

## MARXISM AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

### THE MODES OF PRODUCTION DEBATE

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There can be little doubt now, in any circles, as to the complete inadequacy of the development perspective that rose to prominence in the 1950's under the title of the "modernisation" approach and which found its main apologists in American social science (see the critique by Frank, 1970). The events of the 1970's (Latin America, Vietnam, Angola, Rhodesia, Iran, Chile) have illustrated the importance of Marxist analysis and its use as the ideological base of liberation movements. But increasingly, as more and more work has been produced on this particular subject so it has become clear that it is impossible any longer to talk of a single Marxist perspective on the issue of underdevelopment and imperialism (see Foster-Carter, 1973). Beginning with the Frank/Laclau debate in the 1960's Marxist theory has been increasingly divided within itself as to developing a coherent and practically useful paradigm. What this paper will attempt to do is to review the main body of literature that has grown up around the central theme of 'mode of production' and the process of transition between different modes, and will tentatively suggest future lines of analysis that could prove useful. In particular we will look at the work of Frank, Laclau, Rey and Dupré, Banaji and Hamza Alavi and suggest that the latter's approach is the most convincing. To apply the main features of the debate to contemporary underdevelopment we will argue that we need to reintegrate discussion in terms of a true Marxist social formation that is a complex unity, combining relations of exploitation, relations of production, circulation,

distribution, reproduction and other elements of the traditionally economic side of mode of production. In addition an integration of the superstructures and especially the role of the State into a Marxist perspective of the colonial and post-colonial reality is necessary. History, process and totality become the key terms, as well as the theoretical relationship between modes of production and social formations. (For parts of the ensuing argument we have drawn on Foster-Carter, 1978, especially his exposition of Rey's general theory.)

### I The Critique of Frank

At the root of most radical analyses of underdevelopment we find the name of Andre Gunder Frank and it is with his most influential essay that we will start here. "The Development of Underdevelopment" (Frank, 1970) posited the theory of metropolis-satellite relations between the advanced capitalist countries and the underdeveloped periphery. In his work on Chile (Frank, 1967) Frank introduced two important concepts that underlay his whole work. The first one was the rejection of the theory of the 'dual society' where Latin America is divided into capitalist (developed) and feudal (underdeveloped) sectors. From its very first contact with mercantile capitalism Latin America has been incorporated into a capitalist world system. He writes,

the expansion of the capitalist system over past centuries effectively and entirely penetrated even the apparently most isolated sectors of the underdeveloped world (Frank. 1970:5).

Thus there were only seemingly feudal remnants that were created by the process of underdevelopment. We shall come back to this important point later with Laclau.

The second concept that he introduced was the contradictions of capitalism that 'caused' underdevelopment. The first contradiction was that of the "expropriation/appropriation of economic surplus" and involved

the distinction made by Paul Baran (to whom Frank owes an enormous intellectual debt) between 'actual' and 'potential' surplus. 'Actual' surplus is that part of the economic surplus that is saved and invested. 'Potential' surplus is that which is not available to society because of the monopoly structure of power. As David Booth has pointed out this is a different usage of the term 'surplus' than other Marxists have used. (in Oxall et al, 1975:68). The second contradiction that led to underdevelopment was 'metropolis-satellite polarisation'. Other analysts have termed this phenomenon unequal development (Amin, 1976). So,

One and the same historical process of the expansion and development of capitalism throughout the world has simultaneously generated - and continues to generate - both economic development and structural underdevelopment.

Rather than being stages of evolution (or 'stages of growth' as Rostow has labeled them) underdevelopment and development are dialectically related and interdependent. This polarisation between metropolis/satellite takes place on the national as well as the international level. The third contradiction was that of continuity in change. He referred to the

continuity and ubiquity of the structural essentials of economic development and underdevelopment throughout the expansion and development of the capitalist system at all times and places (Frank, 1967:12).

So the emphasis was on structures of dominance rather than on other historical changes that Latin America had experienced. This very basically is Frank's model. Latin America is and always was capitalist.

The response to Frank has come in two main stages, both of them Marxist. Firstly a group of Latin American Marxists argued that the metropolis/satellite model was overschematic and that what needed to be emphasized was the relations of dominance between the social classes internal to the colony. Dos Santos argued,

the process under consideration, rather than being one

of satellization as Frank believes, is a case of the formulation of a certain type of internal structure conditioned by international relationships of dependence,

and Weaver has stated,

the use of economic surplus, not merely its quantity, must be the centre of attention and this necessitates class analysis.

Frank has agreed himself that such a focus is vital and in one of his later works, Lumpenbourgeoisie: Lumpendevelopment, he writes,

This colonial and neo-colonial relationship to the capitalist metropolis has formed and transformed the economic and class structure, as well as the culture of Latin American Society. These changes in national structures have occurred as a result of periodic changes in the form of colonial dependence.... This colonial and class structure establishes very well defined class interests for the dominant sector of the bourgeoisie. Using government cabinets and other instruments of the state, the bourgeoisie produces a policy of underdevelopment in the economic, social and political life of the 'nation' and the people of Latin America. When a change in the forms of dependence modifies the economic and class structure, this in turn generates changes in the policy of the dominant class which further strengthens the same bonds of economic dependence which produced the policy and thus aggravate still further the development of underdevelopment in Latin America (Frank, 1972).

What this suggests then is an alliance between different bourgeoisies in the world system and while they may be structured in an hierarchy their collective interests are such as to ensure the active participation by the 'junior' members in perpetuating relations of exploitation that subjugate the mass of the people in the colonial countries so that the march of Capital goes unimpeded. Although we would argue that Frank has got the essence of the relationship, in terms of Marxist theory it is not expressed in a coherent and sound manner. We will see one aspect of this below.

The most wideranging critique to emerge of Frank has been from E. Laclau in his article, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America" (Laclau, 1971). He agrees that to view Latin America as a dual economy

is wrong. But instead of Frank's all-embracing and homogeneous capitalism Laclau suggests we view a structured and differentiated whole which is capitalist (i.e. the economic system). But within this are placed modes of production which are principally identified with relations of production and which are feudal and capitalist. Thus for Laclau a mode of production is not characterized by exchange (as for Frank) but by relations of production, and he goes to great lengths to point out the sections in Marx's work where he also identifies relations of production as the central element in mode of production. He suggests that Frank's difficulties in his definition (or non-definition) of what capitalism is start from his failure to recognize the difference between what Marx called 'capitals' and 'capitalism'. So in Marxist terms the mere existence of capital does not mean the existence of capitalism. (The essence of this critique of Frank is a point which Laclau himself would be as well to examine in his own work.) Merchant capital stands as a precursor of the capitalist mode of production. Indeed both Marx and Weber recognize the necessity of mercantile capital for the development of capitalism 'proper'. For Laclau then the mere existence of capital in the realm of exchange in the agrarian sector in Latin America is no proof that it is "developed capitalism's" capital, and explains Frank's basic mistake by reference to translation difficulties of Marx's German (i.e. translating 'capital' into 'capitalism').

Laclau defines a mode of production as

an integrated complex of social productive forces and relations linked to a determinate type of ownership of the means of production (Laclau, 1971).

Ownership of the means of production is recognized as the essential element in the definition of a mode of production which consists of (1) a determinative type of ownership of the means of production; (2) a determinative form of appropriation of the economic surplus; (3) a

determinative degree of development of the division of labour; (4) a determinative level of development of the productive forces. Feudalism exists in Latin America because on these levels there can be observed a difference between the agrarian sector and the urban sector. The agrarian sector is characterized by: extra-economic pressures that subject the labour force to produce a surplus (feudal dues and obligations); that surplus is then appropriated by someone other than the direct producer (appropriated by the landlord from the peasant); the means of production remain the property of the direct producer (the peasant owns the instruments of production as well as 'owning' the land - a share cropper).

Laclau writes,

In the capitalist mode of production, the economic surplus is also subject to private appropriation, but as distinct from feudalism, ownership of the means of production is severed from ownership of labour power; it is that which permits the transformation of labour-power into a commodity, and with this the birth of the wage relation. I believe it is possible within this theoretical framework to situate the problem of dependence at the level of relations of production (Laclau, 1971).

Having thus established to his theoretical satisfaction the existence of different modes of production Laclau then has to theorize the relations between the different modes. As already mentioned the context in which relations between feudal and capitalist take place is the 'economic system' (others have called it the social formation) which designates the mutual relations between different modes. Again Marx is used to differentiate between the concepts of 'mode of production' and 'economic system'. When Marx talked of the production of surplus value he was talking of a mode of production. But when he was theorizing the relations between different modes of production, or different sectors of the same mode, then he was talking about an economic system. So the level of exchange and circulation, which is the level that Frank is operating on, is only the level of the economic system and not that of the mode of

production. For Laclau, far from capitalism being contradictory to feudalism, the effect it has is to actually accentuate and consolidate the 'subordinate' mode. Rather than capital destroying feudalism it strengthens it. Examples are given from the history of Chile which show that capitalist entrepreneurs strengthened servile and traditional exploitation in the countryside to maximize profits. Thus far from the dualist thesis which maintains that two modes of production in an economic system exist independently of each other Laclau emphasizes the 'indissoluble unity' between them.

## II Modes of Production in Indian Agriculture

Although Laclau's critique of Frank has provided invaluable insights into the problem of theorizing the nature of dependence, his own work also has serious weaknesses which until recently were not really recognized. Indeed the influence he has had on development field work has been immense but because of some theoretical deficiencies in his model these have also been problematic. A little publicized debate that went on in the pages of the Economic and Political Weekly between 1970 and 1973 on the characterization of the mode of production of Indian agriculture illustrates some of the problems. Doug McEachern has neatly summarized this debate (McEachern, 1976) in considering the questions that arose within the debate (what are the defining features of capitalism? How do we recognize them in agriculture? How do we define feudalism and its associated forms?). We have to focus on the following issues concerning the transition from "feudalism to capitalism".

- (1) The extent to which commodity production was generalised.
- (2) The extent to which landless labourers constituted a force of free wage-labourers.
- (3) The extent of capitals' involvement in circulation and relations of production.

(4) The significance of tenancy relations in agrarian production.

Firstly, on the question of the extent to which commodity production was generalized, the main protagonists were agreed as to the existence of general commodity production during the colonial period but a failure to specify when it became dominant in the mode resulted in a difference as to its significance. Patnaik argued that generalized commodity production was essentially a graft onto the traditional mode and that it did not alter existing conditions of production. Chattopadhyay, on the other hand, argued that generalized commodity production had to entail the existence of capitalist relations of production. That is, something (relations of production) must have changed to alter the status of non-commodities to commodities. But as Banaji argues, and as we agree below, relations of production are more than just the immediate relations apparent at the point of production. So even if the relations of production at the point of production remain the same it is possible that this could conceal a change in the effective relations of production (as compared to the relations of exploitation) within the context of a much wider definition of mode of production that includes a whole host of other elements. This is one of the major problems with Laclau and we will expand on this later.

Secondly, is the question of the extent to which landless labourers constituted a force of free wage-labourers. Again the argument centred on the extent to which landless labourers were free. Patnaik argued along the thoroughly unmarxist lines that the landless labourers were not really free (although they were free to sell nothing but their labour) because they were bound by poverty, numbers, lack of alternative employment and extra-economic pressures more in common with feudalism. But this is similar to arguing that the working class of New York is not really free (in the strictly Marxist sense of course) because of their lack of educational qualifications, their domination through T.V., etc..

Chattopadhyay, treating the landless labourers as a capitalist workforce was able to connect this to the generalization of commodity production as capitalism. Again we would emphasize the need to examine this in an overall context.

Thirdly, the debate focussed on the extent to which capital in the countryside remained in the sphere of circulation and did not actively affect the production relations in agriculture. This is the main focus of the Frank-Laclau debate and the debaters on India are tied up with very similar types of questions. For Patnaik the distinguishing feature between the feudal landlord and the capitalist was that the surplus be reinvested in improved techniques of agricultural production. This issue of reinvestment raised the very difficult question which McEachern identifies as "the extent to which the experience of colonialism served to intensify various forms of exploitation without capital entering the sphere of production " (McEachern,1976:449). Patnaik reiterated Laclau's perspective that the existence of capital in circulation does not entail capitalism. But then Chattopadhyay does not argue that. Again as in the first two cases the context in which this capital operates is all important, and neither element on its own can be used to justify a characterization one way or the other.

Fourthly, the debate centred on the significance of tenancy relations in agrarian production. It is assumed that tenancy is incompatible with capitalism but both Patnaik and Chattopadhyay agreed that there were possible examples where tenancy was compatible with capitalism. Thus landlords can develop as representatives of landed capital, with tenancy thus transformed as a consequence or they can continue to live through the exploitation of rent. There was also the case whereby the tenant farmed through the use of wage labour and paid the landlord ground rent.

We introduced the Indian debate here as an important example of the

tendencies in development work since Laclau's critique and the kinds of difficulties it leads to. Hamza Alavi has written, "The Indian debate accepts too readily the assumptions and arguments advanced by Laclau having dismissed Frank's problematic totally " (Alavi, 1975). Alavi is not concerned with identifying whether Indian agriculture is capitalist or feudal, for it is clearly neither but in identifying its inbetween nature. He does so by integrating the type of issues examined above into an overall historical process which is reflected in the place of India in the development of a world system and her present role in such. He is positing a new mode of production, a colonial mode of production, which arises directly out of India's colonial relationship with Britain. That will be examined in more detail below. Here we wish to point out two further problems in Laclau's critique (in addition to the above). Firstly, there is the issue of Banaji's distinction between 'relations of exploitation' and 'relations of production'. Relations of exploitation are the particular form in which surplus is appropriated from the direct producer.

Relations of production, on the other hand, are the specific historically determined form which particular relations of exploitation assume due to a certain level of development of the productive forces, to the predominance of particular property forms and so on.... Thus capitalism cannot be defined in terms of the existence or non-existence of wage labour, for the latter is only transformed into a capitalist relation of production under certain historical conditions, in the first place its insertion into a framework of extended reproduction where 'unlimited expansion, perpetual progress, becomes the law of production' in contrast to all pre-capitalist modes of production where production was every time resumed in the same form and on the same scale as previously...thus the error which deduced feudalism from the prevalence of serfdom and the one which deduces capitalism from the existence of wage labour are symmetrical; they both confuse relations of production with relations of exploitation (Banaji, 1972, p. 2498).

Thus both Laclau and Frank are guilty of abstracting from a complex model and process elements that do not make sense except within that framework. But at least Frank is aware of some of the difficulties.

How, for example, would Laclau handle a single worker who is simultaneously "(1) owner of his own land and house; (2) sharecropper on another's land; (3) tenant on a third's land; (4) wage worker during harvest on all these lands; and (5) independent trader of his own home produced commodities " (Frank, 1967, pp. 271-2).

The second problem with Laclau which has been pinpointed with great accuracy by Alavi concerns the problem of contradiction. Laclau posits relations between the two modes as coexisting within the economic system. But if they were separate modes then in a Marxist sense the only relation between them would be one of contradiction and not coexistence. Although he speaks of an "indissoluble unity" it is a unity in an hierarchy, which is a feature of a single mode of production. What seems to be missing in Laclau's account is a notion of process from coexistence to domination. Contradiction implies process and because there is no contradiction there is no process. At least in Frank there is process even if it is of the very simple pre-capitalist to capitalist variety. We will come back to the work of Alavi and Banaji later but we now wish to focus on a European writer, Pierre-Phillipe Rey, who is dealing with similar types of problems, (the transition from primitive to modern) but uses entirely different language in their conceptualization. As such he is, we believe, more theoretically developed than either Frank or Laclau, although we will argue that his work has serious shortcomings which must be dealt with.

### III Rey and the Articulation of Modes of Production

For Frank the issue of contradiction does not arise because we are dealing with a single mode of production. For Laclau contradiction is negated by 'indissoluble unity'. For Rey, contradiction and coexistence are not seen as total opposites but as conflicting features of a historical process in which the Althusserian notion of 'articulation' is vital to

his work. One of the defining features of the seminal work undertaken by Louis Althusser is a redefinition of the classical base/superstructure metaphor from one where the superstructures are a mere reflection of the economic base to a model where the superstructures have their own indices of effectivity (Althusser, 1977) (i.e. they have a determinate role in relation to the base and the other superstructures) both internally, and externally in relation to the base. What Rey and his colleagues have done is to apply this internal articulation between different levels of a mode of production to the articulation between modes of production. So the central notion of contradiction becomes a much more theoretically useful concept because articulation can define and specify the nature of that contradiction. Foster-Carter has written,

...just as Simmel observed 'conflict is a form of sociation' so contradiction among modes of production is a form of articulation. Each concept needs the other: articulation without contradiction would indeed be static and anti-Marxist, but contradiction without articulation (or transition without articulation) fallaciously implies that the waxing and waning of modes of production are quite separate activities, each internally determined, whereas in fact they are linked as are wrestlers in a clinch (Foster-Carter, 1978, p. 73).

This concept thus brings closer the mutual determining effects of contact between different economic units than certainly either Frank or Laclau managed, and even clearer than that 'articulated' by Alavi. Rey, who is the most theoretically advanced of those influenced by Althusser, seeks to explore the place of exchange in the relations between modes of production and the effect of this on relations of exploitation and production - especially on the dominance of one mode over another.

Rey, after introducing the notion of capitalism in Europe as developing not out of a contradiction in feudalism but in fact as feudalism protecting capitalism in its infancy (so that ground rent is identified by Rey as being part of feudalism and appearing as an integral part of

capitalism because of the articulation between the two modes), then goes on to examine the articulation of capitalism with pre-capitalist modes. Post has pointed out that the notion of articulation has two meanings, both of which give a clear definition of the process of articulation. Firstly it means to join together. Secondly it means to give expression to. So as two modes interact they are both affected by their interaction with the other. It is not a case of pure domination.

As Rey writes,

Capitalism can never immediately and totally eliminate the preceding modes of production, nor above all the relations of exploitation which characterize these modes of production. On the contrary, during an entire period it must reinforce these relations of exploitation since it is only this development which permits its own provisioning with goods coming from these modes of production, or with men driven from these modes of production and therefore compelled to sell their labour power to capitalism in order to survive (Foster-Carter, 1978, p.59 ).

Rey identifies three main stages in the process of articulation. (a) Capitalism reinforces the pre-capitalist modes; (b) Capitalism subordinates the pre-capitalist whilst still using it; (c) The pre-capitalist totally disappears. As stated before such a labelling gives articulation a process as well as approaching the notion of the problematic of the contradiction which it negates. Rey writes of

the articulation of two modes of production, one of which establishes its dominance over the other... not as a static given, but as a process, that is to say a combat between two modes of production, with the confrontations and alliances which such a combat implies: confrontations and alliances essentially between the classes which these modes of production define (Foster-Carter, 1978, p.56 ).

So articulation is not just an abstract concept. It is about the basic essentials of imperialism - labour power and raw materials. It is also about alliances between classes with mutual interests of exploitation in the two modes. This notion of exploitation in the pre-capitalist mode is another important advance by Rey.

To illustrate the above types of concepts, Rey (in conjunction with Dupré) chose the case of West African lineage societies and the process of their articulation with capitalism. They start off by examining the role of exchange between elder groups in reproducing the conditions of production in the pre-capitalist mode. We are back again on Frankian territory. Rey and Dupré use Meillassoux's work and set out to examine why goods produced by one group (cadets - unmarried, young, male) can be entirely controlled by another group (the elders). After rejecting a number of conventional explanations based on physical coercion and control of technical knowledge, they argue that the vital element is that they reserve for themselves control of social knowledge and control of the cadets' access to women, which they guarantee by possessing the elite goods which are essential for marriage. So reproduction is achieved, in a sense, both materially and 'ideologically'. Elders in different groups within the mode of production form an alliance to protect their authority and power.

The control of matrimonial exchanges is one of the means by which the elders as a group guarantee the control of the demographic reproduction of the lineages. The reproduction of the cadets' dependence in relation to the elders is correlatively guaranteed (Rey and Dupré, 1973, p. 146).

For a cadet to become an elder he has to follow certain prescribed behaviour. Thus the elders had control of demographic reproduction and they in addition exercised control over the exchange of slaves, which entailed controlling the redistribution of men from demographically strong lineages to weak ones. This demographic reproduction is identified by Rey and Dupré as the essential condition for the reproduction of the conditions of production. The place of exchange (of slaves) is vital in reproduction. So what we have is the exchange of slaves between exchange partners as far as the coast; an exchange which is controlled by the elders of neighbouring groups to guarantee demographic reproduction and

which is based on these elders collectively controlling the elite goods which guarantee their dominant role in relation to the cadets.

Having now an idea of the traditional mode of production with which capitalism articulates we can now look at the precise process of that relationship. In the first period capitalism makes use of the exchange networks which allowed the movement of slaves from the interior to the coast and also the movement of products in the same direction. Factories are then set up on the coast which make use of both labour and raw materials supplied through the traditional mode and protected by the local chiefs. There is an alliance between the elders and the western traders and 'industrialists'. In addition to the installation of factories we can identify the 'tagging on' to the end of the lineage slave exchange, the slave trade of the west. This initial contact with capitalism served to reinforce the pre-capitalist mode of production. But, of course, it was no mere co-existence, for the slave trade could only survive by exploiting the internal contradictions of the lineage societies.

The demographically strong lineages which traditionally had no interest in reintegrating slaves as nominal cadets formed between themselves chains of exchange which excluded weak lineages in which slavery was no longer able to play the role of demographic corrective to more than a minimal extent (Rey and Dupré, 1973, p. 146).

The contradiction between the social function of exchange and the control by elders was further reinforced by this move towards hierarchization. But there is stability for a time. The dominant instance between the two modes is that of exchange. This first phase of articulation thus reinforces the existing mode while heightening and concentrating the contradiction.

The second phase of articulation is the colonial period where capitalism has taken root and become the dominant mode. For Rey and Dupré, colonialism arises because, when commodity exchange replaces slave and trade exchange, the political power of the local power holders (where the

changes of exchange terminated) collapsed. As a result political protection for trade has to be recreated from 'outside'.

The period of trade in products, as opposed to the period of slave trade, is an unstable period which goes by the name of colonialism (Rey and Dupré, 1973, p. 146).

To destroy the pre-capitalist mode Rey and Dupré state that violence is a necessity. Where capitalism is dominant but where pre-capitalist modes still exist and where they are needed by capitalism, violence has to take place on more than the economic level and must enter the superstructural level as well. Capitalism must have a legal and institutional framework to protect its naked economic violence. This mode is described as a 'transitional mode of production' and will dissolve when the time comes to give way to capitalism proper. We will question below the validity of this notion of the development of capitalism proper. By uniting different relations of exploitation under one unity Rey is working on the same ground as Alavi.

The third phase, the complete destruction of pre-capitalist modes by capitalism, has not as yet happened anywhere (and as we shall argue below it cannot structurally happen anywhere). What we would want to stress is that Rey and Dupré's approach seems to us to offer a much clearer picture of the actual process by which capitalism relates to other forms of society which it encounters in its expansion. It is not a mere imposition but a dialectical relationship that is taking place under the notion of articulation.

It was mentioned earlier that Rey and Dupré saw the use of violence between the first and second stage as a universal necessity in the articulation between capitalist and other modes. But it is this colonial relationship and its impact which they do not fully integrate into their otherwise sound theoretical scheme. The problems occur principally when we carefully study the role of the homoficence of

capitalism, the inside/outside distinction on the development of capitalism and the role of the colonial period in characterizing the nature of contemporary underdevelopment. Rey has insisted vociferously his opposition to voluntaristic notions of the development of capitalism (as in Kay's "capital created underdevelopment not because it exploited the underdeveloped world but because it did not exploit enough") and the need to view capitalism as homoficient - i.e. its internal structures and economic laws only allow one form of development. Again we are back in Frankian polemics (Frank, 1975). Thus articulation will have as its final stage the development of capitalism in all the colonies. But this is to leave out of the analysis of capitalist development the role played by active human beings. As Foster-Carter observes, we have heard a lot in the past few years of the latter part of Marx's dictum that "men make their own history but not in conditions of their choosing" and not enough of the former. As he points out, Rey is prepared to make an exception to this homoficiency of capitalism in the case of France between 1871 and 1958. The theoretical question is, if it can happen in France then why not elsewhere? This insistence on homoficiency is all the more irritating in that he has been one of the few Marxist development theorists to fully appreciate the impact the traditional mode of production has on capitalism. Leading from this problem is his view on the distinction (or lack of it) between capitalism emerging from outside or inside. Again Foster-Carter has provided the most illuminating insights into this issue. That Rey is aware of the distinction is clear from some of his statements:

Thus is the transitional social formation subject to a double history, where the contradiction bursts forth between two orders of necessity: on the one hand the history of capital itself, which for the most part is written outside such social formations; on the other hand the history of the transition, specific to the modes of production which are there articulated (Foster-Carter, 1978, p. 64).

But although he is prepared to allow the transitional form this double history he does not seem to see it as significant in terms of the overall development of capitalism. Regardless of its history (indigenous, colonial) capitalism will finally only have one form.

But the deficiency in his work of such a distinction leads to the third problem identified above - the role of the colonial period in characterizing the contemporary state of underdevelopment. The important point is that capitalism in the Third World has not taken a course similar to its development in the West. It is precisely because of this that we can talk of underdevelopment. Foster-Carter has written, and we quote at length,

the 'extraverted' nature of the Third World's original insertion in the capitalist world economy is not just of historical interest: it is a continuing and defining feature, not to be abstracted from, of the very essence of what we mean by 'underdevelopment'. Certainly we may see the thrust of, and indeed accept, Rey's basic claim that at one level the action of capitalism must be homoficent (else we would not be right to call it by a singular name, capitalism). But this must be complemented by analysis at the level of the social formations and their interrelationships, in a world system which gives analytical pride of place to what Rey blithely grants en passant: that capitalism comes to the 'Third World' from the outside, as foreign capital, indeed as colonial capitalism, and the extraversion thus created persists defining the character of contemporary underdevelopment, viz. as an externally oriented, distorted and indeed disarticulated 'part-economy' subordinated (now as ever) to metropolitan capital (Foster-Carter, 1978, pp. 65-66).

So the history of capitalism in the colonies continues to be written from outside the social formation. It is this that Rey misses but that Alavi captures. The development of a world system perspective has been a response to this phenomenon, as of course has the work of Frank. Balibar has summed up this problem of colonialism as

The event in their (the colonies) history is produced in the time of their diachrony without being produced in the time of their dynamics: a limit case which brings out the conceptual difference between the two

times, and the necessity of thinking their articulation (Balibar and Althusser, 1970, p. 301).

As far as Rey is concerned, despite the serious problems that were discussed, we feel that the theoretical basis of articulation is such as to suggest that some of the more recent attempts to characterize the process of underdevelopment would greatly benefit from their insertion into such a perspective and would prove to have greater historical incisiveness, as well as helping to pin down the nature of contemporary underdevelopment. Alavi's work is a case in point.

#### IV Alavi and the Colonial Mode of Production

Alavi is clearly dealing with the same problematic, although the word 'articulation' does not arise in the precise sense that was used by the French school. Banaji is the first to see the value of a new mode of production that arises as a result of capitalism's articulation with traditional modes, and as a solution to the confusion surrounding Frank's basic "mistake". That is

The process of integration of particular areas of the globe into a world market dominated by the capitalist mode of production was confused with the installation of the capitalist mode within these areas (Banaji, 1972, p. 2499).

For him the distance between the concepts of installation and integration can only be overcome by an adequate theory of colonialism, and in particular a colonial mode of production. Arguing against the coexistence of modes and using the distinction made above between relations of exploitation and production he sees no reason why a single mode of production may not contain a variety of relations of exploitation. We have to try and develop in terms of a colonial mode of production why capitalism did not take its 'logical' course in the colonies. The reason of course is that the colonies suffered from the part that they played as they were initially integrated into the world-wide pattern of capital accumulation under British domination. And because of the nature of the transition from colony to

independence some colonies still play a subordinate role in relation to the metropolis, which has shifted westwards from Britain to the U.S.A. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries the dominant form of accumulation remained colonial plunder, which was largely used to finance the industrialization and development of the white colonies as well as aiding industrialization in Britain itself. Banaji writes,

The colonial modes transmitted to the colonies the pressures of the accumulation process in the metropolis without unleashing any corresponding expansion in the forces of production...the mode of production installed in the colonies reduced the entire process of production to an immense superexploitation of variable capital (Banaji, 1972, p. 2500) (Our emphasis).

Thus the original and continuing colonial relationship "mutated" the "pure development" of capitalism in the colonies. Certainly development in India did not take the path foreseen by Marx, who saw colonialism as a revolutionary force that destroyed the traditional mode, which was enclosed and static (a strange thing for Marx to be saying considering his stress on dialectics and contradiction), and opened the way for an eventual development of socialism. Although Marx was correctly able to pinpoint the truly revolutionary nature of the impact of capitalism, the installation of private ownership (instead of possession) of land, he did not fully comprehend the nature of India's insertion into a developing world system (Marx, 1976, Chapter 33).

To examine the precise 'inbetween' nature of the colonial mode we shall now turn to Alavi and his penetrating analysis of Indian agriculture. We have to examine the notion of a colonial mode in the context of the class relationships and class alliances that manifested themselves in the period before and after independence. The landlords before independence lined up alongside the British rulers but even after independence they were able to retain power at the vital points, namely in the state

and the villages. Thus the populist ideology and rhetoric of the nationalists was considerably toned down when it finally came through as legislation.

Land reforms were a failure in India because attempts to create a small peasant economy along the Chinese lines could not be successful without a basic upheaval in the rural structure (Alavi, 1975, p. 163).

The impetus to develop a small peasant economy was provided not just by populist ideology but by the desires of the dominant bourgeoisie (indigenous and foreign) to derive a greater marketable surplus of agricultural produce. They were not directly concerned with the productivity of the peasant but with an increase in the marketable surplus. Clearly the small peasant strategy was failing and a new policy would be based on the re-alignment of class forces that took place in the 1950's. Before independence the indigenous bourgeoisie had been on the nationalist side against the landed class and the imperialist bourgeoisie. But after independence universal adult suffrage conferred on the rural power holders (the landlords) a new political role for it was they who dominated village politics. Thus the Nationalist leadership, the indigenous bourgeoisie, allied with the traditional rural power holders, and landed families which before independence had supported the pro-British Justice Party joined the Congress Party.

While at the national level the indigenous bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie influenced the strategic decisions of the Government, the main body of the Congress Party machine was taken over by the land-owning classes. There was no more any question of the indigenous and foreign bourgeoisie attacking the interests of the landowning classes who were now their allies (Alavi, 1975, p. 163).

The new policy placed an emphasis on technological solutions within the confines of the existing class structure and it is this complex situation and process that led to the coining of a colonial and post-colonial mode of production.

Alavi attempts to conceptualize the main elements of a colonial mode by comparing it to the pure forms of feudalism and capitalism, but particularly in relation to the former. As such it emerges as a powerful critique of Laclau's thesis. One of the defining features of pre-capitalist modes is that they exhibit a low level of technology in the exploitation of the land and tend to small commodity production. Another feature is that the feudal economy is geared towards 'conspicuous consumption' by the landlords in a system of 'simple reproduction'. There are a couple of things to note in relation to these factors. Firstly, the scale of investments (i.e. the Green Revolution) in the last few decades have only been possible because of the installation and encapsulation of the colonial agrarian economy within the industrial world imperialist economy. Secondly in the colonial mode there is a system of expanded reproduction in contrast to the simple reproduction of pre-capitalist modes,

but of a deformed nature that characterizes the colonial mode, because a substantial part of the surplus generated in the colonial agrarian economy (as well as that generated in colonial industry) is appropriated by the imperialist bourgeoisie and enters into expanded reproduction not directly within the colonial economy but rather at its centre... (it) benefits the imperialist bourgeoisie rather than the colony (Alavi, 1975, p. 163).

So it is a deformed extended reproduction neither capitalist or feudal.

In pre-capitalist modes there is also an absence of generalized commodity production (although one of the elements in the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Europe was the development of simple commodity production). In India generalized commodity production was created and nurtured by imperialism and is at its precise service. Indeed the generalized commodity production is also of a deformed type. Amin terms the economies of the colonies as disarticulated internally so that different sections of the economy do not trade with each other directly but only through the imperialist centre, to which they are

subordinated.

Referring back to the distinction between relations of exploitation and production we have to understand the former as the latter only within an overall context that includes the legal and institutional frameworks within which such relations occur. So the distance between the political system of feudalism and the colonial state points to the different impact the relations at the point of production will have within different modes of production. Thus the localized power structure of feudalism was transformed in the colonial mode to a dialectic between central authority and local power which Perry Anderson has called the "parcellization of sovereignty" (Anderson, 1974, p. 148). So the colonial power subordinated the power of local power holders to its own power and the 'bourgeois revolution' in the 'colonies (overseen by the imperialist bourgeois) created

a bourgeois state and bourgeois property and a  
bourgeois legal and institutional apparatus  
precisely as an integral and necessary component  
to its economic domination (Alavi, 1975, p. 163).

One of the most refreshing parts of Alavi's overall work is his stress on the superstructures and specifically the role of the State in the colonial mode. Just as most other features of the colonial mode are a deformed form somewhere in between feudalism and capitalism so the colonial state is a deformed caricature of its capitalist model. Whereas in the metropolis the state oversees the affairs of the bourgeoisie and retains a relative autonomy in relation to the different fractions of the ruling class, in the colonies the state accomplishes this in relation to a wider range of interested classes, although still with the same interest (the maintenance of the colonial mode). The notion of a Colonial state will become increasingly important when we start discussing Alavi's conceptualization of a post-colonial mode of production, and the need to

use some of the theoretical constructs of 'articulation'. So the colonial state has to mediate relations between the three dominant classes; the indigenous bourgeoisie, the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the landed classes. And the instruments of this mediation are the state/military oligarchy that retain state power at the moment of independence because the indigenous bourgeoisie is too weak to wrest it from them. Without a fundamental break in the class structure of the colony metropolitan domination would continue, only under another guise and with the help of interested indigenous classes. Alavi writes,

The bourgeois revolution in the colony...is characterized by the imposition of colonial rule by the metropolitan bourgeoisie. In carrying out the tasks of the bourgeois revolution in the colony, however, the metropolitan bourgeoisie has to accomplish an additional task that was specific to the colonial situation. Its task is not merely to replicate the superstructure of the State which it has established in the metropolitan country; it must also create a state apparatus through which it can exercise dominion over all the indigenous social classes in the colony. It might be said that the 'superstructure' in the colony is therefore 'overdeveloped' in relation to the 'structure' in the colony, for its basis lies in the metropolitan structure itself, from which it is later separated at the time of independence. The colonial state is therefore equipped with a powerful bureaucratic-military apparatus and with governmental mechanisms that enable it, through routine operations, to subordinate the native social classes. The post colonial society inherits that overdeveloped state apparatus... (Alavi, 1973, p. 147).

The political level is also brought into his analysis. But again the important thing to note is the deformed character of the colonial state in relation to the pure capitalist form.

Before we examine the post colonial mode it would be as well here to review Alavi's enormous contribution to the debate of modes of production and the problematic elements in his work that could be improved with reference to some of the other literature we have been discussing. What Alavi has ingeniously accomplished is the reversal of the proposal of the articulation theorists, i.e. the articulation of several modes of production within a single social formation, into a single mode of

production which is inserted into numerous social formations. As mentioned before, for him the notion of contradiction precludes a conceptualization of the problem in terms of a number of modes of production within a social formation. But we have suggested that Rey is very aware of the problem and in fact gives contradiction a concrete process. But in the end we have to ask the question: is the reformulation of Laclau's 'indissoluble unity' into "a hierarchical structural relationship within a single mode of production, namely the colonial mode of production" any advance beyond the world system perspective? As Alavi himself asks, "should we not speak instead of an imperialist mode of production that embraces a global unity"? (Alavi, 1975, p. 190). This leads to a whole set of unanswered questions. What is the relationship of the colonial mode to the capitalist mode? Obviously it is a product of capitalism yet is it only a transitional form or the final form? But Alavi talks of a postcolonial mode so in some way it is not the final form. Yet it seems to be getting nearer the pure form all the time. Or can structural change only take place within certain capitalist defined limits? And if it is only a transitional form, Alavi is giving a lot of substance to shifting criteria. So the colonial mode of production is not a self contained unity. Is it then possible or legitimate to talk in terms of a mode of production? It seems the problems could be endless. But the articulation literature could help out here. Transition, process and articulation are vital ingredients to a coherent Marxist theory of underdevelopment and social change. So is Alavi's emphasis on the structures of dominance that operate within the colony, and between the colony and the metropolitan centre. It is just such a synthesis that is required at present. A proper conceptualization of the problem of modes of production as an abstract theoretical tool to help analyze the concrete reality of the social formation which is made up of many conflicting

elements. In other words what is being suggested is a shift of emphasis from the problematic notion of a mode of production to the level of the social formation. Both concepts still play a vital role but it seems easier to integrate the superstructures into a coherent analysis at the level of social formation rather than at the level of modes of production. So in a sense the superstructures and the role of exchange are easier to situate at the level of the formation, mediating as they do relations of exploitation.

We wish to conclude here with an exposition of Alavi's notion of a postcolonial mode of production and a discussion of the issues that this raises. We will try to supplement his theory with elements from the articulation school. The basic question here concerns the nature of the indigenous development of capitalism and its precise relation to metropolitan capitalism. Also it deals with the internally disarticulated nature of the colonial economy. Alavi states that a new kind of structural dependence between the Indian bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisies has been developing in the field of research intensive industries which has led to technical collaboration and a further convergence of interests between the two bourgeoisies. So with the consolidation of their relationship, the relationship between the dominating classes and the subordinated classes is even more acute. The structural exploitation of the Indian peasantry and proletariat by the metropolitan bourgeoisie is still present. What seems difficult to conceptualize is this change occurring within the confines of Alavi's previous theoretical schema, which seemed to imply that the colonial mode was such because of the structural role it played in relation to the industrialized world. Process was a vitally needed term. Just as structure is a term which Rey needs. As stated before, process without structure is thoroughly unmarxist.

Because of this change in the relationship between the two bourgeoisies the nature of the internal disarticulation of the economy has also changed. The deformed generalized commodity production and the deformed extended reproduction have been partially altered. Firstly, the pattern of generalized commodity production is now more internalized so that the internal disarticulation is less acute. However, "the external dependence is increasingly in the field of capital goods and research intensive technology, and not with regard to industrial commodities in general as before " (Alavi, 1975, p. 192). Secondly, there is an increased proportion of the surplus that is appropriated internally so that the process of extended reproduction is more internalized than before. Because the articulation approach includes the notions of contradiction and process it is easier to conceptualize this transformation in those terms. In Alavi's colonial mode it seemed that indigenous development was being held in a stranglehold by metropolitan capital. But the contradictions that were manifest on the economic and political level between indigenous and metropolitan were given room for expression as a result of class conflict and political changes and this has led to some kind of "independent" indigenous development. Articulation can still hold the distinction between outside and inside and integrate it into a process. Yet the structural component of Alavi's analysis is just as important for a coherent conceptualization of contemporary underdevelopment. A true synthesis is what is required.

### Conclusion

As is clear from the above exposition, we believe that a global perspective to the issue of the development of underdevelopment is essential, incorporating as it does the history of imperialism, colonialism, domination and underdevelopment. But such a perspective should also transcend a theory of geographical domination of one area by another by placing

firmly in the centre of the analysis the vital notion of class and class alliances. The Frankian model needs a clarification and extension that is suggested by the work of Rey where the precise nature of the articulation between capitalism and the pre-capitalist form is specified. It was suggested in the analysis that Alavi is the most theoretically advanced of the recent theorists but that there existed various problems in his work which although it captured the vital colonial relationship and the structural changes that this instituted, as well as the effects of those structures on contemporary underdevelopment, was somewhat lacking in the notion of process and contradiction within what he terms a colonial mode of production. Thus what was suggested was an application of some of Rey's theoretical concepts to Alavi's work, i.e. a true synthesis which would advance Marxist theory. A distinction between the types of relationship between capitalist and pre-capitalist societies is much needed.

One of the major conceptual problems that we dealt with was the distinction between modes of production as theoretical entities and social formations. Rey and Laclau refer to the social formation within which separate modes articulate, although they differ on the nature of the articulation. Alavi on the other hand identifies a single mode of production within which exist several social formations (an essentially correct position). The problem with Alavi's (and Frank's and Wallerstein's) work is that the mode of production is so gigantic in scope (international and global) that in a practical sense there is a need to conduct the debate at a slightly lower level, whilst still working with a world perspective. We need to find a middle road between the micro notion of Laclau's relations of production (exploitation) and Frank's macro exchange systems. And if we want to include within our units of analysis elements of both the base and superstructures and remember Marx's adage that

Production, distribution, exchange and consumption  
...all form the members of a totality, distinctions within  
a unity (Foster-Carter, 1978, p. 76).

then it seems at a practical level that the social formation is  
the easiest and most fruitful level at which to conduct debate, whilst  
at the same time using the abstract notion of mode of production to  
inform the details of the debate.

Social formations can deal better with an incorporation of super-  
structural elements into the discussion. Thus, the political and state  
levels are easier to define and identify on the level of the social forma-  
tion, enclosing as they do, and referring to, distinct cultural and  
national boundaries. Foster-Carter warns against a narrow economism  
that has dogged the modes of production debate:

Reification aside, too little attention has been paid  
to other 'instances' and 'practices' than the economic:  
notably the political, not to mention those areas  
(ideology, religion, kinship ideas) which correspond  
to people's own consciousness of their position. This  
is not a plea for ethnomethodology but it is certainly  
above all a clarion call for class seen as the key  
mediator between (to oversimplify) modes of production  
and human action (Foster-Carter, 1978, p. 72).

Thus, the study of the colonial state can only make sense within a study  
of the world system. Yet it makes little practical sense to talk about  
a single mode of production with a single set of superstructures. The  
state in the nation-state of the colony plays a different role than the  
state in capitalist societies. To talk about them as elements of a  
single superstructural framework is not at all fruitful. In a practical  
sense the social formation within which it immediately functions seems a  
useful place to start the debate.

All the elements we have discussed have to be integrated into an  
overall complex of relationships and structures of action and in the end  
we have to acknowledge as basically correct Frank's shadow across the  
whole literature.

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