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"A STRUCTURAL THEORY OF IMPERIALISM" -
TEN YEARS LATER *

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Goals, Processes and Indicators of
Development

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1. Introduction

The article "A Structural Theory of Imperialism" was written during a week-end August 1970, and first published in the Journal of Peace Research 1971.⁽¹⁾ It was based on quite a lot of preparatory research, much of it focussing on the structure of the world system.⁽²⁾ Somehow the article seemed to strike a cord if one should judge by the interest it aroused,⁽³⁾ although that might certainly be much less due to any quality the article might have had than to its timeliness. There was an intellectual and political need to see imperialistic phenomena of our times within a common frame of reference,⁽⁴⁾ and the article was an effort to do precisely that.

We are now ten years later, and that might provide an opportunity to try to review the world situation in the light of the article and the article in the light of the world situation; that is the purpose of the present article. The focus will be on both ways of comparing the two: both an effort to see what can be grasped in the world as it has evolved (not developed) during these ten years using the perspectives implied in the article, and to see how these perspectives should be revised in the light of contemporary world history.

Doing this, one might perhaps start with a very brief summary of some crucial points in that theory. First of all, why is it referred to as "structural"? There are two answers to this: it is structural in the sense that no specific actors are indicated, and in the sense that for the concrete actors that happen to be performing roles in that structure no specific motivation is necessary. The basic

assumption is that the structure (of imperialism) is extremely strong and has its own internal logic so that once it has started operating it is not necessary for those who are acting within it to will all the consequences. There must be a motivation to want some of them, but it is certainly not necessary to have a complete overview of the total picture. This was an important part of the theory: as the consequences by most value standards to a large extent are evil and evil consequences within the Judeo-Christian ethical and legal frameworks are usually associated with evil people,⁽⁵⁾ something is needed to account for the circumstance that so many people not only with good brains (capable of seeing the consequences) but also good hearts (capable of suffering the bad consequences) are participating in the structure. The structure simply goes on by itself, creates wealth for some nations, poverty for others, wealth for some classes, poverty for others and does not ask for much in terms of motivations.

However, a still more important implication of the word "structural" is the first idea alluded to above: no specific actors are named. It is like the structure of a family system as described by anthropologists: the structure can be enacted without being rooted in particular, named individuals. Hence, there is no assumption at all that the structure of imperialism has to be run from the Northwestern corner of the world, rooted in a triangle with the United States at one corner, the European Community countries at an other with appendages, and Japan as some kind of honorary Northwestern citizen as the third.⁽⁶⁾ It is well known that within this triangle the center of gravity of the system has been moving, perhaps never in the absolute sense of leaving one part totally, settling in another part; but in the relative sense

of proportionate distribution of control over decisions. Given this it could not be strange if the center should move again, and one basic point in the theory is that it opens for this possibility. It does not tie imperialism to phenomena coming out of the tremendous growth in productive capability and control in Northwestern Europe from the 16th century and onwards.⁽⁷⁾ What the theory does is simply this: it indicates what to look for if imperialism is at work, not where to look for it.⁽⁸⁾ In doing so it opens for the possibility that the center might be sliding, or even jumping across the surface of the earth, possibly settling in other quarters of our world system.

Then, what is meant by the term "imperialism"? It is seen as a world system,⁽⁹⁾ the primary aspect of which is precisely center/periphery creation. It creates and maintains a world gradient, a verticality. To the extent there is a motivation it is clearly to enrich the center, but not necessarily to impoverish the periphery - the motivation would be to control the periphery. The question, then, is how this is done, both how gradients are developed and how they are maintained. At this point there are five theoretical perspectives in the article to be considered.

First, the concept of imperialism used here does not presuppose any primacy of economics. Attention is given also to political, military, communicative, cultural and social imperialism,⁽¹⁰⁾ depending on the precise content of the gradient. It is not assumed that all 5 or 6 go together, nor is it assumed that the process of building imperialism starts with any particular one. On the contrary, it is considered dangerous to tie the concept of imperialism too closely to the concrete historical phenomenon of western imperialism, because this might detract us systematically in recognizing similar and perhaps equally dangerous phenomena because they do not fit the Eurocentric pattern as we know it. As a matter of fact, the structural theory is more holistic⁽¹¹⁾ in recognizing general patterns or structures and would orientate the search more in that direction than in the direction of

Linear causal chains. Again, it should be emphasized that this is not to dispute the validity of such chains in concrete analysis, but in order to keep the total scheme of reference open.

Reasons for this are relatively obvious.

Thus, the position of dominance and control exercised by the Soviet Union over client countries is one that not only is referred to as imperialistic but also should be referred to as imperialistic;⁽¹²⁾ it has very many characteristics in common. But that does not mean that it is necessarily economically enriching for the center of the Soviet Union - it might even be impoverishing. It might even be that they pay in order to maintain a control which is then exercised primarily in political and military terms. Just as there is a center/periphery gradient between parents and their offspring as noticed clearly when the parents try to reproduce themselves in the children, not only biologically but also socio-culturally, there is something of the same between the fatherland of socialism and the client states: a reproduction of a socio-cultural pattern, a way of organising society, for which reasons the Chinese term "social imperialism" seems to be a very apt one.

Another example: inspite of the liberation of eastern Europe that took place from the October Revolution 1917 onwards, there is little doubt that there still is a cultural hegemony over eastern Europe, more exercised in the client states than in the Soviet Union itself (perhaps);⁽¹³⁾ and partly as a way of counterbalancing the enormous Soviet pressure. Characteristic of this is the sensitivity to any cultural signal coming out of the West, any new orientation, in addition to the strange, almost perverse, idea of using enemy countries of a defunct social formation, capitalism, as model countries not only to be caught up with, but even to be surpassed.⁽¹⁴⁾

And then there is, as a third example, the case of Japan which clearly exercised an economic hold over other countries, not too different from that of the Northwestern corner of the world, but does not seem to have added to this the other aspects of a complete imperialist configuration: political, military, communicative, cultural and social aspects. Japanese imperialism is monocentric and happens to be, indeed, economic whereas that of the West is polychromatic, fully-fledged.⁽¹⁵⁾ Since this is the type of imperialism we are used to what the Japanese do seems to pass more undetected and even to show up as more blatantly economic because the other aspects are missing and hence are something that can more easily be dealt with, in specific contexts. The latter may be true, but it brings out the point and the fruitfulness of considering imperialism as a many-faceted thing.

Second, the structural theory of imperialism had an approach to exploitation which came out of one particular question: under what condition would we say that there no longer is exploitation? When the terms of trade are right; but what then defines them as right? The theory suggested that this would never be enough; that in addition to exchange aspects of interaction one also had to look at the "in-change" aspects, the intra-action that takes place within both parties as a consequence of the interaction. Clearly, exploitation or inequity differs from inequality in being some type of structure-induced inequality. But that is not merely a question of what meets the naked eye and can be measured as the net value flow between periphery and center; it is also what goes on inside the periphery and inside the center as a result. This "something" can be referred to as spin-offs or externalities, in other words, as costs and benefits not accounted for (not compensated for, not paid for). Many of them are non-material and not easily accountable in monetary terms anyhow, but that does not mean that they should escape the intellectual framework of anyone analysing imperialism.⁽¹⁶⁾ Consequently, the answer to the question would be that the total impact of the interaction should be about equally beneficial to both parties, taking into account both inter- and intra-effects.

Third, the theory was a four-party theory:

the center in the Center, the periphery in the Center, the center in the Periphery and the periphery in the Periphery. It was felt that in order to analyse this phenomenon one should not have any a priori assumption as to where the coalitions might be formed. The scheme should be open, also opening for the possibility of new coalitions not detected before by a theory that too much sees imperialism in dichotomous terms, bourgeoisie vs. proletariat, internationally defined. And second, the terminology was chosen so that not only class relations in a traditionally economic sense could be analysed, but also along the other dimensions of imperialism. There is a need for a theory of imperialism that does not necessarily only operate with countries and their subdivisions into classes as building blocks. There could be imperialism within countries, especially between ethnic groups and along geographical center/periphery gradients; and there could be imperialism in non-territorial systems, for instance between inter-governmental organizations on the one hand, and non-governmental organizations on the other. This point will not be developed further below, but only mentioned as an example of how theories should open for explorations of future possibilities, not be a closure accounting for a past only, however well they account for empirical patterns.

Running through all this, then, is the basic idea of imperialism as a structure/process. There has to be a relatively cohesive Center, there is a Periphery - the exact content of the relation between the two will change all the time, but the form of the relation may remain the same. There is a logic to the structure. It is centrist, vertical and universalist in the sense of being, at least potentially, world-encompassing. In other words, it is a perfect implementation of the basic aspects of Western social cosmology. As such imperialism can be seen as a genuine offspring of Western civilization, which does not mean it may not also be found in other parts of the world, but perhaps not with the same universal aspirations. (17)

2. The last ten years : an overview

I shall now simply use this review of the article as a table of content for the comments on what happened during the last ten years, and on the theory as such - starting with the structure itself.

The hypothesis is that the structure is sliding, and more particularly in the sense that the center of gravity is moving from the world Northwest to the world Southeast - a triangle the corners of which would be the People's Republic of China, Japan, and Southeast Asia with Australia/New Zealand. Detailed argumentation for this is developed elsewhere,⁽¹⁸⁾ suffice it only to emphasize that the theory opens for such possibilities as it is not linked to any particular center or any particular periphery. In other words, it cannot be held against the theory that the Northwestern corner of the world has been weakened since it was written. As a matter of fact, a number of strategies for how to weaken it were outlined at the end of the article,⁽¹⁹⁾ many of them being exactly of the type that have been pursued energetically during the 1970s (particularly periphery country coalitions, with increased periphery-periphery interaction).

However, the theory not only permits this, but also points to one important factor: as it is structuralist it is a holistic theory, about a configuration, and the underlying assumption would be that the whole configuration will tend to reproduce itself, if not necessarily at the same geographical place, so elsewhere. In other words, there is an internal logic to the configuration supported by rather compelling structural forces. And one part of that internal logic would be that it is reasonably uncentric, not in the sense of being concentrated in one street, in one city, in one country (the Wall Street syndrome beloved by people who prefer operating within very steeply pointed conceptual pyramids that they try to project onto the real world, in equally steep pyramids of control),⁽²⁰⁾ but in the sense of an area, not necessarily contiguous, where control can be coordinated and from which control can be exercised. And in this there is an implicit theory of

contemporary history, separating the forces tearing down, gradually, the Northwestern platform of control from the forces building up, gradually, a Southeastern new platform of control, gradually attaining more significance than the Northwestern one in the world economic system as a whole. There is no reason why these two forces should be the same. If the point of departure is a cosmos of a relatively orderly imperialistic nature, then there could be forces of chaos, and there could also be forces creating a new cosmos. Thus, one might say that the point of departure was, and to a large extent still is, the Old International Economic Order, then comes the New International Economic Order spearheaded by the Third world as a block (at least as a voting block in the United Nations system) creating considerable chaos starting with the OPEC action, and then comes the Southeastern corner of the world using this chaos as a raw material to be processed into a New/Old International Economic Order. The structure is like a Gertalt screaming for a center; if the Northwest is not able to deliver the goods somebody else must. That somebody else cannot possibly be Third world countries in general because they are not cohesive enough, nor regionally because they are generally too poor and unable to run a world system. It could be the newly industrializing countries (NICs), but they are located far apart, are not cohesive, do not constitute a center - they are, in fact, only an economic abstraction based on some statistics. But in the Southeast the situation is totally different: here is a shared Confucian/Buddhist/occidentalizing ethos, practically speaking all the production factors necessary and sufficient to run a system, the will to do so, and the patient work of building a cohesive political structure.

This, however, immediately opens for the question of motivation: why should they do it? There is capability, is there also motivation?

The whole history of Japan certainly shows that there is ability. A theory, perhaps most forcefully formulated by the Japanese economist Akamatsu⁽²¹⁾ of gradually substituting for labour other factors of production, natural resources in general and energy in particular for sure, but then more and more capital and research, has worked to Japan's

advantage. The condition for this, however, has been exactly the same for Japan as for the world Northwest: that not everybody does the same. In other words, the condition has been the validity of the law of uneven development. Moreover, there has been the advantage of being new-comer, of not being tied by the strings of conventional wisdom but having a fresh approach, including fresh factors of production, to production of goods and services and their distribution. The Japanese have known how to place themselves on those segments of economic cycles where value is really added, and they have known how to use that value so that the cycles are not only reinforced, but expanded and deepened. Moreover, they seem now increasingly willing to share this with their dai-to-ā environment. So the ability is there^(??), as well as some element of opportunity. What about the motivation, why do they do it?

In a sense the motivation is simple enough: the enrichment of the center, whether it means building strong and rich countries as such, strong and rich elites, or a strong and rich population. From the point of view of the structure of imperialism it does not matter much which motivation, nationalism, elite privileges or a welfare state orientation, dominates. What matters is the construction of interaction cycles with highly asymmetric net benefits, and to be located in the right segments of those cycles.

Of course there is a difference here between the Japanese/Chinese motivation and the Western motivation when it comes to all the other aspects of imperialism. Western imperialism is more complete, the Japanese pattern is a highly reduced configuration built around economic world market operations. With Japanese economic expansion does not go a corresponding expansion of the circle of Japanese language speakers, dissemination of such patterns as the use of kimono, ikebana, sake or kyōto floors, etc. What the Japanese ask from the world system is only that the economic market operates to their advantage. What is at the roots of this may be discussed, but it is probably a disinclination to see the rest of the world as a periphery in which

the center can reproduce itself. The world is (Chinese) more seen as profoundly barbarian, possibly in need of being converted, but hardly able to undergo that process, and (Japanese) as a vast resource through which economic cycles can profitably be spun.

In other words, the motivation for Japanese imperialism is seen as predominantly economic, but that economism does not stem in our analysis from any characteristic of imperialism as such, but from a characteristic of the Japanese of orienting itself towards the world, meaning by that the world outside dai-to-ri. There is certainly a concept of an East Asian family tied together with cultural, historical and social ties, and when that family was exposed to Japanese militarism from the Sino-Japanese war 1894-5 onwards to the capitulation 15 August 1945, it may be seen not as the result of Japan being so strong, but possibly as an outcome of China being so weak, weakened by western imperialism. Today that situation no longer applies and the best Japan can hope for in an East Asian context would be a condominium with China, perhaps gradually recognizing her political/military supremacy provided she recognises Japan's economic/technological supremacy. Together they could then set about dominating the world market, at least to the corners of the world where tariff and non-tariff barriers are not effectively built too high for them to jump over (or too deep to creep under, a usually more subtle approach).

In no way does this mean that there is a return in the theory to the primacy of economics. To the contrary, the events during the last 10 years seem amply to have confirmed the significance of, for instance, cultural dimensions as something very real around which world structures can be built. It is still too early to see what will come out of Islam in this connection, but when the Imam (Khomeini) talks about an Islamic world, without borders, what he means is not that all borders will disappear, but that they will be insignificant relative to the unifying force of Islam. During the last decade, moreover, both the New International Military Order⁽²³⁾ and the New International Communication Order⁽²⁴⁾ have taken shape relatively clearly, both of them challenging the Old International Orders, neither of them with a very clear

center so far, the prediction being that new centers will emerge as long as the search for "international order" goes on. No much for the structure.

Then, what has happened in the general field of exploitation? Are there new patterns of exploitation, was the distinction between inter- and intra-exploitation a useful one?

It seems clear from the last 10 years that what could be called the terms of exchange (or more narrowly terms of trade) approach is an insufficient approach to the historical task of righting the structure. More particularly, in one of the basic documents defining the New International Economic Order in United Nations' terms, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, it is quite clear that industrialization of Third world countries is an important part of the total approach, although the explicit references to the many spin-off effects of this are often missing. The point, however, is that not only the ideology of material progress in the sense of getting richer has arrived in the most remote corners of the world. The ideology of the multiple benefits of industrialism and world commercialism, among other things based on periphery-periphery trade, has also arrived.

However, at this point something was not made sufficiently explicit in the original article. Not so much in the article as in the operationalization of the theory the externalities are too much linked to the nature of the concrete goods exported and imported rather than to the total cycle itself. Thus, it has rightly been pointed out ⁽²⁵⁾ that it is possible to be a net exporter of even highly sophisticated industrial goods without benefitting from the externalities in terms of, say, research and education, because that is being done elsewhere, just as it is possible to be a net exporter of very crude raw materials or semi-manufactured goods because the way these commodities are extracted and distributed into the world market might be highly sophisticated and externality producing. As to the former one might think of the relocation of industries from the First world into the Third world and as to the latter such cases as Sweden (timber and ore), and Australia and New Zealand (wool). Thus, in the case of Sweden what was exported might

have been crude, but there was forestry science, mining science, highly complex organizations, schools at all levels related to these processes, and so on. And needless to say, these two cases are similar: in the case of relocated industries the spin-offs do not go to the country where the industries are located, but accrue to the home countries of the industries where they have been developed. In the second case the countries where the commodities are extracted are in control of the entire process on local ground and hence able to internalize the externalities (including the negative ones, such as pollution and the various types of costs that come with increasing productivity).

The conclusion is not that the division between the visible and less visible parts of the exploitation iceberg was a fallacious one, only that it should not be identified too closely with the nature of the product exchanged. As a matter of fact, that identification would be a mistake precisely of the type the argument is directed against: the tendency to identify exploitation with exchange effects, not adding the inchange effects as the focus is on the concrete product moving between countries. The focus should be on the whole process.

But then there are some other aspects of exploitation theory that could be improved upon. In this terribly important - both practically and theoretically - but also highly elusive concept there seem to be two lines of definition or precisison: exploitation in the sense of unequal exchange, and exploitation in the sense of "making use of" beyond capacities for reproduction. ⁽²³⁾ Where the unequal exchange definition is concerned there are many sub-divisions, depending on to what extent intra-effects are really considered, and depending on what dimension one is looking at: terms of trade in monetary or physical terms over time, the number of hours on either side that have gone into producing the goods and services, and so on.

The second approach, however, also opens for some interesting perspectives. During the 1970s this was brought in particularly in connection with the use and misuse of nature. It was pointed out that when nature is "exploited" beyond its regenerative capacity,

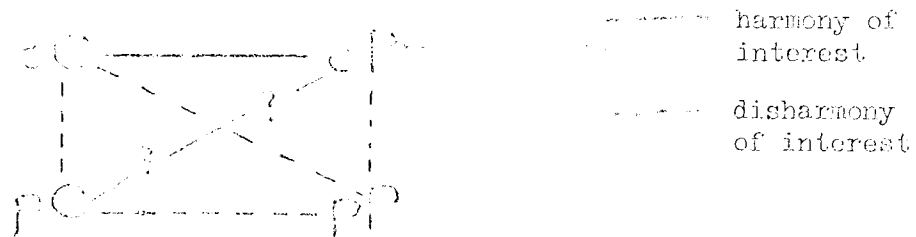
its capacity for renewal, then something dramatic starts happening: outer limits have been transgressed. This certainly also applies to human beings: the capacity for reproduction can be destroyed, the ability to raise one's own children, not to mention the ability to raise oneself. Since the unit of reproduction of human beings traditionally also is a little ecological habitat, the family, what is being talked about is exploitation of the family rather than of the individual worker. And since the woman/wife/mother is the one on whom traditionally most of the tasks of reproduction have fallen - she is the one producing and raising the children and mainly trying to make them fit for life outside the family - most of the pressure falls on her. The question can be or should be raised: if she "reproduces" the children and the husband, who reproduces her? Possibly the combination of the absence of a good answer to that question, and the load put on her, go far towards explaining the higher incidence of suicide in women in patriarchal societies than in men.⁽²⁷⁾

Similarly, one might talk about countries being exploited beyond their capacity of renewal, renewal possibly defined here as the capacity for new goal setting and pursuit of goals with means at their own disposal. In other words, one could see exploitation as defining the bottom level below which one can go but should not do so, unless harm is being wrought, even sought. It should be noted that to Marx exploitation was an exchange concept rather than a rock-bottom concept: workers were being exploited to the extent that they did not themselves dispose of the surplus value, the surplus value being profits minus what was needed for the reproduction of the workers. Thus, in order to account for the fact that workers are often paid wages with which reproduction would be impossible, Marxist thinkers have had to introduce the concept of super-exploitation,⁽²⁸⁾ exploitation beyond exploitation. This does not necessarily mean that the workers starve and die, but that they have to fall back upon an informal sector not accounted for, not costed when salaries are decided upon. In other words, in the "modern" sector survival is impossible; but if the worker in addition can rely upon the support of the "traditional" sector it might nevertheless be possible to eke out a living.

What we are aiming at with this is essentially an opening for how serious the subject of exploitation is. It is not merely a book-keeping concept, a subtitle under the larger heading of economic and social justice. It is not simply a question of the other guy not getting too much of the cake; it is a question of life and death. And this has become even more clear during the 1970s: however defined the rate of exploitation has increased in the Third world, possibly also in the First world. In the Third world even the rock-bottom type exploitation may have increased in many quarters, but this may not have been the case in the First world. The standard of living has increased for the workers, the consequences in terms of life and death have been reduced or are less visible, but the economic justice type exploitation has probably increased above any preexisting level because of the way in which ever increasing productivity opens for higher rates of surplus produced by the workers, but decided over by the managers.

Let us then turn to the third aspect: the quadripartite structure of imperialism based on Center and Periphery countries and center and periphery groupings:

Figure 1: The quadripartite structure of imperialism



The central axis of the whole theory is harmony of interest between the two centers: this is a circulus in of the whole structure of imperialism. But what about the other five relations? How do they combine - for instance, is the structure balanced, clearly divided into two mutually opposed camps? Or, could it be that it is not, it is not clearly divided and as a result relatively well protected against disruption because there is only one permanent alliance? ⁽²⁹⁾

There is of course the disharmony in center/periphery relations inside the country, be that a Center or a Periphery country. This certainly does not mean that they cannot both grow together, as they can also both go down together. The disharmony is expressed in very differential rates, even when they are both positive and they are both negative (thus, it is not at all presupposed that it is positive for the center and zero or negative for the periphery). Moreover, it is assumed that the disharmony in the Periphery is bigger than the disharmony in the Center; this is the second major axis around which the theory of the four groupings is woven.

As to the rest, several possibilities can be imagined. Clearly the two peripheries can find themselves on the same course; at a distance, but parallel enough to feel that they go up together and down together with the oscillation of the system. In that case a material basis for the marxian scenario, "proletarians in all countries, unite!" will be present. But there are also other possibilities pointed at in the original article: the national war of liberation where groups in the Periphery go together against the Center, and the peoples' war of liberation where the periphery of the Periphery tries to go it alone against an alliance constituted by the other three.

This opens for the possibility of a relationship, a dynamic and dialectical one, between inter- and intra-conflicts. The nucleus of that type of theory would be that when the inter-conflict (between Center and Periphery) exceeds a certain level, then the intra-relations start changing. Those changes are usually seen under the heading of "nationalism": conflict without leads to cohesion within. No doubt there is something to that. But what would happen if the intra-conflict exceeds a limit with , tremendous contradictions within systems, what would be the consequence? There is the old hypothesis that the leaders will try to manage these contradictions by stepping up the level of inter-conflict so as to have the first process become operational: internal cohesion due to conflict without. But there is also the other possibility that this might simply lead to a decrease in the level of the inter-conflict: through lack of attention given to it, or possibly even because both parties inside the system look for support from their opposite numbers outside the system. And then the total system may be oscillating between national conflict "horizontal" wars (the pure inter-conflict) and class-conflict, "vertical" wars (the pure intra-conflict). In short, the structure is ambiguous and may be manipulated from one articulation to the other.

3. Some Policy Implications

What is the policy implication of viewing the world this way? Clearly, a basic point would be to get out of a periphery position in an imperialist structure; a second basic conclusion drawn by many would be to get into a center position. And the third conclusion, if you are already in a center position, would be to try to keep it with all possible means, including military action.

The first conclusion drawn will in general lead to a developmental policy characterized by one word: self-reliance. Not only do ties with the already existing center have to be selectively cut (selective delinking), one also has to rely on one's own resources, develop them as far as possible, individually or collectively - at the local, national or regional level. The method is probably relatively sure, but also slow, and requires much stamina, and a relatively puritan ethic in order not to yield to the temptation of selling the raw in order to receive the cooked from the center countries, ultimately running out of raw materials to satisfy Center appetites.

The second conclusion leads to a totally different developmental policy: selective entry into the world market in center positions, starting with substitution of labour for other factors at home, but as soon as possible adding the processing of raw materials and raw factors in general that are not only one's own but also come from, or are located in, other places. In other words: an effort to achieve a center position as quickly as possible, more or less playing the system the same way as the present center countries do. One may say that this is the policy pursued by the NICs in general and the South-east and East Asian NICs in particular.

The third conclusion has as development policy consequence the idea of fighting in order to protect privileges. Since these privileges are located in the Periphery countries the struggle will generally be in Periphery countries - hence the export of belligerent activity in the post Second World War period to these countries. (30)

Of these three options the first one is certainly the ethically most defensible one, and in the longer run may also be the one that pays off. To get into a center position is tantamount to get in quick returns, but also quick losses: these are vulnerable positions indeed. To be in a periphery position is, by definition, to be vulnerable. To be neither, selectively cutting links with the system, developing oneself with one's own means, which in most cases would mean regionally in the present world, would probably be the strongest option. But it does require a time perspective different from the other two, and a willingness to forgo immediate gains in order to build a more secure position for the future.

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Professor Colting is at the Institut universitaire d'études du développement, Geneva.

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2. This applies to all the works reproduced in Vol. IV of *Essays in Peace Research*, the first two sections entitled "International Interaction" and "World Structure".
3. In Nils Petter Gleditsen *et al.*, *Johan Galtung: A Bibliography of His Scholarly and Popular Writings 1951-82* (International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 1980), "A Structural Theory of Imperialism" was found to be the most frequently quoted work - see Table 8, p. 77.
4. Perhaps the major need was to have a concept of imperialism that permitted people to talk both of U.S. and Soviet imperialism, breaking down some of the conventional division of labour between the ideological left that focuses only on capitalist imperialism and the ideological right that focuses only on the other form.
5. For more on this point, see "Two perspectives on society," Chapter 2.1 in *The True Worlds*, *op. cit.*
6. This is developed in some detail in *World Conflict Formation Processes* (GPID Project, Geneva, 1980).
7. In the Goals, Processes and Indicators of Development Project Herb Addo, Institute of International Relations, University of the West Indies, has focused particularly

on the Eurocentric aspects of imperialism theory precisely because imperialism was Eurocentric.

8. To many people this would be too abstract. It becomes a form, in process, but lacking concrete anchoring in the real world. This is true, but also a very anti-scientific argument. Science consists precisely in wedging the abstract and the concrete, in sensing essential reality but also in intuiting forms, structures detached from concrete reality so as to be able to identify them elsewhere. This affects on some of the best known theories of imperialism, such as V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (International Publishers, New York, 1932), when in the final chapter, "The place of imperialism in history," he summarises (pp. 122 et seq.): "We have seen that the quintessence of imperialism is monopoly capitalism. This very fact determines its place in history... we must take note of the four principal forms of monopoly, or the four principal manifestations of monopoly capitalism, which are characteristic of the epoch under review..." They are "concentration of production at a very advanced stage of development," "the capture of the most important sources of raw materials", "the banks and monopolies of finance capital" and "colonial policy." It is easy to agree with this — but the whole book is inextricably tied to concrete European colonial history, and does not open for insights in the state Lenin himself built. Similar remarks can be made about Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment* (Monthly Review Press, London and New York, 1974), which deals with how the economic penetration of the West, backed up by military operations, built monopolistic and monopolistic power and made for peripheral underdevelopment in underdeveloped countries — and this as the source of their underdevelopment. As most of a work, its strength, but also its weakness being the way it is tied to concrete history.

Samir Amin, *Imperialism and Unequal Development* (Monthly Review Press, London and New York, 1977), takes the theme further, perhaps in a more political vein. His conclusion is as follows: "The societies of the capitalist centers are sufficiently rich, the interrelations of interests sufficiently complex, the feeling for problems which have a common structure sufficiently shared, for these societies to be able to wait for some decades yet in a kind of slow decomposition. On the other hand, the societies of the dominated periphery no longer can wait. With every passing year, the material conditions of the vast masses become more intolerable, while the palliative of capitalist interests on becomes increasingly worthless." This is all true, but it sadly underestimates (1) the possibility of new capitalist centres, such as integrated Western Europe and above all Japan and more significantly, Japan with China and Southeast Asia and (2) the capacity of the elites in "the societies of the dominated periphery" to seize on the situation and build structures that are essentially capitalist even if the level of integration with the state and the size of the public sector may differ. Giovanni Arrighi, *The Emergence of Imperialism: The Limits of Hobson's Paradigm* (New Left Books, London, 1977), is a book tied to concrete history. Much of it as the title indicates, is tied to Hobson's analysis, Hobson's "aid." "Ever its (analytical) origin lies in the nation-state (NS)" It is in no position to represent either the imperialism of ancient Rome, for example, or even that of Holland in the first half of the 17th century; only with the rise of Nationalism after the nation state became a dominant force on the world scene, and only two hundred years later did it become the basic "cell" of the international system on 19th C. I would certainly agree with Arrighi that this is a limitation, a handicap or a *quid pro quo* for the analysis of imperialism. Henry Arendt, *Imperialism* (Part Two of the *Origins of Totalitarianism*) (Harcourt Brace, New York, 1968), is very brilliant, lucid, but even more concretely historical. It has an important description of a very imperialist, Cecil Rhodes (pp. 94-95): "his money should be used to found a secret society... to carry out his scheme... organized like Loyola's, supported by the accumulated wealth of those whose aspiration is a desire to do something... between 1870 and 1880 a thousand men in the prime of life scattered all over the world, each one of whom would have had Europe and upon his mind in the most susceptible period of his life the dream of the Founder, each one of whom would have been especially — magnetically — oriented towards the Founder's purpose." Rhodes drew up six wills, all of them mentioning this secret society — see Basil Williams, *Cecil Rhodes* (London, 1921). What actually came out of it was the "Rhodes Scholarship Association to which Rhodes left not only one thousand but members of all 'Nordic races,' such as Germans, Scandinavians and Americans, are admitted."

9. Referring to Vukobrat's seminal and rightly applauded work, but also very much in line with the present history. The work on imperialism that to my mind

comes closest to presenting a general theory is, of course, Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade* (Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1972), p. 263 where he states "the ferocity of Marxism, which have begun to show signs of losing reality within the context of the industrial nations, are being realized to perfection on the scale of world economy." P. 265: "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 to give new impetus to the *unevenness of development* that sets in motion all the other mechanisms of exploitation and fully explains the way that wealth is distributed." For a general review of imperialism theory as applied to the Third World, see Peter Evans, *Dependency Development* (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1979), Chapter 1 on "Imperialism, Dependency and Dependency Development," pp. 14-54.

10. For an effort to explore the concept of social imperialism, see Johan Galtung, "Social Imperialism and Sub-imperialism: Continuities in the structural theory of imperialism," *World Development*, 1976.

11. For more on this point, see Johan Galtung, *In Defence of Epistemological Eclecticism* (GPID Project, Geneva, 1980).

12. Rumania would seem to be a case particularly open to Western cultural penetration and particularly resistant to russification as in the rejection of the effort to "russify" the spelling of Rumanian words, emphasising its slavonic rather than Latin roots.

13. For if the Soviet Union should "overtake capitalism," in conventional technical-economic, productionist-consumptionist terms, what would happen? Some tentative answer: a much less clear goal-setting, "socialism" would have really to formulate its own goals a much less clear threat and enemy-image — "capitalism" would be much less powerful in conventional military-political terms.

14. This is developed at some length in the article about Japan referred to in footnote 1 above.

15. If one looks at it historically it can probably be maintained that at the roots of both Hegelian and Marxist is the science of book-keeping and the basic idea of not being in the red and not being cheated. Unfortunately the range of "externalities" not captured in book-keeping is considerable — that is the reason why we have that concept — and some ranges of the total spectrum are also largely absent from the intellectual frameworks analysing imperialism.

16. For more on this, see Johan Galtung, *Five Cosmologies: An Impressionistic Presentation* (GPID Project, Geneva, 1980).

17. See the paper referred to in footnote 6 above.

18. Basically the point in the strategies was Periphery to co-operate more with Periphery and less with Centre, and to make the relations with the centre less exploitative.

19. To such people, very orthodox Marxists indeed, analysis will come to be when a causal chain is anchored to the satisfaction of the author in Wall Street — like for a Freudian when some linkage to repressed infant sexuality has come up in a patient's fantasies.

20. For a presentation of the ideas of the Japanese economist Kename Akamatsu, see the article by Saburo Okita, "Japan, China and the United States: Economic Relations and Prospects" in *Asian Affairs* (Summer 1976), pp. 1080-1110, particularly p. 1102. Also see his preface (p. 1103): "As pointed out at the beginning of this article, the Western Pacific region, including China, will be the most dynamic part of the world during the last part of this century." In capitalism, it should be remembered, it is dynamism that counts.

21. A more complete list of the strong points of Japan could look something like this:

(1) Japan is a rather democratic country with a relatively equally shared standard of living. People are made use of, even very much so — meaning everybody is somehow being made use of.

(2) The Akamatsu method, gradually substituting research and capital intensive production for labor intensive production — today recognized development theory, in Japan it has been so for a long time.

(3) There is an epistemological eclecticism in Japan, combining elements of oriental and occidental thinking.

(4) A very high level of quality control, and not only quality combined with industrial mass production. One might say that Japan has managed to overcome the ancient

contradiction between capital and labour intensive production, making for a production that is both labour, capital and research intensive.

(5) Japan is rather cynical about global conflicts, using the world as a resource in general, not losing time or money on siding in an alliance framework with one bloc rather than the other, thereby foregoing important business opportunities – or at least doing so less than others.

(6) Some of the ingenuity of the Japanese technology is not seen in the individual components of a product, but in the ways in which they are combined – excellent watches with computers built into them, for instance.

(7) Another important aspect of Japanese technology is the way in which it breaks out of existing paradigms. An example is the idea of transporting bulk goods by enormous, although very slow moving submarines!

(8) Then, there is the very famous long-time planning horizon, at least 50 years, that makes it possible to withstand short-term disappointment.

(9) There is the famous *Japan Inc.*, particularly based on the way in which bureaucrats, capitalists and intellectuals are integrated into well-functioning systemic units.

(10) There is the ethos aspect of the whole thing, combining Buddhist, Confucian, Shinto and Western elements. The Chinese would have a focus on Daoism rather than Shintoism making Chinese more flexible, more dialectical but the Japanese are more single-minded in pursuing their course as also prescribed by Shinto ideas and ideals.

(11) Japan has been playing on planned obsolescence by others, precisely because others make cars not to last Japan can make them to last knowing that the consumers would prefer that.

(12) Of course, Japan is engaging in dumping by having other conceptions of the economic unit that produces an entity – for instance conglomerates of economic units where one part can absorb the pressure a weaker part in the system could not have been able to absorb if it is dated.

(13) The Japanese population and not only the Government may keep out foreign products – if the Government is pressed to start really importing, the Japanese population may simply refuse buying.

(14) Japan has the good luck that it is so poorly understood in the West, that the West always constructs a Japan which is difficult to recognise in concrete reality. An example of that is the article on Japan in *Time* magazine, March 30, 1981 – better than what it used to be, but still very weak in understanding the religious basis of the Japanese constitution.

22. Incidentally, Japan will probably soon benefit from this by being a major exporter of military hardware to developing countries, not only to others.

23. Incidentally, Japan may very soon be benefiting from this by being a major exporter of telecommunication hardware, not only to developing countries, but also to others.

24. For reviews of the original article "A Structural Theory of Imperialism," for instance, by Andrew Mack, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. XVII (September 1974).

25. These two concepts are explored in Johan Galtung, *Two Concepts of Exploitation* (GIDD Project, Geneva, 1986).

26. One is particularly thinking of the Japanese case where there is a pronounced swing in the suicide frequency of women who are through the reproductive period and hence, not being productive either, in a sense are marginal in the whole social structure.

27. The group on World Economics of the Max Planck Institute in Starnberg made very fruitful use of this concept in their work on the new International Division of Labour.

28. This, of course, would constitute a bridge between "split and role" politics and tactics, and what can be gleaned from the theory of balanced and unbalanced conflict formations.

29. For more on this, see the book by Johan Galtung, Peter O'Brien and Roy Preisker, (eds.), *Self-Reliance* (Bogel-Quverture, 1980).

30. This is particularly well demonstrated in the very important works by Istvan Kende, "Local Wars After 1945," *Journal of Peace Research*, 1978.