grabs. Also, international law, sometimes called international investment agreements, supports private expatriate interests over and above local and national interests when the two conflict (Pearce 2012: 102–103; Schoneveld et al. 2011; Wisborg 2012). The most important reason, however, is that there is a general feeling that 'development is coming' and endurance rather than resistance is needed. In one case, in Ghana, a regional director of the Environmental Protection Agency would not insist that companies do the right thing because he did not want to obstruct development (Schoneveld et al. 2011).

Meanwhile, land grab is widening income and social inequality. By the very nature of the distribution of benefits and losses, people who have are getting more, while the rest are struggling. According to Pearce (2012: 78), there is now an 'enclave economy' in which land grabbers and their cronies live in great prosperity, while the others struggle to make ends meet. Social inequality has been linked to poor health, poor food security, crime, grime, and unhappiness. Poverty eventually worsens when these worsen. Indeed, the massive displacement illustrates the growing inequality. In Gambella, Ethiopia, the government has launched the villagisation project in which some 180, 000 people will be resettled in areas where, according to the government, social amenities are available. Yet even people with such amenities are being moved, an experience which exposes the overt mission of the project. Not surprisingly, the place of the resettled people is being taken by agro-industries. For the resettled locals, their new locations have worse livelihood conditions than their original homes (Pearce 2012: 11). Thus, starting from a perspective of coming out to 'help' the poor or the world, to get energy or food, land grab seems to be the cause rather than the cure for this canker.

These empirical examples dispute both populist and ideological representations of land grabs. It is misleading to contend that land grabs have brought no benefits to local populations, but also misleading is the claim that the processes and phenomena of land grab are win-win. What the examples reveal is a clear case of accumulation by both dislocation and dispossession. Exploitation and expropriation are commonplace and the so-called benefits are concentrated rather than spread. Actors in a stronger class position have appropriated greater gains, with the majority of people having to leave with secondary and transitional land rights, and insecurity. Even within the marginalised classes, there is great social differentiation along ethnic and tribal lines as global capital takes advantage of non-capitalist or partially capitalist systems transformed by colonial and neo-colonial forces to accumulate and dissipate. These differential scales of benefits and losses at the local, national, regional, and global levels reveal land grab as a particular type of imperialism that is not only different but also differentiated from 'classical imperialism'. However, as with classical imperialism, land grab has evoked counter-imperialist responses.

### **Anti-imperialism: alternative agriculture as protest, conflict, and resistance**

Anti-imperialism may come in the form of alternative forms of agriculture that part company with the capitalist logic. It may also take the form of overt protest against the advancement of the reaches of capitalism. A hybrid of both can also take place; that is, resistance to agricapitalist forms of land use and the use of land for non-capitalist farming.

Regarding organising agriculture in an anti-imperialist way, smallholder farming has gained great popularity in recent times. In this agricultural form, farmers decide what to produce and for whom – a system widely regarded as eco-friendly. In Africa, there is a collection of examples about how smallholder farming in urban areas generates decent income and food to support large numbers of families with small plots (Obeng-Odoom 2013). This is not just an African practice. In Asia and Latin America such evidence abounds too. However, the most popular of such farming types is organised by the global peasant movement La

Vía Campesina, formed in 1993. According to eminent sociologist Walden Bello, 'La Via Campesina is probably the most effective of these movements of people ...' (Bello 2007: 4). Its central vision is fighting for 'food sovereignty' – a broader concept than food security – that entails looking at food as a human right, not just as an aspiration, discouraging fast and junk food, and encouraging a return to common land in which people have use rights in the commons rather than owning them as 'property'. The project challenges individualism and seeks to speak truth to power by advocating humanism and communalism (Desmarais 2007; Riddell 2009). La Via Campesina embodies a transnational peasant struggle. Indeed, the name in Spanish means 'Peasant way' or 'Peasant Road' (Desmarais 2007: 8).

Other forms of anti-capitalist struggles exist in the form of overt protests or local attempts to use violence to protect land. At present, conflict has been reported between natives and settler communities. In the Pru district in Ghana, minor confrontation between settlers and natives have been reported. Violence also in the Greenleaf area in Juapong, Ghana, where one labourer was shot dead on 3 April 3 for trying to clear land for jatropha cultivation when that land was the subject of a long dispute between the chief and another person (Thornycroft 2012). In South Sudan, there was a public meeting at which residents in the sub-county of Mukaya decided to reject one lease made by so-called 'influential people' who had acted without addressing community concerns (Pearce 2012: 46). In Juba, in the same country, the mobilisation of indigenous land rights claims continues to be used as a shield to parry attempts at appropriating land for 'development' (Badiey 2013).

Elsewhere, there are talks of preparing the youth for armed attack in Gambella, Ethiopia. Conflicts have been reported between the Anuak and the more privileged highlanders, the Anuak and the government, and between the government, the highlanders, and the Anuak over struggles concerning land. In one case, some 420 people were killed (Pearce 2012: 9–16). In another case in Agogo in Ghana, local residents have expressed much concern about the nature of the land transactions, including the lack of consultations, and the like. In April 2010, a demonstration by the residents became slightly violent, and

when police were called in there was shooting in which 14 people were wounded. Another demonstration was started in 2011 to protest against the dispossession of land (Wisborg 2012). In Dipale in Ghana, the natives have resisted by abstaining from sharing local knowledge about how to prevent fires, or by not helping to quench fires when they start in a region which is very prone to such problems (Yaro and Tsikata 2013).

There has been an innovative anti-capitalist twist towards constitutional political economy. A university academic in the Knutsford University College has filed a constitutional case at the Supreme Court of Ghana seeking that the court should compel the Ghanaian state to prevent takeover of Ghanaian lands, and obliging it to fund institutions mandated to protect Ghanaian lands from foreign takeover. The plaintiff is said to have noted: 'It appears the Government of Ghana is not sufficiently prepared to deal with the challenges that such rapid and massive exposure to foreigners pose to Ghana's national welfare' (Issah 2013), prompting him to file the case on 9 April 2013. The case has yet to be decided, but the route taken complements the existing avalanche of anti-imperialist struggles.

These anti-imperialist responses, to be sure, are not only local or localised. Instead, they are getting increasingly regionalised. In 2010 there was the Kolongo Appeal made by peasant groups in Mali who organised local resistance to land grabs. Subsequently, there was the Dakar Appeal which led to a global conference of peasants in Mali in 2011 that ended with a 'commitment to resist land-grabbing by all means possible, to support all those who fight land-grabs, and to put pressure on national governments and international institutions to fulfill their obligations to ensure and uphold the rights of peoples' (Nyeleni Declaration 2011: 2).

Developmentalist transnational bodies such as the Food and Agricultural Organisation and the World Bank advocate regulations, including the so-called 'Responsible Agricultural Investment Principles' and other voluntary charters such as The Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (FAO 2012). These endorse business as usual, but address socially sensitive or welfarist concerns. However, anti-imperialist movements or protests have called

for small-scale farming, and there is proof that such alternative land uses and forms are viable and sustainable. Most of Africa's cities are fed by small-scale urban farmers (Schmidt 2012). Indeed, in both Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, respectively the first and second largest producers of cocoa in the world, smallholders are the centrepiece of production (Ryan 2011). There is proof that a combination of community land titling, community-made rules, and conflict resolution improves security of tenure, as it did in the cases of Uganda and Liberia (Knight et al. 2012). Of course, these have their problems too, but they ought to be studied in their own terms and improved based on consultation, mutual respect, and inclusive ideology.

## Conclusion

The imperialist processes of land grabbing justified on grounds of 'improvement' and 'progress', 'employment', and 'food security' have produced cataclysmic outcomes for the majority poor and weaker classes and gender. De-peasantisation, landlessness, loss of sovereignty, employment, and livelihoods are but a few of the outcomes of this particular type of capitalist development. It follows that the benign motives mask detrimental ethnicised, gendered, and class outcomes that advantage powerful groups within and without the nation states of Africa.

As with historical processes of enclosure in days past, the dispossession and loss of control of labour from the product of their exertion has been naturalised as the only path to human development. However, this imperialist model is being contested on multiple fronts: through demonstration, constitutionalism, lack of co-operation, and a small amount of armed struggle. Unfortunately, these anti-imperialist responses are not yet co-ordinated and the demands of the various groups vary greatly. There is no common rallying point such as food sovereignty nor a common voice such as *La Via Campesina*. Even worse, the comprador states and their spokespersons are extremely determined to bring about greater modernisation and industrialisation, and give the false impression of consensus when, in most cases, local farmers and indigenous usufructs have not been consulted. Nevertheless, the existence of discontent itself and the modest but important achievements it has chalked up give much hope for the future of anti-imperialist struggles.

This epoch of imperialism though has important distinctive features relative to old forms of imperialism. It is not simply state-centric and is not sharply divided between the 'economy' and 'politics'. This imperialism has diverse loci and actors which do not neatly fit within a core-periphery framework although core-periphery processes are at play. It is, to this extent, a new variety of imperialism, albeit one with similarly destructive outcomes for the majority in the weaker classes and monopolised benefits for a few.

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## Marxism and Imperialism

The relationship between Marxism and imperialism has been established since the writings of Marx himself. Particularly in *Capital*, Volume I, Marx discusses the international division of labour caused by the expansion of capital in Chapter 15, English capital in Ireland in Chapter 25, as well as engaging with a theory of colonialism in Chapter 33 (1992a/1867). Marx's own views on both colonialism and imperialism have been well discussed in critical analysis of both his well- and lesser-known texts, many of which are presented in the compendium text *On Colonialism* (Marx and Engels 2001; see also Nimitz 2002; Pradella 2013). However, the study of imperialism post-Marx grew from a belief that, while some analysis of imperialism was present in the works of Marx, a dedicated analysis of the state and the international sphere had been left at an embryonic stage. This is broadly true, but this view has received criticism based on historiographical analysis of both Marx and the earliest authors on imperialism (Pradella 2013). The phenomenon of imperialism, while still discussed by Marx in a number of instances, was not given the same sustained critical attention as other issues in his work. This is the point at which Marxism's engagement with imperialism becomes more profound and substantial. Imperialism, therefore, to Marxism has always been a 'problem' of some form.

Indeed, the 'problem' of imperialism derives from a number of perceived sources: gaps in Marx's own writing; an explanation for why capitalism endures; an account of the phenomenon of globalisation. It is the contention of this essay, then, that the ongoing relationship between Marxism and imperialism reveals one of Marxism's main strengths, and its clear weaknesses. It reveals Marxism's capacity to explain new phenomena coupled with a rigorous and critical method; however, it also reveals a reliance on systemic explanations for contingent developments, and a considerable partisanship between radical thinkers.

This relationship between Marxism and imperialism therefore begins early in the 20th century with the work of the 'classical' authors of imperialism, building on the work of Marx and critiquing extant understandings

of imperialism, particularly John Hobson's. This chapter charts the origins of this relationship and its various iterations throughout the 20th century until the present. This relationship has, fundamentally, changed very little, deriving largely from Marx's own work, and the work of the first Marxist theorists of imperialism. Indeed, the relationship is iterative rather than developmental, with particular ideas within Marxist theories of imperialism recurring perpetually. Most notably, the overarching power of Finance, or monopoly capital, within capitalism, and the idea of imperialism as a qualitatively distinct 'stage' of capitalist development are extremely powerful ideas within the tradition of Marxist theories of imperialism.

The essay will be split into three sections according to various 'phases' of Marxist thought on imperialism: first, the 'classical' Marxists, from Hilferding to Lenin; second, the 'neo-colonialist' thinkers; and finally, the 'new' imperialists.

### The 'classical' Marxists

The first Marxist theorists of imperialism, writing at the beginning of the 20th century, sought to link contemporary international political developments to the nature of capitalism itself. The developing tensions between European states, it was argued, resulted from a need for states to secure control over foreign territories as an outlet for surplus capital (Bukharin 2003/1916; Lenin 2010/1916; Luxemburg 1963/1913). Alongside these systemic pressures, the early field of study was also shaped by the role of particular agency, especially financiers and bankers (Hilferding, 1981/1910). A notable division between those regarding capitalism as leading inevitably to conflict, and those who believed that such tendencies could be tamed by social and political reform, was also apparent with this distinction being most clearly articulated by the dialogue between Kautsky (1914) and Lenin (2010/1916).

From Hilferding onwards, however, there emerges the idea that existing Marxist texts lacked an explanation for the phenomenon of imperialism. Hence, Otto Bauer described Hilferding's *Finanzcapital* as the 'fourth volume' of *Capital*, addressing the international and imperial rivalries (and their origins) in a fashion not present in the three volumes of *Capital* itself. The explanation for Hilferding

(1981/1910) for the development of this phenomenon lies in the relationship between capital and the state, particularly the overwhelming power of monopoly capital over the state.

While Hilferding's approach laid a foundation for an analysis of imperialism, his approach focuses on the unification of capital within the 'metropolis' rather than on an analysis of relationships between states. It is Bukharin who develops, perhaps, the first 'theory' of imperialism, though his reliance on Hilferding's work is clear. Hilferding's imperialism was inextricably linked to the notion of monopoly: the conglomeration of the fractions of capital into finance capital controlled by bankers. Hilferding's understanding of the development of imperialism springs forth from the inherent tendencies of capitalism itself, as well as the personal direction of specific actors.

A circle of people emerges who, thanks to their own capital resources or to the concentrated power of outside capital which they represent (in the case of bank directors), become members of the boards of directors of numerous corporations. There develops in this way a kind of personal union, on one side among the various corporations themselves, and on the other, between the corporations and the bank. (119–120)

Hilferding (319) then links the power of monopoly capitalism to the inherently crisis-prone nature of capitalism, and the role of the state in resolving those crises:

As has always been the case, when capital first encounters conditions which contradict its need for valorization, and could only be overcome much too slowly and gradually by purely economic means, it has recourse to the power of the state and uses it for forcible expropriation in order to create the required free wage proletariat.

Hilferding also maintains that while capitalism, as a social relation, may exist everywhere, it is only when a state associated with an 'export capital' is in control of a territory that the process of surplus value extraction is at its most efficient.

This explains why all capitalists with interests in foreign countries call for a strong

state whose authority will protect their interests even in the most remote corners of the globe, and for showing the national flag everywhere so that the flag of trade can also be planted everywhere. (320)

As with Hilferding, subsequent authors also saw a problem of imperialism for Marxism. Lenin introduces Bukharin's *Imperialism and World Economy* by emphasising that the study of imperialism is the only means to understand political developments of the day:

The problem of imperialism is not only a most essential one, but, we may say, it is the most essential problem in that realm of economic science which examines the changing forms of capitalism in recent times. Everyone interested not only in economics but in any sphere of present-day social life must acquaint himself with the facts relating to this problem ... Needless to say that there can be no concrete historical analysis of the present war if that analysis does not have for its basis a full understanding of the nature of imperialism, both from its economic and political aspects. (Bukharin 2003/1915: 8)

Following Hilferding, Bukharin (152) argues that not only is monopoly capital important to understanding imperialism but that, without it, imperialism would not be possible. Indeed, this is a view shared by Lenin (2010/1916: 46) also, declaring monopoly capital the 'essence' of imperialism. As with Hilferding, Bukharin clearly links imperialism to the valorisation of capital, in that it 'is nothing more but a process of a continuous reproduction of the contradictions of capitalism on an ever wider scale' (Bukharin 2003/1915: 153). This is a view shared by all Marxist theorists of imperialism but it is especially clear in the earlier authors, sketching out the link between Marx and the spread of capitalism across the globe. Indeed, as Luxemburg (1963/1913: 365) notes, 'capital needs the means of production and the labour power of the whole globe for untrammelled accumulation; it cannot manage without the natural resources and the labour power of all territories'.

While a number of similarities exist within the works of authors on classical imperialism, it is possible to characterise these authors as using very similar methods to understand

how capitalism developed a particular form at the beginning of the 20th century. These methods are, principally, understanding the state as an instrument of the will of bankers, and presenting imperialism as a specific and predetermined period of capitalism (Sutton 2013). Kautsky (1916: 18), while also offering an instrumentalist conception of the state, avoids the problem of periodisation by emphasising the contingent nature of extant accounts of imperialism, arguing that it is not a pre-determined period of capitalist development. Indeed, Lenin (2010/1916: 142) quotes Kautsky in order to criticise his claims of contingency as mere 'Socialist-chauvinist' claptrap:

Cannot the present imperialist policy be supplanted by a new, ultraimperialist policy, which will introduce the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital in place of the mutual rivalries of national finance capitals?

Lenin rejected Kautsky's view since, he argued, states developed unevenly in capitalism and, therefore, national interests were constantly shifting and there could be no stable 'ultraimperialist' policy, only the ultimately terminal impulsion to competition and conflict of the imperial stage of capital (ibid.). For Lenin, Kautsky had rejected Marx entirely and joined the ranks of 'bourgeois writers', thus leading Lenin to label Kautsky's idea of 'ultraimperialism' as 'ultra-nonsense' (ibid.: 35).

Lenin's argument is clear that imperialism is both a necessary and the highest stage of capitalist development. McDonough (1995: 364) argues that Lenin's work, along with the earliest Marxist authors on imperialism, represents the pivotal moment in resolving the 'first crisis of Marxism' as its introduction of a 'stage theory of capitalism' to Marxist thought helped to explain capitalist recovery instead of revolution. However, the subordination of the contingent developments in global society to a deterministic understanding of capitalist development remained highly problematic for these particular understandings of imperialism, especially given that the historical developments of the 20th century led not to system-destroying warfare but, rather, to something closer to the 'bourgeois' understanding of imperialism held by Kautsky.

However, also problematic within these accounts is the emphasis placed on the role of Finance. These authors are not simply arguing that the power of banks and their domination of the state is a particular or contingent aspect of the imperial form of capitalism, but that it is inextricably linked to an understanding of capitalist production as teleological. In other words, the arguments offered by these early theorists were ill equipped to explain capitalism that did not follow this particular form.

### The 'neo-colonialist' thinkers

The historical developments of the early 20th century, particularly the global wars of the period, devastated the European system of empires. This triggered the demise of the Eurocentric world order, led to the onset of decolonisation, and facilitated the rise of the US. This historical turn, therefore, undermined the original theorists of imperialism. Apparently, not only had European states withdrawn from their empires but the dominant world power was now a self-declared anti-imperial world power. Therefore, the concept was ostracised from the scholarly mainstream during the post-1945 era.

However, imperialism continued to be theorised and accounted for. The main focus was now no longer centred on themes of rivalry and warfare, but on the changing nature of international capitalism, the qualities of the 'world system', and on questions about economic dependency, underdevelopment, and the relations between core and peripheral states (Amin 1977; Arrighi 1994; Baran and Sweezy 1968; Cohen 1973; Frank 1966; 1978; 1980; Frank and Gills 1993; Galtung 1971; Mandel 1975; Wallerstein 1974; 1975; 1980; 1989). However, the continuities between this 'second wave' of scholars and the earlier scholars are quite remarkable. Rather than a revolution in the theorisation of imperialism, these later scholars were highly dependent on the key concepts developed by earlier authors.

The 'second wave' of theories of imperialism occurred in the 1960s and 1970s and is generally synonymous with Dependency Theory and World System Theory (Brewer 1990: 161), and developed from earlier ideas of uneven development, monopoly capital, and a stage theory of capitalism (McDonough 2007: 258; Soldatenko 1982: 41). Amin (1977: 112) accepts the Leninist notion that



imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism since it is the most exploitative stage of capitalism, and therefore the 'highest' stage of capitalism.

The authors of the 'second wave' characterised the world economy according to zones of development: core, semi-periphery, and periphery, with surplus value being channelled from periphery to core states. These theories argued that dependent territories are kept in a perpetual state of underdevelopment in the interests of monopoly capital in the core countries. This allows advanced monopoly capital to continue to exploit these territories without competition from native production, and without a working-class consciousness developing there. Where the earliest authors on imperialism emphasised the competition between states, the authors of the 'second wave' emphasised the importance of changes in international capitalism, particularly the dependency and uneven development between core and periphery states (Kettell and Sutton 2013: 4). This development in the literature does, to some degree, approximate Kautsky's notion of 'ultraimperialism', in emphasising a harmonisation of interests between 'core', or imperialist, states.

One further development of this characterisation led not just to a typology of states but also to a typology of class. Amin (1977: 115) identifies a core working class, and periphery working class, each with its respective bourgeoisie. They can be considered distinct in that they are divided nationally, holding apparently separate cultural and social values and interests. As such, the periphery bourgeoisie can be anti-imperialist allies to the periphery working class; so too can the core working class be pro-imperialist along with their respective bourgeoisie. However, this is an acceptance of the manner in which imperial relations present themselves in capitalism – not as global capitalist relations but rather as the relations between nationally constituted states.

To some extent, then, these approaches diminished the role of agency, focusing instead on the role of the 'world-system' and its typology of states to account for the persistence of capitalism not just in what Hilferding initially referred to as the 'metropolis', but also in the allegedly independent former colonies. Considering the debt owed to Lenin by these theories, it is not surprising that the emphasis would be on such a structuralist

account. The key development of these theories, building on earlier Marxist authors, was to account for an imperialism that was neither formally territorially bounded nor prone to system-threatening competition between imperial states (Song 2011: 293). However, the same problems resurfaced in 'second-wave' accounts as they had in the 'classical' Marxist accounts; namely, a stage theory of history, the role played by monopoly capital, and, therefore, the presentation of contingent developments as necessary aspects of capitalist social relations. Furthermore, new problems emerged from the effort to resolve issues with the first theories, particularly a reliance on an explanation of state behaviour that split class along national lines.

### The 'new' imperialists

During the latter years of the 20th century, the concept of imperialism remained at the academic margins. The principle means of understanding imperialism was now framed in terms of the debate on 'globalisation', particularly from the mid-1970s, which argued that the role and power of the state were being undermined by a hitherto unseen level of capitalist accumulation (Pozo-Martín 2006). The resurgence of imperialism as a field of study during the early years of the 21st century was once again linked to an assertion that this form of imperialism was also both qualitatively distinct and unique. Denoting a figurative as well as a literal shift from 'old' to 'new' imperialism, the view from many quarters was that imperialism was not merely 'back' but more profoundly exploitative than ever. There is both a lack of clarity, and some irony, in the term 'New Imperialism' to describe this development in the literature. In terms of the latter, the phrase 'New Imperialism' has been used since the very first dedicated study of imperialism by Hobson (1968/1902) to emphasise that this new 'phase' of imperialism rested both on conflict and competition between empires, as well as the power of finance over the state. Marxist authors on imperialism owe a great deal to Hobson's account. In terms of the former, the use of the term 'New Imperialism' in the literature could potentially refer to either a new theoretical approach to understanding imperialism, or a qualitatively distinct form of imperialism (Harvey 2007: 57; Kettell and Sutton 2013: 6–20).

David Harvey's account (2003: 116) of the New Imperialism highlights the importance of understanding how capital must valorise the role of the state in resolving blockages to the circuit of capital on a global scale. Harvey however relies on the idea of the neo-liberal state, deriving from an apparent caesura in the 1970s, the shift from Fordism to 'flexible' accumulation, and the ensuing turn from modernity to post-modernity, to substantiate his idea of contemporary imperialism. Harvey (1990: 124) lays the foundation for this by declaring, 'the contrasts between present political-economic practices and those of the post-war boom period are sufficiently strong to make the hypothesis of a shift from Fordism to what might be called a 'flexible' regime of accumulation a telling way to characterize history'. To Harvey (171), this movement to a 'flexible regime' is concomitant with the shift to post-modernism, emphasising 'the new, the fleeting, the ephemeral, the fugitive, and the contingent in modern life, rather than the more solid values implanted under Fordism'. In critique of Harvey, Wood (1997: 540) characterises his position as follows:

Postmodernity then corresponds to a phase of capitalism where mass production of standardized goods, and the forms of labour associated with it, have been replaced by flexibility, new forms of production – 'lean production', the 'team concept', 'just-in-time' production, diversification of commodities for niche markets, a 'flexible' labour force, mobile capital and so on, all made possible by new informational technologies.

Harvey's understanding of a change within capitalism from modernity to post-modernity has already been well critiqued as the periodisation of capitalist society, used to explain the shift from Fordism to flexible accumulation (Wood 1997).

However, this is also true of Wood (2005:134) when she argues that the New Imperialism rests on a 'Universal Capitalism' – one in which capitalism has already expanded to incorporate the entire globe, requiring a new type of imperialism based on 'economic domination' rather than the rivalry of nation states that characterised 'old imperialism'. Harvey (2007: 60) criticises Wood's (2005: 100) typologies of both imperialism

and capitalism as unable to fully explain the dynamic changes in global capitalism. Harvey (2007: 67) acknowledges that neither he nor Wood (2005) did a 'very good job' of theorising the state in their accounts of imperialism, which incites him to exhort, 'Not only do we need a new theory of imperialism to match the conditions of our time but we also need a new theory of the capitalist state'.

For Harvey, 'around 1970 or so' is the beginning of the third stage of the global rule of the bourgeoisie (2003: 60). This, he declares, saw 'a different kind of system emerge' that was quintessentially neo-liberal in character, transforming the state itself into a different 'type' of state. (62). Indeed, Harvey is explicit that this shift to a newer imperialism only occurs due to the transition from Fordist to flexible accumulation, leading to an ascendant financial power (64). In fact, Harvey's emphasis upon the power of the 'Wall Street-Treasury-IMF' complex, as financial power over the state, is highly redolent of the earliest theories of imperialism, which rested on the idea of finance capital requiring the state to undertake imperialism.

The focus for Harvey, and the New Imperialism more broadly, has, unlike prior accounts, focused almost solely on the actions of a single state: the US, emphasising both its military dominance and its position as the centre of global financial capital. As the dominant power within the international state system, this is perhaps understandable but not entirely unproblematic, and has received considerable criticism from Marxist authors. Hardt and Negri (2000) term contemporary global society as 'Empire' and criticise the US-centric approach of Harvey. To Hardt and Negri (xii), Empire is a decentralised and deterritorialised global power structure. Empire has four distinct aspects: first, Empire is global; second, Empire appears eternal; third, Empire pervades every aspect of society; fourth, Empire is exceedingly violent but appears peaceful (xv). Empire therefore seeks to reconcile the apparent deterritorialisation of imperialism with continued exploitation and the inherent violence of capitalism; however, this account becomes, in effect, indistinguishable from an account of capitalism itself and therefore provides nothing other than an abstract understanding of capitalism divorced from the still extant features of the international state system (Kiely 2005: 48). This critique is also made by Wood

(2002; 2005: 6) of Hardt and Negri, whom, she argues, accept the superficial qualities of globalisation and miss something 'truly essential' about both capitalism and imperialism, namely a robust understanding of the state.

This critique has also found substantial purchase elsewhere. Panitch and Gindin (2006) Pozo-Martin (2006: 236), and Robinson (2007: 8) argue that an under-theorisation of the state is characteristic of most scholarship on the 'New Imperialism', including Callinicos (2005a; 2005b), Gowan (1999), and Harvey (2003). Callinicos's (2010: 82–84) response to this is to invoke a form-analysis understanding of the state. However, Callinicos (*ibid.*) rejects form-analysis as more problematic than useful, leading him to accept a 'broadly Gramscian approach' to imperialism (99).

The New Imperialism developed following debates over 'globalisation' and the international proliferation of 'neo-liberal' ideology. These authors sought to explain the sudden and massive expansion of credit within the global economy, as well as to account for a perceived 'hollowing out' of the state. However, from this particular historical context derives the literature's fundamental problems, which, again, have not fundamentally resolved the problems of the first Marxist theorists of imperialism. First, the consensus on the New Imperialism is that we are, yet again, in a distinct phase of capitalism. Second, the role of Finance dominates explanations of the behaviour of states, and the nature of this New Imperialism. Last, perhaps distinctively in this new phase of scholarship on imperialism, this apparent historical shift away from the state has also led to authors themselves neglecting the role of the state in understanding imperialism.

## Conclusions

This relationship between Marxism and imperialism has been an illuminating one, highlighting not just the enduring value of Marxist scholarship on imperialism but also its persistent problems. Most notably, these problems derive from a conflation of factors contingent upon and necessary to capitalist social relations, which themselves derive from, perhaps, an emphasis on theory over historical research. Broadly lacking in Marxist theories of imperialism is a sustained

engagement with historical scholarship. There is also a neglect of the specific relationships between states and the everyday 'minutiae' of capitalism. Rather, these accounts have generally focused more on 'top-down' systemic theories of imperialism. As such, Marxist theories of imperialism have almost always invoked Finance, or monopoly, capital to explain the phenomenon, which they have also sought to identify as a particular and discrete historical period of capitalism. These theories have changed, of course, depending on their particular historical circumstances. The first theories sought to explain imperial rivalries leading to a system-threatening war; the second wave of theories sought to explain the continued inequality between Western and post-colonial state; while the latest wave of Marxist thought has sought to incorporate globalisation and the apparent retreat of the state.

More recent developments in understandings of imperialism in Marxist scholarship have centred on the debate between so-called neo-Gramscian and open Marxist theories of the state. Most obvious in this debate is the limited engagement either approach has had with the other, leading to highly partisan scholarship by both sets of authors (see e.g. Bieler and Morton 2003 Bieler et al. 2010; Bonefeld 2009; Bruff 2009a; 2009b; Burnham 1991). The main distinction between these two groups is that, while open Marxists sought to demystify the nature of capitalism by a return to Marx himself, neo-Gramscian scholarship sought to base an understanding of modern capitalism upon the work of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. The value offered by both of these approaches, however, is in their desire to theorise the state, offering a rigorous critical lens through which to understand the changing conditions of capitalist social relations. Given the development of Marxist theories of imperialism over the course of the 20th century, and their problems stemming from a lack of sustained analysis of the origins of state action, this more recent debate, although partisan, offers to inject new vigour into a Marxist understanding of imperialism.

Alex Sutton

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## Monopoly-Capitalist Imperialism and the Non-profit Industrial Complex

Discussions on the changing forms of imperialism have retained their relevance in the face of stupendous upheavals of the world economy and geopolitics since the 1970s. This essay aims to contribute to these discussions from the perspective of the monopoly-capital school. More precisely, its contribution is twofold. In the first place, I analyse the stagnating nature of US monopoly capitalism since the 1970s using data obtained from primary sources. By stagnation, I do not only mean the slowing down of economic growth, but also an amalgamation of declining production levels below the economic potential, significant levels of (long-term) unemployment, and rising inequality (Foster and Magdoff 2009). This is despite soaring corporate profits in the context of financialisation. Stagnation is then associated with escalating imperialist aggression and the intensification of contradictions between US imperialism and the Third World. This helps explain why US imperialism increasingly relies on interventions abroad by means of the non-profit sector as a more cost-effective method than military invasion.

In the second place, I assess the growing importance of NGO-isation for imperialist interventions geared toward advancing the interests of monopoly capitalism. Besides presenting empirical evidence on the global NGO boom since the 1980s, I argue that corporate foundations and the US state

apparatus assume a key economic role in the non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) as the agents of monopoly capitalism. I identify three historical moments that underlie the emergence and consolidation of the NPIC. First, the Cold War conjuncture allowed US imperialism to develop new strategies of regime change employing the resources of such actors as the George Soros Foundation (GSF), National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Second, the advancement of the neo-liberal agenda led dominant international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) to prioritise non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as an alternative to state-centred welfare regimes. Third, the need to pacify growing social unrest – caused by neo-liberalism’s failure to overcome inequality and stagnation – was satisfied based on strategies of co-optation and the professionalisation of NGO cadres.

My argument on NGO-isation is inspired by John Bellamy Foster’s Kalecki-informed analysis of the triangular structure of contemporary imperialism. According to Michał Kalecki, the imperialist system of the Keynesian era rested on a triangular structure that was composed of: (a) state-financed military production (i.e. the military-corporate complex, often called the ‘military-industrial complex’); (b) media propaganda (media-corporate complex); and (c) a putative full-employment/welfare-oriented superstructure (Keynesianism) underpinned by the war machine, serving to justify it (Kalecki 1972). Building on Kalecki’s work, Foster provides an updated version of the theory of imperialism of the monopoly-capital tradition by laying emphasis on the primary role of the above triangle in the restructuring and preservation of the contemporary imperialist system (Foster 2006; 2008). Expanding on his work, I argue that one of the most significant changes in the triangular structure of contemporary imperialism is in its third pillar, particularly with the abandonment of the welfare-oriented paradigm and the adoption of the neo-liberal globalisation project. In this essay, neo-liberalism is simply referred to as a set of institutional structures, norms, and unwritten rules that regulate the global political economy of the post-1980 era based on the principles of capital and trade liberalisation,

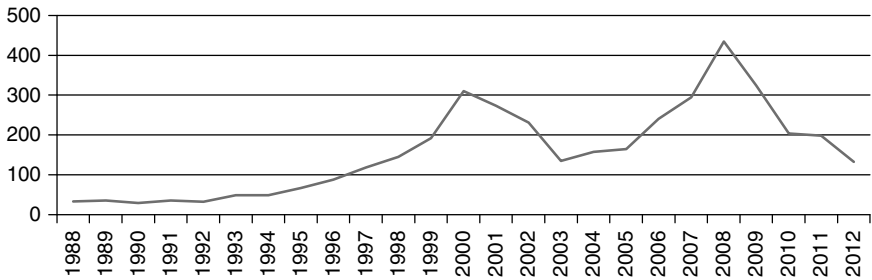
privatisation and financialisation. It is spearheaded by US imperialism and its global network represented by the IMF, World Bank, World Trade Organisation, etc.

The essay is divided into three parts. The first provides a theoretical and empirical discussion of contemporary imperialism. Not only do I address the stagnating nature of US monopoly capitalism, but I also touch on its aspects related to military and media power. The second section shifts the focus to the NPIC by assessing the global NGO boom with respect to its economic and conjunctural background. The third section examines the co-optative effects of the NPIC on NGO leaders and Third-World countries. In the conclusion, I discuss the importance of popular struggles for the transformation of the non-profit sector into a popular-democratic domain. I conclude by drawing attention to emerging alternatives to the NPIC in Latin America. This region has become a mainstay for the global anti-imperialist struggle with the rise of leftward social movements and centre-left governments since the 2000s (Gürcan 2013).

### **The metamorphosis of monopoly capitalism and restructuring of the triangular structure of imperialism**

The neo-liberalisation of the world economy under the US leadership represents a landmark in the history of modern imperialism. As portrayed by John Bellamy Foster, neo-liberalism corresponds to ‘the most recent manifestation of imperialism: capital (large corporations, both financial and non-financial) using governments, and especially the leadership of the US government, to make it easier to exploit the world’s resources and people’ (Foster and Magdoff 2009: 41). A defining feature of the neo-liberal era is the financialisation of the world capitalist system since the 1970s. For the specific purposes of this essay, it is sufficient to illustrate financialisation based on the growing total value of all traded shares in the US stock market exchange as a percentage of GDP. The World Bank data indicate that there has been a value growth of almost 100 per cent between 1988 and 2012:

The neo-liberal era has been marked by a general economic tendency toward stagnation as



**Figure 1** Stocks traded, total value (% of GDP)

Source: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/CM.MKT.TRAD.GD.ZS>

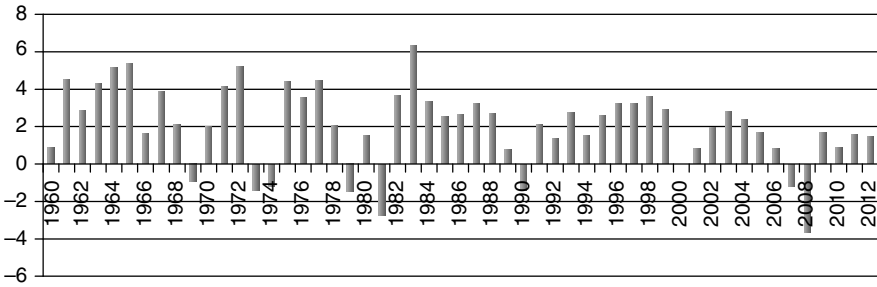
the economy functions below its productive potential, while suffering from significant levels of unemployment and inequality. The data suggest that the US economic growth (taken as GDP per capita growth) has tended to stagnate below 4 per cent in most of the period 1961–2012 (Figure 2), although corporate profits have seen record uptrends (Figure 3). This goes hand in hand with declining levels of industrial production (Figure 4), a rising share of long-term unemployment in total unemployment (Figures 5 and 6), and growing income inequality (Figure 7).

The neo-liberal transformation of the imperialist system has not altered the real essence of imperialism, which manifests itself in the growth of monopoly capitalism as the dominant form of capital. For the purposes of this chapter, monopoly capitalism can be defined as a capitalist system dominated by giant (i.e. highly bureaucratized, hierarchical, management-controlled and financially independent) corporations and strong imperialist states that further the interests of giant corporations (Sweezy and Baran 1968). Driven by the need to retain control over raw materials and labour, and to generate surplus-absorption opportunities in peripheral areas, monopoly capitalist imperialism is characterised by the further polarisation of the world economy into centre and periphery (Foster 2006).

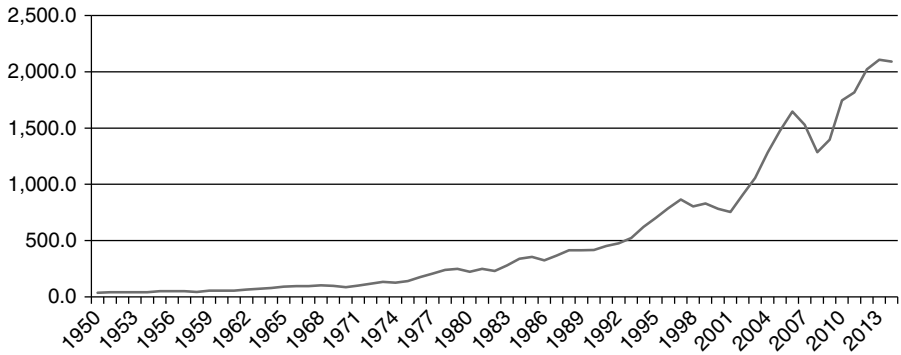
Data on the concentration ratio of US industries can provide a provisional depiction of monopoly capitalism and its inherent drive for monopolisation, albeit at the national level. Given that the US economy is the powerhouse of the global economy, one could assume a symmetry for the monopoly power of US-centred firms at both the national

and international levels. According to the US Census data, the four largest firms in national commercial banking and savings have monopolised 55.7 per cent and 41.1 per cent of the total sectorial revenue in their respective areas. The same rates for software publishing, motion picture and sound recording, newspaper and book publishing (nerve centres for the manufacturing of consent) are 38.9 per cent, 34.5 per cent, 29.4 per cent and 33.4 per cent. In the agri-food sector, a vital sector for the reproduction of labour power and continuation of the economy, the four largest companies have monopolised sectorial revenues as follows: animal food processing (43.9 per cent), grain and oilseed milling (54.2 per cent), flour milling (52.1 per cent), rice milling (55.4), starch and vegetable fats and oils manufacturing (69.3 per cent), fats and oils refining and blending (53.8 per cent), soybean processing (85.4 per cent), breakfast cereal manufacturing (85 per cent), and sugar manufacturing (51.9 per cent) (USEconomicCensus 2007).

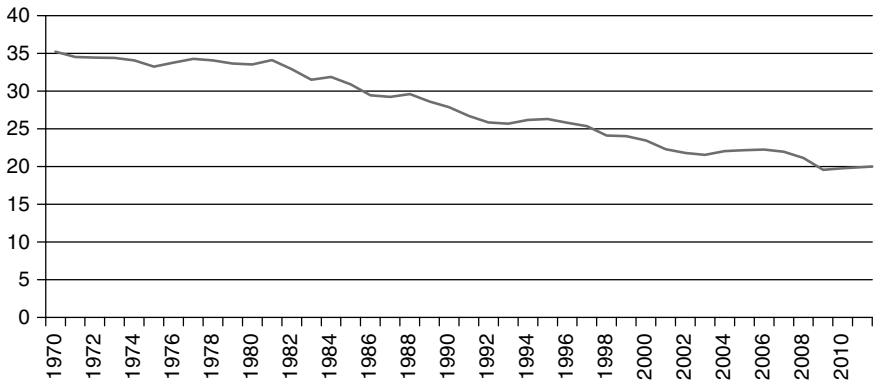
As the data on economic growth, inequality and unemployment demonstrate, significant levels of financialisation, monopolisation, and corporate profits could not provide a tangible solution to the stagnation problem of US capitalism. The stagnating state of monopoly capitalism is the underlying reason for imperialist aggression and the intensification of contradictions between US imperialism and the Third World. Relatedly, it is important to stress that imperialist aggression cannot be reduced to the individual policies of certain 'ambitious' states or the personality of policymakers. It is rather a systematic result of the logic of monopoly capitalism as a historical/structural formation (Foster 2006: 13).



**Figure 2** US GDP per capita growth (annual %)  
 Source: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD.ZG>

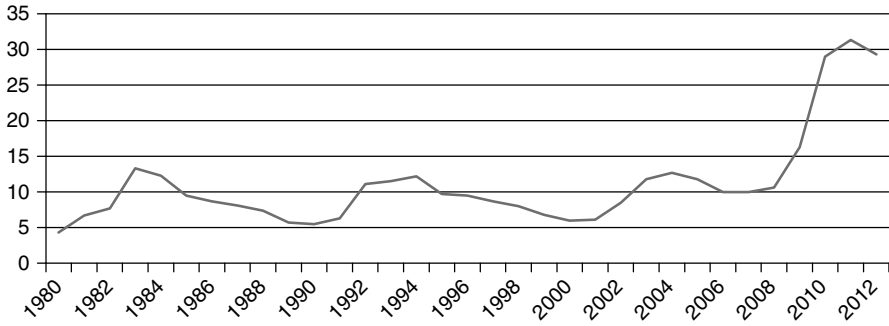


**Figure 3** US Corporate Profits (1950-2014, in USD Million)  
 Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis: <http://www.bea.gov/national/nipaweb/DownSS2.asp#XLS>



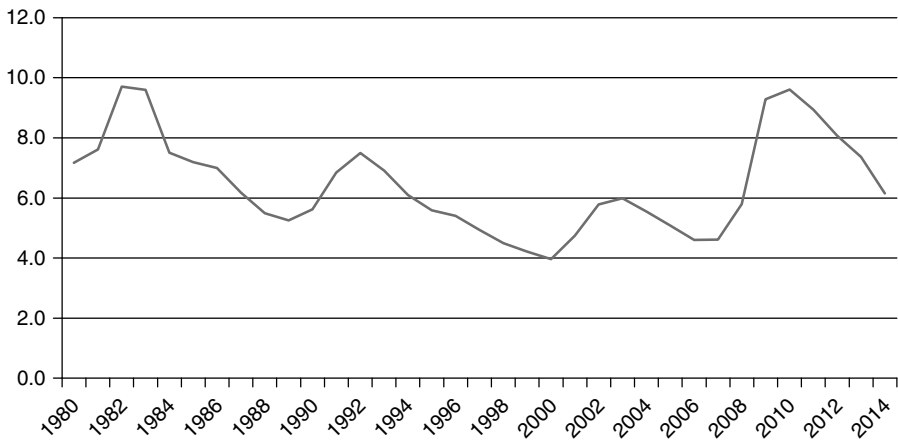
**Figure 4** Industry, value added (% of GDP)  
 Source: World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.TOTL.ZS>





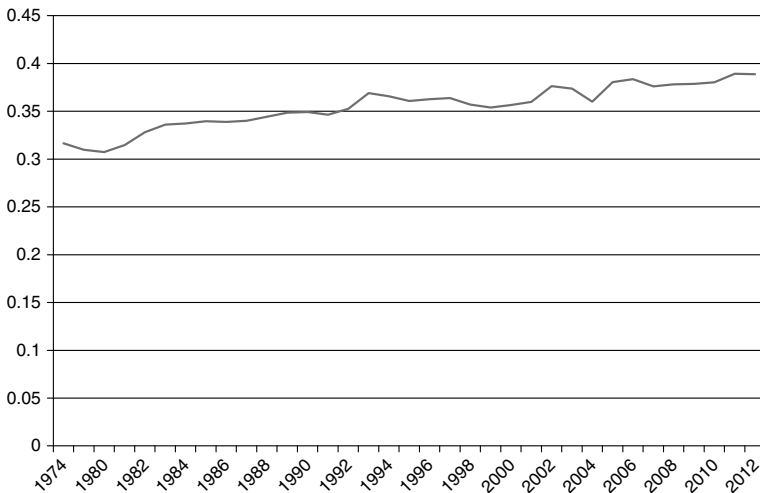
**Figure 5** US long-term unemployment (% of total unemployment)

Source: World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.LTRM.ZS>



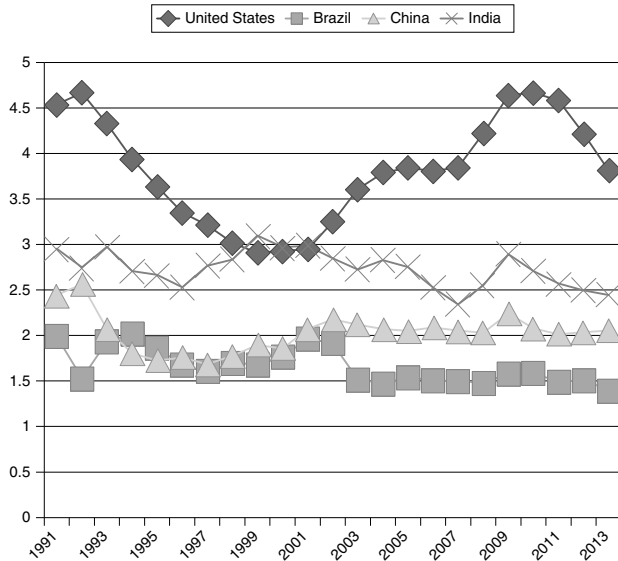
**Figure 6** US Unemployment Rate (% of Total Employment)

Source: Bureau of Labour Statistics <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet>



**Figure 7** US Gini Index (Increasing Inequality)

Source: OECD



**Figure 8** Military expenditure (% of GDP)

Source: World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS>

As mentioned earlier, the defining components of the historical structure of monopoly capitalism include the military- and media-industrial complexes. As far as the military-industrial complex is concerned, Foster points to the fact that the US remains the world leader in military spending (Foster 2008). The US leadership came to keep its leading position thanks to record levels of budgetary increase. Between 2001 and 2007, US national defence spending soared by 60 per cent in real dollar terms, reaching a level of \$553 billion (Foster 2008). It is thus no coincidence that the US Department of Defense has become the world's largest employer by providing work for 3.2 million people (BBC 2012). Figure 8 reveals that US military expenditure has tended to exceed that of the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) between 1991 and 2013. Clearly, high levels of military spending are a chief indicator of the extent to which military and industrial sectors are intertwined within the US state and economy (Foster 2008).

The imperialist tendency toward militarisation stimulates the decline of US global hegemony, which in turn further intensifies military escalation (Foster 2006). According to István Mészáros, the military aspects of today's imperialism are one of the most crucial components of monopoly capitalism.

Considering the current state of military technology:

'... We have entered the most dangerous phase of imperialism in all history. For what is at stake today is not the control of a particular part of the planet ... but the control of its totality by one hegemonic economic and military superpower, with all means – even the most extreme authoritarian and, if needed, violent military ones. This is what the ultimate rationality of globally developed capital requires ...' (Mészáros 2001:37)

As for the media-industrial complex, US corporate/imperialist media are among the primary beneficiaries of the US-led neo-liberal globalisation, as their revenues outside the US are soaring at a rapid pace and the US government itself is lending support to media monopolies in trade deals and intellectual property agreements (Foster 2006). According to the US Census data, the media, information and arts/entertainment industry provides employment for almost 5.5 million persons (USCensus 2007). The essential role of the media-industrial complex consists of the depoliticisation of the masses as well as the provision of ideological support for the

US war machine through all sorts of propaganda and disinformation (Foster 2006). As such, the media-industrial complex expresses itself most clearly in the extensive use of media during such imperialist wars of aggression as NATO's war against Yugoslavia in 1999 (Foerstel 2007). The imperialist media's role was not only revealed in the stigmatisation of the Serbs, but also in the legitimisation of the Wars on Iraq (1990 and 2003), known as the first widely televised wars in history. There is no need for further clarification as to the role of the media-industrial complex in manipulating public opinion on the so-called Arab Spring, Libya, and Syria. Indeed, the same goes for imperialist attempts to stigmatise the so-called 'rogue states' such as Venezuela, Cuba, and North Korea.

As Philips remarks, the US media industry is being increasingly centralised and monopolised by fewer than a dozen media corporations that dominate the worldwide flow of news. It is also striking to notice that the board members of the largest 11 media corporations in the US (a total of 155 people) are intertwined with the top echelons of monopoly-finance capital, the Central Intelligence Agency, and other key sectors of the state apparatus (Philips 2007: 59–60). As a result of monopolisation, entertainment and news services are being intertwined to multiply the profits of monopoly capitalists and expand the reach of imperialism. This is perfectly exemplified in the case of Time Warner Inc., one of the world's largest media conglomerates, whose reach includes television and film production, publishing, and cable channel services (Foerstel 2007: 10).

### **The non-profit industrial complex: The NGO boom and its origins**

The non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) complements the power of the US military and media in the quest for world domination. The NPIC is better conceptualised as a 'set of symbiotic relationships that link together political and financial technologies of state and owning-class proctorship and surveillance over public political discourse, including and especially emergent progressive and

leftist social movements, since the mid-1970s' (Rodríguez 2007: 21–22). Thanks to the active support of the US and monopoly capitalists themselves, the NPIC grew to be a vehicle for the disintegration of nation states in the Third World.

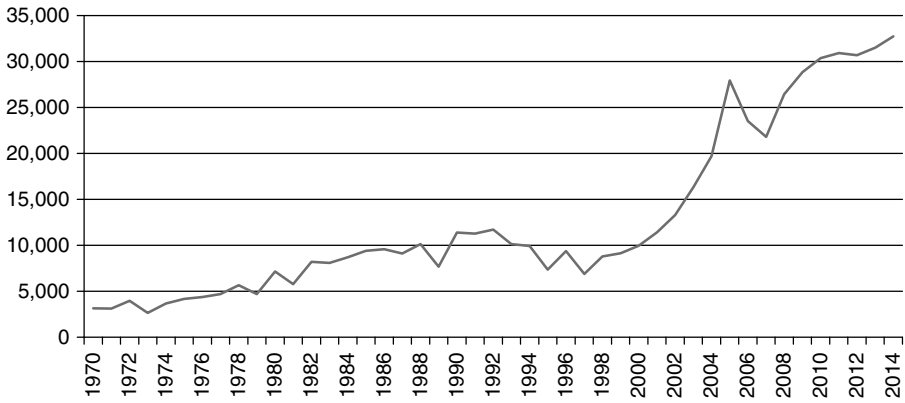
There are sufficient data to assess the NGO boom under neo-liberal globalisation. In OECD countries, the number of development NGOs rose from 1,600 to 2,500 between 1980 and 1990. A similar trend was observed in Canada, where the number of development NGOs climbed from 107 in 1980 to 240 in 1990 and to more than 500 in 2005. The Third World was not exempt from this trend. Bolivia registered a rise from 100 NGOs in 1980 to 530 NGOs in 1994. The NGO boom in Tanzania recorded a growth from 41 NGOs in 1990 to more than 10,000 by 2000. Similarly, Kenya witnessed a rise from 511 in 1996 to 2,511 in 2003. The worldwide reach of development NGOs during the 1980s was 100 million people, whilst this number grew to around 250 million in the 1990s and more than 600 million in 2007 (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 77–78). Indeed, external funding was crucial for the global NGO boom (Choudry and Kapoor 2013). Figure 9 illustrates the spectacular rise of official US funding to governments and civil society, a great number of which can be assumed to be proxies of US imperialism. In turn, Figure 10 provides more detailed data as to how the significantly growing US aid contributes to NGO-isation.

Therefore, Barry-Shaw and Jay rightfully argue that NGOs have become a major player in the neo-liberal 'development industry':

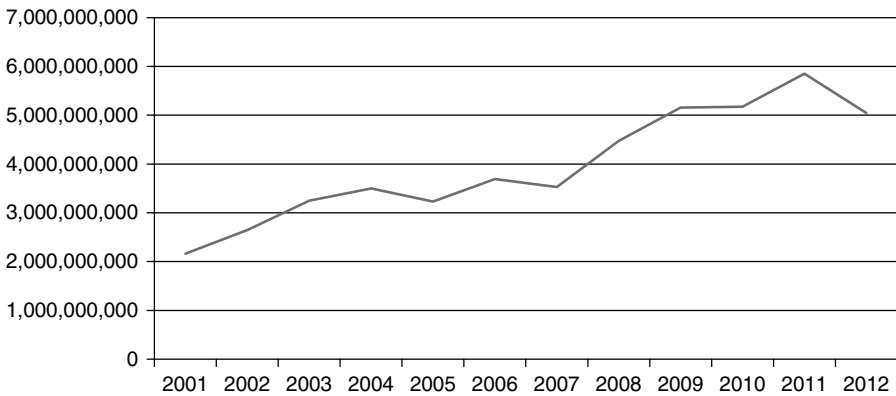
One study showed that by 2002 the NGO sector across 37 countries had an estimated operating expenditure of \$1.6 trillion. Other estimates are higher, with some studies showing an overall increase in the flow of funding through NGOs from 4,200 billion in 1970 to \$2.6 trillion in 1997... the seven largest NGOs had a combined income of \$2.5 billion in 1999. (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 16–17).

Other data reveal that the financial assets of NPICs exceeded \$1.59 trillion, whereas their expenditure was more than \$822 billion in 2000 (Kivel 2007:138).

The NGO boom did not merely originate from state support. On the contrary, the direct



**Figure 9** US Official Development Assistance Net Disbursements, in current USD million  
 Source: <http://stats.oecd.org/>



**Figure 10** US Disbursements to US, Non-US and International NGOs (in current US Dollars)  
 Source: <https://eads.usaid.gov/gbk/data/explore.cfm>

role of monopoly capitalism cannot be underestimated. Corporate foundations are thus an important element of the NPIC as the long arm of monopoly capitalism. It is noteworthy that the net worth of monopoly-capitalist foundations rose by 400 per cent between 1981 and 1996, to \$200 billion in total (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 24–25). As Christine E. Ahn asserts, ‘with few exceptions, foundation trustees are extensions of America’s banks, brokerage houses, law firms, universities and businesses’ (Ahn 2007: 66). Ahn also adds that NPIC resources are controlled by a narrow elite of corporate foundation boards and staff. They are mostly composed of white, middle-aged and upper-class individuals, who are prone to undermining the public

accountability of foundations. Ahn goes on to refer to research conducted in 1997 involving 12 prominent conservative foundations. The study reveals that these institutions ‘controlled over \$1.1 billion in assets and awarded \$300 million in grants from 1992 to 1994’ (Ahn 2007: 68). According to other research (carried out in 1995), ‘conservative multi-issue policy institutions such as the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the Free Congress Research and Education Foundation, the Cato Institute, and Citizens for a Sound Economy collectively had a revenue base of over \$77 million’ (Ahn 2007: 69–70). Ahn highlights the individual example of the Heritage Foundation, which received around \$28 million in grants from

numerous conservative foundations from 1999–2001. She points out the fact that liberal foundations (such as the Rockefeller, Ford, and Bill and Melinda Gates foundations) are no less innocent of advancing a monopoly-capitalist/imperialist agenda. The role of the Rockefeller Foundation in the capitalist Green Revolution against the spread of communism is exemplary of the ways in which liberal foundations also serve to advance monopoly-capitalist/imperialist interests (Ahn 2007: 70–72).

Three conjunctural factors can be identified to explain the historical emergence of the NPIC with active state and corporate support. A key factor that has led to the rise of the NPIC is the Reagan Administration's efforts to destabilise the former Soviet Union and East European socialist regimes. In his book, MacKinnon gives evidence of how George Soros financially supported Solidarność, a key actor which served to weaken the socialist regime in Poland. Similar support was provided for Charter 77, one of the leading actors of the Czechoslovakian Velvet Revolution in 1989. What is also worthy of mention is the efforts of the Soros Foundation to spend millions of dollars to publish non-Marxist textbooks and support Alexander Yakovlev.

Similar methods were also replicated in the overthrow of the Slobodan Milošević Government in Serbia, after which the Soros-funded Otpor! became a global model of mobilisation for pro-US regime change during the Colour Revolutions in the 2000s (MacKinnon 2007: 24–25, 42–45; Vukov 2013). As depicted in Tamara Vukov's interviews with Serbian NGO activists, Western NGO funding came with bags of cash rather than via legitimate bank transfers, with the sole condition of engaging in anti-Milosevic actions. The funding of those who wanted to diversify their actions toward larger issues (including human rights, education, the judiciary, etc.) was cut by the donors. Moreover, project-based funding served to divert the attention of Serbian NGOs from long-term to short-term strategies compatible with capitalist market adaptation (Vukov 2013).

An equally important actor in the development of the NPIC is the NED. The NED was created in 1982 as a non-profit and government-funded organisation aiming to counter the spread of communism in the world. Having started with a budget of \$18 million, it reached a budget of \$80 million in the 2000s.

The NED funds contributed to the strengthening of such organisations as the Andrei Sakharov Institute, the Center for Democracy, Charter 77 and Solidarność, which specialised in mobilising dissidents of socialist regimes. Similarly, the NED funds nowadays serve to support dissidents in 'rogue states' such as Venezuela and Cuba (MacKinnon 2007). The track record of the USAID is no less impressive. The WikiLeaks documents and many other credible sources have revealed how the USAID as a 'civilian foreign aid agency' transferred millions of dollars to Cuban and Venezuelan NGOs for pro-US regime change (Beeton 2014; Bigwood 2014; Mallett-Outtrim 2013).

Whereas the first factor leading to the NGO boom speaks to geopolitics, the second can be linked to the global political economic conjuncture characterised by the advance of neo-liberalism (Kamat 2013). Therefore, NGO-isation is greatly indebted to the support of US-dominated international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB). According to Barry-Shaw and Jay, these institutions see NGOs as 'ideal vehicles for tackling social costs' of the structural adjustment, which has led to worsened levels of poverty and unemployment. NGOs have become a preferred channel for the provision of welfare services that used to be assumed by the state. They are seen as superior to the public sector in terms of their alleged ability to provide more cost-effective and better targeted services, as opposed to inherently 'corrupted' and 'inefficient' state bureaucracies. This helps conceal the fact that a great number of Western-supported NGOs are nothing like 'value-driven' and 'bottom-up' organisations, but they rather rest on bureaucratic, hierarchical and professionally staffed agencies (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 23, 34–35, 40, 68–69). In this sense, the NGO boom can be viewed as an integral component of neo-liberal globalisation (Petras 1997).

A third factor is the need to pacify popular-democratic upheavals that arise out of a conjuncture marked by long-term stagnation, rising inequality, and imperialist aggression. Movements of popular-democratic potential have been a primary target of corporate and foundation funding, which aims to transform these movements into non-antagonistic and reformist agencies of social service (ibid.). The absorption of radical movements

is ensured through the establishment of patronage relationships between the state/private capital and social movements. The co-optation of radical movements is further consolidated via ideological repression and institutional subordination thanks to 'a bureaucratised management of fear that mitigates against the radical break with owning-class capital (read: foundation support) and hegemonic common sense (read: law and order)' (Rodríguez 2007: 31). Rodríguez states that the active involvement of monopoly capital (namely such actors as the Mellon, Ford, and Soros foundations) in the non-profit sector serves to assimilate 'political resistance projects into quasi-entrepreneurial, corporate-style ventures' (Rodríguez 2007: 27–28).

### **NPIC as a co-optative mechanism: Evidence from the Third World**

Militants of radical movements are either co-opted into the NPIC or replaced by new cadres. The co-optation of militants occurs with the professionalisation and depoliticisation of movement leadership (Choudry and Kapoor 2013):

The non-profit structure is predicated on a corporate structure and hierarchy that rewards 'bourgeois credentials' and 'upward mobility'; the non-profit model makes it easier for young economically privileged people just coming out of college to start a non-profit than to engage in long-term established movements; the mode is obsessed with institution-building rather than organizing; and it forces social injustice activists to become more accountable to funders rather than to our communities. (King and Osayande 2007: 83)

Nikolas Barry-Shaw and Dru Oja Jay point to the fact that the contemporary development discourse rests on a language of 'empowerment' and 'capacity building' through NGOs. However, in practice, most NGO programmes have ended up disempowering civil society groups insofar as they have been rendered more accountable to donors and less responsive to their constituencies. Whilst genuine social justice movements depend on gaining wider popular support to engage in an empowering practice, a great number of

NGOs prefer to depend on external donors. They do not necessarily feel the need to win the support and encourage the active participation of popular masses into their ranks (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 76–78).

The so-called 'empowering' capacity-building practices of mainstream NGOs prioritise the acquirement of 'skills and organizational set-up necessary to meet the punishing bureaucratic demands of the donors'. The aim is to create '(self-)disciplined clients of donor agencies' (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 81). Relatedly, the process of professionalisation of NGO cadres is further accelerated with a flurry of sectorial experts and the opening-up of business schools, the curricula of which are devoted to training high-profile 'managers' in the sector (Gillmore 2007: 45–47). The managerial profile of leaders mostly reflects a technocratic view of development, which reduces global issues such as poverty to a quantitative problem rather than viewing them as a product of unequal social relations. As such, development is considered to be a purely technical matter that is to be isolated from ideology and politics (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 7–8).

The co-optative structure of the NPIC also serves to replace social mobilisation with social service. Social service work has become a distinct employment sector that generates philanthropic relief at the expense of reproducing previously existing structures of inequality and injustice:

The existence of these jobs serves to convince people that tremendous inequalities of wealth are natural and inevitable. Institutionalizing soup kitchens leads people to expect that inevitably there will be people without enough to eat; establishing permanent homeless shelters leads people to think that it is normal for there not to be enough affordable housing. (Kivel 2007: 139–40)

Technocratic and social service-centred approaches to the problems of development turn movement leaders into social service workers who are entirely differentiated from their membership base. In turn, the NGO-led social service work is confined to satisfying the daily needs of atomised individuals or communities rather than addressing the root causes of exploitation and violence. Such a narrow focus leads civil society organisations

to become the defenders of the status quo (Kivel 2007).

A prime example of the absorption of radical movements by the NPIC is Palestine. According to Andrea Smith, the fact that the vast majority of Palestine NGOs adhere to a 'two-state solution' is not pure coincidence. Such adherence legitimises colonisation and occupation policies, while ensuring full control of Palestinian resources by the Israeli state. Many NGOs operating in Palestine avoid addressing the issue of occupation, and devote their attention to developing joint 'Israeli-Palestinian' projects. In terms of stressing the symbiotic existence of imperialism and the NPIC, it is worth noticing that 80 per cent of the Palestinian infrastructure is funded by international granting agencies that seek to impede anti-capitalist sentiments and establish free-market mechanisms integrated to the world economy (Smith 2007). Similarly, Barry-Shaw and Jay argue that the First Intifada, which erupted in 1987 as a non-violent popular uprising against the Israeli occupation, was led by a network of grass-roots committees and left-wing organisations (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012). The period following the First Intifada saw a far-reaching NGO boom which redirected Western development aid for the co-optation of radical anti-Israeli movements.

Western funding for Palestinian 'civil society' grew exponentially after 1993, and the number of Palestinian NGOs skyrocketed from 444 in 1992 to over 1,400 in 2005. Palestinian NGOs benefiting from the deluge of Western funding became some of 'the largest, and therefore the most significant' organisations in the Occupied Territories. By 2005, the NGO sector employed more than 20,000 people, and NGO service provision covered 60% of all health care services, 80% of all rehabilitation services, and almost 100% of all pre-school education. (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 92)

As such, the Second Intifada (which erupted in 2000) was led by Islamist groups left outside the NGO sector. NGO-ised organisations could not provide support to the Intifada movement for fear of losing their Western funding (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012).

The Palestine case is not an exception in the Third World. Haiti, as the poorest country

in the Americas, has been one of the biggest victims of neo-liberalism in the continent. The country qualifies as an 'NGO Republic' because it has the world's highest concentration of NGOs per capita, 'with over 900 foreign development NGOs and an estimated 10,000 NGOs overall operating in the small Caribbean nation of 8 million inhabitants' (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 43–44). What are the results of the NGOs presence? 'Nearly 80% of Haiti's basic services (healthcare, education, sanitation etc.) are provided by NGOs.' In 2005, over 74 per cent of all 'help wanted' advertisements were for jobs working for NGOs or other international organisations (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012).

In the case of India, key NGOs – which used to pretend to sympathise with anti-displacement movements such as the Lok Adhikar Manch (LAM) – have easily been co-opted by state and corporate actors because they fear being de-registered or blacklisted as 'anti-industrial NGOs'. The co-optation of NGOs resulted in the formation of a pro-displacement forum in favour of the mining industry. The LAM activists also complain about large NGOs that engage in corporate espionage. According to the activists, it is common for companies to hire NGOs to conduct surveys and interact with the local population in order to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of communities for co-optation purposes. Workshops and other educational activities are used to create favourable opinion regarding capitalist industrialisation, and local people are lured by material incentives such as free health check-ups, clothing, bikes, microcredit, etc. (Kapoor 2013).

Widely advertised as one of the World Bank and IMF's success stories in sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1980s, Ghana suffered from growing popular discontent under structural adjustment programmes. The figures show the extent to which neo-liberal policies eradicated public services: 'Enrolment rates fell and primary school dropout rates climbed to as high as 40%. In 1990, 80.5% of children reached fifth grade, but by 2000 the figure had fallen to 66.3% ... visits to clinics and hospitals fell by as much as 33%' (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 25–26). The Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment (PAMSCAD) was created in 1987 as a counter-action against growing popular unrest under neo-liberalism. PAMSCAD's social funds, which amounted to \$85.7 million, stimulated

a countrywide NGO boom. The NGO number increased from 17 in 1987 to 120 by the early 1990s, and to 400 by the second half of the 2000s. Whilst access to public services witnessed a considerable decline, the growth of regime-friendly NGOs started to fill the empty place left by the state, contributing to the silencing and co-optation of the popular opposition in Ghana (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012).

Prior to the 1990s, radical NGOs that fought for land reform were a critical element of Bangladeshi civil society. The transfer of millions of development dollars to NGO-led microcredit programmes helped pacify mobilisations for land reform: 'Today, virtually all of Bangladesh's 2,000 NGOs are "involved in microfinance in one way or another"' (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 108). The microcredit movement propagated the misguided conviction that rural poverty does not emanate from unequal distribution of wealth, but from inadequate access to the credit market and lack of individual responsibility and entrepreneurship. Thanks to massive external funding, NGOs have ultimately become one of the most popular job markets in the country (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012).

In the Philippines, the colonisation of civil society goes back to the 1980s and 1990s, during which international institutions transferred tens of millions of development dollars to create a neo-liberal non-profit sector. As a result, the Philippines today enjoys the presence of over 60,000 NGOs. A World Bank report dating from 2009 reveals that 75 per cent of its loans and 87 per cent of its country assistance strategies involve 'civil society engagement' (Africa 2013). Nowadays, 48 per cent of NGOs are believed to rely on foreign funding, whereas 12 per cent benefit from corporate funds as their core source of funding. Africa Sonny draws attention to how mainstream NGOs are partnered with the military's counter-insurgency programmes, particularly in conflict zones, with the aim of inhibiting genuine grass-roots initiatives and covering up human-rights violations. Rather than mobilise local communities against neo-liberal policies and structural inequalities, mainstream NGOs act as charity intermediaries for cash transfers that are provided by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (Africa 2013).

Finally, the Afghan case is a clear example of how NGO-isation ends up generating a new comprador class compatible with the interests of imperialism:

University educated Afghan people (less than 1% of the population has any university education) working for NGOs and other international agencies were one of the few social groups that strongly supported the occupation forces. While government civil servants were paid \$60 per month on average, Afghans working for NGOs earned an average of \$1,000 per month. (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012: 223)

Barry-Shaw and Jay assert that NGOs have assumed a key role in implementing the Karzai Government's development programmes, particularly the flagship rural programme called the National Solidarity Programme (NSP). It was created in 2003 with Western funds, and launched as a 'participatory grassroots initiative' (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012). An equally striking fact about the Afghani case is how the military uses NGOs as a strategic asset for counter-insurgency and intelligence. The Canadian counter-insurgency manual stresses the central role of NGOs in winning over hearts and minds. More strikingly, it was revealed that 90 per cent of the coalition forces' intelligence in Afghanistan came from aid organisations on the ground (Barry-Shaw and Jay 2012).

### **Conclusion: Popular alternatives to the NPIC**

Monopoly capitalism cannot extricate itself from the trap of stagnation, economic crisis, and inequality despite soaring profit and monopolisation levels. This situation forces US imperialism to increasingly rely on military aggression, media manipulation, and colonisation of the non-profit sector. Military aggression is used to control the world's resources and prevent the emergence of potential rivals at the expense of eroding US hegemony. However, the rise of potential rivals cannot be prevented, as witnessed in the case of the emerging economies of the BRIC. Faced with intensifying global competition, US imperialism feels greater need to disintegrate the nation states of the Third World. Meanwhile, media power alone cannot regenerate consent for a US-centred world order. This is where the crucial role of the NPIC comes in. The colonisation of the non-profit sector serves to pacify those who cannot be directly persuaded by the media, and disintegrates the nation states of the



Third World in the interests of monopoly capitalism. Similar to the media-industrial complex, the NPIC also provides political and ideological support to militaristic practices.

The cases from Third-World countries expose the imperialist drive to impose regime change, advance the neo-liberal agenda and pacify social unrest via the NPIC. Each of the three motives of the NPIC (geopolitics, global political economy, and co-optation) is also a leading factor in the historical emergence and consolidation of the NPIC. Whereas the Afghani and Philippine cases mainly reflect the geopolitical factors with regard to military-NGO co-operation, the Haitian case invokes the role of neo-liberalism in dismantling the welfare apparatus and turning Third-World countries into 'NGO republics'. The Bangladeshi, Indian, Ghanaian, and Palestine cases lend evidential support to the imperialist drive to co-opt radical movements with respect to land reform and social mobilisation.

Despite the strength of the global non-profit sector, the antidote for the decolonisation of the popular sector is already available. We have the guiding example of the global peasants' movement, which is highly instructive concerning the way civil society can be liberated from the yoke of the non-profit sector. La Vía Campesina is the world's largest global social movement, connecting more than 150 peasants' organisations in over 70 countries. This movement is known for its refusal of NGO-isation as well as its bottom-up decision-making model based on the principles of inclusion and consensus. According to La Vía Campesina, mainstream NGOs tend to manipulate and dominate the discussions on behalf of the peasants with their technocratic and top-down approach (Desmarais 2007).

What are the specifics of the alternative represented by La Vía Campesina? What clues can it provide about the peoples' liberation from the non-profit sector? A number of insightful pointers can be drawn from the case of the Movimiento Nacional Campesino Indígena (National Peasant and Indigenous Movement, MNCI), a member organisation of La Vía Campesina, with which I have worked during my fieldwork in 2014. The MNCI is Argentina's largest peasant movement with more than 20,000 member families. Rather than integrate itself in the NGO/charity sector, the MNCI prefers to organise

rural communities as a class organisation in a constant state of mobilisation. This is sustained by bottom-up decision-making processes, which start at the community level and spread to the provincial and national levels. No hierarchical leadership practices are encouraged, as the membership base relies on 'peasant militancy' rather than narrow and educated NGO cadres and 'activists'. The strength of the movement also emanates from strong class alliances that link different sectors of the Argentine working classes. While recognising the potential contributions of state-sponsored cash transfers and microcredit that are free of the World Bank's yoke, the MNCI struggles for a radical agrarian reform by relying on a broader alliance with the urban informal proletariat of shanty towns, particularly with the Confederación de Trabajadores de la Economía Popular (CTEP, Confederation of the Workers of the Popular Economy). Agrarian reform is seen as the only way to address the structural roots of inequality. In other words, unlike the NGO-model of charity for atomised communities, the MNCI relies on class action that not only unites peasant communities at the national and global levels, but also connects with the other subordinate segments of Argentine working classes in urban areas.

The MNCI movement is extremely cautious in establishing relationships with NGOs, other international institutions, and state actors. A few militants come from a social-service or university background, but most of them share the same living conditions as the rest of the militants with no privileged position. The movement insists on self-management and bottom-up decision making, although it benefits from the technical expertise and resources of a limited number of international organisations and state actors. Thanks to its emphasis on organisational autonomy, the MNCI has led countless land occupations and national-level protests, and come to establish its own officially recognised elementary schools and university with its own teaching staff and curriculum. The case of the MNCI alone demonstrates that working classes are capable of liberating themselves and bringing about social change by reversing the relations of power. Indeed, these achievements have been made possible without the 'prescriptions' of the World Bank and the 'professional help' of NGO technocrats. They lie rather in preventing externally funded

projects from becoming a core resource of organisation and in prioritising social mobilisation as a means to subordinate state power.

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## Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOS)

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are not a new phenomenon. Arguably, we can see their earlier incarnations in the humanitarian assistance and anti-slavery societies of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, for example. Indeed, some contemporary NGOs have their roots in 19th-century missionary and/or faith-based charitable and philanthropic work (De Waal 1997; Manji and O'Coill 2002). NGOs have been active in the United Nations (UN) from the time it was established in 1945, since when the term has gained general currency. Today, the task of defining an NGO must contend with different descriptions employed by the state or inter-governmental

institutions with which many of these organisations interact. The UN system defines an NGO as a legally constituted organisation created by natural or legal persons operating independently from any government. For the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the term 'NGO' 'encompasses any private or nonprofit organization that is formed or organized independently from a national or local government entity' (USAID, n.d.).

On the one hand, whether or not they are active within the circuitry of the UN or other intergovernmental bodies, NGOs can be said to be defined by what they are not. Yet, on the other, the accuracy of this definition can be challenged because so many of them (although not all) depend on government funding and/or compliance with official regulation or registration requirements set by state or inter-governmental agencies. Indeed, Sangeeta Kamat (2013: xi) reminds us that NGOs do not exist outside of the state, market or society, as some imply. She suggests that they represent 'one more institutional form through which class relations are being contested and reworked'.

The UN created institutional space for NGO participation in international policy forums such as those on population, human rights, the status of women, and the environment. Such participation, mainly of northern-based international organisations, increased throughout the 1970s and 1980s, further multiplying after the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio Summit), when many more NGOs sought accreditation and access to UN fora. Improved communication technologies and international travel – for those who could afford or access these – and a growing identification of common issues and problems which transcended national borders also contributed to the rise in international NGO activity. In 1995, then UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1995) said:

Non-governmental organizations fulfil an essential representational role in the contemporary world. Their participation in international organizations is, in a way, a guarantee of the political legitimacy of those organizations. Today, on all continents, non-governmental organizations continue to multiply .... I have had occasion to state on several occasions ... that

I hoped that non-governmental organizations would be given an increasingly important place within the United Nations itself. From the standpoint of global democratization, we need the participation of international public opinion and the mobilizing power of non-governmental organizations.

In 1997, the UN General Assembly began to debate the possibility of extending the participation of NGOs to include all areas of UN activity. To obtain UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) consultative status, NGOs must show that their activities are relevant to the work of ECOSOC, must have been in existence (officially registered) for at least two years, have a democratic decision-making mechanism; and the major portion of their funds should be derived from contributions from national affiliates, individual members, or other non-governmental components. The ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, comprising 19 UN member states, recommends general, special or roster status for NGOs on the basis of an applicant's mandate, governance and financials, among other criteria (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.). Current UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon claims that the three main areas where NGOs are needed are 'sustainable development', 'disarmament', and 'helping countries in transition' (UN Radio 2011). NGOs have been dominant in the proliferation of numerous national and international coalitions and campaigns in recent years around the environment, food sovereignty, human rights, women, humanitarian intervention, aid, development, health, education and health, among other concerns. Some have played major roles in lobbying for various inter-governmental negotiations and agreements on sustainable development, the regulation of hazardous wastes, the global ban on landmines and the elimination of slavery.

International financial institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the InterAmerican Development Bank and the African Development Bank have also increasingly involved NGOs (civil society organisations, CSOs) in financed development assistance. For the ADB, 'Civil society refers to groups distinct from the government and the private sector who operate around shared interests, purposes, and values. Civil society organizations (CSOs) encompass

a wide range of organizations, including nongovernment organizations (NGOs); community-based organizations (CBOs); and people's organizations, mass organizations, professional associations, labor unions, private research institutes and universities, foundations, and social movements' (Asian Development Bank, n.d.). CSOs are increasingly involved in World Bank-financed projects in such areas as AIDS prevention, environmental protection, education, and even in macro-economic reform. Active CSO involvement in World Bank operations has risen steadily over the past decade, from 21 per cent of the total number of projects in 1990 to 82 per cent in 2009 (World Bank, n.d.). Similarly according to the Asian Development Bank website (Asian Development Bank, n.d.), in 2010, 81 per cent of approved loans, grants, and related technical assistance and 37 per cent of stand-alone technical assistance approved included some form of CSO participation. In turn, and as with the UN, the policies of these institutions also set parameters for which kinds of organisations will be involved in their programmes, and the terms of dialogue or other forms of engagement with official processes.

### **'Civil Society', neo-liberalism and geopolitics**

NGOs are often complex and difficult to fit into compartmentalised analyses or typologies, although many have tried to do so. Histories and context matter. NGOs operate in so many contexts and roles that it is difficult to generalise about them. Fisher (1997) argues that there is a danger of over-essentialising them and a need to unpack micropolitics, complexities, and interconnections between local sites and larger contexts. However, critics urge that we must seriously examine commonly held assumptions that portray NGOs as inherently benign, neutral, and even apolitical actors; and to analyse the roles that they play. Radha D'Souza (2010: 249) holds that the ascendancy of NGOs is a key aspect of 'new market regimes that seek ways of replacing citizen-state relationships under state regulation with civil society-stakeholder relationships under market regulation. The UN Human Development Summit and the Copenhagen Declaration in 1995 forms a watershed moment for social movements in

that the neo-liberal transformation of international organisations initiated by “globalisation” and spearheaded by the World Trade Organisation targeted social movements for the regime changes’. Uncompromising in their critique of NGOs, Petras and Veltmeyer (2001: 138) view most NGOs as agents of imperialism.

Politically the NGOs fit into the new thinking of imperialist strategists. While the IMF [International Monetary Fund], World Bank and TNCs [transnational corporations] work with domestic elites at the top to pillage the economy, the NGOs engage in a complementary activity at the bottom, neutralizing and fragmenting the burgeoning discontent that results from the savaging of the economy.

Alongside their promotion by the UN, several factors account for the growth of aid and development NGOs, and their relationships with governments and the private sector over the past three decades. The 1990s saw the further spread of NGOs and ‘civil society’ organisations and rhetoric worldwide. Increasingly, governments, inter-governmental organisations and international financial institutions promoted the policy and practice of ‘strengthening civil society’ along with ‘good governance’ and decentralisation. The dominant notion of ‘civil society’ emphasises the rights of individuals to pursue their self-interest rather than collective rights, and upholds the interests of state and capital. It also facilitates what Kamat (2004) calls the privatisation of the notion of public interest. Wood (1995: 254–256) cautions the following:

‘Civil society’ has given private property and its possessors a command over people and their daily lives, a power enforced by the state but accountable to no one, which many an old tyrannical state would have envied. ... The rediscovery of liberalism in the revival of civil society thus has two sides. It is admirable in its intention of making the left more sensitive to civil liberties and the dangers of state oppression. But the cult of civil society also tends to reproduce the mystifications of liberalism, disguising the coercions of civil society and obscuring the ways in which the state oppression itself is rooted in the exploitative and coercive relations of civil society.

Given the role of NGOs as key ‘civil society’ actors, and indeed the conflation of the two concepts, Wood’s observation seems highly pertinent.

Fowler (2000) sees a number of factors which account for the growth of NGOs involved in Third-World development, and their increased relationships with governments and the private sector. He sees the rightward shift in northern politics during the Reagan-Thatcher era as key to ‘the start of the rise in official finance to, and number of NGOs that continues today’ (2). This was due to the move away from government to the market as the engine of growth and progress, and ‘meant more responsibility to citizens and their organizations’ (ibid.). Although funds used to flow primarily from northern governments or financial institutions to southern governments, Many NGOs have increasingly become channels for, and direct recipients of this ‘development assistance’ (Biel 2000; Hancock 1989; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; Wallace 2003). Priorities for official development assistance had shifted gears after the end of the Cold War. Increasingly, governments, inter-governmental organisations and international financial institutions promoted the policy and practice of ‘strengthening civil society’ along with ‘good governance’ (Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; 2005; Veltmeyer 2007). These are intrinsic pillars of neo-liberal policy, as Kamat (2004) and Petras and Veltmeyer (2005) argue. Northern government and private-sector funding agencies resourced NGOs as part of an economic and foreign-policy strategy to ‘democratize’ countries through ‘civil society’ (Mojab 2009; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; 2005; Veltmeyer 2007) in a unipolar world. With the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the broader focus on geopolitical and security concerns in economic and foreign policy since the attacks of 11 September 2001, came renewed explicit linkages gathering state actors, the private sector, and NGOs in the name of development, humanitarianism, peace, and security (Bebbington et al. 2008; Mojab 2009); what others have referenced as the militarisation of aid or humanitarian imperialism as development and security agendas cohere in the interests of global capitalist governance (Bricmont 2006; Duffield 2001). This entailed support for only a limited restructured state, free-market economic reforms, and an increased role

for NGOs and private-sector organisations in providing social services and local development initiatives. For Kamat (2004) and Petras and Veltmeyer (2005), the professionalisation of community-based NGOs and their depoliticisation works well for neo-liberal regimes. Indeed, for Petras and Veltmeyer, this serves to keep 'the existing power structure (*vis-à-vis* the distribution of society's resources) intact while promoting a degree (and a local form) of change and development' (20). Instead, these organisations merely seek to ameliorate some of the social or environmental impacts through community development and participation-based development projects (on NGOs in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, see Fernando 2011). With the rise of a range of international/community development, advocacy and other NGOs and the enlargement of NGO-political-space, forms of hegemonic NGO politics emerged, wherein the terms of social change amount to limited gains as opportunities might permit within existing structures (Choudry and Shragge 2012). While there are NGOs which openly contest the power of states and capital, these are a minority. For Kamat (2004: 171), rather than 'deepening the gains made on the basis of popular democratic struggles, NGOs are being re-inscribed in the current policy discourse in ways that strengthen liberalism and undermine democracy'.

In many cases, and by no means only in the international development sector, NGOs have grown to fill gaps in providing services and public goods instead of the public sector. In many countries they also provide job opportunities for former civil servants as the public sector is slashed (Burrowes et al. 2007; Petras and Veltmeyer, 2001).

Many NGOs are themselves sites of considerable internal struggle over politics, positioning, programme priorities – and power. They represent a multiplicity of agendas, functions, and organisational structures, and reflect a spectrum of histories, values, approaches to practice and ideologies. While the term 'NGO' is usually assumed to signify a non-profit organisation, some NGOs are little more than businesses (Hancock, 1989; Jordan and Maloney 1997; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; Reinsborough 2004) and/or corporate structures. Some are volunteer-driven, and/or emerge from popular movements and a claim to have a democratic structure. Others, as Gallin (2000: 27) notes, 'have a self-appointed

and co-opted leadership, are not accountable to any constituency other than public opinion and their funders, do not provide public financial information, and have no clear monitoring and evaluation procedures'. In different contexts, a range of NGO-related acronyms are used to further classify NGOs: business-interested NGOs (BINGOs), royal family NGOs/religious NGOs (RINGOs), government-sponsored NGOs (GONGOs), environmental NGOs (ENGOs), among others.

Some NGOs contract directly with the state to provide services, some receive state and private sector funding, while others rely on charitable donations. Writing about international aid NGOs, De Waal (1997: 66) believes that:

the expansion of internationalized humanitarianism in the 1980s and 1990s reflects a retreat from accountability, akin to the dominance of neoliberalism. This is no coincidence: the internationalization of social welfare is closely linked to the decline of state authority, which is central to the neo-liberal project. The humanitarian international may be the 'human face' of neo-liberalism, but it is a charitable face with little accountability.

He sees both neo-liberalism and international humanitarianism being used as justifications for foreign institutions to intrude into the domestic politics of Third-World countries. The imposition of neo-liberal policies is entirely consistent with downloading responsibility for service provision and development projects from the state onto NGOs and communities. For Kamat (2004) and Petras and Veltmeyer (2005), the professionalisation of community-based NGOs and their depoliticisation works well for neo-liberal regimes. Petras and Veltmeyer suggest that they keep 'the existing power structure (*vis-à-vis* the distribution of society's resources) intact while promoting a degree (and a local form) of change and development' (20).

Some NGOs have been set up by business lobby groups and industry think tanks and have been successful in gaining access to international policy forums through accreditation as NGOs or CSOs (Kamat 2004). Some supposedly community organisations, such as 'BINGOs', have been set up by corporations and public-relations consultants in an effort to counter opposition to corporate

power and shape public opinion and debate on environmental and social issues. As Beder (1997) notes, to cite one example of this trend, the 'Wise Use Movement' which emerged in the US, Canada and Australia in the 1980s and 1990s (which has campaigned against environmentalists, environmental regulation, and for guaranteed access for mining and forestry on public lands) portrayed itself as a 'poorly financed, grassroots movement' (51). But in the US it has been 'stage-managed' by a conservative foundation, the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise. Many of the groups within the Wise Use Movement have received substantial industry funding and support. In other cases, corporations sponsor or form 'partnerships' with existing NGOs in an attempt to improve their image. This phenomenon is well documented in Beder (1997), Dauvergne and LeBaron (2014), Lubbers (2002), and Rowell (1996). John Hilary (2013) notes the partnerships between a number of NGOs with big business and their active involvement in the 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) programmes of business: 'This collaborationalist turn on the part of NGOs – increasingly pronounced in recent years – has contributed to the closing down of critical space, as corporations have been able to point to their partnerships with "respectable" civil society (especially NGOs from the global North) as a means of marginalising more radical opposition to their operations and to the system as a whole' (147–148).

Some NGOs are essentially community-service or advocacy organisations with little focus on broader social, political, or economic issues, and no links to social movements. Others operate at a local and national level and combine policy analysis, lobbying, and mobilisation. 'Development' NGOs, largely but not solely based in the North, still focus mainly on poverty relief overseas, and are increasingly channels for government aid and development budgets. Some of these organisations maintain a very narrow, specialised, single-issue focus, others have a broader global and local perspective.

In sum, the category 'NGO' is itself open to manipulation and control by states and inter-governmental institutions either through legal means such as NGO registration laws or through funding relations which allow for surveillance and regulation of NGO activities. This includes the power to confer or revoke

charitable or tax-exempt status, and funding relationships which shape NGO policies and positions.

### NGOisation and NGOism?

US activist and author Patrick Reinsborough writes:

Just as service oriented NGOs have been tapped to fill the voids left by the state or the market, so have social change NGOs arisen to streamline the chaotic business of dissent. Let's call this trend NGOism, the belief – sometimes found among professional 'campaigners' – that social change is a highly specialized profession best left to experienced strategists, negotiators and policy wonks. NGOism is the conceit that intermediary organizations of paid staff, rather than communities, organizing themselves into movements, will be enough to save the world. (2004: 194)

The term 'NGOism' has become common among many in social movements and activist networks, especially those with commitments to decentralised, non-hierarchical modes of organising and mass-based peoples' movements with more radical platforms (Petras and Veltmeyer, 2001; Reinsborough, 2004). Many social movement activists also speak of the 'NGOisation' of movements and struggles – that is, their institutionalisation, professionalisation, depoliticisation, and demobilisation (Armstrong and Prashad 2005; Burrowes et al. 2007; Choudry and Kapoor, 2013; Kamat 2004; Smith 2007a). Kamat (2004) argues that this process is driven by the neo-liberal policy context in which NGOs operate. Organisations must demonstrate managerial and technical capabilities to administer, monitor, and account for project funding. While there are some NGOs which do serve people's movements struggling for more radical social change (see Africa, 2013 for examples from the Philippines), mass-based organisations of movements who represent their demands themselves through various forms of political mobilisation have often been in conflict with organisations which claim to represent the poor and marginalised, but in fact have no mass base or popular mandate (Faraclas 2001; McNally 2002; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; 2003; 2005; Veltmeyer 2007). When they are

neither internally democratic nor accountable to a mass base, how are NGO demands for greater democracy and transparency of states or inter-governmental institutions and their legitimacy to speak on behalf of 'the people' to be understood?

### **NGOs, policing dissent, and gatekeeping**

Petras and Veltmeyer (2001) see the vast majority of NGOs as serving to displace, destroy, or neutralise social movements fighting for economic and social injustice throughout the Third World. Elsewhere, they write that 'the forced professionalization of the community-based NGOs, and their subsequent depoliticization, represent two sides of the same development, producing a common set of effects: to keep the existing power structure (*vis-à-vis* the distribution of society's resources) intact while promoting a degree (and a local form) of change and development' (2005: 20). For these authors most NGOs are 'intellectual policemen who define "acceptable" research, distribute research funds and filter out topics and perspectives that project a class analysis and struggle perspective' (2001: 137). Some NGOs – especially aid and development agencies with funding relationships with partner organisations in the Third World, as well as some established research and advocacy NGOs in both North and South – position themselves as the gatekeepers between social movements and other organisations. That is, they act as intermediaries, and yet their roles and interests in doing so and the power inherent in acting in this way, are frequently opaque and rarely subject to critical examination (Burrowes et al. 2007; Choudry and Shragge 2012). Townsend and Townsend (2004: 281) note that gatekeeper NGOs 'command the discourse, can write the funding proposals ... and are "in the information loop"', often creating a sense of powerlessness for those on the outside. Northern NGOs and social movement activists may be unaware of – or unconcerned about – whether Southern organisations and their representatives have a genuine grass-roots base; or, rather, whether they represent a professional class of NGO representatives with access to international networks but no accountability to those they claim to serve.

In many NGO networks, there is much focus on development and development models which often obscure the capitalist relations which underpin them. Critics charge that these organisations often merely seek to ameliorate some of the social or environmental impacts through community development and participation-based development projects. With their praxis and principles usually rooted in liberal notions about society and the state, many NGOs have distanced themselves from, or stigmatised activists and movements that drew from Marxist traditions as doctrinaire, anachronistic ideologues, excluding them from their events (Petras 2002; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001). In some cases there is outright hostility and suspicion towards NGOs from mass movements, especially towards those which receive government and/or foreign funding. Further, some NGOs have been charged with, and exposed as complicit in, counter-insurgency and intelligence-gathering operations for domestic and foreign state powers (see, for example, Williams, 2011). Does the institutionalisation and bureaucratisation of organisational forms advance or inhibit movements for social change? Do NGOs open up political space or represent a new form of regulation and containment?

Discussing human rights advocacy NGOs, Richard Falk (1999: 98) argues that:

[t]he main human rights NGOs were very much outgrowths of Western liberal internationalism and looked mainly outward to identify abuses in Communist and Third World countries. In part, this reflected civilizational, as well as partisan and ideologized, orientations. It was expressed by a very selective emphasis by human rights organizations on the abuse of dissenters and political opposition or on the denial of Western-style political liberties .... In other words, human rights progress, while definitely subversive of statist pretensions in certain key respects, still remained generally compatible with the maintenance of existing geopolitical structures of authority and wealth in the world and, as such, exerted only a marginal influence.

Funding and other material support can orient NGOs to prioritise institutional survival and maintenance at the expense of mobilisation: NGO actions may be shaped by material incentives. This has implications



for the professionalisation of social change (Reinsborough 2004; Smith 2007b) and the spread of forms of marketisation, territorialism, and competition among NGOs. Petras and Veltmeyer (2001) see the vast majority of NGOs as serving to displace, destroy, or neutralise social movements fighting for economic and social injustice throughout the Third World. Williams (2010) suggests that NGO-led processes of human rights intervention are often inherently imperialist and colonial, as opposed to struggles which address the processes of imperialism and colonialism as explicit targets for political action. He contends that this is made evident in many NGOs' tolerance for and complicity with development/market violence in contexts of displacement and dispossession. Within the context of neo-liberal transformation, development and advocacy NGOs in particular come to contribute to managing and structuring dissent, channelling this into organisational structures and processes that do not threaten underlying power relations. Further, these organisations often act to absorb cuts in services and a reduced role for the state under neo-liberal restructuring and/or as a safety valve or lid on more militant opposition against such policies (Choudry and Shragge 2012).

Greenfield (2001), McNally (2002), and Petras and Veltmeyer (2001) suggest that most NGOs tend to operate in ways which accept capitalist globalisation rather than seeking to transform the system altogether. Instead, many of these organisations have focused on lobbying and trying to influence elites rather than movement building. In doing so, they have often become more driven by notions of polite reformism and self-interest in the maintenance of their organisation and funding relationships – and ultimately serve dominant political and economic interests (McNally 2002; Rojas 2007; Smith 2007a). In some cases, these organisations have become corporate entities in their own right (Blood, 2005), part of what Rojas (2007) and Smith (2007b) describe as 'the non-profit industrial complex' (Smith 2007b: 3), modelled after capitalist structures. While some NGOs maintain a focus almost solely on the international arena, and some look for new opportunities for political leverage at a supranational or transnational level, for many NGOs and social movements the state remains both a target and terrain of struggle (Goodman

2002; Keck and Sikkink 1998). Some NGOs co-operate closely with domestic governments at an international level, while others are diametrically opposed to such collaboration. Organisations that frame their demands in liberal social-democratic traditions tend to demand a humanised form of capitalism and a retooled state, although some view incremental gains and reforms as necessary steps in a longer-term transformation of society and social and economic relations.

Goodman (2002: xvii) raises important questions about the legitimacy of international NGOs, predominantly based in the North, becoming vehicles for 'people power' in this international space, and also questions their political leverage and institutional capacity to perform this task. He sees NGOs that operate at this level as broadly reformist, seeking greater institutional accountability and the formulation of goals that address popular priorities rather than elite interests. But this mode of operating is itself elitist and only open to a privileged few with access (albeit limited and contested) to either critique or advise agents of globalisation, and who are willing to operate within the parameters set by those institutions. The ability for these actors to pursue such a mode of action is frequently linked to their relationships with state governments in Northern countries, and the fact that their ideologies and political platforms do not reject the fundamental principles of these institutions.

Yet some NGOs were set up by, and have managed to remain attached and accountable to, people's movements for specific purposes (Burrowes et al. 2007; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001; 2005; Rojas 2007). However, these tend to be exceptions. Such organisations are often hybrid activist/social movement organisations which work at building social movements and community mobilisation, and are also constituted in a way to be recognised in an organisational form which allows them to seek support from philanthropic foundations, or state funding and tax-exempt status where these exist (Burrowes et al. 2007; Smith 2007b). For example, Burrowes et al. (2007: 231) note that Brazil's *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* MST; a landless rural workers' movement) has had strategic relationships with NGOs, many of which 'were started at the request of the movements, usually to provide specific skills or resources' but 'ultimately ... are not essential. If those

NGOs collapsed tomorrow, the movements would remain intact'.

Like Petras and Veltmeyer (2001), Fowler sees another factor in the emergence of NGOs as the creation of a safer space for intellectuals and others on the left during periods of heightened repression, often under authoritarian dictatorships. Meanwhile, sometimes funded by northern NGOs, private foundations, and government development-assistance programmes, some Third-World NGOs have been vehicles for relatively privileged intellectuals to research, or to conduct professionalised lobbying of, governments or international institutions, but have later reached out to social movements as their legitimacy and lack of a grass-roots base have been challenged, for example, in the context of the growth of the global justice movement.

Some NGOs with roots in popular progressive social movements become disconnected from them and institutionalised (Burrowes et al. 2007; Petras and Veltmeyer 2005). Kamat (2004) highlights a shift among community-based NGOs (sometimes referred to as community-based organisations or CBOs) in a number of Third-World contexts 'from broad-based political education and organization of the poor to providing social and economic inputs based on a technical assessment of capacities and needs of the community' (168). This resonates with critical perspectives on trends in community organising in the global North. For Piven and Cloward (1977: xi), for example, writing on poor people's movements in the US, '[o]rganizations endure, in short, by abandoning their oppositional politics'. They hold that the preoccupation with financial survival, and building and maintaining these organisations divert energy and resources away from organising and escalating popular protest movements, and indeed often blunts or curbs them. This trend can be seen at the local, national, and international levels, where many NGOs lose their capacity (assuming that they ever had one) to remain critical or to support popular education and mobilisation programmes. For Biel (2000: 298), NGOs as key actors in a liberal pluralist civil society are central to a 'new political economy of co-opted empowerment' which promotes fragmentation and inhibits 'the gathering-together of the forces of the poor'. Mathew (2005: 193) also notes the 'self-fragmenting' tendency of progressive movements in the US which comes with

the institutionalisation of the separation of communities at each and every level possible, resulting in a rise and proliferation of community-based organisations which each have their own interests (but not necessarily accountability back to the community that they claim to represent). Yet Rucht (1999: 220) notes that the 'shift from radical challenger groups to pragmatically oriented pressure organizations' can lead to a 're-radicalization at the fringes'. Thus, while changed structures and self-interest in organisational survival may often lead to changed, deradicalised ideologies, this process of institutionalisation can drive others to seek different, more contestational forms of politics and models for their movements. In this dynamic and in longer-term social movement struggles arguably lie the most compelling prospects for building intellectual spaces, counter-power, and action for systemic change that go beyond dominant NGO/'civil society' activities and politics.

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## Nuclear Imperialism

### Imperialism

The 21st century began with a profusion of ideas pertaining to empire and

imperialism. Provoked by a unilateralist expansion by the US in its launch of the War on Terror in 2002–03, supported by claims of being an unrivalled military superpower and the global hegemon, many scholars have found cause to reconsider the formations of the post-war world order since 1945. Of the myriad forms of empire – political centralisation under an emperor; colonial acquisition in empire building; monopoly capitalist formations; direct military intervention and basing; ideological and material domination and subjugation of one group, nation state or ideology by another – yet another form was to emerge through the development of nuclear weapons and energy technology in the post-war world system.

Unlike the sectioning of the world into colonial assets amid the inter-imperialist rivalries for geopolitical accumulation of capital and power in the 19th and 20th centuries, a new form of imperialism was forged through a Cold War conflict between two distinct spheres. The ensuing proxy and covert wars and bitter ideological conflict that enforced this division only gradually dispersed as one sphere was interpenetrated through an increasingly diversified network of private capital, industrial firms, nation states, financial and political institutions, and media outlets. From 1991, the globalised acceleration of production, circulation, and investment ran in parallel with a spreading chain of US military ('lily pad') bases and installations. In the 'new imperialism', these military platforms served to pave the way for transnational network operations to flourish, opening and penetrating new markets (Callinicos 2003; Forte 2010: 2–5; Harvey 2003; Johnson 2007).

Certainly, the US military and economic occupations of client states such as Japan, West Germany, Italy, and to an extent the UK, established the architecture of a US-designed Cold War alliance. Having secured the US dollar as the world currency reserve, the Bretton Woods international financial institutions instrumentalised a global capitalist order in which national economies, state leadership and ruling elites at 'the periphery' were penetrated and reorganised into trade and military zones conducive to US banks and transnational corporations at 'the centre'. Where this ideological, strategic, and structural reshaping of world order by the 'Western' empire under US leadership was as a prerequisite to

meet the challenge of the 'Eastern' communist bloc during the Cold War, the concerns for decolonisation and local relations between non-aligned states, and for poverty, famine, and disease in Third- and Fourth-World societies presented a more complicated reality.

The interstitial operation of US 'liberal' or 'capitalist imperialism' can be traced to at least the Spanish-American war of 1898. Its most recent reiteration has taken the form of Washington's National Security Council and the Project for a New American Century (PNAC) since the late 1990s. (Arrighi 1994; Harvey 2003: 26–30;). In this dynamic penetration of states by a combination of capital accumulation and military threat/protection, as it has been underpinned by an apparently immutable law of globalisation and decorated with exhortations to 'the good', 'freedom', 'liberty', 'justice', 'humanity', 'democracy', perceptions of an 'informal US empire' have been sustained (Panitch and Gindin 2004: 16–19).

There are significant design flaws in the idea of an advanced capitalist 'free' world under US leadership, however. Aside from orchestrated attacks on progressive secular nationalists through covert means and proxies in resource-rich regions of interest to the US since the 1950s, the long-term structural impact of profitability and over-accumulation produced crisis in the form of recessions, inflation, and monetary instability during the 1970s (peak oil) (Brenner, 1998). The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Iran's Islamic revolution, China's reform, and Israel's armistice with Egypt in 1979 reverberated at the very centre of imperial capital. The US responded by funding radical Islamists abroad and, together with the UK, targeted organised labour and national protectionism by introducing further privatisation and austerity measures both at home and in developing nations through the G7, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank in the late 1970s and early 1980s ('neoliberalism') (Freeman and Kagarlitsky 2004; Panitch and Gindin, 2004: 50).

With the unifying force of the Cold War partition no longer available by 1991, the expanded transnational economic and geopolitical space put previously allied states and corporations into conflict. NATO and the EU, backed by the neo-liberal Washington Consensus, sought to extend free-market capitalism into Eastern and Central Europe. Yet, as the US sought to control resource access and distribution, concentrate wealth

in US banks and corporations, and increase dependency on US military protection, with 737 US bases officially recognised in 63 countries as of 2005 and a likely total of roughly 1,000 bases, it became apparent that the US was experiencing 'imperial overreach' (Johnson 2007: 143; Kolko 1994).

Increased economic interdependence may have reduced the likelihood of a 20th-century-style world war, yet the 'post-war' era saw a proliferation of smaller wars, conflicts, and operations as well as famines and diseases. The legacy of direct, indirect, and pre-emptive US wars and operations since the 1950s is instability and unquantified destruction in specific regions. While serving to warn other nations who might plan to challenge the US economically or militarily, such (para)military activities have also secured greater control over surplus extraction and the distribution of 'global resources' upon which potential rivals depend (Harvey 2003: 19). This has been dubbed 'making it safe to do business' in foreign territories.

The unlimited unilateralism of the US posture in the 21st century can be seen as the fruit of the past two centuries of liberal rhetoric concerning spreading good in the world, combined with long-held American anxieties to contain an emergent power on the Eurasian landmass (Mackinder 1969: 89). Somewhat paradoxically, this imperialist architecture has matured when US domestic instability and economic vulnerability have become more acute. With Chinese and Japanese banks financing US fiscal and trade deficits, the EU and NATO, China, Russia, and Brazil and a suite of supranational corporations are diversifying their networks and establishing independent pacts and agreements (Arrighi 2005: 61–80). In the greater uncertainty of having neither communism nor jihadism to unify multiple actors in one order, transnational and corporate militarisation is increasingly inseparable from the global accumulation process.

## Nuclear

In the formation of the new imperialist order, it is instructive to consider the influence of nuclear technology. Coveted as a means by which to gain access to an ascendant transnational club, it is no surprise that the permanent members of the UN Security Council rapidly developed nuclear weapons

capabilities in the 1950s and 1960s. The geo-strategic and economic effect on the international hierarchy indicated the importance of nuclear technology.

The US was the first in the world to prepare and conduct an atomic weapon test. Codenamed Trinity, and held in the Alamogordo, New Mexico on 16 July 1945, this was as much a symbol to mark the changing order as it was a scientific test. With the Allied West–Soviet East divide having opened up as early as 1943, in June 1946 the US presented the Baruch plan to the United Nations (UNAEC) which launched the atomic age and its intrinsic dualism: 'between the quick and the dead', between 'world peace or world destruction', the 'new hope for salvation or slavery to fear'. The Soviets rejected this plan as disingenuous, as the US had cast itself as the sole supplier of nuclear material and technology to the UNAEC. On 1 July 1946 the Americans responded with Operation Crossroads, a series of hydrogen and atomic bomb tests on the Bikini atoll in the Marshall Islands. Eventually, the Soviet Union followed suit with its own successful atomic bomb test in 1949.

If the US could not be the sole possessor of atomic weapons, it would attempt to control and profit from extending a limited supply of nuclear technology to select states, thereby multiplying the threat to the socialist bloc. A nuclear trap had been set. To 'become nuclear', enormous investments were required to overcome technical engineering requirements. With the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) presiding over the nuclear resources, market devices and techno-political instruments, it was perceived that no nation could secure its independence without nuclear power (and protect against nuclear blackmail), becoming nuclear meant a long-term commitment to development, structural change, and maintenance. The insecurity of the Cold War increased, as having nuclear weapons implied having to use them (as Truman would say), which meant planning for nuclear war.

As part of his 'New Look' strategy, President Eisenhower launched his Atoms for Peace speech at the United Nations on 8 December 1953 to promote the peaceful use of nuclear power. Many nations were already actively sourcing uranium and nuclear resources. As most national elites were aware, nuclear power plants were inherently dual-use and could be used for both military and

energy production purposes. Much like the Baruch plan, Eisenhower's rhetoric separated commercial and military aspects so as to depoliticise nuclear power as a constructive, banal, and peaceful enterprise. The launch of the first US commercial nuclear reactor in July 1955 produced contracts with 37 nations and expressions of interest from 14 others. The US AEC quickly marketed an atomic-powered merchant ship and atomic aeroplane as well (Tanaka and Kuznick 2011).

The US aimed to compete with its communist rivals to supply nuclear technologies to Third-World nations that were seeking to protect their hard-won sovereignty and build their economies. Diffusing the operation of nuclear imperialism through neutral technological devices such as the UN International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA), mandated to promote the peaceful use of nuclear power (1957), assisted in recapturing these nascent states by controlling the flow of monopolised uranium processing and nuclear technologies.

Denied access to American nuclear technology, imperialist rivals such as the UK Atomic Energy Authority (1945) launched independent atomic programmes to maintain status and leverage in the post-war system. As a case of the centre exploiting the periphery, the British turned to Commonwealth countries like Australia for the raw uranium necessary for enrichment and bomb preparation in the UK, which would then be used at test sites in Australian territory. British corporations such as Cozinc Rio Tinto (CRA) subsequently claimed the majority share of uranium mining rights, in collaboration with North American, Canadian, and Australian corporations. Between 1952 and 1963, tests were held at Monte Bello Island (1952, x1), Emu Field (1953, x2), Maralinga (1956–57, x7), as well as on the Kiritibati and Malden Islands of Kiribati. Dubbed a 'triumph for British scientists and industry', the radioactive fallout was passed off as being 'almost negligible'.

In 1954, when Prince Philip 'left his mark in the South Australian desert' (opening the Maralinga testing range in an area traditionally owned by the Pitjantjantjara, Kokatha, and Tjarutja people and which contained sites dating back to the giant Emu), the British military scientists had already been granted permission to 'shoot anything they liked', as the minister for external affairs, Richard Casey, put it in 1953. Instead of receiving the nuclear

reactors, bombs, submarines, and satellites the Menzies Government had anticipated in return for fossicking, mining, infrastructural development, and technical assistance to the imperial alliance, Australians received 100,000km<sup>2</sup> of contaminated land. Ultimately, with the land permanently contaminated, the Maralinga and Pitjantjantjara peoples lost their lifeways which are inseparable from those particular lands and which have been passed down for generations.

In the mid-1950s, the United States Information Agency (USIA) distributed US AEC packages in countries like Australia which promoted nuclear power and isotopes as the magic elixir to reduce distances, improve crops, power cities, cure the sick, and provide industry jobs. It was further added that nuclear power would rejuvenate the 'lonely and silent outback' as a useful place that hummed with machinery. Philip Baxter (head of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission) imagined nuclear power and nuclear weapons as the way toward self-sufficiency, national security ('one man to hold off a hundred') in an uncertain Asian region, and to ascend to great power status (Reynolds 2000).

The poisonous nuclear rituals conducted in post-colonial peripheries bound national and supranational entities to the imperial centre. The client state was rewarded for consenting to the dominant modality as it facilitated greater penetration by the hegemonic power. Nuclear protocols magnified the historical relations between the internally colonised, settler colonial society, and imperial power. Just as Marshallese inhabitants of Bikini were misled and dispossessed of their ancestral home to become captive experimental subjects of the US government, indigenous Australians and Australian and British soldier-workers were neglected both prior to and after the tests and they and their progeny suffered from fatal and chronic effects from exposures to blast fallout and radioactive waste.

Another client state and one of the first to sign up to the American nuclear model was Japan. Often described as a Faustian bargain, with the aid of US agencies during the Occupation period and after (1945–52), the case for the peaceful uses of nuclear power exploited received ideas about the causes of Imperial Japan's humiliating defeat – energy scarcity and superior American technology.

Widely broadcast through national and local outlets including the *Asahi*, *Chugoku*, *Mainichi*, *Nihon Keizai* and *Yomiuri* newspapers (Takekawa 2012), for many, atomic energy was the 'third fire' which heralded a 'second industrial revolution'.

In order to transition Japan into a nuclear client, the US narrative of 'the Japanese' had to be reversed from fanatical and undivided devotees of Imperial Japan to model students of American democracy. Imbricated with Harry S. Truman's 'Campaign for Truth' offensive against communism in 1950, a precedent of collaborating with high officials in the Japanese wartime regime selected for their potential as intelligence assets (including former secret police, biological and nuclear weapons researchers, mafia leaders) was established to contain the influence of the USSR. Practised by the US Embassy, US Information Service (USIS) and CIA after 1952, individuals such as Shōriki Matsutaro became ideal collaborators in overcoming Japanese society's so-called 'nuclear allergy' and undermining the political left. Resuming his position as editor in chief of the *Yomiuri shinbun* after a stint at Sugamo prison as a suspected war criminal, Shōriki actively encouraged peaceful nuclear power as an apparently neutral opportunity for Japan to overcome its pariah status and renew itself as the techno-scientific-industrial powerhouse of Asia. His influence expanded when he founded the commercial station *Nippon Television* in 1953 (with Shibata Hidetoshi as director), which broadcast the first professional all-Japan baseball game. At the urging of a young Nakasone Yasuhiro recently returned from the US, a significant nuclear research and development budget was passed in 1953 and General Electric reactor blueprints for local manufacturing were acquired in 1954.

At this critical juncture, in March 1954, when the path was laid for a nuclear-powered future, 23 Japanese fishermen on the *Daigo Fukuryūmaru*, among other fishing vessels and fish caught from the area, were exposed to the 15 megaton 'Bravo shot' hydrogen bomb test as part of Operation Castle on Bikini atoll. By the time the ship returned to port in Japan, one fisherman had died and the others had advanced symptoms of acute radiation sickness. Petitions by citizens of Tokyo and local governments saw the collection of 32 million signatures nationwide and 600 million worldwide by August 1954. Stout

resistance from a nascent anti-nuclear movement led by the political left and trade unions converged in the first World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen bombs in Hiroshima in 1955.

The foundations for a 'plutonium economy' were already underway, however. Known as the '1955 system', in that year the LDP (*Jimintō*) was founded, the *Yomiuri* co-sponsored the *Atoms for Peace* exhibition in November, the US-Japan Atomic Energy Agreement was signed in December, and the Atomic Energy Basic Law was passed to found the Japanese Atomic Energy Commission (JAEC) in January 1956. Shōriki was appointed minister of atomic energy, chair of the JAEC, and head of the Science and Technology Agency. With Kishi Nobusuke, another rehabilitated war criminal, leading the LDP to victory in 1957, a pro-nuclear, pro-American conservative policy platform became the bedrock for extending and projecting US imperial policies throughout 'free Asia', in the name of containing communism. Seeing nuclear weapons as a way to stem the 'human sea' tactics of communist powers, Kishi stated that it was not unconstitutional to acquire tactical nuclear weapons in the defence of the nation and to (re)gain power in East Asia (Office of Intelligence Research 1957: 2). Along with the bad old days of the Japanese Empire, living memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were buried beneath the foundations of the new nation state.

When the world was alerted to the dangers of nuclear brinkmanship during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, the massive losses of human life from a nuclear exchange had already been factored-in by US and Soviet leaders and their strategic advisors. The decisions of US leaders were informed by reports from nuclear and strategic analysts, who argued that nuclear wars, even small tactical ones, could be won (Kahn 1960; Kissinger 1957). The US had already threatened the People's Republic of China with nuclear weapons numerous times during the Korean War, and had nuclear tipped TM-76 mace missiles stored on Okinawa for this purpose (Komine 2013; Mitchell 2012; Rabson 2013). In addition, the total number of nuclear weapons tests (ground/air, underground, underwater) and ventilations from nuclear power plants since 1945 had already dramatically raised background radiation levels in air, land, and oceans. When the US



and Soviet Union signed the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963, the environmental conditions of the planet had been permanently altered.

Nuclear energy and weapons capabilities mirrored the arms race between the US and USSR in the 1970s and 1980s. Based on the US 'nuclear umbrella', states like Japan calibrated their defence postures so as to balance non-nuclear weapons status with a potential to produce weapons-grade fuel, aeronautical delivery systems, and fuel for satellite systems. Multilateral and regional agreements to control nuclear proliferation, such as nuclear-free zones or UN-led initiatives, have often been ignored or obstructed by the US, which prefers bilateral agreements. For nation states with limited options for independence in the new imperialist system, nuclear weapons capabilities have proved to be a useful, if cavalier, bargaining tool to at least avoid total collapse and subjugation. As of 2014, however, undisputed military superiority has not deterred the US from committing to an expensive upgrade of its nuclear weapons capabilities to meet the 'threats' of China and Russia.

### Health and environmental effects

Long before the discovery of uranium fission, it was known that uranium mining produced pulmonary diseases. The regularity of such cases led to the establishment of the International Commission for Radiological Protection (ICRP). Dr Herman Müller's research on the mutagenic and generational effects of X-rays in 1928 (*Drosophila* fly) and physicians' reports on radium exposure, dust particles, and radon gases were made known in the early 1930s. From 1939, scientists employed on the Manhattan Project knew of the intergenerational health and reproductive risks posed by ingested uranium fission materials. Prior to the development of the atomic bomb, they researched the potential of fission products (strontium) for use in environmental weapons which could disperse the materials over enemy territory, and contaminate enemy food and water supplies (Conant et al. 1943; Hamilton 1942; Langley 2012).

Between the 1940s and 1960s, despite prior knowledge of the radiological warfare tests, the US AEC calculated the risk of fatality from cancer in proportion to the dose received. This was based on studies by the Atomic

Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC) on acute and short-lived external gamma exposure from a Hiroshima-type bomb within a 2km blast radius. Averaged for the 30-year-old male, any exposure below 100 mSv/year was considered negligible to human health. The ICRP adopted this model as the international standard for radiation exposure and safety standards. Disparities of gender, age, physiological variation, period of exposure, diet, or environmental specificity were occluded, as were non-cancer, non-genetic or non-fatal chronic illnesses (auto-immune disease, fertility impairment or birth defects, or toxic combination with other carcinogens).

This ICRP standard used to dispel public fear during intensive nuclear testing in the 1950s and 1960s masked the fact that ionising radiation particles had been introduced into all levels of life for eternity (on average 100,000 years). Having recognised that even small amounts of radiation can induce some mutations, especially in the reproductive cells, which can accumulate in successive generations (e.g. US National Academy of Sciences, 1956), conscientious scientists (such as Linus Pauling and Andrei Sakharov) and public intellectuals actively protested against nuclear testing. In 1963, Ernest Sternglass calculated that between 1951 and 1966, fallout from nuclear testing in the US alone had caused increased infant mortality (375,000 additional deaths) and 'countless fetal deaths'. He also found greater frequency of infant asphyxiation and respiratory distress in areas downwind of nuclear reactors. (Freeman 1982: 76–81; Sternglass 1969: 26–28).

In 1971, the ICRP set a universal occupational limit of 50mSv/y, which was revised down to 20mSv/y in 1990. Over the past 20 years, *in vitro* and *in vivo* studies confirm that uranium products, when ingested in micro-particles, can be genotoxic (damaging DNA), cytotoxic (damaging cells), and mutagenic (mutation inducing) to living beings (US ATSDR 2013).

The geostrategic and capital investment to obtain the most 'competitive' yellowcake by first world states and corporations has intensified the exploitation of vulnerable resource-rich states and peoples. In their precarious conditions, these states and communities have become dependent on the revenue generated from supplying uranium, labour, and sites for nuclear testing. They frequently argue that 'over stringent' safety measures

would bring mine closures, and that workers in need would forego the risk of radiation exposures and tolerate looser monitoring and conditions. While states and corporations have inserted barriers between them and the metropolitan regulator, the ICRP has accommodated their claims by adopting an ALARA clause (as low as reasonably acceptable). This serves to minimise financial loss through flexible radiation protection standards (whole body testing, ambient dosimetry, whole population averaging, no alpha-beta measurements, defective records, skewed data interpretation) (Hecht 2012: 207).

This process has also been evident in Japan, an advanced capitalist technocracy, in the nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant ongoing since 11 March 2011. The response from the state, corporations, media outlets, and regulators (WHO, UNSCEAR, IAEA) to an unprecedented scale of radiation releases demonstrates their entanglement within a 'global nuclear village'. While denying and trivialising the danger, and exploiting uncertainties about ionising radiation (Grover 2013), the Japanese government has selectively shared information on the reactors, delimited evacuation zones, set radiation safety levels, monitored food, water, soil, and air, altered diagnostic and medical registry practices, and curtailed media reporting. This has ensured plausible deniability, minimised understanding of risk, and blocked culpability for the inevitable health damage received by a portion of the population, in Japan and elsewhere.

The implications of the unlocated corium from Reactors 1, 2, and 3 and the evaporation of water from the spent fuel pool of Unit 4, are more serious than has been officially acknowledged. Given the stochastic rather than even dispersal of radioactive contaminants, rather than dispersing evenly, those who are most exposed are workers at nuclear-related sites, and those who reside in environmental distribution pathways. Those who were not provided with the requisite information by the government for protection from radiation exposure after 11 March, or who have not evacuated from contaminated areas (for economic reasons or otherwise), will more likely consume at a consistent rate food and water that is contaminated. Those who cannot afford to procure foods from elsewhere, who are ignorant of the need to do so, or who consume it where nations have agreed to accept

food products from contaminated areas as 'economic aid', are also likely to be harmed. Further, those from lower socio-economic strata who cannot afford health supplements or specialist medical care, or from nations which are denied access to expensive pharmaceuticals, are more exposed. In Japan, ordinary citizens in Tōhoku and Kantō areas are adopting methods of self-monitoring food, water, and radiation distribution in inhabited environs, dietary mineral supplements, and they selectively screen food products.

## Conclusion

Since 1945, for the first time in history, human beings have developed a clear capacity to destroy conditions conducive to the continuation of human life on the planet. Ascendant in the post-war world order, nuclear imperialism has facilitated the invasion, occupation, division, and dispossession of the affected lands they own and belong to, and the water, food, and air they require to sustain healthy lives. In even a limited exchange of nuclear weapons, organised human existence would be terminated (Helfland 2013). This could also occur over a longer period of time, through ingestion of on-going releases of 'low-level' radiation into the environment from uranium mines, uranium-related weapons use, nuclear reactors, and waste sites. As the effects of radiation on the unborn and very young are far more critical than on a mature adult, adults may pass on the effects of cellular damage through reproduction even if the harm they receive is ostensibly minimal. Through the intensification of cellular damage from accumulated and magnified radiation leading to infertility, humans could extinguish themselves.

The long latency periods from the bioaccumulation of radiotoxic materials have made it easier to conceal the effects from the past two centuries of mining, atomic tests, power plants and dumping. As nuclear technology is a pillar of the new imperialism, the global nuclear industry has steadily captured and funnelled enormous human, technical, and financial resources away from localised industries such as manufacturing and food and energy production, toward the centres of capital. With few incentives for rigorous monitoring and safety programmes at nuclear sites, particularly in poorer economies such as in Namibia or Congo but

also in the 'internal colonies' of wealthier economies such as Japan, the US, Canada, or Australia, the exposure and replacement of workers (casual, menial, itinerant, non-white, or indigenous) provides a bulwark to absorb the violence of capital accumulation. While disseminated confusion regarding health risks serves to blur causation between exposure and illness, a biopolitical regime shields the experts, bureaucrats, and business people from liability for industrial toxicity, at least in the short term. Invocations of stability in the form of economic and political stability and security have served to consolidate the transnational nuclear industry in the new imperialism.

As long as the entangled relations of nuclear imperialism continue to remain invisible, it is reasonable to assume that institutional dose-effect models will continue to reflect its interests. It is unlikely that analysts and advisors to political and corporate leaders will have accurately or judiciously calculated the costs in reproductive capacity and food sources in the biosphere.

Some of the most critical proponents of an anti-nuclear imperialism are those on 'reservations' who are exposed to nuclear and other industrial sites. As witnesses to the near-permanent destruction of their life-worlds, first-nation indigenous representatives have demanded recognition of their prior ownership of lands and restitution for any damage done. Seeking to de-centre the universality of capitalist values in which economic evaluation transforms the commons into resources, and men and women into commodified labour, these voices have maintained more direct forms of surplus distribution to sustain collective cultural and material autonomy and to re-include the non-negotiable 'rights of nature' in law (Gibson-Graham 2005: 5–16; Povinelli 1993). Given the alternative of permanent war, climate change, and extinction, other humans could do worse than to take their demands seriously.

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## Racism and Imperialism

Racism has a complex relationship with imperialism. On the one hand, the rise of empire during the course of the 19th century played an important role in its ideological evolution as Europeans made contact with people in Africa and Asia and came to the conclusion that they had not reached the same level of economic, social, cultural, and religious development because they formed part of inferior racial groups. This type of inequality is found in pre-modern empires such as the Ottoman, in which those of the

Muslim faith always remained top dogs in a religious hierarchy. Empires in the 20th century have practised the most extreme forms of racism, epitomised by the actions of the Nazis during the Second World War, who carried out a series of genocides against those whom they had constructed as racial inferiors (Mazower 2008). However, some empires have also displayed diversity and even equality. While Turks may have found themselves at the top of the religious tree in the Ottoman Empire, elements of diversity existed within the system which they had created since the late Middle Ages. The best example of an empire practising equality consists of the system constructed after the Russian revolutions of 1917 in the form of the Soviet Union. This gave rights based upon nationality to peoples over the vast areas which it controlled. Some of the worst acts of racism and ethnic intolerance have actually taken place when empires have come to an end and when concepts of nationalism have replaced those of diversity, as the examples of both the dying Ottoman and Soviet Empires demonstrate.

We therefore need to see empire as a system of control in which some elements of diversity may exist, but in which a perceived ethnic, racial, religious, or political trait means that a particular group remains at the top of the hierarchy. While some empires might recognise diversity, all also practise exclusivity. Some are clearly more inclusive than others. On the one hand we might identify the Soviet Union as the most egalitarian while, on the other, we can point to Nazi Europe during the Second World War as the most racist. In this way we need to understand empire as a system in which one ethnic group controls a series of others, often before the others have any sense of national or ethnic consciousness but in which this control helps to bring such consciousness into being.

The racism which imperial regimes practise manifests itself in a variety of ways. In the first place, we can identify ideology, which varies from the fairly inclusive USSR to the overtly exclusive Nazis. In between we can identify, for example, the British and Ottoman Empires. Ideology manifests itself in a variety of ways including decisions upon who holds power. In the Nazi, Ottoman and British cases, this depended upon possessing the correct racial, religious, or ethnic credentials; in the Soviet case, ideological soundness

played a determining role. Most empires carry out acts of persecution, often in the most extreme form of genocide. However, some of the worst cases of mass killing have taken place when nation states, with their exclusive nationalistic ideologies, have replaced more inclusive polyethnic entities.

### Ideology

Empire may not have invented racial ideology, but racism became an ideology in the age of empire in the decades leading up to the First World War. The fathers of racial ideology, such as Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau and Robert Knox, created racial hierarchies in the middle of the 19th century at a time when Europeans increasingly came into contact with peoples throughout the world whom they found unfamiliar and therefore rationalised the differences which they perceived precisely by establishing racial hierarchies (see e.g. Biddiss 1970; Lorimer 1978). However, while many European empires came into contact with people beyond Europe, others racialised those they found on their doorstep. The main focus of 19th-century British imperial racism may have consisted of the people it controlled in Africa, Asia, and the West Indies, but the subjected people of the colony on the British doorstep, Ireland, also found themselves constructed into a different race (Curtis 1971). Similarly, while the German Empire may have utilised the same racist ideology in the territories which it seized beyond Europe at the end of the 19th century, (Conrad, 2011) German racial ideologues also began to racialise the people whom it controlled in Poland, seized by Prussia during the course of the 18th century (Broszat 1972).

Racial ideology played a central role in the classic colonial empires which emerged during the course of the 19th century. However, the most overt example of racism and empire consists of the self-appointed Third Reich, which controlled most of Europe during the Second World War. The ideas upon which it operated essentially put into action the views of Nazi ideologues, especially Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. At the top of the racial hierarchy stood the German Aryans, who essentially had the role of controlling the territories that the Nazis had seized because of their imagined racial purity and superior intellectual ability. In order to make Nazi dreams come

true, the new masters of Eastern Europe had to utilise the power of the indigenous populations of the territories they conquered in the form of Slavs, whom they could work to death if necessary. In this new and perverted Garden of Eden, some groups would face expulsion (the unhealthy, the Roma and the Jews) because the racial ideology and hierarchy constructed by the Nazis meant that they should face extermination (for an introduction, see Burleigh and Wippermann 1991).

Other empires practised racism in less obvious ways. The Ottoman Empire controlled a variety of ethnic groups in the territories which it had conquered in the Balkans from the 14th–16th centuries. Some of these would certainly have had advanced concepts of their own religious and perhaps ethnic identity (at least in a pre-modern sense), including the Orthodox Serbs and Greeks. While the empire may have carried out acts of persecution when sweeping westwards, one of the reasons why these identities evolved into nationalism from the end of the 18th century was that the Ottomans recognised their existence through the millet system, which allowed different religious groups to continue functioning and practising their own faiths. This gave an element of multi-ethnicity to the Ottoman Empire, although this had its limits as Muslims remained at the top of the tree and multi-ethnicity only functioned as long as the controlling ideology did not come under threat. When it did come under threat, as the Empire began to collapse during the course of the 19th century, those who threatened the status quo would face the consequences (Quataert 2005).

One of the least racist empires was the USSR. While it does not always attract the label of empire, it operated in this way in many senses, being ultimately controlled from the central point of Moscow, and building on the foundations laid by its Tsarist predecessors who had expanded their domains from this point. While the decades leading up to the First World War had witnessed the implementation of a policy of Russification, which meant the suppression of a variety of ethnicities (Weeks 1996), the Soviet Union operated in a different way. In theory, no racism existed in the Soviet Union. Rather like the Ottoman Empire, the USSR tried to maintain control by recognising, perpetuating, and even creating ethnic difference (see e.g. Martin 2001), as long as it did not threaten the

status quo. However, once it did, as happened during the Second World War, those who questioned the system would, like nationalists in the late Ottoman Empire, face the consequences in the form of ethnic cleansing, especially in connection with perceived and real acts of treachery which followed the arrival of German armies during the Second World War.

### Imperialism and the practice of racism

The racial ideologies which form the basis of imperialism manifest themselves in a variety of ways, including the implementation of hierarchies and the practice of persecution. This is especially so when the established order expands or feels threatened by ideologies, above all modern nationalism, which threaten the status quo. Even in the case of the ethnically egalitarian USSR, the Empire carried out acts of persecution against those perceived as threatening it.

The millet system within the Ottoman Empire only functioned on the basis of the Muslims maintaining their position at the top of the tree, which manifested itself in a variety of ways by the end of the 18th century. While there was a certain equality in terms of the right to religious worship, clothing laws, for example, distinguished people according to social status and ethnicity. At the same time, while all law courts may have been equal, Muslim courts were more equal than the rest (Quataert 2005: 142–194).

As well as creating and perpetuating structures of ethnic exclusion, the Ottoman Empire also carried out acts of extreme persecution, especially during its rise and fall. The expansion of the Empire into the Balkans meant acts of extreme intolerance in the context of medieval warfare carried out against a series of groups which they conquered, including Greeks, Bosnians, and Bulgarians (Kinross 1977; Malcolm 1994: 43–50; Palmer 1992; Wheatcroft 1995: 1–22).

The rise of nationalism during the course of the 19th century fully revealed the nature of Ottoman intolerance as the patriarchal and dying entity came under threat from new and more dynamic belief systems which, by attempting to split away from the established Empire, appeared to threaten its very existence. While a variety of ethnic groupings faced the wrath of the Ottomans, those

which would experience some of the most extreme persecution included the Greeks, the Bulgarians, and the Armenians. The reaction towards the rise of Greek nationalism in many ways set the scene for what would occur over the next century. The revolt of the Greeks in the 1820s instantly resulted in their repression, which included the brutal hanging of the patriarch of Constantinople. Ultimately, this act of vengeance, like many of those which followed over the next century, would prove futile with the emergence of the first Greek state in the 1830s (Clogg 2002: 17–97). Similarly, the ‘Bulgarian Massacres’ of 1876 could not prevent the formation of ‘large Bulgaria’ (Crampton 1997; Jelavich 1983: 346–348). On the other hand, the late Ottoman Empire carried out its most extreme acts of persecution against the group, which did not ultimately emerge into a nation state until the end of the Soviet Empire in the form of the Armenians. They differed from most of those which would emerge into nationhood because of their location in core Anatolia, rather than the ultimately peripheral and dispensable Balkans. While the Armenian genocide, like the ‘population exchange’ between Greece and Turkey, happened at the end of empire, less extreme acts occurred against them before the final death throes of this entity in the First World War and its aftermath. For example, in 1894 3,000 Armenians were murdered in Sasun, while in the following September an Armenian demonstration in Constantinople led to the murder of thousands of Armenians. In August 1896, a further 20,000–30,000 may have been killed while another peak of late pre-War persecution occurred with the Adana Massacre of 1909 (Kevorkian 2011; Walker 1990: 136–242).

The British Empire overtly operated upon the principle of superiority of the white races. On the one hand, this manifested itself in the ideologies about conquered peoples which had emerged from the first imperial encounters of the 17th century and would become increasingly sophisticated during the 19th. At the same time, acts of extreme intolerance also occurred, especially against native Americans from the 17th century and indigenous Australians subsequently. Finally, as in the case of other empires, a hierarchy developed in which white Protestants held the upper hand in imperial administration, despite examples of local autonomy which emerged from the 19th century (see e.g.

Daunton and Halpern 1999; Evans 1988; Rich 1990; Schwarz 2011; Trautmann 1997).

The most extreme example of an empire which practised persecution was the Third Reich. Born in an expansionist war aimed at acquiring territory in Eastern Europe, the Nazi regime implemented the hierarchy which had emerged in German racist ideology since the early 19th century. At the top stood the Germans, comprising both invaders and the millions who had lived in Eastern Europe for centuries, either as a legacy of the collapsed Austro-Hungarian Empire, or as a result of migration which had taken place eastwards. They would now find themselves a privileged ruling elite. Below them stood a range of racial undesirables who would face the 20th century's worst acts of racism.

Nazi anti-Semitism meant the attempted elimination of all Jews on the European continent, initially through ghettoisation and consequent starvation; then though the actions of the mobile killing units (*Einsatzgruppen*), which carried out mass shootings and also utilised local anti-Semites throughout Eastern Europe; and, finally, by the use of the gas chambers concentrated in the Polish death camps. These formed part of a vast system of incarceration throughout Europe, which had initially emerged in the Nazi German homeland in the 1930s. In all, 5,933,900 out of 8,861,800 Jews in the countries occupied by the Nazis were murdered, meaning a death rate of 67 per cent (for an excellent outline, see Dawidowicz 1987).

The outbreak of the Second World War meant that the Nazis also decided upon a 'Final Solution' to the 'Gypsy Question'. As many as 500,000 Roma may have perished as a result of this decision. The fact that the Nazis were not as focused upon exterminating European Gypsies as they were upon eradicating the European Jews meant that the former had a higher survival rate despite the Nazis using similar methods of extermination. Following the invasion of Poland, they initially found themselves concentrated in the ghettos. In November 1941 they were gathered in the Łódź ghetto with a view to their extermination, subsequently being sent to the death camp at Chelmno. At Auschwitz, a separate sub-camp was created for Gypsies ('B II e'), where they were subjected to the experiments of Josef Mengele (see e.g. Lewy 2000).

While the Nazis implemented genocide against the Jews and Roma, the third major

group which they came across in Eastern Europe, in the form of the majority Slavic populations, also had their role to play in the new order. Building upon racial ideology which had emerged during the course of the 19th century and which had marginalised Eastern Europeans, they were now viewed as subhuman. Consequently, the invaders had no hesitation in killing either soldiers or civilians. The Soviet Union, as the homeland of both the supposedly racially inferior Slavs and communism, suffered particularly badly, resulting in the deaths of up to 20 million of its citizens and the destruction of around 1,700 towns and 70,000 villages. The invading Nazis commandeered agricultural produce, shot all communists, and brutally treated prisoners of war, meaning that about 3.3 million of the 5.7 million seized between June 1941 and May 1944 died, mostly due to starvation, although the SS may have executed about half a million (Förster 1989; Kumanev 1990; Mayer 1990: 259–275). The real role of the Slavic populations of Eastern Europe in the new Nazi order was as workers under the control of German masters. At the same time as utilising the labour power of the populations it came across on the ground, the regime also imported millions of Eastern Europeans to work in agriculture and in the armaments factories of mainland Germany (Herbert 1997).

A series of explanations presents itself for the level of persecution which the Nazis carried out. In the first place, the leader, the party, and much of the German population believed in a dynamic racial ideology which established and then implemented ethnic hierarchies. Just as importantly, the acts of genocide occurred in the age of Total War, when the killing of both soldiers and civilians became a central aspect of everyday life throughout the European continent.

While not quite on the same scale as the actions of the Nazis, the Soviet Empire also implemented acts of ethnic cleansing during the course of the Second World War against those regarded as having committed treachery. As we have seen, during the 1920s and 1930s this regime acted in some respects in a fairly egalitarian way in ethnic terms, even though it had murdered millions of people because of their social status.

Language policy provides an indication of egalitarianism, although it also indicates

contradictions. The Bolsheviks believed in the equality of all languages and opposed the dominance of Russian. By the middle of the 1930s, native language schools had therefore opened in all regions of the country and textbooks were printed in 104 different languages. However, at the same time as native languages were extended, so was Russification, a process actively pursued from the late 1930s and continued after the Second World War. After 1945, the Soviet state pursued a policy of bilingualism, with an emphasis on Russian. Soviet language planning therefore had two clear but inevitable and contradictory results. On the one hand, minority languages survived and thrived in many cases, despite the disappearance of some. On the other hand, use of Russian clearly expanded. According to the census of 1970, the Soviet Union had 130 ethnic groupings which spoke 130 different languages (for an introduction to Soviet language policy, see e.g. Anderson and Silver 1992; Bilinsky 1968; Comrie 1981; Lewis 1972).

While nationality policy may have demonstrated elements of ethnic tolerance, religious policy did not, as the example of the fate of Muslims in the Soviet Union demonstrates. Islam experienced extreme repression during the early days of Stalin in the late 1920s and early 1930s, which meant the arrest and deportation of nearly all religious functionaries, the closure of virtually all of the 25,000 mosques which had existed in 1917 as well as Muslim schools, and the threat of dismissal of Soviet officials practising their religion. Some revival took place during the Second World War, although further repression followed under Khrushchev (see e.g. Bennigsen and Wimbush 1985; Pipes 1955).

One Muslim group, the Crimean Tatars, would face even more extreme persecution during the Second World War as a result of their perceived connection with the enemy. During the 1930s, a process of Sovietisation meant an attempt at assimilation and consequent alienation of the Crimean Tatars. During the Second World War, some fought on the side of the Nazis and, while others played a part in the Red Army, Stalin's vengeance was total. Immediately after the expulsion of the Nazis in the spring of 1944, all Tatars who had served in the German armed forces were executed. The rest of the population faced deportation to the Urals, Siberia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia, mostly

Uzbekistan. Of the 110,000 people deported, about 46 per cent died in an action tantamount to genocide (Nekrich 1978).

The Soviet Germans suffered a similar fate because of their perceived connection with the Nazis. This complex ethnic group had resided throughout Russia for several centuries. In the early Soviet Union they had actually done quite well, as indicated by the establishment of the Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic of the Volga Germans in January 1924. During the Second World War, as a result of accusations of acting as an internal front for the invading Nazi armies, the Soviets dissolved the Volga Republic and deported its German populations out of European Russia and into Siberia and Central Asia, a process which took several years. As a consequence of the expulsion of the Germans from European Russia, the numbers of Germans in the Soviet Union decreased because of movement out of the Soviet Union, either into Germany, or, in a few thousand cases, beyond the European continent (Pinkus 1986).

### Imperial collapse

Some of the worst imperial persecution of ethnic groups has occurred when empires collapse, being committed either by the regimes themselves or by those which succeed them as, in both cases, a move occurs away from any semblance of multiethnicity or diversity towards monoethnic nationalism. This has happened especially during the course of the 20th century, as seen in the fall of the Ottoman and British Empires.

The end of the Ottoman Empire provides one of the best examples of such processes in action. As we have seen, the Turks became increasingly intolerant as they lost territory during the course of the 19th century. However, at the same time as they persecuted those they regarded as treacherous, Muslim populations which remained in territories lost by the Empire became victims of some of the earliest acts of what would become known as ethnic cleansing during the course of the 20th century (McCarthy 1996). The worst intolerance occurred in the era of the First World War, beginning with the Balkan Wars of 1912–13 and ending with the 'population exchange' between Greece and Turkey during 1922–23. These events occurred against the background of the death of the multiethnic



Ottoman Empire, replaced by excluding nation states such as Greece and Bulgaria, which tried to eliminate their Muslim and other 'enemy' populations by deportation. At the same time, within Turkey itself, the Ottoman ideology, which had accepted diversity upon its own terms, now found itself controlled by a more dynamic and exclusionist Turkish nationalism which undertook the same acts of ethnic cleansing (but on a much larger and more ruthless scale) as those states which replaced it in the Balkans. As during the Second World War, the unravelling of the Ottoman Empire and its consequences for minorities took place against the background of Total War, when killing of soldiers and civilians became part of everyday life.

As a result of the Balkan Wars of 1912–13 involving Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Serbia, populations with the wrong ethnic credentials found themselves living in areas controlled by governments with which they had no ethnic affiliation. The area acquired by Greece to the north of its existing territories included a minority of Greeks, with a larger percentage of Bulgarians and Turks, some of whom faced expulsion (Dakin 1972: 190–200).

The worst act of intolerance occurred during the First World War, in what has become known as the Armenian Genocide. Under threat from the Turkish authorities, it is estimated that between 1.5 million and 2 million people fled their homes in south-eastern Anatolia towards the Syrian desert, of whom about half died, while others fled westward as refugees (Melson 1992: 145–146). These events took place not only against the background of war and rising nationalism, but were rooted in the resentments which had characterised relations between Turks and Armenians over the preceding century. The spark for the genocide came from the idea that Armenians had fought with the Russians against the Ottoman Empire, which faced defeat at the Battle of Sarikamiş in January 1915. At the same time, the Armenians differed from many of the national groups that lived in the Balkans because of their location in the heart of Anatolia. Ultimately, during the Ottoman Empire's collapse, its Balkan, Middle Eastern, and North African territories became dispensable as the newly emerging Turkish nationalists became determined to hold on to Asia Minor.

For this reason over a million Greeks, whose ancestors had lived on the Aegean

coast of Turkey around Smyrna for millennia, found themselves deported to Greece in 'exchange' for several hundred thousand Muslims from Greece following the Greco-Turkish War of 1921–22 (Hirschon 2003). The new slimmed-down Turkey felt that it needed to eliminate all surplus populations with the wrong ethnic credentials, especially those perceived as having connections with internal and external enemies.

Other empires have also declined in similarly, if not equally, bloody circumstances. While Britain may ultimately have surrendered most of its possessions in a relatively peaceful way, reactions to rising nationalism often proved hostile. In India, we can point to examples such as the suppression of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 or the Amritsar Massacre in 1921 (see e.g. Collett 2005; David 2002). However, the worst acts of genocide in the case of British imperial decline occurred in the immediate aftermath of the retreat from India, as the newly emerged and dynamic nationalisms of India and Pakistan, mirroring similar nationalisms which had developed in the Balkans, ethnically cleansed themselves of over 10 million of their perceived Muslim and Hindu enemies (Talbot and Singh 2009).

At the same time as this 'population displacement' occurred, so did the ethnic cleansing of Germans from Eastern Europe, as the short-lived Nazi Empire collapsed. As many as 13 million Germans may have fled westwards towards rump Germany between 1944 and 1947. These included people who simply escaped the advancing Soviet armies. However, much of the migration occurred as a result of the movement westward of the Soviet border. In turn, the Polish border also moved further to the west, leading to an ethnic cleansing of German parts of Poland. Those nation states invaded by, but now liberated from, the Nazis (including Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania) also expelled their ethnic German populations, which had lived in these nation states before they had emerged as such entities in the fall-out from the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918 (see e.g. Bethlehem 1982; de Zayas 1993).

## Conclusion

Racism therefore characterises empires not only during their existence but also their

aftermath. All of these entities produce some sort of racial and ethnic hierarchies, implemented in varying ways. At the most extreme, we can point to the genocidal Nazis, who had no pretence of equality of peoples in their imperial entity, but instead wished to create the racial hierarchies which had emerged in German right-wing thought over more than a century. At the other extreme we might point to the ethnically egalitarian Soviet Union, which, however, could carry out acts of persecution against those perceived as treacherous, illustrated by the fate of Germans and Tatars during the Second World War. At the same time, those who held on too strongly to their religiously based ethnic identity could also face persecution. In between the Soviets and the Nazis, we can identify empires such as the British and Ottoman ones, where a type of de facto ethnic diversity existed, but in which white Britons and Muslims remained top dogs. Those who threatened this hierarchy faced persecution.

However, some of the worst examples of ethnic and racial persecution have occurred as empires have declined and collapsed. On the one hand, the imperial powers have reacted badly to a change in the status quo in the systems they have established, as the example of the Ottomans in the 19th century illustrates. Yet the final unravelling of empire reveals new forms of intolerance, as the old order collapses. New nationalisms reject any concepts of diversity which may have existed, as they wish to create new ethnically pure entities.

Panikos Panayi

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## Refugees and Empire

### The refugee and institutional order

Contemporary theorisations of imperialism and empire, in their disparate analytical approaches and political inclinations, share a particular concern with the figure of the refugee. This is not surprising, as histories of empires and refugeeing are inextricably linked to each other. Emerging in its modern form at the beginning of the 20th century from the ashes of European empires, the modern refugee institution has functioned since then as a discursive and material cog for the assertion and upholding of key principles and practices in the international sphere, and of the hierarchies associated to them. The refugee is and has always been deeply implicated with the disruption, establishment and consolidation of international politico-institutional orders.

'Refugee' is the Anglicised version of the French term *réfugié*, a term that had been used in France since the high medieval period to denote people fleeing religious persecution. The term derives from the Latin *figere* (to flee)

and the prefix *re* (back to, return), referring to a person fleeing back to safety (Soguk 1999). The connotation of the refugee as a person who simultaneously escapes and returns, to safety in this case, is crucial for understanding the liminal character of the refugee institution as a figure in between politico-institutional orders, simultaneously an evidence of failure and a confirmation for such orders. Indeed, while in those days safety was primarily defined in terms of refugees' escape – the *fugere* – its contemporary usage is premised on refugees' *re*-turn to the 'protective' embrace of the inter-state system.

The most widely recognised definition of who is a refugee was delineated in the wake of the Second World War, and is contained in Article 1A(2) of the 1951 United Nations (UN) Convention on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons. The Convention establishes that a refugee is a person who can be determined to have a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or membership of a particular social group or political opinion; who is outside the country of his nationality; and who is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (UNHCR 2005). This definition evidences the nature of the refugee as an element of both confirmation and disruption of politico-institutional orders. On one side, the definition asserts and universalises state-centred interpretations of social life. A person is a refugee as a result of his or her escape from state persecution; a person can become a refugee only through the recognition of his or her claims by state authority. On the other side, the definition enables forms of inter- and transnational governance. Its normative content legitimises, in fact in many cases demands, the operations of inter-governmental bodies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and transnational and local non-state organisations; it generates global humanitarian discourses, regional programmes, and sector-wide 'best practices' for the protection and assistance of refugees; it engenders activities, propositions, critiques, and manipulations (Novak 2013).

The refugee has always been implicated in practices of state making and intergovernmental regimentation: refugee migrations are the product of crises or at least of profound changes in forms of government, while at

the same time producing new forms of government (Soguk 1999). The refugee is a limit concept (Nyers 1999), a person inhabiting a liminal space (Malkki 1995) within accepted forms of institutional order.

The liminality of the refugee thus conceived makes it crucial to contemporary theorisations of empire and imperialism. The latter find a confirmation of their analytical propositions, by focusing alternatively on the *exceptional* character of the refugee, on its constitutive *force*, or on the *material forces* that shape and sustain refugee-related operations (Novak 2011 makes a similar categorisation).

### The refugee exception

The author who more forcefully explores the institutional liminality of the refugee is Giorgio Agamben. Agamben's work is premised on Carl Schmitt's formulation that the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the law. The simultaneity of this condition is what constitutes the paradox of sovereignty: the sovereign, possessing the legal power to suspend the law, puts himself or herself legally outside the law (Agamben 1995). Such a zone of indistinction between public law and political fact represents sovereignty's limit, understood as both its beginning and end: it represents the foundational moment of sovereign power; it includes through exclusion. This understanding of sovereign power is associated to the figure of the *homo sacer*, a condition or form of life described as bare, that is, naked or depoliticised. Excluded from both divine and juridical law, *homo sacer* similarly exists in a no man's land, at the threshold between the spaces of law (Mitchell 2006). *Homo sacer* is the excess of the process of sovereign political foundation: he is excluded from the normal limits of the state, yet as the limit upon which sovereign power is founded, he is also simultaneously an integral part of it (Kumar Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2004).

The figure of *homo sacer* is, and has been, readily associated with that of the refugee. As the embodiment of citizenship and statehood boundaries, in fact, the refugee reifies such boundaries, rendering their meaning concrete. As a residual (excremental, as Agamben would put it) subject who can be encompassed neither territorially nor in relation to the nation, however, the refugee

simultaneously challenges that norm. The UN Convention definition above and more broadly refugee law re-encompass within the inter-state system what escapes from the trinity 'nation–state–territory', thus defusing such challenge. The refugee represents the 'exception' on which the norm relies.

It is the exposure of the political act hidden in the refugee definition – that of considering human life exclusively in relation to sovereignty and citizenship – which makes the refugee exception crucial for capturing, from this perspective, the imperial order of our times. On one side, the refugee represents a disquieting element in the order of the nation state, because it breaks the identity between the human and the citizen, that is, it conceives human beings exclusively by deference or reference to the nation state; the refugee brings the fiction of sovereignty to a crisis (Agamben 2008). On the other side, in a context like the contemporary one, where growing sections of humankind are no longer representable through nation state frameworks, the act of re-drawing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion signals the constitution of new forms of sovereign power. Indeed, one of the principal lessons of imperialism is that the historical and geographical specificity of certain spaces is linked to the specificity of certain people (Reid-Henry 2007), and it is from this perspective that the refugee acquires analytical prominence in contemporary theorisations of empire and imperialism.

To transpose Agamben's reflections on the state of exception to our contemporary world, in fact, theorisations that follow this analytical perspective portray the events of '9/11', and the exceptional response that ensued, as the foundational moment in the constitution of a new imperial order. Through this optic, places like Guantanamo (Aradau 2007), or the exceptional geographies delineated by the 'War on Terror', can be seen as archetypical examples of the spaces of exception defining the political *nomos* of our contemporary world (Minca 2006). Similarly, detention centres for irregular migrants (Perera 2002) and refugee camps in Tanzania (Turner 2005) or Kenya (Jayi 2011), as much as, more broadly, the treatment of irregular migrants (Kumar Rajaram 2006), are portrayed as reconfiguring world spaces into a colonial present.

Agamben's concern with boundaries of inclusion or exclusion into the political space is at the centre of theorisations of imperialism

premised on the exceptional power to define the realm of the political. The refugee, as a liminal body that exposes the self-contained institutional order between sovereignty, law, and the inter-state system, is thus a central figure of our time: it exposes those who hold the sovereign power to define the realm of the political. Indeed, the key insight offered by Agamben for understanding the contemporary world is his suggestion that democratic liberal governments are becoming totalitarian states through the powers of exceptionalism. No longer temporary or occasional, the state of exception has become the rule (Mitchell 2006).

### The refugee and its force

The relation between liberal governments and the refugee is also at the centre of a second strand of imperial theorisations, which, rather than focusing on the sovereign's act of exclusion, emphasises the enabling and generative dimension of the refugee institution, that is, its *force* in constituting new politico-institutional governance regimes. These contributions are mostly, albeit not exclusively, premised on the work of Michel Foucault, particularly on the concepts of productive power (Foucault 1981) and governmentality (1991), and thus emphasise the productive, that is, enabling and generative, nature of the refugee institution. Rather than seeing the refugee as a conceptual category at the threshold, and constitutive, of sovereign power, these contributions are concerned with the refugee as an object of thought and intervention, and on the discursive and material effects of contemporary refugee-related and humanitarian interventions.

Nezvat Soguk's account is exemplary in this respect because of the extreme depth and span of its research, as well as its theoretical rigour. Soguk (1999) traces the political rationalities and technologies of government that transformed the refugee into a practical field of governmental activity, through the identification of the refugee's three essential elements (a state-based territoriality, the establishment of a nationality–law nexus, its inter-governmental regimentation). These elements are associated to a centuries-long process of institutional transformation marked by three episodes of displacement – the displacement of the Huguenots, the French Revolution émigrés, and post-First World War

displaced populations across Europe – that represent key moments for the definition of law-making practices in relation to territory, nationality, and inter-governmental regimentation respectively. By constituting refugee displacement as a problem of government, the refugee enables and defines the contours of a wide range of protection and assistance practices, an ‘ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of a very specific albeit complex form of power’ (Foucault 1991: 102): a form of power that attempts to shape and direct human conduct towards specific ends.

At its broadest, thus, refugee interventions are variously portrayed from this perspective as an expression of liberal rationalities of government (Lippert 1999), as forms of governance that stabilise, reconfigure, and reproduce world hierarchies (Nyers 1999) and that are geopolitical in their nature and intent (Lui 2002), despite their humanitarian justifications. Interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine thus enable the creation of an ‘architecture of enmity’, which reconfigures international relations into a colonial present (Gregory 2004: 17–29).

Duffield (2001) most forcefully develops the link between so-called complex humanitarian emergencies and neo-colonial forms of liberal imperialism. Setting his analysis in relation to the so-called new wars characterising the context of globalisation, he questions the motives justifying humanitarian interventions, seeing them as a pretext to bypass the principle of sovereignty and to establish a global governance regime premised on liberal ideas. Such regime brings together governments, non-governmental organisations, military establishments, and private companies in complex and cross-cutting governance networks operating from the supranational to the local level. These networks are the vehicles of neoliberal governmentality, and attempt to impose a radical agenda of social transformation to which states are subordinated. This is part of a strategy that, establishing a link between security, development, and humanitarianism, attempts to spread Western liberal states’ influence and control over illiberal regimes and so-called global borderlands, thus consolidating their external frontiers. Although premised on equality and democracy and the rights and freedoms of people, the effect of such form of governance

is to institutionalise hierarchies among peoples and states (Duffield 2007).

Drawing from a far wider range of political and philosophical sources, and in more controversial, but also influential, ways, Hardt and Negri (2002) similarly premise their understanding of empire as a post-sovereignty and all-encompassing networked form of government, on the creative and generative power of refugees, understood here as part of a multitude. However, rather than seeing refugees as the enabling object of intervention upon which global governance regimes are premised, they see the multitude’s constituent power as the best hope for a progressive transformation of the current socio-political order, as it is on its constitutive power that empire’s rule rests. In their understanding, the humanitarian complex, that is, the ensemble of organisations, agencies, and principles informing humanitarian and developmental actions, is one of the pillars sustaining a new form of political rule, which does not possess any single locatable source, or any territorial centre of power. It is a global political order that accompanies the globalisation of capital, and that is premised on the establishment of flexible hierarchies and networks of command. Empire has no limits: it progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers, and it operates on all registers of the social order extending down to the depths of the social world. The refugee, the irregular migrant, and all those who compose the multitude are the expression of a counterimperial ontology that attempts to disrupt empire, by destabilising its foundation.

### **The refugee and his or her material forces**

A third strand of theorisations concerned with the relation between the refugee and imperialism sets instead the refugee institution and refugee-related intervention in relation to historical and material contexts shaped by capitalism and geopolitics. Although engaging with the refugee as a conceptual category and as the object of concern of humanitarian interventions, these contributions tend to emphasise the geopolitical nature of the former, and the instrumentality of the latter in serving the interests of powerful states. This approach is sceptical towards the ontological concerns of the previous

two strands, and reaffirms more traditional understandings of imperialism as a state project. Analytical attention is thus concerned with highlighting the *material forces* of production that shape the structure of society in any given historical moment. From this perspective, the refugee plays the role of a ruse, hiding the imperial projects of powerful states, most notably the US.

At their broadest, political-economy conceptualisations of the refugee reject residual understandings of this institution, that is, definitions that are based on the notion of lack of protection, such as that contained in the above UN Convention. Rather, they emphasise the historically evolving process of production of the refugee institution, the contextual and dynamic processes and practices of its social re-production, and the productive forces underpinning both. Such relational understanding of the refugee entangles both refugee migrations and humanitarian aid with national and international politico-economic structures (Novak 2013). Most notably, such narratives conflate the US's geopolitical interests with capital's endless accumulation drive. The dispossession of resources and environmental degradation, privatisation, and all those processes associated to the current bout of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2005) produce refugee displacement by crafting profoundly unequal and violent political and economic contexts; refugee-related interventions and their geopolitical rationales provide a convenient fig leaf for the re-production of such imperatives and rationales.

Through this optic, emphasis is therefore given to the strategic dimensions associated with refugee protection, as seen from the perspective of powerful states. The above UN Convention definition, thus, premised refugee protection on civil and political rights, as opposed to socio-economic rights, because it facilitated, in the context of the Cold War, the condemnation of Soviet politics against ideological dissent. It emphasised state persecution on the basis of religion, race, or membership in a social group, because these issues were historically problematic for the Eastern Bloc. Its selective and intermittent use, as much as the historically changing attitudes towards asylum at global level since then, function as a confirmation of the inextricable relation between the refugee and the interests of powerful nations (Chimni 2000).

Indeed, evidence supporting the materiality of such relation can be traced to the strategic deployment of the various principles embedded in the above refugee definition. The latter embodies and reproduces all the contradictions and tensions characterising modern international relations: the frictions between universality of human rights and territorial sovereignty; the compromise between individual and state rights; the contradictory principles aspired to by the Charter of the UN, such as state sovereignty, national self-determination, democracy, and respect for human rights. The emphasis on one or the other such principles, in different geographical contexts and historical moments, demonstrates how these principles are a ruse, and ultimately serve the interests of countries like the US in their attempt to deny sovereignty to countries such as Iraq (Bellamy Foster, Holleman, and McChesney 2008) or Afghanistan (McLaren and Martin 2004). Humanitarian interventions, together with state-building and development policies and practices, transform international relations and reconfigure relations between non-Western states and their societies; they are an expression of imperial power, which acts by hiding its actors behind a language of democracy, human rights, and humanitarianism, thus denying the possibility of holding them accountable. Empire is in denial (Chandler 2006).

Of course, these same principles can be used to reach conclusions that stand in a diametrically opposite position *vis-à-vis* those put forward by the above analyses. Advocates of empire condemn human rights violations and lack of democracy, and highlight the threats posed by failed and rogue states, all of which are said to be causes of refugee displacement. Niall Ferguson's (2004) nostalgia for empire, as much as the call by Robert Cooper (2002) for a new liberal imperialism based on the principles of the UN Charter, mentioned above, was making headlines at the turn of the millennium. The seemingly systemic crises of the last decade, however, seem to have silenced these invocations – it is hoped for good.

### **Refugees and institutional incompleteness**

The theorisations presented above offer alternative, albeit often overlapping, conceptualisations of the relation between

imperialism, empire, and refugees. Whether focusing on the exceptional character of the refugee as a conceptual category, on refugee displacement as generative of networked forms of imperial rule, or on refugee migrations and interventions as a confirmation of more traditional understandings of state-centred imperialism, they substantiate the proposition that the refugee is a key political figure of our times. Indeed, the major insights offered by these contributions to the long tradition of theories of imperialism stem precisely from their ability to systematically and convincingly connect the figure of the refugee with the establishment of imperial institutional orders.

However, there are limitations to their analytical frameworks, which stem from the all-encompassing nature in which they define those connections. Surely, the global reach and the extent of the forms of imperial power that these frameworks uncover beg for theorisations that capture these relations at its broadest. This is what makes the above analyses powerful, and analytically useful for the identification of imperial projects, their key agents and institutions, and their overarching power. Yet by starting their analysis from, and emphasising the decidedly global nature of, imperial politico-institutional orders, the theorisations explored above develop the connection between such orders and refugees *away from* the latter. Implicitly or explicitly, this connection is seen as unidirectional, unfolding in a top-down way: the multiple contingencies and contextual occurrences through which such connection concretely takes shape across the world are the result of the more or less resisted but nonetheless direct consequence of imperial projects, and the more or less coercive power of their key agents. Such contingencies and occurrences, in other words, are treated as 'parochial': they occupy a second-order rung in the analytical scaffolding of contemporary imperial theorisations (Novak 2011). All episodes of refugee displacement, protection, and assistance, thus, can ultimately be explained by an already existing imperial project, and identifying the most convincing of these theorisations becomes a matter of (intellectual and political) *faith*.

Put differently, while these theorisations make broad claims about how the world as a whole or a big part of it actually worked and work, most of these contributions evince little

curiosity about the extent and limitations of the knowledge necessary to make those kinds of statements. The naming of empire as a form of power to be embraced or feared contributes little to political debate. Extracting a moral from historical context and trajectories, and turning it into a policy recommendation, diminishes politics as well as history. Thinking about the varied ways in which power has been exercised, constrained, and contested – within and beyond empires – may help to open the political imagination and focus the mind on the stakes and the consequences of political action (Cooper 2004: 272).

Examining the concrete operational mechanisms of refugee-related interventions in their historical and geographical diversity, on the contrary, foregrounds the wide variety of discursive, institutional, and material practices associated to the refugee institution, as well as refugees' own strategies and projects of engagement and interaction with them. Imperial 'orders' centred on the figure of the refugee do not respond to a singular logic, they do not completely fulfil the objectives they set themselves, and neither do they produce uniform outcomes. Refugee-related interventions unfold at a variety of scales and operate in multiple directions: they are seized, deflected, and manipulated by various humanitarian bodies and organisations, and by refugees themselves. Foregrounding the limits of such imperial politico-institutional orders, that is, the contextually mediated ways in which these 'orders' dynamically and concretely take shape in different contexts, renders the relation between imperialism, empire, and the refugee always incomplete (Novak 2011).

This does not mean denying the existence of empire or of imperial projects. Rather, grounding the arguably disembodied imperial theorisations presented above interrogates the imperial scale of analysis as pre-given and discrete from other levels of analysis; it attempts to capture the relation between imperial projects and refugees in an embodied way, by epistemologically situating and grounding cartographies of imperialism centred on the figure of the refugee. Such embodied epistemology may have the potential to subvert dominant geopolitical narratives, and may have concrete effects on the lives of people who are players in such events (Hyndman 2004). Indeed, focusing on the multi-scalar operations that define the connection between



empires and refugees, makes more visible the forces and agents that negotiate their existence around the refugee institution, and in so doing reproduce themselves (Sinha 2008). From this perspective, then, the incompleteness of imperial politico-institutional 'orders' may well be a form of political rule (Bhatt 2007) as it reproduces the hierarchy of material forces brought together by the generative force of the refugee exception.

Paolo Novak

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## The Social Costs of US Imperialism

### The 'American way' of imperialism

The terms 'imperialism' and 'colonialism' are often used interchangeably but they are not the same. Formal colonies based on direct control of territories are the best-known form associated with imperialism, a form which covered large parts of the world until its collapse after the Second World War. Two forms of indirect control, the establishment of what now are usually called 'client states' (formerly called 'protectorates' or 'satellites') and spheres of influence, together often called 'neo-colonialism' in Africa and other former colonial regions, are the leading expressions of imperialism today. This indirect control functions through bilateral and multilateral military alliances, and bilateral and multilateral trade agreements on the model of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The American anti-colonial revolution of the 18th century established a republic which began to call itself a democracy in the 1830s before any other modern nation did. Thomas Jefferson, revolutionary leader and author of the Declaration of Independence, advocated an 'empire for liberty', a continental empire which through territorial expansion would enable farmers and artisans to live in peaceful and prosperous coexistence with the merchant capitalists, slaveholders, and large landowners – the ruling elites of the new republic. Jefferson as president advanced this policy through the Louisiana Purchase, the purchase of France's land claims in North America.

US expansion through the 19th century was to contiguous territories. Indigenous people, called 'Indians', were the first direct victims of this 'empire for liberty'. They signed treaties which US governments routinely broke, and were forced onto reservations after many bloody wars by the end of the 19th century.

It would not be until the early 1930s that the first serious reforms in US government policy toward indigenous peoples would be enacted under the leadership of John Collyer, director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in the New Deal Government of Franklin Roosevelt.

The indigenous peoples were defined as 'savages', whether they were land-owning and even slave-owning Cherokees in Georgia, warring Apaches in the South West, Sioux horseman in the Dakotas, or buffalo herders on the plains. And 'savages' had no rights to land because they could not develop the land.

The most important long-term social cost of this policy to the American people perhaps was the connection of these policies with concepts of 'democracy'; a 'democracy' based on exclusion of 'Indians', slaves, Spanish-speaking Mexicans seen as inferior to Anglo-Saxons, a policy which by the 1840s was called 'manifest destiny'

Manifest destiny was often associated with anti-colonial rhetoric. The conquest of much of northern Mexico in the Mexican-American war (1845–49) was, for example, seen by some as a war to destroy the last vestige of the Spanish Empire in North America. The slave states were among the strongest supporters of manifest destiny and abolitionists opposed the Mexican War as a slaveholders' conspiracy to expand slavery, seeking unsuccessfully to have Congress block war appropriations and

also pass the abolitionist-inspired Wilmot Proviso, a congressional resolution which would have barred slavery on all territories taken as a result of the war.

Manifest destiny in the hands of pro-slavery politicians led the slave states to attempt to expand their system into the western territories through the brutal Fugitive Slave Act (1850), the failed 'Ostend Manifesto' calling for the purchase of Cuba, Spain's major slave colony (1854), the Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854), repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1819 which restricted slavery geographically, and the subsequent use of force to impose a pro-slavery constitution in the Kansas territory. The slave states also demanded total compliance with the slaveholder-dominated Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision (1857), which would have declared slavery to be legal everywhere in North America and deprived all free Blacks of citizenship rights.

The final and necessary social cost of the antebellum 'empire for liberty' was a revolutionary civil war, whose losses counting both sides would be greater than US losses in the two world wars combined. It was a war that devastated large areas of the former slave states and led to both the end of slavery and the establishment of a new political party system and power structure which would advance industrial/financial capitalism.

### **US imperialism in the age of industrial/financial capitalism**

In the last decades of the 19th century, the major European powers began to extend colonial imperialism and fight with each other for colonies, protectorates, and spheres of influence around the globe. This was the imperialism of industrial/financial capital, an imperialism which sought markets and raw materials like the earlier commercial capitalist imperialism, but now began to export capital itself to find cheaper and cheaper labour for an expanding world market which needed in quantity and variety more raw materials, larger markets, and much greater military and naval forces to defeat imperialist competitors and subjugate people.

By the 1880s, the US began to strengthen its naval power (a policy endorsed by the steel industry) as its industrial capacity grew by leaps and bounds. US investors bought sugar and other plantations in Spanish Cuba and

the Independent Kingdom of Hawaii, and competed for commercial gain and influence against European imperial powers and the Japanese Empire in China and the Pacific.

In Hawaii, American planters, faced with economic ruin thanks to the McKinley tariff of 1890, colluded with US officials to launch a 'revolution' in the islands and annex them to the US. This policy was implemented paradoxically by President McKinley (1897), whose tariff (in the interest of the stateside industrialists who generally supported the Republican Party) threatened the American planters in Hawaii, who were also strong supporters of the Republican Party. For the indigenous population of Hawaii, territorial status meant, as Jawarlal Nehru would say famously about British imperialism in India, living as servants in their own homes. As Britain sent indentured Indian labour to its African colonies, the US would, through negotiations with Japan and China, import Japanese and Chinese labour to the Hawaiian Islands.

### **Spanish-American War and the 'Cuban model' of US imperialism**

Faced with an uprising in Cuba against Spanish colonial control which threatened US investments, the McKinley Administration declared war on Spain in 1898, ostensibly to liberate Cuba. Very soon, the US navy destroyed the Spanish Pacific Fleet and occupied the Spanish colonial Philippines in the Western Pacific. When the smoke had cleared, the McKinley Administration, in the face of substantial opposition, annexed the Philippines and Guam in the Pacific and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean as colonies.

While this was 'minor' compared to British, French, German, and Belgian colonisation in Africa, and British and French colonisation in Asia, it was the first overseas colonial intervention by US military forces. The US in the first years of the 20th century fought a bloody counter-insurgent war against Filipinos who had initially welcomed them as liberators, losing many more troops than they had in the Spanish-American war itself, destroying whole villages, and taking the lives of an estimated 250,000 Filipinos.

In Cuba, the US first refused to permit the Cuban revolutionary army to participate in the surrender of the Spanish colonial forces in 1898, and then refused to end its

occupation of the island until the Cubans had written into their constitution the Platt Amendment, a resolution drafted by Senator Orville Platt of Connecticut. The amendment demanded Cuban acceptance of the US government's right to determine Cuba's economic relations with foreign powers and intervene militarily in Cuban affairs to 'protect Cuban self-determination'. To back this up, Cuba also ceded a naval base at Guantanamo Bay to the US.

The 'Cuban model', accurately called by American anti-imperialists 'gunboat diplomacy', was rapidly extended to many nations in Central America and the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and beyond. Just as Britain had played the leading role in the development of the Suez Canal and then used defence of the canal to extend its empire, President Theodore Roosevelt bought out the assets of a bankrupt French company seeking to build a canal through the Columbian province of Panama and then conspired with the CEO of the company to stage a 'revolution' supported by the US navy to establish an 'independent Panama' which would permit the US to build the canal. The existence of the canal and its defence then became a rationale for scores of US interventions mostly carried out by the Marines, whose actions were romanticised in US popular media in ways similar to those of British Grenadiers and other colonial forces elsewhere.

The direct relationship of US corporations and investors with the US government was deepened and US military and civilian authorities both exported racism across the Caribbean, Central America, and the Pacific and through those actions intensified racism at home. Two examples highlight this. At a time when European colonialists were contending that colonies would serve as a way to export socially disruptive surplus populations from the imperialist countries, Senator John T. Morgan of Alabama, leader of the Democratic minority on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, wrote to the State Department suggesting the possibility of resettling Southern Blacks in the Philippines and giving them land that would be taken from the Filipinos (the State Department didn't reply). African-Americans, fighting in the segregated units of the US army against the Filipino uprising, faced for the first time appeals from Filipinos not to fight for whites

who oppressed them against a dark-skinned people. Also, there were reports that both white and black US soldiers, in burning Filipino villages, would shout 'Nigger', long established as the most pre-eminent hate word in the US, at the Filipinos. From their letters back home to family, friends, and ministers, it is clear that many African-American troops were particularly traumatised by the open and extensive racism of a war in which they were fighting in the army of the racists.

Under the Platt Amendment, there would be major and minor US military interventions until Franklin Roosevelt formally repudiated it, rejecting US direct military intervention to protect US economic interests and proclaiming a hemispheric 'Good Neighbor policy'.

Here are a few highlights nation by nation of that policy, called gunboat and dollar diplomacy in the US and 'Yankee imperialism' by most Latin Americans. The US applied Platt Amendment principles to turn the Dominican Republic into a protectorate (1905) and Marines occupied the Dominican Republic (1916–24) to maintain order and protect US investments. When US-trained National Guard leader Rafael Trujillo became dictator of the Dominican Republic in the mid-1930s without direct US intervention, Franklin Roosevelt said famously 'he's a son of a bitch but he is our son of bitch', a frank admission of what the US policy of gunboat/dollar diplomacy meant, even after the gunboats were withdrawn.

The administration of President William Howard Taft further developed this policy, encouraging US investment banks to invest in China and Caribbean nations to strengthen US interests against imperialist rivals. The US also enlarged its naval military power to protect these growing investments. Under Taft, this was known as 'dollar diplomacy'. Under what should be called gunboat/dollar diplomacy, Marines occupied Nicaragua in support of President Diaz, former treasurer of a US mining company (1910), and then reoccupied the country to crush anti-Diaz forces as he held an election with 4,000 eligible voters and himself as the only candidate. The US kept troops in Nicaragua until 1925. The following year, Marines returned to battle the radical reformer Augusto Sandino, whom the Coolidge Administration called an agent of a 'Nicaraguan-Mexican-Soviet' conspiracy to establish 'Mexican-Bolshevist hegemony' over Nicaragua as a springboard to attack the

Panama Canal (1926), a Monty Pythonesque early expression of what was later known as the Domino Theory.

US Marines left Nicaragua in line with the Good Neighbor Policy (1933) but National Guard Commander Anastasio Somoza murdered Sandino and established a family dictatorship which lasted from 1934–78. While FDR expressed no sympathy for Somoza, he somewhat disingenuously contended that intervention against him would be a return to the Platt Amendment in violation of the Good Neighbor Policy.

Interventions might also be 'private'. The overthrow of a liberal regime in Honduras was funded by banana company tycoon, Sam Zemurray, and directed by US mercenary Lee Christmas, whom new conservative president Manuel Bonilla made head of the Honduran army (1911). The Harding Administration brokered a deal with Guatemalan elites to oust a liberal government for the United Fruit Company (1921).

Racism, always present, sometimes took strange turns. Under Woodrow Wilson, who rejected 'dollar diplomacy' verbally but increased US military interventions in the Caribbean, the US occupied and turned Haiti into a protectorate (1915). US troops remained until 1934. During the First World War, Franklin Roosevelt, assistant secretary of the Navy, actually wrote the Haitian Constitution. In 1919, the US Marines ruthlessly suppressed a Haitian uprising, during the occupation, Haitian presidents and other prominent Haitians were barred from the elite US Officers Club on the island because they were black!

Gunboat/dollar diplomacy continued unabated in Cuba. A Cuban uprising against the Platt Amendment led to an invasion/occupation by Marines (1906–09). US Marines intervened again under Taft to smash a strike of sugar workers which threatened US investors (1912). US Marines re-occupied Cuba (1917–22) under Wilson and Harding until 'stability' (protection of US economic interests) was restored. These policies created enmity toward 'Yankees' and 'Gringos' throughout Latin America.

But the Marines were often glorified in US media under such slogans as 'the Marines have landed' and 'the Marines are here to clean house'. Such headlines were similar to media portrayals of British Grenadiers and French Foreign Legionnaires in the British

and French Empires, creating mutual hostilities that undermined positive relationships.

The New Deal Government inherited these policies in the midst of a global depression. As in other areas, Roosevelt, a major reformer in the US context but no revolutionary, sought to reshape this policy in ways that would win over the people of Latin America without abandoning US business interests. First, Roosevelt announced a Good Neighbor Policy and abrogated the Platt Amendment (1933–34). He surprised many by sending US warships to support democratic forces which in 1933 ousted the brutal Cuban tyrant Gerardo Machado (toasted by Coolidge and Wall Street in the 1920s). This was a rarity in history, where the US intervened against a right-wing dictator.

But then, faced with a reformist government and a powerful left, the US supported strongman Fulgencio Batista behind the scenes in establishing his first dictatorship to protect US investments on the island. Mexico was a much greater problem which FDR responded to in a creative way, making his fullest break with gunboat/dollar diplomacy and advancing a policy of Pan-American co-operation.

Under Woodrow Wilson, the US launched a naval assault and occupation of Vera Cruz, Mexico, in opposition to military strongman Valeriano Huerta, whom Taft had supported in the overthrow and murder of the reformer Francisco Madero as the Mexican Revolution ended the 40-year dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz (1914). Wilson's subsequent interventions, first for and then against North Mexican leader Pancho Villa, led Villa to launch raids against US territory as the First World War raged in Europe. Wilson sent the US army into Mexico to catch him. This ended disastrously, as US troops clashed with anti-Villa Mexican forces and never caught their target. In the aftermath of the Coolidge intervention in Nicaragua (defined as a defence against the expansion of 'Mexican Bolshevism' which would threaten the Panama Canal but in part a ploy against Mexico's threat to nationalise US oil holdings), the Hoover Administration sent warships to support the defeat of an uprising in El Salvador of workers and peasants led by communist Faribundo Marti, the first real communist-led revolutionary uprising in the Western hemisphere, resulting in the killing of Marti and the massacre of over 8,000 peasants and workers (1932).

When Mexican President Lazaro Cardenas nationalised the Mexican oil industry and US investors, led by the Hearst Press demanded military intervention of the kind that Coolidge had used against Nicaragua, Roosevelt responded by having the Import Export Bank give Mexico a \$25 million loan to compensate US investors. US–Mexican relations sharply improved under the Roosevelt Administration even though Cardenas was by far the most socialist-oriented president that Mexico would have in its history.

As a complement to its Good Neighbor Policy, the administration fostered a broader vision of Pan-Americanism based on co-operative hemispheric economic development. However, these policies would not survive the beginnings of the Cold War. An attempt was made by left New Dealers in the Board of Economic Warfare (BEW), chaired by vice president Henry Wallace, to extend the New Deal through Latin America. They sought to have firms with US government contracts provide their workers with minimum wages, trade union rights and other benefits the New Deal had established for American workers, but the initiative was defeated by conservative elements within the administration backed strongly by Wall Street.

Under the Truman Administration, the US Army established the School of the Americas (1946) an upgrading and major extension of the Hoover policy of training and making into middlemen the Latin American military elites whose principal role would be to fight their own people. The school remains in existence today, having trained thousands of future military and police authorities including officers who would lead in the overthrow of democratically elected governments and advance policies that would lead to the deaths of tens of thousands of their own people.

### **Globalisation of gunboat/dollar diplomacy**

When the Second World War ended, US prestige among progressive and revolutionary forces through the world was never greater. Under the New Deal Government of Franklin Roosevelt, the US had served as the centre of the ‘Allied Powers’, holding the British Empire, under conservative leadership seeking to maintain its empire, and the Soviet Union, under Communist leadership fighting a war of survival and liberation for its own

people and the people of Europe together, to defeat the fascist imperialist Axis powers.

The US had also used its influence to establish a United Nations organisation, and under the New Deal Government (itself relying on a domestic centre-left coalition of labour and political forces) advanced policies to make the UN serve through its social agencies as the force to implement global policies to increase food production, sanitation and health care, international labour standards that address the economic and social inequalities that produced war and past imperialist policies which had greatly increased all of those inequalities.

But the balance of political forces in the US had changed significantly during the war. Wartime economic expansion connected to the creation of what would later be called the military-industrial complex strengthened corporate and conservative forces. They would recycle and update US policies of gunboat/dollar diplomacy and seek to apply these to the whole world.

### **The big picture of US imperialism and the Cold War**

First, the Truman Administration expressed hostility to the Soviet Union from its very first days in April 1945, as the Red Army fought the last Battle of Berlin and the European War ended. Then the Truman Administration, initially fearful of the Red Army’s military power and the influence of the Soviets and Communists throughout Europe and Asia, began to see in the atomic bomb a weapon that could enable it to frighten the Soviets into complying with its demands for the economic and political organisation of post-war Europe and Asia.

Even before the Second World War ended, the Truman Administration had adopted the policy that Churchill in the last years of the war sought to have FDR adopt: to abandon anti-fascist co-operation with the Soviets and ‘Big Three Unity’ and move toward a policy of undermining communist-led insurgent movements, even if that meant quietly embracing fascist collaborator forces, as the British army did in the fall of 1944 when they invaded Nazi-occupied Greece and opened fire on the communist-led insurgents who had led the fight against the Nazis since the German invasion.

The US also began this policy in the Asia Pacific region even before the end of

the war. In the bloody fighting for control of the Philippines, General MacArthur's Intelligence staff put down its most important grass-roots ally, the communist-led people's army (HUKs) which had saved the lives of Americans and worked with American troops, as the British had in Greece months before. After the Japanese surrender, the Truman Administration used the large Japanese armies on the Chinese mainland as a police force to keep, as Truman admitted in his memoirs, the Chinese Communist Party, whose influence had grown tremendously during the war, from leading the Chinese people to victory.

Also, the Truman Administration retained the Japanese emperor, Hirohito, whom Americans during the war had seen along with Hitler and Mussolini as the third member of an 'Axis of Evil', and gave him and all members of an extended royal family immunity from war crimes prosecution, even though a number were directly involved in atrocities against the peoples of China and other Asian nations.

When the war ended, Korea was 'temporarily divided' into US and Soviet zones of occupation. In the South, Syngman Rhee, a conservative who had spent most of the previous 35 years on US soil, was brought in by the US occupation. Rhee was soon to become 'our son of a bitch', the first of many local tyrants whom the US would establish and/or keep in power. In Korea, the US occupation employed well-known Japanese collaborators in the police to suppress student and worker opposition to Rhee and the American Military Government (AMG).

US policy was deeply influenced by its closest ally the British Empire, mixing and matching old British imperialist policies of creating balances of power, now in the name of 'freedom' and 'democracy' as against the British 'progress' and 'civilisation'. After the British army attacked the anti-Nazi resistance movement in Greece in 1944 (a centre of its 'traditional sphere of influence in the eastern Mediterranean) and installed a conservative monarchist regime filled with many Nazi collaborators and pre-war Greek fascists, a bloody civil war ensued. But by the winter of 1947, the British Empire, bankrupt ideologically and financially, was withdrawing everywhere.

The Truman Administration, already using threats against the Soviets in Europe and recruiting former Nazis from the Intelligence

and police services of Axis Europe, 'experts' in anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, leaped in with a 'Greek Turkish Aid bill' to replace Britain in the Greek Civil War. Along with this specific policy, Truman called for a US commitment to 'aid free peoples' who are fighting against 'subjugation' by 'armed minorities' or 'outside pressure.'

Former vice president Henry Wallace called this 'Truman Doctrine' a 'world Monroe Doctrine'. One could also call it an extension of gunboat/dollar diplomacy imperialism from the Caribbean and the Western Hemisphere to the whole world, with a new version of the Platt Amendment giving the US the 'right' to intervene in the affairs of all nations in defence of their rights to 'self-determination' and 'independence' as the US government defined these terms.

In the years to come the earlier invasions of Cuba, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, the failed interventions in Mexico, would be repeated in Greece, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan, Lebanon, Iraq, directly; and in France, Italy, Indonesia, the Congo, Brazil, Chile, Angola, Mozambique, East Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, and today Syria, indirectly. These direct and indirect interventions were in support of 'our sons of bitches' around the world with military and economic 'aid'; the training of military and police forces; the advance of 'free-market' policies that aided foreign investors and local elites; and the fomenting of economic crises and internal subversion against those governments which resisted US Cold War policies. The process was ritualistically defended as a major part of an unending war against a Soviet-directed 'world Communist conspiracy', a perpetual Cold War to prevent a nuclear hot war.

### **The big picture of Cold War and 'post-Cold War': consequences for the US**

The distinguished historian of US foreign policy Walter LaFeber estimated that US military spending during the period from the Truman Doctrine to the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, with all of its hidden and ancillary costs, amounted to 10 trillion dollars. By a conservative estimate, given military spending over the last 22 two years in the 'post-Cold war period', spending has been even greater than that. The pattern of expansion (Korean War), plateau (post-Korean War),

expansion (Vietnam War) very short inflation limited plateau (post-Vietnam War) great expansion (Reagan Hollywood 'virtual wars'), plateau ('post-Cold war'), G.W. Bush expansion, called by historian James Reed 'Reagan on steroids' ('wars and occupations against terrorism' Afghanistan, Syria, Ukraine, and who knows where next) continues to this day, regardless of the administration.

The pre-Cold War policy of US imperialism (the use of protectorates, satellites, client states and spheres of influence as against formal colonies) had both avoided the high overhead costs of the former Great Powers' colonial imperialism and the politically disadvantageous loss of life that their colonial military interventions had led to. This was its 'strength' as it developed its control over the Western Hemisphere and campaigned to open up the colonial regions, protectorates, and spheres of influence of its imperialist rivals.

The 'globalisation' of this policy with the Truman Doctrine, the formation of NATO and subsequent multilateral military alliances (SEATO, CENTO) and numerous bilateral military alliances, meant that from 1947 to the present the US would spend much more on the global Cold War and its sequel, the global war against terrorism, than all of its allies and enemies combined. Also, the US would in the name of 'containment,' 'counter-insurgency,' 'low-intensity wars' and 'proxy wars' do among the great powers most of the fighting and suffer most of the casualties in the large Cold-War Korean and Vietnam Wars and later 'wars against international terrorism' in Afghanistan and Iraq.

### **Some speculation about the costs of roads not taken**

In calculating the 'price' of American imperialism to the American people, the overwhelming majority of whom are workers and salaried employees, retirees (former workers and salaried employees) students (future workers and salaried employees), many of the costs are incalculable, because of what did not occur. How much higher would general social security benefits have been over the last 66 years if general revenues had been added to the regressive payroll taxes (which Roosevelt showed sympathy for and progressives put forward in legislation), if the social-security-based national health system that was the subject of a fierce legislative battle

after the war had been enacted, if the large public power projects on the TVA model for the Columbia and Missouri Rivers had been enacted, along with public housing legislation on the model of the original United States Housing Authority and federal aid to education in the model of the National Youth Administration.

Given the wartime economic expansion, the establishment during the war of a system of progressive taxation, the fact that one-third all workers outside of agriculture were unionised and (even with the divisions between the conservative exclusionist AFL and the inclusionist CIO), the organisational support to establish this post-war programme, to which public opinion was sympathetic, existed on paper in 1945.

The Cold War was not the only reason why groups like the American Medical Association, the National Association of Manufacturers, the US Chamber of Commerce, and the private power companies were able to bury this programme, but it was a central reason.

The association of this programme (a social-security-based system of national health care, public power expansion on the TVA model, federal aid to education, housing, and transportation,) with 'creeping socialism,' the purges in the trade union movement and the arts, sciences and professions of its most militant advocates, all in the name of Cold War anti-Communism, systematically doomed the programme. And there were other costs that could not easily be calculated in dollars and cents.

For example: the cost to the trade union movement over the last 66 years of tens of millions of real and potential members as the number of workers in private-sector unions dropped from 35 per cent in 1947 to single digits today; the cost to hundreds to millions of Americans over that period of many billions of dollars in out-of-pocket health-care expenses that working people in the rest of the developed world do not have to pay; the high rate of infant mortality relative to other developed countries that exists in the US; and the emergence from the Reagan era to today of children as the largest group living in poverty.

### **Interventions and their concrete social costs**

Here are some of the most important Cold-War interventions and their social costs.



In China, the Truman Administration spent over \$3 billion in military aid to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang regime (1945–49), organised the regime's 'elite divisions', and only ended its formal aid when the revolutionary forces had clearly gained the upper hand. The US then refused to recognise the Peoples Republic of China, blocked its admission to the UN until 1972, and did not establish full diplomatic relations with it until 1978, providing over time many billions of dollars in military aid to 'the Republic of China' (Chiang's rump regime in Taiwan). Also, the US helped to train Chiang's commandos for raids of the Chinese mainland, threatened war with China in the 1950s over the islands of Quemoy and Matsu in the Formosa Strait, provided financial and indirect military aid to feudal-religious elements for an uprising in Tibet against the People's Republic of China (1959), and subsequently, as it came to recognise China, manoeuvred to create conflicts between China and India and use China as a 'strategic ally' against the Soviet Union.

For the American people, the costs were real-war dangers as US paratroops prepared to attack the Chinese mainland in the event of full-scale war in the Formosa Strait in the mid-1950s, a peacetime draft that undermined working-class communities by taking from those who could not be deferred for medical reasons or were enrolled in colleges or were unacceptable due to criminal records.

In Italy, the new CIA 'passed' its first 'test'. The agency (called by its members 'the company') spent millions of dollars to defeat a united front of Communist and Socialist Parties which had been expected to win the 1948 elections. It also used the Democratic Party to mobilise Italian Americans to send telegrams to relatives, provided both Marshall Plan aid and other forms of aid to the Italian government, funded Mafia elements in Sicily and southern Italy to undermine a free election, and continued over the next four decades with limited success to try to defeat and isolate the Italian Communist Party, supporting both former and neo-fascists, traditional conservatives, and anti-communist factions of the Socialist Party to achieve those ends.

The CIA's activities began a pattern of involvement with organised crime groups who would use their increased wealth and connections to develop in the 1950s the heroin market in US working-class communities, destroying hundreds of thousands of

lives and increasing crime significantly in US cities.

After independence in the Philippines (1946), which the New Deal Government had promised in the 1930s, US 'military advisors' organised the campaign to crush the communist-led anti-Japanese Huk army, electing and then removing Filipino presidents until the 1960s when one of their 'assets', Ferdinand Marcos, realising that the US was turning against him, made himself 'president for life'.

US agribusiness corporations, Dole especially, participated in and profited greatly from the exploitation of the Filipino people in alliance with terroristic regimes and local right-wing gangs to murder peasant organisers and drive poor peasants from their land.

Edward Lansdale, a classic imperialist adventurer in the tradition of Britain's Chinese Gordon and Lawrence of Arabia, organised the post-war political campaign to elect Ramon Magsaysay as president of the Philippines, then led the US military mission to French colonial Indochina (1953) to remove the French and bring in Ngo Dinh Diem, a US 'asset' to establish a dictatorship, and finally served as director of the CIA's Operation Mongoose (1961), the largest and most expensive CIA operation in the world aimed at overthrowing the revolutionary government of Cuba and murdering Fidel Castro and its other leaders.

Lansdale, an advertising man from San Francisco before the Second World War, was the stuff of which 19th-century imperialist 'heroes' were made. He even used his influence to have Hollywood change the screenplay of Graham Greene's novel *The Quiet American*, turning a character widely believed to be based on him from a villain to a hero.

The US intervention first in the French colonial war and then in its own version of a colonial war (1950–75) would eventually cost directly 58,000 lives, hundreds of thousands wounded, and the psychic trauma that many experienced because of the atrocities that were and are the reality of 'counter-insurgency' as against the rhetoric of winning the hearts and minds of the people. Of course, it also cost the people of Indochina over 3 million lives. For millions of Americans, the great struggles unleashed by the Civil Rights movement and enacted in Great Society legislation brought with them the possibility of winning decisive victories against poverty and racism in the US. The intervention in

Vietnam, when all the slogans were stripped away, was, like the dozens of interventions in Latin America before and during the Cold War, a war against the poor with a large racist subtext.

US involvement in the Korean civil war (1950–53) was explained to Americans as a UN ‘police action’ (US interventions in the Caribbean had been defined as the use of ‘the international police power’ under the Platt Amendment to ‘maintain order’ and protect ‘independence’). The Korean War produced a ‘truce,’ a devastated Korea (an estimated 3 million dead) with the US creating the largest ‘protectorate/satellite’ in its history, establishing a large military presence and forward bases against North Korea, China, and potentially the Soviet Union, supporting repressive regimes and the military over the decades, and doing nothing to resolve either the Korean national question or the threat of war that its large and costly military presence represented and continues to represent.

Full globalisation of the Truman Doctrine after Korea meant spending trillions of dollars over time on military-industrial complex corporate subsidies, a ‘warfare state’ that would prevent the development of a modern ‘welfare state’ social system in the US.

Over subsequent decades, US life expectancy declined in relation to other developed countries, public education and child-care services both stagnated, and the US developed a much higher level of income and wealth inequality.

And a phenomenon the CIA called ‘blowback’, that is, disastrous unintended consequences, became a result of US policy.

The US intervened indirectly in Iran (1946) against a Soviet-supported uprising by the Azerbaijani minority in northern Iran (Azerbaijan was a Soviet republic at the time) threatening the Soviets indirectly with nuclear blackmail, which led the Soviets to withdraw their support. The Iranian government followed with widespread repression against the Azerbaijani minority.

After Mohammed Mossadegh, democratically elected prime minister, nationalised what was a private monopoly of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Britain launched a blockade of Iranian oil. When the US government refused him any assistance, Mossadegh turned to the Soviet Union to break the blockade. The Eisenhower Administration then declared Mossadegh a ‘communist’ and

orchestrated his overthrow (1953), replacing him with the Shah, previously a constitutional monarch, who established a brutal terroristic dictatorship in which the US was the principal backer and beneficiary. The oil was then privatised and, in a classic imperialist ‘re-division,’ US oil companies received 40 per cent, other US-influenced companies 20 per cent, and the former Anglo-Iranian oil company, now calling itself British Petroleum (BP), more famous today in the US for spilling oil than spilling blood, received the remaining 40 per cent.

US corporations did very profitable business with and in Iran for the next 25 years, selling arms, engaging in construction projects, and taking their cut of the oil. Secular liberal forces, the Tudeh (Communist) Party, and all other opponents of the regime were ruthlessly suppressed, leaving the Islamic clergy as the only major venue for opposition.

The 1979 revolution, in which millions took to the streets, millions who understood the history of 1953 and all that had followed, was taken over by a section of the Islamic clergy to establish a clerical ‘Islamic Republic’ which channelled mass opposition to imperialism into portrayals of the US and its people as ‘the great Satan’ and secular ‘Western society’ as at war with all Muslims. US corporations lost billions in Iran, although the US froze Iranian assets in US securities valued at over \$20 billion in 1980. (They remain frozen, and their present value is unknown.) The Reagan Administration did ‘receive’ over \$50 million dollars from the Iranian government in the illegal ‘arms for hostages’ deal in order to provide the Iranian military, which had received arms from the US until the revolution, with weapons to use in their war against Iraq, which the Reagan Administration had supported.

Most of this money ‘disappeared’, although some was siphoned off to support the Nicaraguan Contras, an expression in the 1980s of old-fashioned Platt Amendment gunboat diplomacy.

Among the most important social costs of the ‘warfare state’ in the US was a labour movement whose leadership supported all of these policies and did nothing to resist the massive export of capital abroad, which was in effect the domestic policy of imperialism in the US, producing chronic economic crisis and a political vacuum on the labour left which, with the blowback of the Iran

Hostage crisis, provided the background to the Reagan presidency.

Gunboat/dollar diplomacy also returned with a vengeance to Central America when the CIA overthrew the democratically elected Arbenz Government in Guatemala (1954) and brought to power a brutal dictatorship under Carlos Castillo Armas (a US-trained officer) which would take thousands of lives: the most terroristic regime in the region to date

When the Cuban revolution triumphed in 1959, the National Security Council and the CIA were initially confident that Cuba would be another Guatemala. After a steady escalation of attacks on the revolutionary government and an embargo which compelled it to turn to the Soviet Union for aid, Eisenhower and then Kennedy authorised the CIA to create a Cuban exile military force to launch an invasion of Cuba to establish a regime that would suppress all pro-revolutionary forces and restore all US property (on the Guatemalan model).

Continued CIA actions after the failure of this Bay of Pigs invasion to overthrow the Cuban government, raids against Cuba, use of bacteriological warfare to destroy Cuban swine herds, organised sabotage campaigns against the Cuban economy, and plots to murder Fidel Castro (the last documented one in Angola in the mid-1970s) went on for the next three decades. Finally, the economic blockade was intensified against Cuba following the dismemberment of the Soviet Union.

The cost to the American people was first the spending over the last 54 years of billions of dollars of public funds in a futile attempt to destroy the Cuban revolution.

One must factor in the suffering of the Cuban people that these policies continue to produce. Finally, one might look at the loss to all of Latin America of what a policy of Cuban-American friendship and solidarity could have meant for the development of the region, given the outstanding achievements of Cuba in education and health care, connected to what the US has to offer in terms of technology, capital, and its own technical and professional workers. Also, the American people suffered a major blowback from the Cuban policy in the Watergate conspiracy (1971–74), in which former FBI and CIA agents organised a group of Cuban criminals who had worked in CIA terrorist actions against Cuba throughout the 1960s to wiretap phones and microfilm documents at

the headquarters of the National Democratic Party in Washington. And the policy produced its spin-offs.

Indirect CIA intervention in the Dominican Republic to support Juan Bosch as a 'democratic alternative' to Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution was then transformed into support for a right-wing military junta's overthrow of Bosch when his government moved in a socialist direction and threatened the interests of US corporations. This was followed by an invasion by 25,000 US Marines in the name of defeating 'communists' after constitutionalist military officers sought to restore Bosch to the presidency he had won (1965). This was the largest direct military intervention by the US in Latin America in history, 32 years after FDR had formally repudiated the Platt Amendment.

The US also provided indirect support for a military coup in Brazil (1964), ousting a democratically elected progressive-oriented government. Finally, there was active support for military junta regimes in Venezuela, Argentina, Paraguay, etc., and either support for or opposition to civilian governments based on their subservience to US economic interests, all in the name of 'containing' the spread of 'Soviet-directed Cuban communism'. Starting a year before the Cuban revolution, the CIA intervened in the Chilean elections of 1958, 1964, and 1970, funding opposition to the Popular Unity (Peoples Front) coalition of Socialist and Communist Parties and liberal groups led by Socialist Party leader Dr Salvador Allende. Unlike many Latin American countries, Chile had a history of free elections and an independent trade-union movement

The Nixon Administration launched economic/political war against Allende after his coalition won the 1970 elections, fomenting strikes and inflation, supporting rightist and ultra-left groups to destabilise the government, and creating the context for the bloody Pinochet coup and massacre of thousands of Popular Unity partisans. This was followed by economic aid and political support for the Pinochet regime as it destroyed trade unions, privatised Chilean social security, established with the 'advice' of economists associated with Milton Friedman a regime of 'free-market fascism', regarded by scholars of Latin America as the most brutal and repressive regime in Latin American history.

The return of gunboat diplomacy was seen most dramatically in the Reagan years by the

'Contra War' (Contras were elements of the former Somoza dictatorship, first established in 1934) against the revolutionary Sandinista government (established in 1978 and named after the martyred Augusto Sandino) in Nicaragua. The US also supported the more traditional ultra-right Salvadorian government against the revolutionary FSLN (Salvadorian National Liberation Front), thus running two 'low-intensity wars' (the new term of the 1980s) that claimed in excess of 120,000 lives in two small countries throughout the 1980s.

Blowback here came in the form of the Reagan Administration's continued support for the Contra War, following the murder of US nuns in Nicaragua and passage of the Boland Amendment. This barred direct US aid to the Contras. Reagan also intensified surveillance of the US peace movement, especially The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

In the 21st century, oil-rich Venezuela has been the target of US imperialist policies. The Bush Administration's support for a failed coup against the government of Hugo Chavez (2002) was then followed by harassment as it moved in a socialist direction. Venezuela's oil wealth and location offered and continues to offer its socialist-oriented government protection from direct gunboat diplomacy intervention, even after Chavez's death, though US media continues to demonise his successors and does what it can to support the political opposition. Very recently, the Obama Administration has called for the normalisation of US-Cuban relations, something that is long overdue. The blockade, though, remains in tact and relations have in effect worsened, limiting expectations for a 'new Good Neighbor Policy' in the region.

In the Pacific, the US government was to be complicit in events that would claim an estimated 1 million lives in Indonesia in 1965. At first the US refused to aid the restoration of Dutch colonialism after the Second World War and supported Sukarno, a Japanese collaborator, as leader of an independent Indonesia, because of his opposition to the country's Communist Party (1948).

This policy changed as Sukarno formed an informal alliance with the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) against both Islamic conservatives and the military. The CIA supported assassination attempts against Sukarno in the 1950s and worked with conservative elements

of the military against the Indonesian left in the fifth largest country in the world in terms of population at the time.

The US involved itself directly in the massacres of 1965, in which an estimated 1 million PKI activists, workers, peasants, and members of the ethnic Chinese minority were killed by the military and vigilantes linked to right-wing Islamic groups, as a counter-coup in response to an alleged PKI-supported coup.

The CIA would boast of its list of 10,000 key PKI cadres provided to the military, all of whom were allegedly murdered. US support for the brutal corrupt Suharto regime lasted for decades. Subsequently, the US denied all involvement in this sordid history after Suharto's removal in 1998, claiming since the 9/11 attacks to represent the forces of liberty and democracy against 'Islamic terrorism' in Indonesia, although such groups are the successors to the Islamic vigilante groups that the CIA supported indirectly in 1965.

While most of this was then minimised in the US and the US/NATO bloc countries, in large part because the people massacred were communists and people of the left, Indonesia's invasion and occupation of the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, supported by the US in 1975, became the source of an international protest movement.

East Timor, whose population is primarily Christian, had before the Indonesian invasion declared its independence from Portugal. Amnesty International has estimated that the Suharto Government murdered, with US-supplied weapons, as many as 200,000 of East Timor's population of 700,000, while the US continued to support Indonesia's 'sovereignty' over East Timor in the United Nations and blocked attempts to punish it for its crimes.

All Americans suffer in the eyes of history the costs of their government's actions in funding, aiding and abetting what were two genocidal campaigns.

In the post-Second World War Middle East, the Cold War context was largely a distraction from what was and is the real issue: oil. First, the US replaced the British and French Empires, supporting British-installed monarchies in Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq. Working closely with the Saudi Arabian monarchy, centre of the world's largest concentration of oil deposits, US oil companies established the Arab-American Oil Company (ARAMCO), a consortium to develop the oil.

The US was initially cool toward Israel in the multi-faceted conflict between Arab nations, Israel, and the Palestinian population of the former British mandate/colony (1948–present), favouring an ‘Arabist policy’ of support for conservative monarchist regimes in Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia to protect the oil. However, nationalist and socialist-oriented revolutions in Egypt (1952) and Iraq (1958) undermined this policy. Even though the Soviet Union supported those developments, both the US and the Soviets opposed the British-French-Israeli invasion in the Suez Crisis (1956) as a message to the old colonial powers that US imperialism was calling the shots in the region in competition with the USSR and would not tolerate any restoration of British and French power. The following year, the Eisenhower Doctrine pledged US military intervention in the region against ‘Communist influence’. US Marines then intervened under the doctrine in Lebanon against Pan-Arab pro-Syrian and Egyptian forces which had nothing to do with the communist movement.

After socialist-oriented military officers overthrew the monarchy in Iraq (1958), the CIA involved itself in plots with the nationalist Pan-Arab Baath Party of Iraq in attempts to assassinate government leaders, using anti-communism and opposition to Soviet influence as pretexts. In the 1970s, Baath Party leader Saddam Hussein (previously a CIA ‘asset’ in the struggle against the revolutionary military government) played the Soviets against the Americans, established a personality-cult based dictatorship and, to the chagrin of the US, nationalised oil holdings. Hussein became a CIA asset again when, seeing the US–Iran conflict, he seized an opportunity to attack Iran and gain rich oil lands, launching an eight-year war which cost hundreds of thousands of lives and bankrupted Iraq.

During the war, the Reagan Administration acted to cover up Hussein’s use of poison gas and other atrocities against Iran, encouraged its oil-rich protectorates to provide him with loans to finance the war, and resisted Iranian overtures to end the war contingent upon his removal. In the aftermath of the war, Hussein, believing the US would not oppose him (it hadn’t in the past) invaded oil-rich Kuwait, leading to the First Gulf War (1991) as the Pentagon and Bush Administration sought to sustain military spending as the Soviet Union

collapsed. After an easy decisive victory in the First Gulf War, the Bush Administration decided to keep Hussein in power after his regime’s total military defeat as a pawn to be used against Iran. His subsequent massacres of Muslims of the Shia religious denomination and people of the Kurdish ethnic minority, both long-time enemies and victims of his regime, were ignored by the Bush I and Clinton Administrations in the ‘post-Cold War era’.

In the tradition of the old colonial imperialism, nothing that Hussein did to his own people was ever an issue for the US. His nationalisation of oil in the 1970s and invasion of oil-rich Kuwait in 1989 were the only reasons that he lost US support.

The post 9/11 invasion and occupation of Iraq was based on contentions above and beyond anything that the US government had advanced in the Cold War era: that Hussein’s regime was the ally of Al Qaida, which his government had sworn to destroy and whose members it had hunted down and killed; that the regime was hiding ‘weapons of mass destruction’, even through more than a decade of UN inspections showed this to be false; that the regime was a military threat in the region even though its military forces and strength were less than half of what it had been during the 1991, First Gulf War.

The subsequent occupation highlighted as nothing else would Reagan-Bush ‘neo Robber Baron’ capitalism. Private construction contractors, private food providers to the military, private security forces, robbed the US taxpayer of billions of dollars, outraging millions of unemployed Iraqis who saw foreigners taking their jobs, and placing the US military occupation forces in greater danger. The American people pay and continue to pay the price of a 60-year policy recycling largely old British Empire policies in the interests of US-based transnational energy corporations, making the incomes and jobs of millions of American workers subject to the conflicts and crises in this region and the manipulations of the transnational energy corporations in alliance with various governments for their profit. The American people and the people of the world also pay the environmental costs of these policies to land, water, and air as alternative ‘green’ energy sources remain underdeveloped.

The US had not been involved in the colonial carving up of sub-Saharan Africa,

although American firms like Firestone Rubber were involved in the exploitation of Europe's African colonies through various transnational corporations. Cold War US governments both supported the colonial powers as they sought to hold on to their African colonies and, as a plan B position, conservative nationalists, separatists, and military protégés of the colonial powers who would turn their nations into protectorates of the US and its allies on the old 'Cuban model', or 'neo-colonies' as this kind of control were known widely in Africa.

Using the UN as a cover, the US and France intervened in the collapsing Belgian Congo (1960), scene of some of the worst genocidal crimes in human history at the end of the 19th century, to defeat the leader of the national liberation movement, Patrice Lumumba, whom the CIA and the National Security Council compared to Fidel Castro as a socialist revolutionary menace. The CIA helped orchestrate the murder of Lumumba, spent millions to keep his supporters from gaining power democratically, and supported Joseph Mobutu, who established what international observers regarded as one of the world's most corrupt regimes. Mobutu's regime looted billions while the overwhelming majority of the people were malnourished and plagued by the old diseases of poverty and a new one, AIDS, without the most rudimentary forms of medical care.

The US also supported Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique in the 1960s and 1970s. When a revolution in Portugal ended its empire, the CIA employed a plan B strategy in Angola of supporting Holden Roberto, corrupt nationalist brother-in-law of Joseph Mobutu, against the Marxist-influenced and socialist-oriented Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). The CIA allied itself with the South African apartheid government, first to use force to keep the MPLA from taking power and then, to support a rightist separatist guerrilla war led by the adventurer Jonas Savimbi. Similar developments in Mozambique took place with much greater South African participation. US escalation of these actions under the Reagan Administration, supporting and protecting South African military incursions and the wars of Savimbi in Angola and Renamo (the group made up of former Portuguese colonial forces under the direction of South Africa) in Mozambique led to

endless war. Hundreds of thousands died and a greater number were made homeless through these interventions, which continued into the 21st century, largely destroying the possibility for progressive social development and socialist construction advanced by the MPLA in the 1970s.

In South Africa, the US supported under both Democratic and Republican administrations the apartheid regime, led from 1948 to its downfall by the Nationalist Party, whose leaders had been imprisoned by the British during the Second World War because of their support for and connections with Nazi Germany. Coming to power in an election in which the Africans (roughly 75 per cent of the population) were completely disenfranchised, the Nationalist regime wrote 'race laws' which were modelled and in some instance copied in regard to language from the Hitlerite Nuremberg race laws. The crimes and atrocities of the apartheid government were known and condemned through the world, including the US. This did not stop the major imperialist powers from continuing to invest in and profit from the apartheid regime, selling it weapons and protecting it from various political sanctions at the United Nations and other international organisations.

Whatever occasional negative comments US political leaders made about the apartheid state, the CIA worked closely with its South African counterparts from the 1950s to the 1980s. The CIA helped to capture African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela in the early 1960s. It joined South Africa to advance the Savimbi forces in the 'Contra war' in Angola. It indirectly supported the South Africans as they occupied South-West Africa (Namibia) and sought to turn it into something between a colony and a protectorate. Under the Reagan Administration, the African National Congress was, because of its historic alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP), seen as an agent of Soviet and communist world domination. Furthermore, South Africa itself, as the most developed region of the continent with its abundant resources, was seen by the Reagan Administration as a potential Soviet Union of Africa if an 'ANC-Communist' government were to expand northward to put the entire continent under 'South African communist control'.

To counter this, the Reagan Administration put forward a policy of 'constructive engagement', a more extreme version of the

appeasement policy the British Empire had directed toward Nazi Germany in the 1930s, encouraging and apologising for South African military aggression in Southern Africa as against refusing to act against Nazi aggression in Central and Eastern Europe, resisting in the United Nations and in the US movements for sanctions against the South African regime. People's movements in the US and globally eventually did compel both international and US sanctions and, through disinvestment campaigns, significant withdrawals of investment from the apartheid state. Its military defeats in Angola especially (where Cuban-MPLA forces won a decisive victory against South African-Savimbi forces) and the intensification of resistance by the South African masses led to the release of Nelson Mandela, the legalisation of the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party and other political groups, and the establishment of a parliamentary democracy from the ruins of apartheid South Africa, itself a monstrous relic of the Hitler fascism that had been defeated in Second World War.

Although President George H.W. Bush welcomed Nelson Mandela, now leader of a liberated South Africa, to the US (and lectured him about the superiority of capitalism over socialism), no major power in the world had done more to support the apartheid state since its inception, something that should be a source of both shame and outrage for all anti-racists in the US

In the immediate aftermath of Mandela's death, the release of information that as part of the ANC-SACP alliance he had been a member of the SACP's central committee, led to attacks on his memory by rightist and old and new red-baiters through the world, an example of the old definition of a 'reactionary': someone who learns nothing and forgets nothing from history, compelled to do the same thing over and over again.

### Conclusions on 'cost benefits' of the US brand of imperialism

When the cumulative effect of military spending is combined with the cumulative national debt, they show to all willing to see both the diversion of trillions of dollars in capital from socially useful policies and the accruing of a debt whose annual interest payments provide further super profits for creditors in the US and abroad. Today, the cumulative effects

of these policies serves as a deterrent to the funding of programmes to raise the living standards and improve the quality of life for the American people, not to exporting death and destruction in the name of national security and defence throughout the world.

Even conservatives who have actively opposed both existing and proposed public-sector and social welfare policies in the name of opposition to 'big government' and 'waste and inefficiency' (not to mention most of the points made in this essay) might ponder the effects of the national debt and military-industrial complex expenditures on their hopes for an unregulated free-market economy and an expanding and prosperous middle-class mass society.

And, of course, there are the hundreds of thousands who were killed and wounded in the not so cold Korean and Vietnam Wars, the Americans who were killed and wounded in the invasion and occupation of Iraq, US service men and women being killed and wounded in Afghanistan today, and all of the possibilities of interventions in the near future in the name of the 'war against terrorism', humanitarian intervention, and future catchphrases. Those in power in the US who use contemporary imperialist jargon about 'nation building' are examples of the old adage that those who learn nothing from history are condemned to repeat it.

Finally, for both Americans and peoples throughout the world, there are the cumulative costs of all the interventions, the endless 'trails of tears' (as the forced removal of Native peoples under Jackson's Indian Removal policy of the 1830s came to be known), the repeated direct invasions and indirect interventions in various forms through the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific in the pre-Cold War era under the banner of gunboat/dollar Diplomacy and then recycled through the Truman Doctrine and its many spin-offs. Those costs for North Americans, Latin Americans, Asians, Africans, Pacific Islanders, all people, are truly incalculable.

Norman Markowitz

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## South–South Co-operation

South–South co-operation (SSC) refers to formal and informal co-operation between developing countries as well as the increasing economic ties (of trade, investment, aid, etc.) that are both cause and consequence of such co-operation. (This essay uses the terms ‘South’, ‘global South’, ‘developing countries’, and ‘Third World’ interchangeably.) The term was first used officially only in 2004 when the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) decided to change the name of its special unit on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC, mooted in 1974 and created in 1978) to the Special Unit for South–South Cooperation, which would later become the United Nations Office for South–South Cooperation. However, the ideas and practices of SSC have a much longer history.

This essay first outlines the terms in which the contemporary relevance of SSC is discussed and the questions about its true extent, sustainability, and political significance for the world economy which have emerged in it. It then traces SSC’s history from its origins in anti-imperialist struggles and places it within a wider understanding of the uneven and combined development (UCD) of the capitalist world so that SSC’s significance in the multipolar 21st century can be fully appreciated. Then the extent of SSC in key areas is surveyed. After this, the conclusion returns to the questions raised in contemporary discussions to attempt some answers.

## Understanding SSC: Overblown? Unsustainable? Sub-imperialist?

Time was when the dozen of newly independent countries in Asia and Africa, along with Latin American countries seeking to break out of the informal domination of their economies by the advanced industrial imperial countries, professed a common anti-imperialist aspiration towards mutual co-operation and solidarity. However, it remained little more than a pious platitude, regularly affirmed with appropriate fanfare on various platforms by Third-World leaders who would then go back to the business-as-usual of North–South economic links that had been formed under formal and informal colonialism and kept them in the position assigned to them in the international division of labour that imperialism had built: ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’. The development performance of these countries was universally regarded as less than spectacular in the early post-war decades and they were followed by a couple of lost decades of development in the 1980s and 1990s. By this time, most thought that, barring a small ‘tiger’ economy here or there, development in the Third World was a lost cause and SSC no more than a castle in the air. However, things then began to change.

Beginning in the late 1990s and even more since the economic and financial crises of 2007 and 2008, growth in the Third World in general and among the emerging and BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) economies in particular began to accelerate and overtook that in the developed world (O’Neill 2001). The economic centre of gravity of the world economy began to shift away from the advanced industrial countries for the first time since the birth of capitalism. Talk of ‘US hegemony’, ‘globalisation’ and ‘empire’ gave way to that of multipolarity. Now SSC began to be realised as never before. Developing countries began trading more with one another, investing in one another’s economies, and even gave one another aid on a previously unimaginable scale. If this were not enough, they were also co-operating to present challenges to the power of the US and other developed countries on various issues of international economic governance, whether in the WTO or on climate policy (Desai 2013b; 2013c; Hallding et al. 2013; Narlikar 2010).

These developments have been unsettling to many in the advanced industrial world, and



its dominant discourse about SSC and the growth of the emerging economies on which it rests tends to yo-yo between disbelief and fear. Let us deal with the disbelief first. Many question the sustainability of the growth of the BRICs. However, apart from this or that temporary setback to growth, their best evidence is the BRIC and emerging economies' post-crisis growth slowdown. However, even the new slower growth rates remain many times higher than the near zero rates of the advanced industrial countries, and the trend towards an increasingly multipolar economy has, if anything, accelerated in the wake of the economic and financial crises. Others question the viability of the associated rise in SSC pointing mainly to political conflicts between the major BRICs, not least the two most important among them, China and India. However, if these conflicts were indeed make-or-break matters, SSC would not have attained the levels it already has.

Rather than such blanket dismissals we are better advised to undertake a closer examination of these developments and possible road-blocks they may encounter. The 2013 *Trade and Development Report* of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) puts it most clearly:

The continuing expansion of developing economies as a group (in particular the largest economy among them, China) has led to their gaining increasing weight in the world economy, which suggests the possible emergence of a new pattern of global growth. While developed countries remain the main export markets for developing countries as a group, the share of the latter's contribution to growth in the world economy has risen from 28 per cent in the 1990s to about 40 per cent in the period 2003–2007, and close to 75 per cent since 2008. However, more recently, growth in these economies has decelerated. They may continue to grow at a relatively fast pace if they are able to strengthen domestic demand and if they can rely more on each other for the expansion of aggregate demand through greater South–South trade. (UNCTAD 2013a: 4, emphasis added)

Both the slower growth of the developed economies and the faster growth of the developing ones means that in the new pattern of growth the former can no longer be relied

on to provide the markets that will power growth from here on. They will only come from an expansion of the domestic markets and increased trade and SSC between them. This can only be a good thing given that an expansion of domestic markets would mean increasing domestic incomes. But here also lies the rub.

The growth spurt in the BRIC and emerging economies since the 1990s coincided with the general ideological drift towards neo-liberalism worldwide and a shift among the BRIC and emerging economy governments towards progressively liberalising their hitherto state-directed economies and orienting them more towards exports to the US and Europe than they had been hitherto when there were pushing for import-substituting industrialisation. However, coincidence was not cause. In fact, this growth spurt was, in fact, critically reliant on the economic base created during the more state-directed phase of their development and by such expansion of domestic demand as it had permitted (as I argue in the case of India in Desai 2007; 2010). However, many policymakers and opinion makers attribute it to economic liberalisation, and appear set to liberalise further. To the extent that they are successful, however, they will achieve the opposite of what is really necessary to sustain their growth: a restriction of incomes and demand at home and a reliance on slower-growing export markets.

In the wake of the recent crises, while there is some evidence that the Chinese government has read the writing on the wall and replaced lost export demand first with a vast investment boom and then with an expansion of domestic consumption demand, in particular by letting wages rise. And governments in South America had turned away from neo-liberalism much earlier. However, many other emerging-economy governments and policymakers remain too wedded to neo-liberal policy and its reliance on First-World markets when their continued growth depends on ending this reliance. There is no guarantee that they will see the light. Only when they do can the growth of the emerging economies and SSC be considered sustainable.

So much for the disbelief, now we come to the fear. Some regard rising SSC as a significant departure from the ideals of anti-imperialist solidarity proclaimed in earlier times (Nel and Taylor 2013) and others go

further and argue that SSC may simply be the sanctimonious verbiage which shrouds relationships between the stronger-developing economies and weaker ones which are as bad as, if not worse than, North–South imperial relationships (see e.g. Bond 2012; 2014). After all, the imperialisms of the past were also cloaked in mystifying discourse, whether of the ‘civilising mission’ of the imperial countries, the ‘white man’s burden’, or coloniser and colonised constituting a ‘co-prosperity sphere’. Particular attention is paid to the allegedly predatory trade, aid, and investment activities of the BRIC countries in Africa.

If there is a rational kernel to these observations it is this. While the countries of the Third World were always more differentiated than their lumping into a single category allowed, the growth acceleration since the late 1990s was making the Third World even more disparate. The BRIC countries, including two of the Third World’s most populous countries, and the wider set of emerging economies, were growing strongly but they were leaving the countries containing the ‘bottom billion’ farther behind (Collier 2007). While the idea of SSC was formatively connected with the ideals of anti-imperialist solidarity, it was finally growing on practically all fronts in this very different Third World in which power differentials between emerging economies were significantly greater.

Settling these questions about the true extent, sustainability, and political character of SSC requires a closer examination of the history and contemporary dimensions of the phenomenon.

### South–South co-operation in historical perspective

The core idea of SSC is a rejection of an unfavourable international division of labour and the economic relationships (between some countries that specialise in producing higher-value, mostly industrial good, and are thus rich, and others which specialise in producing lower-value largely agricultural good, and thus are poor [Reinert 2007]) which sustain it.

This rejection goes back to the 19th-century architects of the modern developmental state. Policymakers and intellectuals such as Alexander Hamilton in the US and Friedrich List in Germany saw the real rationale of *laissez faire* and *laissez passer* rhetoric. Its *raison*

*d’être* was to maintain the international division of labour unfavourable to them and favourable to the first and at the time most competitive industrial capitalist country, the UK. Against this, they constructed and theorised the first developmental states (Woo-Cumings 1999), which employed a battery of policies, including trade protection, to foster industrialisation, first and foremost by substituting imports.

### Uneven and combined development

This dialectic of international competition in which the industrialisation of some countries prompted others to hothouse industrial development was dubbed ‘uneven and combined development’ (UCD) by the Bolsheviks, and it framed their understanding of their own revolution. As outlined by Trotsky in the first chapter of his *The History of the Russian Revolution*, UCD was an international dynamic specific to capitalism. Like all human advance, capitalist development was always uneven. However, in previous phases of human history, backward countries ‘assimilat[ed] the material and intellectual advancements of the advanced countries’ by repeating the stages through which the advanced society had passed in a ‘provincial and episodic’ manner. The capitalist phase, by contrast, ‘prepares and in a certain sense realises the permanence of man’s development’ and rules repetition out (Trotsky 1934: 26). Instead, it ‘compels’ backward countries ‘to make leaps’. Thus, ‘a backward country does not take things in the same order’ as an advanced one. Instead, it exercises the ‘privilege of historic backwardness’ by ‘skipping a whole series of intermediate stages’, as Germany and the US had recently done while the United Kingdom was paying the price for its early lead (26). Such skipping compressed ‘the different stages of the journey’ in ‘an amalgam of archaic with more contemporary forms’ (1934: 27). Such combined development was the distinctive feature of capitalism. While it had taken capitalist forms in the US and Germany, it could also take communist forms, as it did in the USSR. Both forms constituted a rejection by particular countries of the unfavourable position they had been assigned in the international division of labour.

As I have argued elsewhere (Desai 2013a), contrary to neo-classical views that productive capacity has spread around the world through

markets, or the view in certain Marxist quarters that it has spread through imperialism (Warren 1980), it has actually spread as a result of the operation of the dialectic of UCD. This dialectic has characterised capitalism since its origins. The first instances of combined development were the US and Germany which industrialised to challenge the United Kingdom's industrial supremacy as the first capitalist industrial power, and the most recent ones are the BRIC countries and other emerging powers. This is why the development and industrialisation of today's developing countries must be seen within the historical perspective that encompasses that of the 'now developed countries' (Chang 2002; Desai 2011).

### **Specificities of post-war combined development**

While the rejection of existing positions in the international division of labour had deep historical roots, which connect our understanding of the experience of developing countries today to that of the now developed countries, the associated idea that this might be promoted by anti-imperialist solidarity and co-operation among developing countries was the product of the specificity of the post-war conjuncture in which Third-World countries embarked on their development. SSC can best be understood if it is seen as having gone through two distinct phases. In the first phase, which culminated in the demand for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) in 1974, SSC emerged as a powerful motivation and aspiration but its realisation left much to be desired. Indeed, the developments that followed the demand for the NIEO, including two 'lost decades' of development, seemed to suggest that it was roundly defeated. In retrospect, however, the second and contemporary phase, in which SSC was realised much more substantially and the discourse about it was considerably more pragmatic and muted, can clearly be seen to rest on the gains of that first phase.

The idea of SSC as an alternative to North–South linkages emerged in the post-war period rather than in conjunction with earlier attempts at combined development because of three new factors. There was, first, the sheer number of countries that now sought to industrialise. This was a radically novel situation, contrasting starkly with the relatively isolated cases of industrialisation hitherto. It

created special circumstances and these had to be understood by new theories. One of the most important was the Prebisch-Singer Hypothesis (Prebisch 1950; Singer 1975/1950) about deteriorating terms of trade for agricultural production. It contradicted the neo-classical expectation that they would, over time, rise because productivity would increase in manufacturing faster than in agriculture. This could not happen precisely because of the sheer number of hitherto agricultural economies which now sought to increase their export earnings to industrialise.

There was, second, the fact that with decolonisation and the resulting gain in policy autonomy by the newly independent countries, the formerly imperial developed countries lost the access to colonial markets that they had once secured by imposing 'one way free trade' on their colonies. In place of colonial markets, they now had to expand their own markets by increasing domestic working-class consumption to a hitherto unprecedented extent (Desai 2013a; 2015). Though forced on capitalist countries, this was in itself an entirely salutary development for Western working classes. However, it also created a new international pattern of demand in which developing countries' gains in policy autonomy and their ability to protect domestic markets were offset by the small size of their markets, shrunk by decades of colonialism. So they were put in a position of competing with one another for the far deeper First-World markets, and the idea of SSC was in part a way of replacing this competition with co-operation.

### **The transition from an imperial to an international world ...**

The third factor affecting the timing of SSC's emergence was post-war multilateralism. While it was, as most claim, an idea, it was more than that: it was a necessity, and understanding this and how it was not fulfilled in the post-war period is critical for our purposes as it is shrouded in misunderstandings.

The structures of international trade and finance which had worked, in a manner of speaking, before 1914 had broken down in the course of the Thirty Years Crisis of 1914–45. Indeed, their breakdown was a major component of that crisis. The broken-down structures were not, as the widely accepted Hegemony Stability Theory (which originated in Kindleberger 1973) would have it, a stable

gold-sterling standard regime presided over by the UK and eventually replaced in the post-war period by one centred on the dollar and the US. In reality, the so-called gold standard was always less stable than generally believed (De Cecco 1984) and US attempts to effect a replacement were bound to be even less so (as I argue in Desai 2013a), not least because the gold-sterling regime, such as it was, rested on Britain's vast formal empire, something which the post-war US patently lacked.

Indeed, what had broken down in the Thirty Years' Crisis was the imperial order, and by the end of that crisis it was replaced by an international one. This new order would be overwhelmingly governed by international relations between its constituent independent nation states, not imperial ones between mother countries and their colonies and war-inducing imperial competition between the imperial powers. The international governance and international economic governance of this new order could only be based on multilateral structures. Needless to say, the nation states that would be the collective authors of such structures would not be willing to settle for arrangements in which they were not free to pursue national economic goals – including, pre-eminently, those of development, industrialisation, and full employment. This would mean, above all, a rejection of free markets and free trade (Block 1977).

### **...and the US attempt to turn back the clock**

This was recognised by all parties but such recognition was at best grudging on the part of the US. For it had set its heart on having its turn at being the 'managing segment' of the world economy, with its currency serving as that of the world as, it imagined, the UK had been before 1914 (Parrini 1969). Its power to attempt to realise this impossible goal had been magnified by the war, which had destroyed rival powers' economies while boosting its own to an extent unknown before or since. So the US sought on the one hand to advance its agenda, which was antithetical to the very conception of multilateral economic governance, under the camouflage of its rhetoric. On the other, it attempted to compromise the multilateral structures that had been created – the famous Bretton Woods quartet of the United Nations (UN), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the World Bank, and the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) – by biasing them towards free markets and free trade, and by securing for itself and the dollar a privileged position in them (Block 1977; Desai 2013a).

In doing so, the US ensured that Keynes's idea of a multilaterally managed super-sovereign currency would not come to fruition (Desai 2009; 2013a; and 2012, which details the cost the world in general and the Third World in particular have paid and continue to pay for these arrangements, and reviews the possibilities for alternatives to them). Instead, the US dollar would have a privileged world role. It also ensured that the three main institutions of international economic governance would be biased towards free trade, which would initially exclude most developing countries from participating in them (Block 1977; Hudson 1972; Murphy 1983).

By contrast, the newly independent countries of the Third World needed and were always more committed to and earnest about multilateral international economic governance of a sort which left individual nation states with the policy autonomy to regulate their economies. Here lay the crux of the battles that would be fought out in coming decades between North and South.

As the emergence of multipolarity encourages us to look at the recent and more distant history of the capitalist world order afresh, the history of the post-war tussle between the developed capitalist countries and the developing and communist countries (and we should remember that China continues to be ruled by the Communist Party) will come into clearer focus as the key axis of tension and struggle. As so many of the most prescient critics of the US world role have long recognised, the Cold War was waged as much against developing countries attempting to break out of relations of 'complementarity' with the US and the West as against communism. Along this axis of UCD, developing and communist countries, combined developers all, attempted to counteract US and developing country influence and power to create more truly multilateral structures of international economic governance which would permit sufficient variety of economic forms so both forms of combined development, capitalist and communist, could be accommodated. Indeed, this is where SSC first emerged as an idea and a set of practices *avant la lettre*.

**SSC Mark I**

If SSC was less than adequately realised in the first phase, it was certainly not due to any lack of understanding of its necessity. Such necessity was underscored by reams of critical scholarship on development; much of it produced by UNCTAD, itself arguably one of the earliest and most important of the products of SSC. UNCTAD's analysis pointed out that, by remaining imbricated in their hub-and-spoke economic links of trade and investment with the developed world, developing countries were simply perpetuating the unfavourable international division of labour.

The problem for many decades after the Second World War, however, was that North–South links formed when the developing countries were (formal or informal) colonies of the developed world seemed inescapable. The formerly imperial, advanced, industrial countries recovering from wartime devastation were the growth powerhouses of the post-war period. Without substantial industrialisation in developing countries, their trade complementarities were strongest with the developed countries and, indeed, very weak with other developing countries whose productive structures were far too similar. And not only did North–South trade have the strongest prospects for the export earnings that could finance the investment in industrialisation necessary to break out of North–South linkages, they were also the chief sources of the necessary capital and technology. It seemed a Catch-22. If, over the following decades, some substantial industrialisation was nevertheless achieved in the Third World, it was thanks to a combination of the ability of many developing countries to take the high and hard road of attempting industrialisation in these difficult circumstances, and to their willingness to stand up to the inevitable pressures from the developed world to which these attempts were inevitably subject, and to key SSC initiatives.

The Bandung Afro-Asian Conference of 1955, the launch of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1977, creation of the Group of 77 and UNCTAD in 1964, and the demand for a NIEO a decade later were probably the greatest milestones in this early phase of SSC. Craig Murphy's carefully researched study of *The Emergence of the NIEO Ideology* traces them to the widely shared agreement about the need for multilateral international economic governance at the end of the

Thirty Years' Crisis of 1914–45 (Murphy 1983: 28–29).

The conflict between the developed world and the rest was slow to emerge in the early post-war years not least because the North–South economic divide was considerably less sharp than it would later become. The size of many Latin American economies, for instance, was not only fairly large, especially when considered against the background of the devastation of Europe and Japan, but many among them could point to their contribution to European recovery, as indeed could India (34). These contributions had been made in the name of international solidarity and collective international responsibility for restoring the world economy to health, and the contributors expected a certain reciprocity once the immediate problems of the war-devastated economies were addressed.

However 'as soon as industrialization became an openly discussed topic, the ideological split between north and south became obvious' (43). Third-World countries interpreted Chapter 9 of the UN charter, which spoke, *inter alia*, of 'respecting "equal rights" of nations large and small, of promoting better standards of living, full employment, and development' (quoted in Murphy 1983: 29) as giving them the right to violate the principles of free markets, free trade and even property (in cases of nationalisation of foreign-owned enterprises, for example) in the interest of promoting development and asserting sovereign rights over resources and productive capacity. It also, according to them, imposed upon the developed countries the duty to aid developing countries in their efforts to industrialise (28–29). These efforts were, moreover, justified in terms of the widely accepted goals of expanding production, employment, and trade worldwide. However, it soon became clear that US and developed countries generally had no intention of aiding Third-World industrialisation to anywhere near the extent that European recovery had been aided; and worse, they even justified the existing international division of labour in neo-classical terms as 'specialisation' and, for good measure, rationalised the lack of industrialisation in the Third World as a 'cultural' matter (44).

The critique of such ideas, which would soon take the form of a fully fledged 'modernisation theory' (Gillman 2003), by intellectuals from the Third World was now

inaugurated by the work of Raul Prebisch on terms of trade between industrial and agricultural countries. The unfairness of the developed countries' position was further underlined when these intellectuals were able to point to a range of practices of developed countries and their corporations which violated their own free-market principles. These included the role of northern monopoly corporations in fixing prices, and high military spending as a form of economic stimulus (Murphy 1983: 45).

These grievances led governments of the newly independent Asian and African countries to cement a new solidarity, which climaxed in the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference in 1955. Sino–Indian relations paved the way, particularly the 'Panchsheel' or five principles of peaceful co-existence: mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference, and co-operation. Together, these amounted to 'a recognition of the rights of states to have different economic and political systems' (37) and were adumbrated in treaties between the two countries. While Third-World states, not least India and China, have had their conflicts and even wars, '[w]ith inconsequential modifications [these principles] have been included in all the key agreements among Third World countries that became the background for the New International Economic Order proposals' (37).

The initial emphasis of Third-World solidarity amid rising East–West tensions was on support for the principles of the UN Charter, in particular equal sovereignty and non-interference. Following a conference in Cairo in 1957, they created the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) at Belgrade in 1961. Though its proclaimed goal was to steer a middle path between the capitalist and communist blocs, the logics of UCD ensured that the NAM would always sail closer to the communist countries than to the capitalist ones.

Economic dissatisfactions were also emerging. The developing world had long complained about monopoly pricing of manufactured goods and the lack of an equivalent structure in relation to the prices of primary commodities. One answer was a commodity producers' cartel, and the first and most successful of these, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), was created in 1960. Broader southern unity found an initial expression in the creation of

the Group of 77 and UNCTAD by the UN in 1964 on the strength of Second- and Third-World votes in the United Nations General Assembly and on the basis of a rival understanding of world trade issues to that embodied in the GATT. UNCTAD was charged with the responsibility of developing that understanding on a range of fronts which eventually included the role of trade in the widening North–South income gap, transnational corporations, commodity prices, technology transfer, tied aid, international debt, the international monetary system, and the international financial system. Over the decades, UNCTAD has been at the forefront of developing critical perspectives that challenge the Northern views on all these issues (UNCTAD 2004). This role has not, naturally, been uncontroversial: witness the Northern countries' attack on UNCTAD for its prescient analysis of the housing bubble and the 2008 financial crisis that ensued when it burst (Prashad 2012).

These developments climaxed in the proposals for a NIEO in 1974. It represented the fruition of the foundational intellectual work done by UNCTAD as well as a range of other agencies such as the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) and intellectuals, particularly the Dependency School. It came at a time when the larger international system that the US had attempted to construct and which was the target of the developing world's critique entered its most serious crisis.

Given the apparent (and only apparent) restoration of the system in the 1980s and 1990s, it is often hard today to appreciate the gravity of that crisis. The dollar-gold system had collapsed in 1971 and practically the entire world (Europe, the South, and OPEC) was in revolt (Hudson 1977: 59 ff.) against the US and in 'a movement ... to become independent of the U.S. economic orbit and more closely integrated economically and politically with one another' (Hudson 1977: 1). In this contest, the call for a NIEO 'based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all States, irrespective of their economic and social systems which shall correct inequalities and redress existing injustices, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development and peace and justice for present and future generations' (United Nations

1974) constituted a frontal challenge to the broken-down Bretton Woods system. It was ‘a defiant call for international trade, finance and monetary systems that would amend or replace those that were already existing’ (Murphy 1983: 113). It also represented an unprecedented state of unity among Third-World countries based on the recognition that they all suffered from ‘the same international structural impediments to development’ (110).

### South–South co-operation today

The call for a NIEO would constitute the high point of a common Southern front for decades as the crisis of the 1970s appeared to be resolved (though only apparently and temporarily) on capitalist and First-World terms which also consigned the developing world to two lost decades of development. During this time, Third-World unity fell into disarray, and when South–South co-operation re-emerged in a new form, beginning in the late 1990s, it was connected with the emergence of the BRIC countries and other emerging economies which widened the income gaps within the Third World, raising the new questions about the meaning of SSC mentioned earlier. To put these in context, we must first survey the nature and dimensions of the linkages between developing countries today.

### Trade

With the post-war shift in the pattern of demand towards first-world working class consumption, and the widening divergence in incomes between first and Third Worlds, the major problem for developing countries was their low and decreasing role in international trade, in particular when measured by value (rather than volume). This began to be reversed in the current century. Developing countries began to account for an increasing contribution to world growth, and an increasing share of world trade, going from about 25 per cent in 1985 to about 45 per cent in 2012 (UNCTAD 2013c: 2). Moreover, within this, South–South trade accounted for about 25 per cent of global trade, having doubled over 20 years. This increase was led by trade between Asian developing countries and Chinese exports in particular accounted for nearly 20 per cent of South–South trade. In terms of products, though fuels accounted for 25 per cent of South–South trade, manufactured goods came in second

at 19 per cent and parts and components for electrical and electronic goods, at 15 per cent (UNCTAD 2013d).

### Aid

Depending on how aid is counted, Southern countries are changing the aid regime slightly but significantly, or massively. If aid is counted in the hitherto conventional way, South–South aid constitutes only 6.3 per cent of the world total (Centre for Policy Dialogue 2014: 12). However, ‘when the external financing from the national development banks and state export–import banks of the BRICs to the developing world are added into the mix, the numbers get much larger and exceed the lending totals from the World Bank’ (Chin and Quadir 2012: 494). This amounts to a veritable ‘silent revolution’ in aid (Woods 2008).

This quantitative change is magnified when one considers the changing aid scenario more generally. On the one hand, traditional donors (the developed countries) have been scaling back their aid thanks to austerity, making it more targeted towards the poorest and shifting it away from broader development goals of increasing production and productivity. The focus has increasingly been on ‘humanitarian aid’ within the wider framework of humanitarian intervention and its inevitable less savoury accompaniment, regime change. On the other hand, new and newly important donors from the South are emphasising broader development goals, including infrastructure and industrialisation, re-labelling aid as ‘partnership for development’ and steering clear of political conditionalities. China, in particular, which is a ‘net donor’, has attempted to remain a recipient of aid in a larger effort to retain its identity as a Third-World country, though how long donors will allow this to continue is another matter (Chin 2012).

### Foreign direct investment

The growth of the BRICs and emerging economies is also transforming the world of international production. Foreign direct investment (FDI) is no longer the preserve of developed countries as it was until very recently. Flows of FDI as well as stocks from developing countries in general, and the BRICs in particular, are growing: the share of developing economies in FDI has risen from 12 per cent in 2000 to 35 per cent in 2012

(UNCTAD 2013b: 4). The share of the four BRICs countries rose from 1 per cent of the total in 2000 to 10 per cent in 2012 (UNCTAD 2013b: 5). In the context of crisis and austerity in the developed world, these shares are likely to grow. In 2012, nearly half of the BRICs investments went to other developing economies while 42 per cent went to the developed world and the rest to transition economies (UNCTAD 2013b: 5).

The pattern of FDI from the BRICs focuses on acquiring locational assets such as workforce skills or access to international markets to increase competitiveness, on investment within the home region, and on investment further afield to access new markets or resources. Such FDI is characterised by strategic considerations rather than short-term profits, something the corporations can do more easily because so many of them are state-owned, such as the majority of Chinese TNCs and those from the other BRICs such as Petrobras, ONGC Videsh and Gazprom. These TNCs 'have become truly global players, as they possess – among other things – global brand names, management skills, and competitive business models. Some of them, ranked by foreign assets, are: CITIC (China), COSCO (China), Lukoil (Russian Federation), Gazprom (Russian Federation), Vale S.A. (Brazil), Tata (India) and ONGC Videsh (India)' (UNCTAD 2010: 7). While there have always been state-owned TNCs from the developed world, such as France Telecom, the increased profile of the BRICs in FDI has increased their number. Both state-owned and private TNCs from the BRICs enjoy considerable state backing.

### International economic governance

As we have seen, deep differences between developed and developing countries over the nature and shape of international economic governance have existed from the beginning of the post-war era, and they culminated in the demand for a NIEO by the developing and communist countries in the 1970s. It appeared for a long time thereafter that the matter had been settled in favour of the developed world for good. However, the underlying issues have never gone away and in the new century the BRICs and emerging economies have begun to pose a powerful challenge in and to the inherited institutions of international economic governance. This is evident in a number of ways. The G7 has

been replaced by the G20 as the chief forum for international economic policy co-ordination, so that this is no longer the preserve of Western countries but includes a majority of developing countries as well as Russia. In the WTO (notwithstanding its launch, amid great fanfare, as the flagship of 'globalisation'), the clash between Northern and Southern demands ensured that negotiations of the first round of WTO talks, the Doha Development Round, would remain stalled. More generally, thanks to the increasing problems of the developed world and the structures of international economic governance they have created, combined with the increasing assertion and importance of the developing world, a 'productive incoherence' has emerged in the established institutions of international economic governance, widening the 'policy space' for the developing world through a series of bilateral and multilateral and regional initiatives (Grabel 2010; 2011; Tussie 2010) as well as some grander ones like planned BRICs development bank and reserve pooling initiatives (Desai 2013b; 2013c).

And there are at least some indications that a deeper and broader challenge to the flawed Bretton Woods and dollar-centred institutions of international economic governance might be afoot. Within months of the collapse of Lehman Brothers, the governor of the People's Bank of China was calling for what amounted to a revolution in the international monetary system: the creation of a super-sovereign currency on the model of Keynes's original proposals for the Bretton Woods conference (Desai 2009; 2010; Zhou 2009). At the same time, the BRICs, in the van of the developing countries in general, are calling for a reform of the IMF and the World Bank and are outflanking the inevitable resistance from the developed world by moving towards building alternative institutions of international economic governance such as a BRICS development bank.

### Conclusion

We can now return to the questions about the extent, sustainability, and political character of SSC raised earlier. The above survey of SSC should make it clear that both the growth of emerging economies and co-operation between them are not only considerable, but are changing the nature of the world



economy and its governance. The question of whether these trends are sustainable is more complex and the answer depends on whether emerging-economy governments are able to see the writing on the wall that sustaining their growth requires a U-turn from the neo-liberal path they have embarked upon, even if this may not be particularly palatable to powerful interests within their respective jurisdictions.

As was pointed out earlier, there is no guarantee that they will. However, three factors may force their hand. There is, first, the example of China, which not only remains the most important and fastest growing among the major emerging economies, but also appears to have read this writing on the wall most clearly. Increasingly, governments aiming for growth will be taking their lessons from the demonstrated success of China rather than neo-liberal preaching from stagnant Western countries. Secondly, stagnant Western economies can no longer support neo-liberal export-led growth with their demand as they did before 2008. Finally, emerging-economy governments are today, more than ever, under pressure to accelerate growth from their own restive middle classes whose revolts across the developing world, from Venezuela to Egypt and from Turkey to Thailand, are in response to slowing growth. These pressures can be expected to lead them eventually, that is after a longer or shorter period during which their attempts to achieve growth along neo-liberal lines are finally proved to be in vain, to a more developmental path.

Finally, there are questions about the political character of SSC today: Is it simply a replication of Northern imperialism on a smaller shabbier scale? There is certainly no doubt that, as Jayati Ghosh has pointed out, ‘much of the cross-border economic interaction has been driven by corporate interests rather than broader interests of the citizenry in general’ and that this is why ‘many recent South–South trade and investment agreements (and the resulting processes) have been similar in unfortunate ways to North–South ones, not just in terms of the protection they afford to corporate investors but even in guarding intellectual property rights’ (Ghosh 2013). And certainly a shift towards more progressive policies will require a greater democratisation of economies as well as international economic linkages. Such a democratisation is, one should note, more

likely if the emerging economies shift away from the neo-liberal agenda, as their continued growth requires.

However, even as things stand, there is an increasing number of studies now about Chinese trade and investment with Africa, and while none is entirely uncritical of its effects, the weight of the evidence seems to point to a qualitatively more equal relationship between China and the African countries it deals with than the relationships between African and Western countries (e.g. Brautigam 2009). Not only do the emerging economies come with histories of anti-imperialism rather than imperialism, but the increase in the sources of trade, aid, and investment that they have generated has, in itself, expanded the options for any canny government much as the existence of the USSR in the 20th century expanded opportunities for the developing countries. This was ever the promise of UCD.

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## Violence and Structural Imperialism

The Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung coined the term 'structural imperialism' in a paper published in the *Journal of Peace Research* (Galtung 1971), established by Galtung himself in 1964. The theory of structural imperialism seeks to explain both the existence

and the persistence of inequalities of all sorts between countries, assuming that equality should be a major goal of society. These inequalities are the result of a structural dichotomy in the world system between imperialist and exploited in which the former dominates and exploits the latter. Similarly, within each country there is a class structure which is divided between 'centre' and 'periphery', and therefore the world system mirrors the national cleavages or vice versa.

In a subsequent article (1980), Galtung explains and highlights some issues raised by the original paper, assessing and evaluating how the world system as it then existed could still be understood using the structural theory devised ten years before, and whether the theory should be changed to cope with new challenges. The concept of structural imperialism provides an interpretation of international domination without appealing to specific actors or motivations. In the structural theory, imperialism is a special type of domination between nations and not merely an outright exercise of power. The existing structural division in the world system creates varying degrees of harmony among centres, including the 'centres' in the periphery of the world. Similarly, there are varying degrees of conflicts of interests, defined as countries pursuing incompatible objectives, such as reducing the 'living condition gap' between centre and periphery. Inequality is a structural feature of capitalism.

Although the same structural division exists within individual countries, formally structural imperialism is a relationship in which a country in the centre exerts power over a peripheral country, creating an overall conflict or disharmony of interests, at the same time as harmony between the centres in both countries increases. Consequently, this requires a strong disharmony between the peripheries, similar to the consequences of an existing labour aristocracy in Lenin's theory of imperialism. Thus the transference of wealth and resources from the periphery to the centre of the world system creates inequality, with both centres improving their positions or living conditions at the expense of the periphery in the periphery, but not necessarily of the periphery in the centre. This creates some degree of cohesion in the centre of the system, at the same time as the periphery is strangled by different types of conflict. Structural imperialism is therefore

an international system of domination, yet with substantial intra-national repercussions that feed and are fed by the international structure.

Structural imperialism has two mechanisms, five types, and three phases. The two mechanisms are the vertical interaction relation between centre and periphery (between and within countries) and the feudal structure of interactions between centres and peripheries in the world system. The former relates to exchanges between centre and periphery, mainly in economic and financial terms, but with different effects, positive and negative, international and intra-national. Galtung assumes some sort of unequal exchange, but in an evolving world structure that changes both countries permanently (in the 1980 article, he argues that there are no fixed poles in the world system). The theory emphasises the existence of a processing gap in production between centre and periphery that is paramount to the theory of structural imperialism. This gap, mainly technological, is responsible for the inequality between countries even under conditions of equal exchange. Yet the most important effect of imperialism is a cumulative asymmetric interaction in which the living condition gap increases, reinforcing the initial inequality. Consequently, the periphery in the world system suffers from persistent poverty.

The feudal structure of interactions explains the persistence of inequality. This structure precludes the likelihood of interactions between peripheries in the periphery of the world system, and of connections between peripheries linked to a specific centre with other centres. Therefore a possible political organisation of peripheral countries is avoided. The feudal structure imposes upon the periphery the asymmetric vertical interaction based on trade relations, with peripheral countries exporting commodities and raw materials, in a process that generates dependency and vulnerability, and centre countries exporting manufactured goods. Structural imperialism is therefore, for the centre, a policy of divide and conquer.

There are five types of imperialism. These types cannot be easily distinguished and are different dimensions of the same structural imperialism. The first type is economic imperialism, stressing vertical interactions and the processing gap. The second is

political imperialism, associated with decision-making in the centres and obedience in the periphery, given the power difference. Military imperialism is the third type, characterised by differences in terms of the machines and technology available to build means of destruction in the centre, discipline the periphery, and allow the acquisition of only traditional hardware. Next, communications imperialism includes communications and transport, controlling the interactions that enhance the feudal structure between centres and periphery; this type of imperialism has influenced the area of communications studies and media imperialism (Thussu 2006). Finally, cultural imperialism imposes a separation between masters in the centre and apprentices in the periphery, creating monopolised structures of scientific knowledge, creative activity, and learning.

Regarding the phases of structural imperialism, the theory posits that domination is stable over time, but that it depends on the existence of different degrees of harmony between centre and periphery in the world system. With under developed means of transportation and communications, colonialism requires a physical military presence. The second phase, neo-colonialism, starts when communications and transport improve. In this phase, there are international organisations physically present in the periphery, such as multinationals, political groups, military alliances, news corporations, and non-governmental organisations. These institutions, which establish identities between the centres in the centre and in the periphery, can change over time, creating five sub-phases. In the first sub-phase, national frontiers make their presence difficult. In the second, the foreign elements become subversive regarding national governments. The third sub-phase has organisations created in the periphery of the system, controlled by the centre in the periphery, but directed by the centre in the centre. During the fourth sub-phase, the nation states in the periphery become less important and the asymmetry of power between the world structures becomes clear. The fifth sub-phase presents the possibility of globalisation without states.

In the third phase of imperialism, neo-neo-colonialism, instantaneous and flexible communications networks make physical presence less important, and the centres can co-ordinate their domination tactics more

effectively without relocating to the periphery. The theory claims that military intervention is not the same as military invasion.

The next issue regards the convertibility of one type of structural imperialism into another. Structural imperialism is not hierarchical, but characterised by multiple effects, spin-offs, and spill-overs that reinforce each other. Co-operation and agreement among elites, in the various centres, generalise imperialism, requiring it to be convertible: from the economic to the military type, from political to economic, from military to communications, from communications to cultural, and so on. Liberal democracies assume the equal distribution of all different attributes or types, but the only locus in which they can all co-exist is at the centre of the world system. Moreover, this concentration makes possible the domination of peripheral countries. A perfect structural imperialism would require, however, satisfying all the conditions described for harmonising the class interests at the centre. This is an empirical matter, and Galtung proceeds to evaluate the economic gap between nations in terms of development, inequality, vertical trade, and feudal interactions, accepting the positivist methodology with reservations. The results obtained by Galtung cannot disprove the theory, but cannot shed light on how structural imperialism works either.

Gidengil carried out another empirical test, using cluster analysis approach (Gidengil 1978). She found a group of 20 countries, in a sample of 68, displaying characteristics of centre, 13 characterised as periphery, and other countries considered intermediate (see below). The results support the claim that vertical interaction is the major source of inequality. Youngblood (1982) applied the theory in order to understand the interactions between church and state in the Philippines and equally found empirical support for it.

It is possible to generalise the theory of structural imperialism in different ways. First, it is possible to include three types of nation (centre, periphery, and intermediate) and three types of class. Second, it can cope with the existence of more than one imperialism and extra-territorial actors. The main conclusions will still obtain. Nonetheless, the strategic implications of the theory of structural imperialism are clear. There is an international and intra-national system of domination, and in order to overcome it

structural changes are required. The strategy regarding the international part must involve horizontal interactions, fostering equal exchange and autonomy, and de-feudalising interactions, enhancing equal exchange and developing institutions in the periphery to manage class conflicts and disharmony of interests. Multinational and symmetric organisations must contribute to multilateral interactions among centres and peripheries, while destroying asymmetric organisations. In order to change intra-national domination structurally, it is important to reduce harmony and increase disharmony among the centres in the centre, by means of decreased contacts that force changes in objectives, and to reduce disharmony among the peripheries by means of violent and non-violent revolutions and co-operation.

Advanced imperialism is structural rather than directly violent. It is a matter of degree, combining the ability to exert structural violence with the retention of military imperialism as a major resource. This requires discussing the concept of structural violence, another contribution of Galtung. The author first coined this term in a paper published in the 1960s (Galtung 1969), where he characterises the pervasive inequalities between and within countries, intrinsic features of structural imperialism, as a form of structural violence. Violence in general is always the cause of the shortfall between actual and potential outcomes. The periphery can never achieve the higher performance of the centre as a result.

Galtung distinguishes between personal or direct violence, in which there is an actor committing it, and structural or indirect violence, where there is no such exercise by a specific agent and it is more difficult to identify the explicit source of damage. Structural imperialism is always a form of structural violence, because it is embedded in the structure of the world system. In another work (Galtung 1990), the author develops the concept of cultural or symbolic violence, understood as a means, including religion and ideology, to legitimise the other forms of violence.

After exposing the theory's main tenets, it is possible to evaluate its contribution to the knowledge about imperialism and international domination. In contrast to the structural violence approach, which has become a widely influential concept (see Vorobej

2008 and Weigert 2008), it seems that the theory of structural imperialism has not been adequately appreciated. There are not many studies criticising or testing it in this regard, despite its shortcomings. For instance, it downplays the role of capital exports, mainly in its modern form of multinational enterprises (Petras and Veltmeyer 2007). Furthermore, social classes are only implicit in the theory of structural imperialism. The theory equally underrates the role of resistance against domination in the periphery. The claim that globalisation could move forward without an active role for the state, at least in the centre, is doubtful (Panitch and Gindin 2012).

Perhaps the theory has fallen down along with the Structuralist approach in the social sciences with the rise of post-structuralism and post-modernism. Nonetheless, it provides a wide variety of insights and tools to understand the international relations of domination and national conflicts. The need for horizontal interactions that it calls for as a way to weaken the domination of the centre over periphery anticipates today's South–South co-operation (UNIDO 2009). Inequality is persistent and has been widening (Milanović 2005), as foreseen by the theory. The most important contribution of the theory of structural imperialism, however, is perhaps its analytical method. The theory provides a powerful analytical perspective and therefore offers an alternative to agent-based analytical perspectives. The structural approach regarding nations can incorporate the dynamics of social class in the centre and in the periphery, since it is implicitly there. The approach has the potential, to this date unfulfilled, to combine and unify the recent scholarship in the theory of imperialism and the most important components of imperialism into a single systematic and dynamic account of the fundamental issues of capitalist international and national relations.

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