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**PROLOGUE: THE EUROCENTRIC  
STATE OF THE DISCIPLINE**

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It is being circulated in a pre-publication form to elicit comments from readers and generate dialogue on the subject at this stage of the research.

## CONTENTS

I. Political Economy Is Not a Science of Epistemological Innocence	1
II. The Eurocentric Partisan Traditions	11
III. The Components of the Historic Category	15
IV. Concretizing the Capitalist Historic Dominance	18
V. Elements for "Forwarding"	24
VI. The Basic Marxist Methodological Referents	37
VII. The Methodological Point of Departure	43
VIII. A Partisan Intervention	48
IX. A Note on Intellectual Courage	55
Notes and References	57

We have to invent new wisdom for our age.  
And in the meantime we must, if we are to  
do any good, appear unorthodox, troublesome,  
dangerous, and disobedient to them who begat  
[and taught] us.

Stephen Hymer, 1979

I. POLITICAL ECONOMY IS NOT A SCIENCE OF EPISTEMOLOGICAL INNOCENCE

There is a discipline called political economy, even if there is no clear ontological agreement on what to accept or reject within its limits -- indeed, even if there is no agreement on what it is all about. This discipline, whatever it is conceived to be, is the only unitary mode capable of studying human beings in societies, whose histories change as cultures unfold through time.

The fact that in the recent past the eminence of political economy was threatened by numerous divisions into what constitute the social sciences -- with only scant regard to their organic wholesomeness within the unitary mode of political economy -- can be ignored as an aberration of very unfortunate, even if understandable, origins to be attributed to a variety of reasons, including problems of both the psychology and the sociology of knowledge, and not excluding our intellectual inability to pursue all that is and can be known about subjects in political economy: the meanings and the values of social beings and groups in the unfolding of their cultures.

This discipline deals with many principles and the interrelationships between them, but its first principle -- its basic principle -- from which all else derives deals with the coincidence between cultures of the production and the distribution of both material and non-material human needs in different and related societies. If this basic principle of political economy appears simple and uncomplicated, it is because the modes of its study are complex and even confusing; the basic puzzle, which informs the basic principles of political economy and its lesser curiosities, is this question: Why and how do human beings in given societies, within large-scale historical systems, produce what

they produce, and how do they distribute what they produce to meet human needs (for all)? This puzzle refers to the key properties of large-scale historical systems in terms of the historic referents which define the systems' historic identities.

The two parts of this initial puzzle deliberately hide more than they reveal, as the real source of concern in political economy lies in the interlink between the two parts. Neither in fact nor in the realm of ideas is this link peaceful. In both cases it is full of tensions, conflicts, and struggles.

At one level, the interlink deals with the ontological conception of the human being, at a particular time in a particular culture; how this conception deviates from that culture's axiology; and how epistemology, as the theory and the construction of knowledge, concerns itself with understanding and eliminating the ontological-axiological gap in that culture. At another level, the interlink suggests that political economy as a discipline is not some casual slap-together of politics and economics, but a serious and intricate organic relationship between the science and the philosophy of production and that of distribution in the service of man's sempiternal ontological vocation of confronting dehumanization with increasing humanization toward the axiological maximum of fully humanized societies.<sup>1</sup>

It is for these reasons that the discipline of political economy is full of controversies and does not contain a single question or statement that can be considered objectively innocent and therefore uninteresting. All who come into political economy, and stay in it long enough, sooner or later acquire strong convictions as to what the initial puzzle and the interlink between its two parts should mean. All protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, this subjectivity leads to a situation where no hands in the discipline can remain clean for too long. Seeking equity in the scientific context in political economy, therefore, becomes so difficult that separate courts of equity must exist to cater to different scientific pleas of objective innocence.<sup>2</sup> This raises a problem, however. In political economy, for reasons that constitute

the subject of this chapter, some particular courts not only claim to have but also appear to have real jurisdiction over all that goes on in the discipline. These courts claim to be authoritatively legitimate because they are established and that other courts are only pretenders to legitimate and authoritative jurisdiction. This is what brings about the ever-present struggles and tensions within schools of thought and between their higher courts in the discipline of political economy.

All this makes it imperative that whoever wants to venture into the controversially murky waters of political economy should know that there is nothing like an innocent investigation into any subject in the discipline, because political economy is not informed by an innocent epistemology. To the extent that we cannot scientifically answer a question that has not been scientifically considered, we should know that in political economy, because of the many conflicting scientific claims to orthodoxy, the most innocuous question or statement has a tail to it which links it to a particular understanding of the puzzle mentioned.

If something is worth writing at all in political economy, or in its social sciences form, then the sources of motivation, provocation, encouragement, and sympathies for writing it should be made clear: Is the reader expected to know not only what it is written about but also what it is meant for, insofar as it relates to any part of the puzzle? Further, would one not be right to say that any work which denies its readers such information does the readers a serious discourtesy? And yet can one not read most of the works in political economy — especially those of the social sciences variety — without noticing the full observance of this elementary courtesy, other than the perfunctory commercial references to the readership being addressed? Of course, some authors provide readers with this information. But such authors are very few and very exceptional.<sup>3</sup>

The reason why such discourtesy persists in establishment political economy is that for works to be considered scholarly and therefore scientific, they must be deemed neutral and objective. A problem arises

precisely because the criteria for the neutrality and objectivity in works on political economy are either unspecified, misleading, or deliberately deceptive. The sources of motivations, provocations, encouragements, and sympathies which inform these criteria are never directly expressed in most cases.

To be fair, there are different ideas of what constitute the scientific, the natural, and the objective in the different ideological camps within the establishment, but then the argument in this chapter is that these claims are common to most works in establishment political economy and that they cut across ideological divisions within it to make them generally a common claim as much to liberals and radicals as to Marxists.

I raise these issues at the outset not so that they can be forgotten, but so that their further discussion will lead to a critical consideration of the nature, the motive, and the methods of the commonality I attribute to the different ideological camps within establishment political economy. Principally, I raise these issues so that I can argue that the problem is not that there are many contending orthodoxies in the discipline of political economy but that, because of the nature of our present large-scale historical system in which these orthodoxies operate consciously or unconsciously toward the realization of a purpose, these orthodoxies — liberal, radical, and Marxist — bear a commonality in motives and methods that make them more alike than is often recognized.

I have two initial propositions to make. The first is that the claims to scientific neutrality and objectivity come easily to establishment political economy — indeed they are natural to it — because, apparent ideological divisions notwithstanding, establishment political economy holds fast to a deep-seated common world-view: a common theoretical structure of what the world is like and ought to be like, and what it is about and ought to be about. Because of this common world-view, most works in political economy share the common characteristic of being extremely antiseptic and highly predictable. They are antiseptic



because they lack the honest individual indications of the deep-seated motive behind the works; they are predictable because the theoretical structure of the common world-view is so deeply hidden in the very epistemological pores of establishment political economy that it is taken for granted in ways which can be counted upon to inhibit new insights in the complexity of the articulation of the interlink between the two parts of the basic puzzle.

The second proposition is that because the common world-view is taken for granted, the different ideological options within it, which are strictly no more than mere variations on the common theme of a world-view, are uncritically promoted to the ranks of radically opposite and contending world-views.

It is this common theme of a world-view that, arguing from my interpretation of the emerging world-system perspective, I describe in this book as Eurocentric. The term Eurocentricity, as used here, is meant to express the belief that the dominant world-view within establishment political economy — all ideological hues within it considered — holds fast to the common fallacy of mistaking the European dominance (meaning the dominance of geographic Europe and Europe of the Diaspora<sup>4</sup>) in the world-system — the world-economy and the world-history — for the world-system itself.

I have long suspected that the dominant views in political economy share two prominent properties. One is the propensity or the occupational predilection to obscure the world for non-Europeans; the other is the propensity, even perhaps a conscious conspiratorial understanding, to illuminate the world for Europeans and Europeanized elements in the world only. These suspicions, even if they were to be proved infallibly correct, would amount to very little, since Europeans, as much as any other peoples, should not be denied the right to illuminate the world for themselves in their own fashion.

A problem arises, however, when we consider this suspicion together with the undeniable European dominance in the modern world-system,

because we happen upon a very serious intellectual charge — a charge serious enough to amount to the indictable offence of Europe using its dominance in the world-system to mislead the entire world into thinking as though all its inhabitants were European, Europeanized, or likely to be Europeanized.

This charge will be hard to prosecute, especially if Europe pleads that, given the world for what it is, it is perfectly legitimate — indeed it is only to be expected — that Europe, or any other part of the world, should try to influence the rest of the world intellectually and otherwise in its own interests.

A successful prosecution of this charge, therefore, will have to base its arguments on the unfairness of the methods used by Europe to mislead the world, because of European dominance in the world-system and the pernicious nature of the motive served by these methods.

One aspect of the establishment's Eurocentric method is to fashion ideas about the world and to formulate categories, concepts, and inter-relationships into frameworks and theories in ways that explain the world only to Europeans and Europeanized elements. The other aspect is that while the process of obscuring the world for non-Europeans is going on, there is a severe vigilance against non-Eurocentric and anti-Eurocentric views and ideas about the world.

This is done in two ways. First, any ideas outside the Eurocentric conceptions of the world are vehemently decried, whatever their cosmological sources. This is intended to strike terror in the hearts of the carriers of non-Eurocentric ideas. Second, should such ideas prove useful to European interests, they are then deliberately and consistently interpreted in such ways that can be co-opted into the dominant Eurocentric views of the world to ensure the permanence of Eurocentric dominance in the realm of ideas. The adage appears to be to let a thousand ideas contend, so long as they are all of the Eurocentric kind and usable by, or compatible with, Eurocentric ambitions.

Ashis Nandy, for example, argues in very clear terms that the dominance of modern science (Eurocentric science) inhibits what he calls "intertranslatable languages for the ethnosciences so that they can have dialogues among themselves and with modern science without being swept [off] their feet."<sup>5</sup> This entails a loss of dignity for all non-Eurocentric knowledge systems.<sup>6</sup>

Nandy reasons in very convincing tones when he states that:

Other systems of knowledge are now judged by the extent to which they resemble – or could be validated by – modern science. Henryk Skolimowski has said that science at one time was an embodiment of human dignity. It has lost that status now and has become, often enough, a disgrace to human dignity. We should now be willing to go farther and affirm that modern science has become a means of depriving large parts of the world of their dignity. For instance, the non-modern sciences themselves are now-a-days often compared with modern science along dimensions popularized by modern science. Naturally and frequently, these sciences are found wanting. When they are infrequently found interesting, it is because some aspects of them can be translated into the language of modern science and made readable to those acquainted with the modern world. Or because some aspect of the non-modern science can be interpreted as "rational" when seen as an aspect of a folk science surviving in a special habitat at the periphery of the modern world (and not as an alternative universal solution competing with the world-view of modern science). Generally such considerations are shown to non-modern systems when they have a clear practical dimension (as in the case of acupuncture) or when they fit in with the concerns of the modern West (as in the case of Zen psychology).<sup>7</sup>

All this does not make Eurocentricity and its methods necessarily guilty. It is the motive behind the Eurocentric method that makes it guilty, intellectually dishonest, and unacceptable as a way of explaining the entire world-system, of which Europe is only a part – even if the dominant part – to the entire world. The motive appears to be the maintenance of European dominance in this world and its preservation in any transformed future world. The motive is that the European culture, through the dominance of its ideas, will continue to dominate this world and any transitional processes in the present world-system to ensure that the inevitable transformation of this world will still assure European dominance in the ensuing new world order. But there

are two sides to the story. If the motive is what makes the Eurocentric world-view guilty, dishonest, and unacceptable, then I suggest that what makes it pathetic, in the humiliating sense of the word, is the meek acceptance and the blind implementation of this world-view by most intellectuals of the periphery of the world-system.

This, to my mind, is a serious indictment for both sides. But I do not think it is the kind of indictment that would be passed to a higher court for an impartial and just trial by establishment political economy. Why? Because any representative political economy grand jury will be heavily loaded in favour of the establishment. At best, such a jury will be composed of fair representations from the liberal, radical, and Marxist variants of the establishment -- all of them Eurocentric.

The intention, therefore, is not to refer the Eurocentric indictment to any higher court. My concern in this paper is to address my arguments to other political economists who, for one good reason or the other, suspect the validity and the seriousness of the Eurocentric charge. It is in this light that this paper is to be read. It is addressed to political economists and sympathetic social scientists who have good reasons to be critical of the contending orthodoxies in establishment political economy, especially of the Eurocentric propensities in the potentially promising basis offered by Marxism. I shall return to this point in a moment, but first let me state here that the nature of my world-system critique of Eurocentricity is that it is an objection to a particular interpretation of the "world reality problem." The essence of it is that Eurocentric conceptions of the world reality consider the non-European parts of the world as merely underdeveloped Europe. These conceptions pretend to be explaining the world, while in fact they explain Europe and the world to Europeans and Europeanized trustees in other parts of the world in pursuit of the motive of seeking to perpetuate the European dominance of the world-system.

An analogy may be useful at this juncture. Let us conceive an epistemological coin for political economy. If we take one face of this coin to represent the methodology of the discipline, then it is

perhaps appropriate to regard the other face of the coin as representing its theory. This can mean that the reality which the discipline deals with can be conceived of as the matter between the two faces of the coin which is contained by its edge. From this conception, it can be argued that in political economy, method and theory are inseparable and are perhaps more important than the matter they claim to explain; to push the analogy a step further, we can reason that generally faces of coins display their imprimaturs and monetary value with little reference to the actual value of the metal composing the coin. Thus, in political economy, the nature of the method and the theory should alert us to, if not tell us about, their sources of origin and therefore, the nature — that is, the motive and the value — of their dominance and should indicate how much the epistemology of political economy should be worth to different students of this discipline — depending, of course, upon their particular situational persuasions. In political economy, because of its dominant imprimatur, the real value of its epistemology will differ, and in the best circumstances it ought to differ, for different political economists, again depending upon their particular persuasions. Different persuasions should lead to different curiosities vis-à-vis the basic puzzle of political economy and the interlink between its two parts.

A rhetorical question which should be kept in mind when reading this paper — if a student of political economy is not to dismiss its arguments prematurely — is not what this paper and its arguments say with finality, but what they illustrate and suggest. The question is: Given the European dominance in evolving modern large-scale historical systems since the late fifteenth century, is it all that woefully untenable to suggest that the epistemology and the derivative theories and methodologies in establishment political economy are Eurocentric? This paper does not pretend to do any more than illustrate the validity of this rhetorical question by the discussion of the different conceptions of imperialism in establishment political economy.

We should note that the Eurocentric pretence of explaining the world to the world, on its own terms, is not fallacious. On its own terms,

it is not necessarily unscientific or unobjective; on the world-scale of explanation, Eurocentricity is partisan because of its motive. The argument is that the Eurocentric conception of the world reality problem is partisan in all of its different interpretations.

## II. THE EUROCENTRIC PARTISAN TRADITIONS

Since in political economy there is nothing like an uninterpreted reality, one partisan interpretation of reality cannot call for anything less than other partisan interpretations. Each partisan interpretation must have its own motive and its own methods. In fact, it is the motives which in all cases dictate the methods. In political economy, at least, methods are no more than ways to interpret a reality problem. A prescribed method is invariably inherent in a theory — the structure of explanation — of a reality problem. Every partisan interpretation of a reality problem has something crucial about it, which I shall refer to as the point of entry into that reality.

The Eurocentric point of entry into the world reality problem is how to perpetuate European dominance in the world-system. The overriding Eurocentric concern, therefore, is how to make the modern world-system safe for — that is, amenable or conducive to — the perpetuation of European dominance in the modern world-system. What then is my anti-Eurocentric point of entry into the world reality problem?

My point of entry into the world reality problem is unabashedly partisan.<sup>8</sup> It is best expressed by the following complex question: Why is it that the so-called Third World (the underdeveloped parts of the world or the periphery of the world-system) was dominated, oppressed, and exploited, and having been so treated, continued to be so treated, even if the modes of the treatment have changed with time? Specifically, why it is that having been so treated in world-history's past, these parts of the world continue to make it possible for this treatment to continue at this late post-independence phase of capitalist world-history? Clearly, the motive behind this question is to understand the world-

system in such a way that I can begin to approach the matter of making it impossible for the centre to dominate and exploit the periphery.

This question has puzzled me gradually over the past 25 years or so, during which period the ever-present uneasiness which breeds the ever-present contentions in the discipline of political economy has come to centre on the plight of the periphery in what is now becoming increasingly seen as the capitalist world-system and its capitalist world-economy.<sup>9</sup>

There have been many related questions discussed in connection with the plight of the periphery in the world-system. These questions have mostly dealt with the nature of the internal conditions of periphery societies, the nature of the internal conditions of centre societies, and the extent to which the former are not like the latter. Causal relationships between the two internal conditions were not considered interesting problematics. What became known as development studies or modernization concerned itself largely with one question, which was how the internal conditions of periphery societies could be made similar to those of centre societies. This question was considered adequate to all intents and purposes because it was held that development or modernization had to do with how the non-European world could be Europeanized. Development studies and modernization courses did not ask why some parts of the world were supposedly developed and other parts were not. This question did not have to be asked because, from the Eurocentric perspective, the establishment had known the answer throughout world history: The non-European areas and their cultures were not Europeanized enough for them to develop to look like the European areas of the world. This way of looking at the world reality problem is long-standing in European philosophy of social change.

Robert Nisbet, for example, treats this matter very well, but only as aspects of the Western theory of development, in *Social Change and History*.<sup>10</sup> It is clear from this work that most aspects of Western social philosophy are interesting. But for transformational-transitional purposes in present world capitalist circumstances, what



we must appreciate is that European cosmology has been developmentalist and developmental since classical Greece and that it remains so today.

These two terms, developmentalist (from developmentalism) and developmental (from development) differ in their philosophical roles, even though the first term incorporates the second and they share a common etymology.

*Developmentalism* refers to a philosophy of history: a philosophy informing the articulations within and between cultures as they unfold through time. The developmentalist conception of history has three crucial dimensions to it: (1) it holds the progressivist notion of history, (2) it rides on the derogatory comparison with other cultures, and (3) by combined derivation from the other two dimensions, it is expansionist and seeks to dominate and exploit through enculturizing other cultures. These three dimensions combine to show that developmentalism is by nature dominance- and exploitation-oriented. But these are not its defining criteria. Many, if not most, culturally specific social philosophies may display these orientations. In the case of developmentalist social philosophy, its defining criteria are that it is limitless, not so much in fact as in its progressivist, derogatory, and expansionist ambitions.

For a social philosophy to be developmentalist, it must display limitless ambitions of its three dimensions in its real history. Carriers of a developmentalist philosophy of history consider their culture to be the vanguard of the progressive movement through universal history; therefore, they consider their culture superior to all other cultures. This blinding world-view may take exaggerated forms, even in its apparent opposites, and compel expansion while justifying expansionist impulses in pursuit of exploitation, no matter how thinly, falsely as civilizing missions unrelated to the historic theme of a historic time.

*Development*, as a distinct component within a developmentalist philosophy, deals with the specifics of the concrete and the actualizing aspects of this philosophy at particular times within a historic period.

It deals essentially with what is to be done or not to be done within the developmentalist philosophy to assist (through updating and legitimizing) the continuity of the dominance of the dominating culture.

One thing that ought to be clear is that many cultures may have harboured developmentalist ambitions — some may have even displayed developmentalist pretensions — and yet, as far as we know, only the Western (I prefer the term European) capitalist civilization has succeeded in actualizing these ambitions and pretensions over the past 500 years or so. Our contemporary world is nothing, unless we conceive of it as formed in large part by the relentless pursuit of the pretensions of Eurocentric developmentalist philosophy after its world-scale ambitions and the effects of this pursuit. Surely, as nothing lasts forever, this pursuit itself will end in collapse. This is true because escalating contradictions of the causes and the effects of this relentless pursuit will make the capitalist world system come to grief some day. We can all be thankful for this benign knowledge, I suppose. But will this impending collapse also be the end of Eurocentricity? Not necessarily. There is nothing existing, in history or elsewhere, which indicates that the collapse of world capitalism will also mean the end of Eurocentricity. This present world-system is capable of collapsing, but the new system that arises from its ashes will still bear an Eurocentric imprint. What this new imprint will look like is beside the point: it will still be Eurocentric.

Some persons delude themselves by thinking that a shining socialist world order will arise to replace the old capitalist order. I am not impressed by such visions. They denude very little of the Eurocentric world-view. Socialism — utopian, humanistic, or otherwise — is still Eurocentric, if I am to judge by its currently operationalized variants. All the variants I can think of in socialism still bear the Eurocentric imprint of dehumanizing accumulation of capital by exploiting human beings or nature or both excessively.

Let me clarify what I mean when I refer to the world-system, principally its economy, as capitalist in the following section.

### III. THE COMPONENTS OF THE HISTORIC CATEGORY<sup>11</sup>

Human social history can be divided into specific and precise historic periods. The concept *historic* differs from the term *historical*, because while the latter is nebulous and evasive of the precise contents of the categories and concepts constituting and describing sections of history, the former stresses the precise and specific contents of the categories and the concepts that describe definite and prominent periods in human history. *Historic* distinguishes the contents of the categories from one another in terms of real differences in the human-conditioning factors of the different periods. *Historical*, as it is often used, tends to stress the heroic wills<sup>12</sup> and the poetics in history. The term *historic* is intended for viewing history in terms which are fundamental and precise in that they derive from and relate to the distinguishing features of distinctively different periods in history.

I suggest that it would be extremely useful to view the historic identities of different periods in history by the differences in their basic historic components, which I suggest are the following: historic themes, historic motives, historic forces, historic concomitants, and historic logical attendants. When I refer to the *historic dominance* of a period in the history of a society, I am only trying to name and reconstitute the complex which sums up reality, and which is composed of a precise historic theme, historic motives, a historic force, historic concomitants, and historic logical attendants — all of which are peculiar, if not unique, to a historic period of that society.

One would be right to ask what all these terms mean; therefore, I shall attempt to define them. *Historic theme* stands for the theme of themes during a historic period and it is best understood as a social

order's *raison d'être*. This theme would tend to remain constant over the duration of a historic period. What tends to change are the means for attaining and maintaining the theme during a historic period. The *historic motives* are what motivate and tantalize individuals to make a fetish of the theme of themes in the immediate circumstances of their daily lives. The *historic force* is the key element in the complex of varying means which keeps the theme the same during changing historical circumstances within the historic period. The historic force is the source of dynamism which must constantly "update" itself, if the historic period is to remain historic of a particular kind. The term *historic concomitant* refers to those aspects of social reality which are historical, in the sense of being transhistoric, but which assume radically new relevance or acquire new meanings because of new circumstances brought about by the "updatings" in the historic force. The term *historic logical attendants* refers to the aspects of social reality that are historic by being peculiar to a historic period; they are emergent of the changes in and the dictates of the historic force. Within the complex of means in pursuit of the historic theme, the concomitants and the logical attendants play supporting roles to the historic force of a historic period. Therefore, when I refer to the historic dominance of a historic period, I refer essentially to the complex emulsion of a historic force suspending and unfolding in the intimate solution of precise historic concomitants and historic logical attendants, all of which operate in mutually supporting roles to maintain the historic theme in pursuit of precise historic motives. The dehumanizing-humanizing opposites which are always present in human history are always located in this historic emulsion.

Because means which are also thematic can vary — indeed, because they need to vary to keep the theme constant — the deception to look for is mistaking changing means for a changing theme. What we should guard against is the false conclusion that social orders have changed just because the flamboyance of changing means has obscured the bland constancy of the theme. Means have the uncanny ability to masquerade as theme of themes; historic themes have the misfortune of being easily ignored, once the appropriate means machinery has been set in motion

to assure the stability of the theme.

This method derives from the world-system perspective addressing itself to the cardinal contradiction in social reality: contradiction of social reality itself. The contradiction, as can be seen from the contrast between the "flamboyance of means" and the "bland of constancy of the theme," is the contradiction that things can very easily *appear* to have changed in social orders while, in fact, from the *historic* point of view, they remain *essentially* the same — the historic theme remains the same.<sup>13</sup>

#### IV. CONCRETIZING THE CAPITALIST HISTORIC DOMINANCE

Every social order has been part of a particular historic dominance. In the past, different historic dominances (even if similar in some respects) have existed in different parts of the world. But for the past 500 years or so, for the first time in the history of mankind, the whole world has steadily been coming under the dominance of one historic form: the capitalist historic form. In the world capitalist historic form, the historic theme is the accumulation of capital through profit maximization; the historic motives are the attainment of the bourgeois way of life and its concomitants of the proletarian way of life and increasing proletarianization;<sup>14</sup> the historic force is the rising level of efficiency (even if reckless efficiency) in the exploitation of both human and non-human resources; and the historic concomitants and the historic logical attendants are those aspects of the capitalist social reality which must be present and must change as the rising level of efficiency dictates to facilitate capital accumulation by legitimating and maintaining the capitalist order in the pursuit of its historic motives.

Historic concomitants refer to the changes in the transhistoric sociological and other aspects of daily life. They include the changing conceptions of such things as food and nutrition, marriage and love, home, housing and family, work and leisure, and even life and death. Human beings have always regarded food as nutritive and love as somehow related to family and home. They have always made the distinction between work and leisure. They have always known that life implies death -- gradual or sudden, premature or timely. No particular historic period in man's long history can claim to have invented these aspects of life. They have evolved to be present for as long as we care to

remember. This is what makes them transhistoric, except that in changing historic periods they (may) assume different forms, meanings, and values. The argument is that these changing differences occur between and within historic periods to facilitate the maintenance of historic themes. The emphasis in this argument is not on the newness of an invention, but on the newness of the changes in the conceptions of these and other aspects of life, as history moves on in its historic.

Historic logical attendants are those aspects of life which cannot be said to have been present throughout human history but are peculiar to a particular historic period. Examples are hard to provide in this instance. But the state and the nation, bureaucracy and legalities, and even our conceptions of distance, time, and size can be said, for example, to be very peculiar to our capitalist epoch. They can almost be said to have been invented and to have evolved logically to serve the capitalist historic theme of capital accumulation.

In case the distinction I seek to establish between historic concomitants and historic logical attendants is neither clear nor convincing, let me forestall unnecessary contentions by arguing that historic logical attendants can be conceived of as the results of extreme changes in historic concomitants. The argument is that these changes are so extreme that they can be considered to constitute different historic phenomena in the logical services of different historic periods.

I simply state the obvious, therefore, when I say that the characteristics of the capitalist world-system -- its paradoxes and its contradictions -- have developed with the development of the historic dominance of the world capitalist formation. If the theme in this historic identity is the accumulation of capital in the pursuit of the motives, then what distinguishes it from some possible humanized future economic forms is not so much the difference between private and public ownership of production, as both ownership forms hold as their goal the accumulation of capital through increasing the efficiency of production, the cause of man's dehumanization. In the capitalist mode of

production the emphasis is on the efficient production of things, and not on the production of things, efficiently or otherwise, to enhance and dignify human existence in the individual and societal senses. Because of this theme, and the way its logical means and concomitants have developed, the previously "unrelated relations" of the different parts of the world have dramatically given way to a single world-history in the course of nearly 500 years. For this reason, we have a world of political societies within one dominant capitalist world-economy.

I have put down the above to stress that the world has, over the past 500 years, become one — a unit whole with an ethos and a pathos — embracing all other units and affecting all else in this whole. This whole is the capitalist world-system, and it is so all-pervading that it is impossible to envision the transformation of any part of it without considering the eventual transformation of the whole.<sup>15</sup>

I refer to the world-system as capitalist because the world-economy, which holds this system together, is capitalist. This is not to suggest that all the different economies in the world are capitalist in the same sense and to the same degree. What is suggested is that at the world level all types of economies are forced to act, through the world market, as though they were capitalist, in pursuit of the capitalist historic theme of accumulating capital irrespective of the level of development of productive relations, productive forces, and the articulation between them.<sup>16</sup>

Even though we have the central, state, and peripheral types within the capitalist world-economy,<sup>17</sup> and even though these types differ in many ways, we call the world-system, world-history, and the world-economy, which subserves both, capitalist for two main reasons. First, the states of those economies in the world-system which are "fully" capitalist appear to want their economies to remain so; the states of those units which are not yet fully capitalist appear to want to become "fully" capitalist; and the states of those economies which claim not to be capitalist, because they have socialized their means of production,



appear to behave both internally and externally as though they are capitalist or want to be capitalist.<sup>18</sup> Second, we call the world reality capitalist because its historic theme of the accumulation of capital and its individual historic motives of the bourgeois, the proletarian and the proletarianized ways of life, are increasingly becoming universal motives in the world-system.

If we choose to name the world capitalist, it is not meant to be an ideological opprobrium but rather to suggest that, in the sense described above — in its ethos as well as its pathos — the whole world-system as a culture and a process, in structural and relational terms, is capitalist and that the historic dominance of the world-system is capitalist.

In the course of pursuing the different ways of life, through the methodical accumulation of capital, the world-system — its economy, history, and culture — displays historic tendencies of increasing efficiency of exploitation of human and non-human resources. Axiologically speaking, exploitation is the dehumanizing opposite of man's ontological vocation of humanization<sup>19</sup> present, in its capitalist form, in the complex historic capitalist "emulsion." Given what we know about the world today, the advanced science of production and the retarded art of distribution, it is the different modes of capitalist exploitation and their efficiency that make the present world-order unfair, unjust, immoral, and irrational.

From the peripheral point of view, the problem is that none of the three types of capitalist forms mentioned above appears to promise that it will cease to dehumanize people, especially the people (the masses) of the periphery, in its thematic evolution. Therefore, the periphery must make the transformational aspects of the human vocation of increasing humanization their principal vocation.

It must be emphasized that, in this argument, the dominance of the contemporary world social formation, as it is defined by the nature of the links between its constituent modes of production, matters and not

its specific purities.

Since the humanizing axiology of man's ontological vocation is unquestioned, the name we call the world should suggest much more than just a neutral description. The name should unambiguously represent a simultaneous rejection of its main dehumanizing tendencies and the acceptance of its humanizing potential and its growth.

There is clearly a huge difference between capitalism and socialism. But my argument is that, from my perspective, they are only opposite variants within the world capitalist reality rather than radical opposites. They are radical opposites only in the Eurocentric world-view.

What I am struggling to suggest, and I constantly fear that I shall be misunderstood, is that it is dangerous to confront the transformation of the capitalist world-system (or any large-scale historical system for that matter) as though it is the primary historic duty of its dominant part to negate the system and itself with it: suicide is not too common in daily life. Conscious and deliberate historical self-abnegation of large-scale historical systems is, if they exist at all, even less common.

Such systems, if they are not too stubborn, revise themselves so that they can last longer. No honest observer can accuse the capitalist system of a lack of ingenuity or stubbornness to revise itself as it goes along. Capitalist history is replete with clever surmountings of crises. Its very existence produced socialism, which a "cultured" Ghanaian will see and interpret, in only its Eurocentric (final) analysis, as no more than "the same thing different."

That the capitalist world-system will some day collapse we all know. But that is not — indeed it cannot be — the problem. The axiomatic point is that it will collapse by its own abilities and inabilities, as they reflect through an excessive and insatiable appetite. The axiomatic status of this point still does not make it interesting,

however, given what we know about our world and its givens.

From this realization, the initial worry of those of us who seek genuine transformation through a newly conceived and constructed transition of the capitalist world-system is to alert ourselves to the cardinal contradiction (or is it initially a paradox and not a contradiction as such?) that things can very easily appear to change while actually remaining essentially the same.

In this instance, social philosophy – developmentalist philosophy especially – moves subtly. It moves on the subtle meanings it endows categories, their derivative concepts, and the interrelationships between them, as they in turn relate by derivation to the constancy, and subtle variations within the continuity, of its historic theme.

My point is that these categories and the interrelationships between them may display confusing tendencies toward transformational fluidity and rigidity, but still this is not the problem. The problem always is precisely the extent to which such rigidities and fluidities hide the smooth continuity of a developmentalist philosophy.

To illustrate the problem, and also to move on from it, I shall refer to Arthur Lewis's *The Theory of Economic Growth*,<sup>20</sup> W.W. Rostow's anti-communist manifesto masquerading as a historical study, *The Stages of Economic Growth*,<sup>21</sup> the many writings of the Committee for Comparative Politics, the many neo-classical and Keynesian approaches to the study of the so-called economics of development,<sup>22</sup> and the dualistic separation between anthropology and sociology as good indications of the subtlety involved in the Eurocentric nature of dominant political economy.

V. ELEMENTS FOR "FORWARDING"<sup>23</sup>

Immediately after World War II, the liberal Eurocentric conception of the modern world was one of an uncompromising duality, not a set of related contradictions and their intimating paradoxes,<sup>24</sup> which enabled a part of the world-system to feed on other parts. The world-economy consisted of the dual economies of the developed and the underdeveloped sectors between and within societies. But nowadays, because of certain influences,<sup>25</sup> even the liberal view of the world reality has tempered itself enough to adopt the argument that the two sets of economies and societies are not necessarily unrelated in some minimal sense at least, but that the dual nature of the two realities within the modern world reality is more important than any relationships which exist between the separate realities within the dualistic whole. The only time when it is legitimate to breach the sacred duality of the world reality is when it comes to the diffusion of the exogenous sources of "progressive" change from the centre into the periphery. This liberal Eurocentricity as it was championed by many is what has been severely criticized by Andre Gunder Frank in his classic essay, "Sociology of Development and Underdevelopment of Sociology."<sup>26</sup>

From the point of view of development, and with the increasing demonstration of the difficulties inherent in the liberal Eurocentric conception of the duality of the world reality problem, the question confronting this brand of Eurocentricism became why it was that in the face of all the diffusionist theories, and their applications at the national and the international levels, the development-underdevelopment duality persisted in its traditional or non-modern perversity. This question centred on the lack of evidence indicating that the Third World countries were getting more complex in social structure and

growing economically by following their predicted self-sustained developmental paths, just as the European countries had done earlier.

The pursuit of this question has been very interesting, even if as a career it has been rather inauspicious. The debates which this question engendered became something akin to battlegrounds for inner Eurocentric ideologies. The positions taken by the different Eurocentric ideological camps are what are often presented as immaculate universal theories of explanation of the underdevelopment of the Third World and often as the bases for the hopeful Eurocentric predictions regarding the dissolution of underdevelopment.

While liberals contemplated what was responsible for underdevelopment, considering endogenous Third World societies' deficiencies, and prescribed exogenously diffusionist Eurocentric solutions, the radical and Marxist alliance within the establishment contemplated and responded by asking who was responsible for the underdevelopment of the Third World societies. This latter question did not exclude the question of "what was responsible." The alliance had known the answer to this question all along: it was capitalism of the centre societies. By asking "who was responsible," the alliance came out with the startling discovery that capitalists of the centre were responsible.

We should note two things very carefully at this point. The first is that neither of the two broad views sees the underdevelopment phenomenon as the property of the world-system itself;<sup>27</sup> it remains the property of the periphery of the world-system. Both views see underdevelopment as the property of the peripheral parts of the system, even if they locate the sources of the causes differently. Second, both views conceive of development as the progressive imitation of the social history of the centre by the periphery; Europeanization is synonymous with development.

And yet the radical and Marxist way of putting the question seems to indicate something very crucial. It seems to indicate how far we have come in posing the right question. We seem to be moving away from

regarding underdevelopment as the property of parts of the world-system due to some sort of a natural law, the explanation for which must be sought in inanimate and superstitious realms. I say "we seem to be moving," because it is not yet clear whether we have moved far away enough from Eurocentric mystification of the underdevelopment as it is understood by the crude contest of primacy between "endogenous" and "exogenous" factors. All this is true, and yet nobody can gainsay the fact that we seem to have come a long way from viewing underdevelopment as some stage which some parts of the world, for one silly reason or the other, must go through -- a stage which will consume itself, provided some simple Eurocentric precepts of imitation, planning, and revolutionary rhetorics are indulged in.

Lately, if we have come nearer to formulating the proper question with respect to underdevelopment, we did not come to this point easily. It has taken an intense struggle against conventional wisdoms to establish the baseline that underdevelopment of parts of the world, in contrast to development of parts of it, has something to do with the actions of groups of men as they have interacted on the face of the earth over the last few centuries in a particular history which has benefited some groups and hurt others. This formulation is no mean achievement, considering the initial one-sided nature of the struggle between ideas.

The purpose of this paper is not so much to discuss the struggle of ideas pertaining to the world reality problem. It is to suggest, in a modest way, that in the continuing debates on the world reality problem, it might be useful if we pause to pay attention to the contents that have been endowed certain crucial categories, their derivative concepts, and the interrelations established between them, if our inquiries into who and what is responsible for the underdevelopment phenomenon and what to do about it are not to continue to be frustrated by the Eurocentric predilection to cloud the world reality problem for non-Europeans. Even more important is the hope that, once we reinterpret these crucial categories and concepts, we will then be in much better positions to confront "what is to be done" to remove whatever we come to call underdevelopment.

My argument is not that other world-views, other partisan interpretations of the world reality, will not also be self-serving but rather that any other such interpretation will lack the key Eurocentric property of equating a particular dominance with the entire world-system. No other world-view can do this in any case since, as world-history has unfolded over the last 500 years, no other culture has had the chance to indulge in the self-serving fallacy of equating the dominance of a part with the whole. In addition, it can also be argued that the very genetic make-up of the European world-view is what is Eurocentric, while the genetic make-up of other world-views is not, hence impelling the necessity for Europe to expand, dominate, and exploit on a world scale.<sup>28</sup>

There cannot be a clear world-view without a distinctive and supportive historiography. The argument cannot be that conventional European history — the methodical narration and chronology of European events and events involving Europe — is Eurocentric. The argument is that European historiography — the science or the art (not excluding the possibility of magic) of the construction of historical knowledge for universal consumption — is what is Eurocentric; Eurocentricity is to be understood through the methods employed and the motive these methods serve in the evolution of the modern world-system, with specific reference to the undisputable European dominance in the history of this system. To the extent that history is the stuff from which we derive our knowledge about our world, its workings, and its transformation, then it is the common fibre through the enormous intricacy and the all-pervading complexity of European historiography in its efforts to explain the world that I think we should call Eurocentric.

Scholarship in the people's history movement<sup>29</sup> indicates efforts at a departure from the Eurocentric conception of history as the immaculate presentation of the poetics and heroics of supermen portrayed by "the use of categories which remain wholly external to the object they purport to account for."<sup>30</sup> This movement strives to bring history closer to the lives of the majority of the people who actually make it.

There are many problems, however, in this effort. The biggest problem

is the sweetly tempting danger to swing the pendulum from the worship of heroes in history to the worship of "the people" in the manner of Rousseauist worship of the noble savage. Another danger is the difficulty of inserting the particulars of "the people" into the flow of the general in the articulation of historical forces while allowing for the historical movements and moments within the prominence of a specific and a precise historic boundary. This is particularly worthy of note if historiography is to concern itself with what I think it should focus on — namely, the transformation of our contemporary capitalist large-scale historical system. To do this, historiography must move from the conception and construction of history as "struggle between virtue and vice"<sup>31</sup> to a story of endless justified revenges.<sup>32</sup> Because of its transformational focus, historiography should concern itself with the effective narrowing of the ontological-axiological gaps at all levels within the world-system.

People's history, broadly and properly understood, shows that the most fascinating thing in the study of history today is not in the re-statement of where history went right but, ironically, discovering where it went wrong and still continues to go wrong.

On the issue of historiography, we must refer to Eric Williams's *British Historians and the West Indies*.<sup>33</sup> In this book, Williams demonstrates beyond all reasonable doubt that the worst thing in European historiography, as far as this can be gauged by British historiography during the Victorian era, is European historiography itself.<sup>34</sup> Eurocentricity, during this period, especially its racist component, as Williams demonstrates it, has enough power to move Allan Bullock, a prim and proper Oxford University historian, to introduce Williams's book as follows:

The book was written, in the first place, for West Indian readers, written with passion and for a clearly avowed purpose: "to emancipate the author's compatriots whom the historical writings that he analyses sought to depreciate and to imprison for all time in the inferior status to which these writings sought to condemn them." Before anyone condemns Dr. Williams for using historical material for such a purpose, he should examine the claims to impartiality of the historians from whom



he quotes.

No West Indian is likely to be surprised by the material Dr. Williams has collected to illustrate his argument: at most it can only confirm what he knows instinctively. Many English readers, however, I believe, will be genuinely shocked by the evidence which he produces for a belief in racial supremacy firmly held and openly avowed by some of the most familiar figures in Victorian England. When similar views were expressed by the Germans about Jews and other "non-Aryan" peoples, most Englishmen regarded them as detestable. What we have still not realized, however — and I cannot regard myself as an exception in this matter — is the extent to which our attitudes are unconsciously influenced still by these often barely recognized assumptions.

Eric Williams' book may be attacked as unfair and biased, although by drawing so much of his material from the actual works of the writers he criticizes he has already turned the tables on his critics and left them only with the charge that he has been one-sided in his selection. Even if this were true — and I should not accept it as true, for instance, of his account of the Governor Eyre controversy — it would not affect what I believe to be the real value of his book, the opportunity which it affords to look at our history and ourselves through the eye of a man of different race who has successfully led his people's movement for independence from British rule. It is this which gives Dr. Williams' book, bias and all included, the character of an authentic historical document in its own right.

If history is ever to be more than a one-sided account, then it is necessary, however painful, to look at it from the other man's point of view. This is not a remote academic point of view. As Dr. Williams has been quick to grasp, a people's view of its own history is an essential, perhaps the determining, factor in its sense of its own identity. The West Indians are not the only people looking for a new identity, so are the British, and an important part of the process, for the British, as much as for the French or the Germans, is to revalue their history in the circumstances of a different world. If Dr. Williams' book does no more than drive us to go back and look for ourselves, we have reason to be grateful to him. I cannot believe that anyone who does will continue to see the events he describes in the same light as before.<sup>35</sup>

Williams himself says this in his forward to the book:

The independence of Trinidad and Tobago cannot be developed on the basis of intellectual concepts and attitudes worked out by metropolitan scholars in the age of colonialism. The old intellectual world is dead, strangled by the noose that it put around its own neck. The new world of the intellect open to the emerging countries has nothing to lose but the chains that tie it to a world that has departed, never to return.

Poor and insignificant as they may be, their real opportunity for independence lies in their independent mind.<sup>36</sup>

These are fine words. But how true are they? Is the old intellectual world really dead or has it only assumed new forms in subtlety as the old world itself only appears to have died but, in fact, lives its old self in its new form? And what should be the nature of the "independent mind" that Williams talks about? These questions are indeed the questions for our intellectual times; they deal with the goals, the processes, and the indicators of the independent intellectual development of the periphery of the world-system. This book is, in many regards, to be seen as a modest contribution toward what must be done initially, if we are to forge independent minds in the periphery.

If, as Bullock says, British -- and by implication European -- historiography of the Victorian era was racist, then the question is whether this characteristic has not been passed on to the historiography of today, even if only in its Eurocentric refined form. In our era, a European historiographic bias assumes two extreme forms and has little respect for the middle ground where the historiographic truth probably lies. Each extreme form seems to derive directly from what Eric Williams quotes Lord Acton as having said: that "[certain races, excluding the non-European races] are the only makers of history, the only authors of advancement."<sup>37</sup> Advancement and history, from this point of view, is due to the graces of "certain races." History is a medium for the praise of God,<sup>38</sup> an artefact in the "cultural decoration and an exemplification of [a particular hegemonic power's] wonderful world."<sup>39</sup> History is not meant to answer any difficult questions,<sup>40</sup> because it is not meant to be a guide to action.<sup>41</sup>

From this view of history, historiography concerns itself only with how to present the advancement of the modern world and its evolution as the result of the hegemonic heroics of certain races. In these terms, history has very little to do with the evolution of economics and other realities such as exploitation, which are to be understood by the evolution of events in the periphery and in the centre and what links

the two together in the capitalist world-system to make it de-humanizing.

This view of history persists in Eurocentric circles. The situation is where European historiography and its derived Eurocentric methodologies in political economy, to perpetuate European methodologies in political economy, to perpetuate European dominance and to discourage non-European confidence in the realms of ideas, come in their two extreme forms. One extreme version attributes all that is debased, ineffective, and not to be desired in human beings to non-Europeans. Non-Europeans are, therefore, responsible for all that is wrong in their societies. The other extreme version attributes childlike innocence to the non-European races and their cultures and holds that the European race and its culture are and have been responsible for all that is wrong in non-European societies.

We should know enough today to reject the first view of history as extremist nonsense. By the same token, we should also know enough to regard the second view as a condescending exaggeration. This latter view can be interpreted to mean that non-European races lack the capacity and the refinement to resist domination and exploitation or that they are not yet fully human to be, among other things, inhuman to themselves and to others. This view suggests a refusal to accept the roles of non-Europeans in shaping world-history in its totality through their own abilities and inabilities.

It may therefore come as a bit of a surprise to Eurocentric historiography if I were to argue, as I shall in a later chapter, the historiographic fact that non-European societies have, through their historical abilities and inabilities, always been real parts of their own histories and that they continue to be so even today. Whatever has been glorious in their share in world-history -- such as the abolition of capitalist slavery -- has not been due to either the work of God, the prick of hegemonic conscience resulting in the triumph of the power of pure idealism in the practical world, as Coupland and others would have us believe,<sup>42</sup> or to the European moral allegiance to a civilizing mission.

It has in large part been due to their own participation in world-history, as it has unfolded from particular circumstances to particular circumstances. Whatever has been inglorious and painful has also been due in large part to their own participation in world-history as it has unfolded to date.

For example, if the abolition of capitalist slavery came about because of the persistence of slave rebellions of various kinds and also because of an economic expedient in Coupland's practical work which demanded it,<sup>43</sup> then we should also realize that the slave trade itself was assisted to some degree by Africans of the time. At the moment, the persistence of imperialism is not due to the sole ingenuity of the centre sources of imperialism. The periphery sources of imperialism are now experienced and able accomplices in this nefarious enterprise. If we are not to turn history into "historyoid,"<sup>44</sup> then we must always be conscious of the complex dual, even multiple, nature of historiographic truths.

Nineteenth-century Europe has much greater hold on our present-day thinking about our world than we are often aware. The key categories and concepts and the interrelationships between the idioms in the scientific language with which we explain the world to ourselves not only are Eurocentric but also are bound to nineteenth-century Eurocentricity. The matter is precisely as Immanuel Wallerstein states it: in the social sciences and in political economy, "our concepts are time-bound in two senses."<sup>45</sup> He continues that our concepts "reflect the conditions of a certain age. They apply to the conditions of a certain age — not necessarily the same one as the one they reflect. When using terms, it is always crucial to perceive both sets of referents, or we shall miss the point of a debate."<sup>46</sup> The age is nineteenth-century Europe.

It is the central theme of this paper that the debates on the concept of imperialism have missed the point of the debate insofar as imperialism is a world-system process with participation by all concerned and not an exclusively European phenomenon.

The logical, structural, relational, and other historical exhibits displayed in the confusing debate on imperialism are Eurocentric because, among other things, they are time-bound and they reflect the European conditions of the late nineteenth century — as they apply to the emergence of industrial capitalism — or are presented as though they reflect European experiences from time immemorial.

To call the dominant methodology/epistemology of political economy in the capitalist world-system Eurocentric should not be to state anything startlingly controversial: it is a descriptive fact about not only the depiction of the world reality problem but also the expected and the conventionally accepted ways to approach its study.

Thomas Khun, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*,<sup>47</sup> alerted us to the kinds of resistance to be expected from the establishment in any attempt to change accepted paradigms. In political economy, the reasons for this resistance may be many, but they must include the problem of psychology of knowledge, which oversees the motive of seeking to perpetuate European dominance in the world.

Johan Galtung, a man who has given social science methodology some thought, has recently written a book entitled *Ideology and Methodology*.<sup>48</sup> I interpret Galtung's main thesis to be that methodologies in all societies should be seen as ideologies because of the strong compatibilities between what is considered a "valid scientific product (the science structure) and . . . the social structure within which this product was produced."<sup>49</sup> The scientific product will be shaped according to the social structure.<sup>50</sup> Galtung says that the basic underlying idea is neither complicated nor original:

It is simply that there is a relation so strong between the two that to talk of philosophy of science in general and scientific methodology in particular (what constitutes a valid scientific product) without reference to the underlying social structure is misleading. That kind of discussion will only lead to pretenses of universalism and absolutism, masking the extent to which a valid scientific product also, to a large extent, has [to] validate [and] reproduce the structure that brought it forth. Far from universal, a methodology even

contributes to the definition and maintenance of a certain social structure by being compatible with it, or to its downfall and replacement by another by being incompatible with it. Thus, although the science structure is generally determined by this structure, some feedback is possible.<sup>51</sup>

One of Galtung's main arguments is that the structure of art production, for example, "must either be similar to the structure of the society in which it is embedded or else be rather isolated. . . ."52

Galtung's poignant conclusion of the ideological connections between social structure, science structure, and the scientific product is put this way:

There is no such thing as a general, universal methodology. The epistemology/methodology we have produces results compatible with the structure producing it, and that structure, in turn, is a reflection of the general social structure in which we are embedded. To work with a methodology, hence, is a political act of confirmation or negation of the structure in which we, people in general and scientists in particular, live. Once chosen one may enact the norms of that methodology grammar well, or badly — correctly or incorrectly. But there is a choice, and the choice of a methodology is implicitly the choice of an ideology, including the mystifying, monotheistic ideology that there is but one methodology — the universal one. To the extent that we are conscious the choice is for us to make, not to be made for us and to the extent that we are free for us to enact.<sup>53</sup>

For each type of social structure, Galtung suggests that two key questions must be asked if, among other things, we are going to be able to appreciate the thesis of "methodology as ideology."<sup>54</sup> The first question is "under this structural type, what is the most likely structure of the organization for and implementation of valid science — the scientific and professional structure?" The second is "under this structural type, what is the most likely structure of the scientific product?"<sup>55</sup> He adds that "the first question belongs to sociology, or the science of social structure proper. The second question belongs more to 'culturology' or, perhaps, to 'history of ideas' — to ideology (as distinct from 'ideology')."<sup>56</sup>

The world capitalist system and its economy bear the hierarchical structure of the centre, the semi-periphery,<sup>57</sup> and the periphery in a Euro-liberal culture.<sup>58</sup> The centre is predominantly European and the semi-periphery and the periphery are non-European but ruled by Europeanized elements or Europeans. It is therefore not surprising that in political economy both the scientific structure and the scientific product will be Eurocentric. Ideas will tend to flow from the top to the bottom, and Europeans and Europeanized elements will tend to occupy the higher ranks of the scientific structure. This does not only mean that for the bottom ranks of the scientific structure the scientific product will be Eurocentric; rather, it means that for non-Europeans in the scientific structure of the world-system where a liberal ethos means social mobility is possible and the motto is success,<sup>59</sup> the aim of non-Europeans in the ranks of the scientific structure will be to "supra-Europeanize" the Europeans. Good examples are the extreme vehemence of semi-peripheral and peripheral Marxism and the extreme shadiness of their liberalism.

This reality also means that in the present world-system a vertical division of labour will exist. European and the Europeanized elements in the scientific structure will dispense scientific axioms with underlying basic assumptions and paradigms.<sup>60</sup> The lower ranks of the scientific structure, populated as it will be mainly by the semi-periphery and the periphery professionals in the structure, will busy themselves with the never-ending chores of puzzle solving, having already been given and trained in Eurocentric "universal scientific truths."

In the world capitalist system, the invariance in the dialectically changing universal truths<sup>61</sup> is the extent to which the world is made safe -- meaning absence of war and increasing economic growth -- for the dominance of the European culture, expressed in the functional terms of the extent to which capital is accumulated in the centre by keeping the gradient<sup>62</sup> of the exploitation of the periphery constant. If the persistence of the structure of the world-system is reflected in the persistence of the scientific structure and its products, then it also

means that perhaps the transformational probabilities of the world-system can be gauged by the transformational change in the scientific structure and its products. What comes first (transformation in the structure or in the product) may be difficult to tell. But transformation in the nature of the scientific product must mean something. It can lead to or at least indicate transformational changes in the social structure itself.<sup>63</sup>

This paper does not claim to be initiating much of a change in the capitalist world-system, political economy, or scientific products. What it pretends to suggest is that to even pretend to initiate change, we should first examine our basic concepts and categories to realize that they are as Eurocentric as they can be expected to be, given our capitalist world-system and its European dominance.

The plea is that imperialism is a good concept to start such an examination with, given that it is a much misused concept in all senses by the Eurocentric establishment in political economy.

In this paper, we adopt the approach which sees the structural and the relational aspects of the world-system as processes in themselves.<sup>64</sup> We identify actors operating in the structural-relational processes, and we ascribe motives to the actors in these processes. Imperialism, the subject of this paper, is seen as an abiding attribute of world capitalism set in the strict historicity of world capitalism in evolution.



## VI. THE BASIC MARXIST METHODOLOGICAL REFERENTS

The developmental relations between the centre and the periphery in the flow of modern world history as discussed by Karl Marx in *Capital*<sup>65</sup> rightly became the basis for opposing the liberal orthodoxy in the explanation of the persistence of poverty in the periphery. The persistence and the insistence of the liberal orthodoxy, we should note, only encouraged the Marxist orthodoxy. The problem with Marxism in this regard, however, was not that there threatened to be as many orthodoxies as there were Marxists but that a reverential deference to what Marx's corpus is supposed to mean inhibited a reconsideration of certain crucial matters related to the global development-underdevelopment contradiction.

Marxism now runs the risk of being turned into Marxology. Rather than serve as the solid basis for a fresh wave of intellectual assault on crucial problems in political economy, Marxism has now become a formidable obstacle to such an assault. The problem facing Marxism at present is not that it has become fashionable for all who find the liberal irrationalities and rationalizations of conventional wisdom repugnant to call themselves Marxists. The problem is that Marxism continues to be guarded by a vicious legion of versatile adherents who appear well versed in every page in the huge Marxist corpus. This legion is ever alert to the slightest dissonance between its interpretations of "what Marx meant" and the most innocent and well-intended attempts at extending, reviewing, or even merely rereading Marx in the light of the nonfulfilment of Marxist expectations.<sup>66</sup>

Many Marxist categories, their contents, their derivative concepts, and the interrelationships between them need updating. This becomes

very necessary as we move from the Eurocentric consciousness in which the primary contradiction is bourgeois-proletarian class contradiction to the world-system consciousness in which the primary contradiction is that between bourgeois nation-states and proletarian nation-states; the latter contradiction implies, of course, the secondary contradictions of internal balances of class forces.<sup>67</sup> To call class contradictions secondary is not to denigrate class contradictions but to suggest, in explaining the development-underdevelopment contradiction in the world, that we put emphasis first on the tensions and the forces which distinguish between the centre and the periphery of the world-economy, and second that we explain the articulation and the persistence of these tensions and forces by internal class interests in the centre and in the periphery and the relations between them. This is particularly important to note, if we are going to understand the persistent paradox where things appear to be constantly changing at the international level,<sup>68</sup> and yet things in the periphery and the role of the periphery in the world-system remain essentially the same.

Approached this way, the compatibility and the incompatibility of interests between internal periphery class forces and internal centre class forces could lead us to appreciate the possibility of at least some of the Marxist predictions at this point in world-history. For example, we can proceed to appreciate the possibility of the commonality of interests between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the centre and the periphery societies. Further, we can understand the commonality of interests between the bourgeoisie of the periphery and centre societies. We can then proceed to ask whether there is a commonality of interests between the proletariat of the centre and the periphery. And we may come to understand that, as Franz Fanon noted, in the periphery the proletariat is very privileged indeed, compared with the many unemployed, dispossessed, and semi-proletarianized people there.<sup>69</sup> From this observation, we may question whether the fetish attachment to the working class as the revolutionary class is not itself a Eurocentric factor of nineteenth-century origin.<sup>70</sup>

This understanding will enable us to appreciate what is going on in

periphery not through any set Eurocentric formulae, but through the periphery's circumstances in the world and in history. We will appreciate that the peripheral parts of the world-system are only subordinate and not inconsequential parts of the world and that these parts of the world also make their own histories, even if they do not make their histories as they please. Further, if indeed the contradiction between the centre and periphery is really a historical process and the product of the world-system in evolution, and not due to any magical presence of dualism and its stubborn interference to the effectiveness of diffusionist goals, then perhaps it could also be true that the abatement of class confrontation and conflicts in the centre societies indicates that "international workers' solidarity" has never had any objective basis on the world scale.<sup>71</sup> It may well be that this much-touted solidarity has always been no more than a clever Eurocentric deception — or at best just a harmless Eurocentric phrase for gurgling in the throats of secluded intellectuals who believe in the duplication of Europe in the non-European parts of the world — a cause for alienated dissidents looking for causes to uphold, and a platform for self-conscious radical activists at social democratic annual conventions. The need for such a solidarity may be there, but for it to be meaningful, should there not be an immediately perceived commonality of interests between workers of the world? Is there such commonality of interests? Has there ever been?

The main question then is whether we are to view our realities generally with the aid of Marxist referents or whether we are to blind ourselves to our realities with self-appointed orthodox Marxist referents.

Does the powerful Marxist thesis of unequal development have any relevance outside national confines? If it does, why is there a reluctance to break away from the conception of the world as no more than a set of nations nebulously related only through European dominance in fact and in ideas?<sup>72</sup> Why is there a predilection to confuse the impure nature of "social formations" with the purity of "modes of production" in criticizing the correct view that the world-system — whose dominance is capitalist — has an impure nature but an identity of its

own and thus must be approached on its own distinct terms?<sup>73</sup>

Is it not true that "long-distance trade," in both its exotic and non-exotic forms, as well as in the changing forms of trade and commerce, has always had something to do with the continuing violent contact between European and the non-European cultures? Has this violent contact not remained ever since it started in the late fifteenth century, and has it not taken the changing forms of the plunderings of valuable colonies for the huge differentials in the rewards for labour power (wages) — "unequal exchange" — between the centre and the periphery? Most importantly, have most of the peripheral states that have emerged lately not proved themselves competent accomplices in the exploitation of the peripheral societies by the centre, believing that they can repeat "European transitions" in European fashion by imitating European values in their frantic efforts to live up to the Eurocentric belief that non-European history is not much more than the Eurocentricity of peripheral societies? If the intention is to approach the reality problem from the totality of the world as a large-scale historical system, and not from the Eurocentric perspective, these are questions we cannot avoid asking.

The oppressive hand of Eurocentricity appears to lie as heavily on the Marxist mode of thought as it lies on the liberal and on the radical modes. In the Marxist case, nowhere is this clearer than in the "great transition debate" initiated by Maurice Dobbs and Paul Sweezy in 1950.<sup>74</sup> That this debate has been resurrected at different times since the original debate (Laclau-Frank, Bettelheim-Emmanuel, and Laclau-Wallerstein debates)<sup>75</sup> indicates that if there is any challenge in Marxism today it does not lie in reading classical Marxist sources to provide orthodox statements of what the sources mean or actually intend to say.

Raphael Samuel said a very wise thing when he stated:

Theory is not something ready-made, waiting for us to adopt in the form of "hypotheses," "models" or "protocol." Like any other intellectual artefact, it has its material and ideological conditions of existence. This can obviously be seen in the case of such major revolutions in thought as those associated

with the names of Marx, Darwin and Freud, but it also needs to be borne in mind when confronting more recent conceptual innovations. Theoretical currents only become important because they respond, or seem to respond, to some pre-existing silence or unease.<sup>76</sup>

My particular unease is aptly represented by Samuel:

Too often, in theory as in political practice, . . . propositions have been impoverished by the fact that they have remained locked in their own conceptual world [Eurocentric conceptual world], as though designed to keep reality at bay rather than to engage with it. A history of capitalism "from the bottom up" might give us many clues as to the sources of its continuing vitality than debates on the law of value, necessary and illuminating though these may be. . . .<sup>77</sup>

Many of the key categories now being bandied back and forth are in the first place, at least for Marxists, historically defined [in the circumstances of nineteenth-century Europe] and the historian is likely to bring as much understanding to bear on them. . . .

A theoretically informed approach ought not to be identified with any particular way of writing and it is in no sense dependent upon canonical texts or heraldic verbal devices. The theoretical worth of a project is not to be gauged by the manner of its expression, but by the complexity of the relationships it explores.<sup>78</sup>

The challenge in Marxism, it would appear, lies in reading classical and other Marxist sources and having the courage to apply interpretations of and insights from these sources to various social problems in ways that transcend the Eurocentric orthodoxies which confine aspects of Marxism and threaten to reduce its immense value as a philosophy of transformation: a mode of practical analysis of apparently changing realities to reveal their constancies and continuities, and apparently constant realities to reveal their changes and variations.

The real problem here is the need to recognize that even a highly developed critical social philosophy can very easily become underdeveloped in its anti-systemic critical functions by becoming a prisoner of its own orthodoxy in the changing circumstances of the world reality problem. Marxism was initially a critical anti-systemic philosophy. But it is rapidly slipping from its anti-systemic critical

role to a comfortable anti-regime role,<sup>79</sup> because it lacks the honest and the fluid ability to update itself through internal criticism. In history today, what is interesting in Marxism is not where it was right but in discovering where it went wrong.

Ashis Nandy argues that it is possible to visualize an alternative ethic of scientific interpretation which would admit no end of demystification. He says the credo of such ethics "could well be summarized as 'unending interpretation' . . . where the interpretation which the interpreter provides is ultimately seen as both self-interpretative and self-enriching."<sup>80</sup> Nandy argues that to the extent that Marxism "proclaims itself to be a science, it too might have to give up its faith in the conscientizing vanguard and in the revolutionary consciousness that the masses are supposed to acquire as the pupils of a new priesthood. Only then could Marxism, as a science, hope to be a powerful critique of everyday common sense, standing for conventionality and conformity."<sup>81</sup> Nandy argues further that Marxism is bound to a particular conception of limits of interpretation or demystification. In Marxism, demystification "stops once it reaches the level of the mode of production or class relations."<sup>82</sup> The biggest worry, in my view, is the European purity which Marxism endows to these and other categories.

## VII. THE METHODOLOGICAL POINT OF DEPARTURE

The foregoing is an attempt to situate the discussion in this paper at the frontier of the conflict of ideas dealing with the world reality problem as we have cast it in the changing conception of the development-underdevelopment reality. The interesting context of views at this frontier is between the self-proclaimed orthodox Marxists and the group of Marxists using the world-system methodology. The liberal and the radical Eurocentric arguments are brought up in this contest of ideas to illustrate the pervasiveness and the commonality of Eurocentricity.

I contend that the world-system methodology possesses the potential which enables one to ignore the Eurocentric torpidity of the liberal and Eurocentric hybrid familiarity of the radical conceptions of the reality problem and frees one from the formal Eurocentric rigidities of orthodox Marxism.

What then is the world-system methodology? To start with, there is nothing existing that can be called the only world-system methodology. What we have are the works of a group of writers displaying a boldness and a novelty which render Marxism usable in studying what I have called above the reality problem. The methodology in question emerges from a definite school of thought — a particular tradition in scholarship yet to be fully formed — possessing clear outlines and bold internal strokes. This emerging tradition in scholarship is clearly Marxist. So Marxist is it that its substance and outlines are made even clearer by the criticisms advanced by those who call themselves orthodox Marxists<sup>83</sup> and misused by others.<sup>84</sup>

The works I am referring to may be many but they must include some of

the major works of Oliver Cox, Paul Baran, Paul Sweezy, Eric Williams, Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin, Arghiri Emmanuel, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Terence Hopkins, and many of the works by the students of the "people's history movement."

The world-system methodology does not amount to the study of these authors. It implies the use of their works to arrive at a position which enables us to bring the peripheral part of the world-economy into the wholesome study of the world-system as such, and its history makes it possible for the peripheral parts to see themselves and to be seen as both objects and subjects of history. It is the commonality between the historiographies of these authors that may constitute the methodology. Each author has his own way of approaching history, but there is something common to all the approaches. This "something common" is what I will call the world-system methodology.

Perhaps, for the most part, my use and understanding of the works of the authors referred to above betrays more an admiration of their works than the fullest grasp of the methodological and historiographic commonality between these works. Be that as it may.

Because this paper deals with world-system methodological issues, Terence Hopkins' introduction to the treatment of methodological issues in world-system analysis is particularly useful to refer to.<sup>85</sup> Hopkins correctly says it takes bravery to approach such issues: they are not only controversial but difficult since, among other things, they involve issues of concept formation, their measurement, their explanation, and their interpretation.<sup>86</sup> As Hopkins aptly puts it, world-system methodological issues "concern the study of long-term, large-scale changes"<sup>87</sup> in the sense of historical transformations. For this reason, the job of someone commenting methodologically is to "raise questions not about what we think . . . but about how we think as we proceed."<sup>88</sup> This is not all. Hopkins adds that what one tends to say on methodological issues always tends to be inevitably distant from other modes of discussion.<sup>89</sup> This is a fact and a burden, as all political economists must know.



If it is true, as Hopkins says, that our problem in methodology is to raise questions not about what we think but about how we think as we proceed, then it should be clear that as we become more and more conscious of our world reality problem, we will need new idioms and new intellectual tools to express the newness of our consciousness. But who will provide these idioms and tools?

From our perspective, we cannot expect committed Eurocentrics, irrespective of race, to provide them; and given our Eurocentric reality, it would be considered presumptuous for any unknown non-Europeans to attempt to provide them. Known non-Europeans can get away with it much quicker than unknown non-Europeans but, as Ayi Kwei Armah implies, such non-Europeans are precisely those who have fully embraced the European way of life and its mode of thinking.<sup>90</sup> I shall argue that such persons are known precisely because they have excelled in their adoption of the Eurocentric mode of thinking beyond all reasonable expectations.

Thomas Carlyle, my favourite British historian,<sup>91</sup> is quoted by Eric Williams as having had something to say on the intellectual and other abilities of what Carlyle called the "negro race" while in his usual fascist mood. He described members of this race as capable of the hardest physical labour, capable to withstand more physical pain than members of any other race, and "idle, unambitious as to worldly position, sensual, and content with little."<sup>92</sup> Listen to Carlyle on the "negro's" intellectual capacity:

Intellectually, he is apparently capable of but little sustained effort; but singularly enough, here he is ambitious. He burns to be regarded as a scholar, puzzles himself with fine words, addicts himself to religion for the sake of appearance, and delights in aping the little graces of civilization. . . . black as he is, he is always thinking of his own dignity.<sup>93</sup>

Perhaps not too many people in political economy will identify openly with Carlyle's description of the black race's exceptional capacity for hard work and pain, idleness and sensuality, and lack of ambition and contentment with little. But how many non-Europeans, even nowadays,

have not had their intellectual efforts described, rightly or wrongly, in terms not too dissimilar to Carlyle's — especially if the fine words they puzzle themselves with are incomprehensible to the Eurocentric methodology.

This is precisely the point where, in political economy, the non-European intellectual faces a dilemma. On the one hand, to prove his intellectual ability, he must reason with Eurocentric tools and idioms. And the proof of this exercise lies exactly in how Eurocentrically well he uses these tools and idioms. On the other hand, there is a real danger that whatever is reasoned outside Eurocentric idioms and sympathies will be seen and dismissed as the opposition of traditional science to the modern science of political economy. This initial dismissal is always followed by calls for assiduous modernization of the new idioms which the establishment, irrespective of ideological views, persists in seeing as traditional and thus inferior. This dilemma is compounded for the non-European intellectual, because of the compatibility which Galtung describes above between scientific product, by the scientific structure, and social structure, and the persistent (even if subtle) view that some few people, if not some few races, are mandated by history to provide newness to our appreciation of the reality problem, while others follow and at best solve derivative curiosities. Theory in these circumstances is something written by some for others to learn.

The traditional versus modern confrontation in science will persist for a long time, becoming more pronounced as traditional science regains its confidence, and will abate only if modern science sheds its Eurocentricity and, in the process, learns humility. The essence of the matter in our modern world, as Nandy states, is that "even to the faithful, science is now mainly a vested interest, a commodity, a profession or if the faithful are also given to self-denying patriotism, a national property."<sup>94</sup> He adds, "one of the most totalizing elements of modern science is its inability to recognize itself as one of the many traditions of science."<sup>95</sup>

The sentiments behind these arguments are not necessarily "against method." Yet, given the entrenchment of the Eurocentric establishment in political economy, I must confess some sympathy for Paul Feyerabend's conviction that "anarchism, while perhaps not the most attractive political philosophy, is certainly excellent medicine for epistemology, and the philosophy of science,"<sup>96</sup> mainly because of Eurocentric arrogance in political economy.

Science may or may not essentially be an anarchic enterprise, theoretical anarchism may or may not be more humanitarian, or more or less likely to encourage progress than its law-and-order alternative.<sup>97</sup> But then, these are neither the questions nor the problems for me. My immediate and more limited concern is that one partisan interpretation of basic concepts in political economy deserves no less than another partisan interpretation: Eurocentric renditions of concepts deserve non-Eurocentric counterparts, as a matter of methodological honesty and courtesy.

## VIII. A PARTISAN INTERVENTION

This paper is the first of a series of three intended to be partisan interventions in the debates on the concepts of capitalism, imperialism, development, and the interrelationships between them within the historicity of the world capitalist system, as understood from the perspective of a particular interpretation of the world-system methodology. I consider this book partisan because it is informed by the political attitude of sympathy and solidarity with the peoples of the world who are dominated, oppressed, and exploited by capitalist imperialism and dehumanized by capitalist underdevelopment.

The thesis of these papers is that there are many common concepts in social history which are usable in serious analyses only in the limited context of explaining matters of European concern to Europeans and Europeanized people in this world.

I begin from the fundamental conviction that the largest part of the existing literature expresses Eurocentric views that cloud rather than expose the reality problem; therefore, the burden is on me to point to the methodological sources of the clouding and to an alternative way which exposes the reality problem much better for the purpose of situating the periphery squarely in the mainstream of world-history.

I object to Eurocentric rendition of concepts for two principal reasons: (1) the contents endowed the concepts, and (2) the analytic and other purposes which their uses serve. By Eurocentric, I mean that the conventional usages of many concepts, including capitalism, imperialism, and development and the interrelationships between them are bound too closely to European peculiarities in the study of world-history.

As I indicated above, Eurocentrics tend to reason that the non-European world is only underdeveloped Europe. Further, they tend to believe that in time non-Europeans will come to understand these concepts just as Europeans do. But this assumption serves the much larger assumption that Europe, in the sense described, is larger than the world. This assumption not only implies but also means that the world matters only because Europe is in it. In general terms, it means that non-European areas of the world are no more than the arena for the secondary expressions of the European ethos and pathos in the unfolding of world-history.

The Eurocentric charge expresses the view that the meanings and the usages of many common concepts make historical and analytic sense only in the peculiar and dominating circumstances of Europe within world-history and make no sense whatsoever in the subordinating circumstances of the non-European parts of the world. In their Eurocentric forms, these concepts explain Europe to the world and the world to Europe. They are not equipped to explain the world to the world. Moreover, they simply cannot explain the world to non-European areas in the vital terms of confronting European domination with subordination in the course of transforming the capitalist world-system.

To explain the world in evolution to the world as it is, and if Europe matters only because it is part of the world and not because it is in any sense larger than the world, then we must take the Eurocentric charge seriously. We cannot take its validity for granted; it must be demonstrated by showing how certain crucial, even if common, concepts and their usages bear the Eurocentric imprint.

In showing how such concepts can be understood outside Eurocentric sympathies and how they should be understood within world-system perspective, we can gain a much better understanding of the structural relations and processes that explain the world to the world. The conviction is not only that the refinement of one concept leads to the refinement of another, but that such refinements can betray hidden relationships which can be of great importance in understanding how our

present world became what it is and what constitutes its transformational potential. Indeed, if concepts are really refined to reflect the world reality problem properly, they can lead to refined analyses of historical phenomena by their goals, processes, and indicators.

In the paper on imperialism, I attempt to show how this concept should be understood within the world-system perspective; the idea is to explain the entire world to the entire world through the insistence that the non-European parts of the world should be considered participants in the unfolding of world-history and not as helpless subjects who are no more than spectators.

Specifically, the aim in this paper is to argue that Eurocentric renditions of the concept imperialism tend to be either imprecise or over-precise. By imprecise, I mean that such conceptions tend to endow imperialism with meanings that are too broad by not being historically specific enough to respect the historic identity of the world capitalist system. And by over-precise, I refer to the extreme specificity restricting the historic space which the concept must have if it is to respect the proper identity of capitalist historicity. The main argument is that the imprecise and the over-precise conceptions of imperialism do violence to the concept's analytic precision, which should be derived from the historic specificity of the modern world-system if imperialism is to be of any use in interpreting history in a way that can explain the present and influence the future.

The thesis in this paper is that imperialism of the modern world-system differs so much in theme and motive from earlier kindred phenomena that if we use the concept to describe the expansionist and exploitative facts of capitalism in evolution, then we should not use the same term to describe the expansionist and exploitative impulses of earlier economic forms, because they had different historic themes and motives. Closely linked to this position is the argument that imperialism is a process that derives its dynamism and changing forms from the development of capitalism, which has always been "world-scale." The connection between imperialism and world capitalism is so close, and imperialism so

much an intimate part of world capitalism, that capitalism cannot exist without imperialism; in fact, Samir Amin sees the two phenomena as synonymous.<sup>98</sup>

My point of departure is that imperialism has developed together with the development of capitalism from its very beginning and has been worldwide from the very beginning of the world-system in the late fifteenth century. I refuse to make a distinction between the so-called old and new forms of imperialism within the historicity of capitalism, because I do not believe that the distinction originates from the false Eurocentric distinction between the "so-called primitive accumulation" and capitalist accumulation.<sup>99</sup> I argue that, from the world-system perspective, imperialism has been a single accompanying phenomenon of capitalism. What is important in this respect is the essential continuity of the phenomenon, derived from the continuity of the capitalist historic theme of accumulating capital in the centre of the world-system and away from the periphery since the late fifteenth century, and not the changing forms which the imperialist phenomenon takes as world capitalism changes its own forms to facilitate its theme. This position is what I refer to as the *continuity of imperialism thesis*.

In the second chapter, I present what I consider to be the essential properties of Eurocentricity and contrast them with world-system postulates.

The third chapter argues that the liberal conception of imperialism is transhistoric and transepochal by being too fluid and, therefore, is too elastic, imprecise, and analytically blunt.

The radical Eurocentric conception of imperialism is treated in the fourth chapter and presented as a rigid conception which violates the sensitivity needed to respect the historic specificity of the capitalist epoch in its totality.

The Marxist conception is no less rigid. In the fifth chapter I argue

that the Marxist conception is over-precise and too rigid to be analytically useful.

I undertake in the sixth chapter to show how the world-system methodology would conceive imperialism in its historically precise context, if it is to avoid Eurocentric pitfalls. It is in this chapter that I present the continuity of imperialism thesis in its structured form.

In the same chapter, I present a world-system, structural-relational interpretation of imperialism as the processes linking the internal-periphery and internal-centre sources of imperialism. These are the processes which constitute what I describe as the *imperialist problématique*.

The seventh chapter contains critical comments on the earlier chapters and my responses to these comments as they were presented at the meeting of the Expansion-Exploitation/Autonomy-Liberation Processes Subgroup of the United Nations University's project on Goals, Processes, and Indicators of Development held in Trinidad in January 1981.

The eighth chapter is the epilogue. This chapter reviews the preceding chapters to answer the question of where all this leaves us and what it all indicates from the perspective of transforming the long-term, large-scale historic capitalist world-system.

The third, fourth, and fifth chapters have a common structure beginning with a close textual analysis of the main works that serve as the intellectual sources of origin for the different conceptions of imperialism; I proceed to criticize these conceptions from the world-system point of view. These sources of origin are not clear in all cases. The Marxist intellectual source of origin, for example, is attributed to Lenin, even though some Marxists had expressed themselves on the subject earlier than Lenin.

In the case of the radicals, Hobson was not the first to write on all



aspects of imperialism perceived as a Eurocentric phenomenon — even though he did not use this terminology. Adam Smith in 1776 and others later, including even the Duke of Newcastle of 1895, had anticipated the different aspects of the anti-socio-economics of slavery for example.<sup>100</sup> Hobson's writings did not differ in many respects from contemporary writings on the subject either. His claim to fame in this regard, we must admit, rests on his Manichaeic journalistic excesses in seeing imperialism principally as negative social and economic calculations, on the false appearance that he was sympathetic to the imperialized races.

Lenin's dominating and magnetic revolutionary personality accounts for his writing on the subject being universally accepted as the Marxist source of origin. In the case of Schumpeter, for the liberals, his reputation rests largely on his great ability to write elegantly about complex ideas in very clear and simple ways.

In all these conceptions, what I consider missing is what could be called a third-world-system conception of imperialism. What I seek to provide in this paper is a global equivalent of "people's history."

In anticipation of objections to the use of the term imperialism to describe the evolution of capitalist exploitation toward a world scale since the late fifteenth century, let me say that surely another term could have been chosen to represent this phenomenon. But why choose a new term when one already exists that covers the essentials of the phenomenon? It would have remained a puzzle why imperialism was used to describe everything else but what I describe, were it not that our world-system discussion of Eurocentricity provides a key to the puzzle. The main things wrong with the usages of the term have been the unlimited historical specificity which liberals endow the term with, and the extremely limited historical specificity which radicals and Marxists impose on it. With the proper historical specificity introduced, it seems superfluous to invent any other term to represent the position. I would definitely have had to choose another term to stand for what is described, were it not that the specificity of the historical ensemble to

identify and capture for contemporary usage can be contained most adequately by the term imperialism.

IX. A NOTE ON INTELLECTUAL COURAGE

I shall close this paper on a strange note, by asking what those of us who consider it our timely vocation to attempt to de-Eurocentricize thought in political economy before it becomes impossible are supposed to do. Before we do anything at all, I suggest that we should be courageous in the face of the ever-present fear that we may be wrong. The source of our courage must be clear, however; in the long run, we shall all be dead, and if for some miracle we are not, we shall definitely be too old for it to matter. In any case, the vocation of de-Eurocentricizing thought in political economy is more important than anybody's fear of being wrong. Eurocentrics have been wrong all along and that does not appear to have done them any harm.

The courage needed will have to come in part from the intellectuals in political economy — if it is to come at all — and principally from the intellectuals of the periphery of the world-system. I end on a call to the intellectuals of the Third World, those who are paid by their societies and the world to think about the betterment of our inter-related realities which compose our common reality and destiny in the capitalist world.

I call for a cynical, perhaps even for a nihilistic, posture toward existing Eurocentric conventional wisdom and not necessarily for their total or certainly not for their cavalier rejection.

This call is not an idle call of mere words. It is not a call for words to the exclusion of action. If it is anything at all, it is a call for new words, new idioms, and new tools. They don't have to be right or correct, they only have to exist and contest with other words,

idioms, tools and actions. I call for whatever is needed to be derived from the collective experiences of our subordination to the oppressive hands of Eurocentricity. It is a call for praxis — words that shape actions, and actions that shape words for human betterment. If anything at all, I call for a start to confront the shaping of our collective experiences in exploitation and subordination into a distinct philosophy dedicated to the negation of exploitation in our circumstances of capitalist exploitation. This call affects us all, even Eurocentrics.

The idea is to name our world as *capitalist* so that by naming it we change it.<sup>101</sup> To start with, we should not stay too closely and blindly to the immediately concrete in the historical sense. As Ayi Kwei Armah puts it:

Minds don't stay in the past. . . . They can find the truths of the past, come back to the present and look toward the future. That's not getting lost. The present is when we get lost — if we forget our past and have no visions of the future.<sup>102</sup>

Could the truths of the past be those of the future? That will always be a contentious question. But whatever the truths are, they must ride on a *maji*<sup>103</sup> created especially for their actualization. Who then must create the *maji* upon which the truths will ride?

The answer is that it is the responsibility of us all. But, at the same time, it is not too much to expect that intellectuals will recognize the complex uniqueness and the very subtlety of the plight of the periphery of the capitalist world-system for what it is and, at the very least, do the "initial unveiling"<sup>104</sup> of the truths for us all. Whether we like it or not, intellectuals are among the "hearers, seers, imaginers, thinkers, rememberers . . . called to communicate truths of the living."<sup>105</sup> This must be so if our present plight is not to grow into a blighted confusion from which we cannot salvage "even a broken ring of meaning."<sup>106</sup>

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (The Seabury Press, New York, 1968), *Cultural Action for Education* (Penguin, New York, 1972), and *Education for Critical Consciousness* (The Seabury Press, New York, 1973). See also my critique of these books in "A World-System Critique of Freire's Philosophy of Education: Naming the World Capitalist Reality" (HSDRGPID-65/UNUP-339, UN University, 1981).
2. The old English legal precept that those seeking equity must have clean hands does not seem to apply in political economy.
3. One can find them on the extreme fringes of the discipline.
4. By Europe of the Diaspora, I am referring to the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and some countries in Latin America.
5. Ashis Nandy, "Science in Utopia: Equity, Plurality and Openness" (paper presented at the Alternative Visions of Desirable Societies Group meeting of the UNU/GPID, Mexico City, April 1981), p. 16. See also Nandy, "Emancipating Science" (paper presented at a Science, Technology and Development conference, Berlin, West Germany, May 1979) and "The Traditions of Technology," *Alternatives* 4:4 (1978-79): 165-180.
6. Nandy, "Science in Utopia," p. 16.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
8. For clues to the probable sources of my partisanship, the reader is referred to my "Notes on the Making of a Third World Social Scientist in the Capitalist World," in Erik Rudeng and Hans-Henrik Holm, eds., *Social Science for What?: A Festschrift in Honour of Johan Galtung* (Ejlers, Copenhagen, 1980), pp. 11-15.
9. See note 8 above.
10. Robert A. Nisbet, *Social Change and History: Aspects of the Western Theory of Development* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1969).
11. This and the following two subsections are from my manuscript in progress on "A World-System Critique of Eurocentric Conceptions of Capitalism," mimeographed (1980).
12. Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Future as History: The Historic Currents of Our Time and the Direction in Which They Are Taking America* (Grove Press, New York, 1961), p. 28, depicts social history as "no

longer heroic will, but historic force." See also Heilbroner, *An Inquiry into the Human Prospect* (Calder and Boyars, London, 1975) and my review of this book in *Caribbean Yearbook of International Relations* (1978) as well as Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, "Historical Systems and Social Systems," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 8:2 (1973): 227-246.

13. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "The Consumption of Dependency Theory in the United States," *Latin American Research Review* 7:3 (1977): 16, says "the same thing is transformed into the *other* by means of a process which takes place in time and which brings certain classes into relation with others through struggle and opposes them to rival blocs. . . ." The emphasis is my own. My point is: how different is the *other*? The main contradiction, to my mind, is exactly how the *other* remains the *same*.
14. Johan Galtung, "Global Goals, Global Processes, and the Prospects for Human and Social Development," manuscript in progress (1979), p. 5, describes the Bourgeois Way of Life (BWL) as the mode of production, the mode of consumption, and the goal around which motivation and action do cluster in the world today. It is the particular mode of production which encourages the escape from manual labour, the search and the desire for material comfort, familism, privatism, and nuclearism, as a source of security.  
This is not all, however, for, were this way of life to exist, there must be its opposite, presented as the necessary stage to the BWL. This is the Proletarian Way of Life (PWL), where productive work is the norm through the sale of labour power. In our capitalist reality, the conflict between the BWL and the PWL centres on the desire by the Proletariat for the BWL and the denial of it by the Bourgeois for as long as such denial is deemed necessary by the ever-present crisis in the system. The Proletarian Way of Life affects the many who are only partially separated from their means of production and so must supplement their livelihoods by partial sale of their labour power. This latter way of life affects some peasants, the unemployed, and low-level white-collar workers. For a fuller description, see Samir Amin, *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formation of Peripheral Capitalism* (The Harvester Press, Sussex, 1978) and *Class and Nation, Historically and in the Current Crisis* (Monthly Review Press, 1980). See also Heilbroner, *The Human Prospect*.
15. For further discussion of this position, see my "Informing Visions of Desirable Future Societies through Dialogue of Civilizations: A Peripheral View" (paper presented at the Alternative Visions of Desirable Societies Group meeting of the UNU/GPID, Mexico City, Mexico, May 1979). This essay will appear in Eleonora Masini, ed., *Visions of Desirable Societies* (Pergamon Press, London, 1981).
16. See Andre Gunder Frank, "Long Live Transideological Enterprise! The Socialist Economies in the Capitalist International Division of Labour," *Review* 1:1 (1977): 91-140 and Heilbroner, *The Human Prospect*.
17. Amin treats these distinctions exhaustively in *Unequal Development*.

18. Refer to notes 16 and 17.
19. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.
20. Arthur Lewis, *The Theory of Economic Growth* (George Allan and Unwin, London, 1953).
21. W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth, A Non-Communist Manifesto* (at the University Press, Cambridge, 1967).
22. Among the many works are those by Gabriel Almond, Lucian Pye, James Coleman, Sidney Verba, and Joseph Palombara; on the economic side are works by Ragnar Nurkse, Jan Tinbergen, P. Rosenstein-Rodan, S.P. Singh, Harvey Leibenstein, and James Theberge.
23. "Forwarding," in Rastafarian parlance, means moving on to higher and better things.
24. In my unpublished manuscript, "Dialogue as Development: A Critic of Freire's Philosophy of Education," 1981, I argue that European epistemology and social philosophy do not accord the proper role to the paradoxes that intimate social contradictions and ignore the role that persisting paradoxes can play in indicating the exchange of one set of contradictions for a similar set of contradictions.
25. These influences are mainly from the dependency school of thought.
26. *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution* (Monthly Review Press, New York, 1969), pp. 21-94. All the essays in this book, especially those in its second part, are relevant in this regard -- particularly "Functionalism and Dialectics," pp. 95-107.
27. For an early and a crude attempt to operationalize the development-underdevelopment fact as a world-system property, see my "Trends and Patterns in African Participation in International Relations, 1960-1970: Toward a Theory of International Development" (Ph.D. diss., Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, 1974).
28. Recall the earlier discussion on developmentalism. See also Johan Galtung, Tore Heiestad, and Eric Ruge, "On the Decline and Fall of Empires: The Roman and Western Imperialism Compared" (HSDRGPID-1/UNUP-53, UN University, 1979), and Linda James Mayers, "Toward a Psycho-Social Definition of Underdevelopment and Development" (paper presented at the Underdevelopment and Development in the Black World conference, ASRI, Queens College, New York, May 8-10, 1980).
29. See Raphael Samuel, ed., *People's History and Socialist Theory* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1981).
30. Samuel, "Editorial Preface," in *People's History and Socialist Theory*, p. xxxi.
31. Peter Burke, "People's History or Total History," in *People's History and Socialist Theory*, p. 8.
32. See the contribution of Mihailo Markovic in Eleonora Masini, ed., *Visions of Desirable Societies* (Pergamon Press, London, forthcoming).
33. Eric Williams, *British Historians and the West Indies* (Andre

Deutsch, London, 1966).

34. This is a distant allusion to Williams's reference to Luzy Caballero's statement that "the blackest thing in slavery was not the black man."
35. Allan Bullock, "Preface" to Williams, *British Historians and the West Indies*, pp. 7-8.
36. Williams, p. 13.
37. Ibid., p. 53.
38. Ibid., in reference to Bishop William Stubbs, p. 63.
39. Williams, p. 55.
40. Ibid., in reference to Stubbs, p. 56.
41. Ibid., p. 55.
42. Williams, in reference to R. Coupland, p. 199.
43. See C.L.R. James, *Black Jacobins* (Dial Press, New York, 1938), Orlando Patterson, "Slavery and Slave Revolts: A Socio-Historical Analysis of the First Maroon War, 1655-1740," *Social and Economic Studies* 19:3, 289-325, and Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Andre Deutsch, London, 1964).
44. Norman Mailer, in his book on Marilyn Monroe, claims he coined the word "factoid" to mean exaggerations of the facts in Monroe's life so her life story would accord with the larger-than-life image that the public had of her. "Historyoid" means exaggerating facts in history to suit a purpose. See my "From History to Historyoid: Looking Back to Look Forward," mimeographed (1981).
45. Immanuel Wallerstein, "Imperialism and Underdevelopment," mimeographed (1979), p. 1.
46. Ibid.
47. Thomas Khun, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1962).
48. Johan Galtung, *Ideology and Methodology: Theory and Methods of Social Research*, vol. 1 (Christian Ejlertsen, Copenhagen, 1977).
49. Ibid., p. 13.
50. Ibid., p. 26.
51. Ibid., p. 13.
52. Ibid., p. 21.
53. Ibid., p. 40.
54. Ibid., p. 14.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. The definitions of centre and the periphery are rather standard in the literature. For the definition of semi-periphery, see Immanuel



Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy* (at the University Press, Cambridge, 1979), pp. 95-118.

58. According to my understanding of Galtung's model II in *Methodology and Ideology*, pp. 14-28.
59. Galtung, p. 20.
60. Ibid., p. 30.
61. Ibid., chapter 8.
62. Johan Galtung uses this apt word to describe the connection between the complex goings on in the centre and in the periphery within the world-system in "Global Goals, Global Processes, and the Prospects for Human and Social Development" (see note 14), p. 14.
63. For an interesting discussion of the connections between changes in ideas and social changes see Robert Cox, "Ideologies and the New International Economic Order: Reflections on Some Recent Literature," *International Organization* 33:2 (1979): 257-302.
64. Immanuel Wallerstein, "World-System Analysis: Theoretical and Interpretative Issues," in Barbara Hockey Kaplan, ed., *Social Change in the Capitalist World Economy* (Sage Publications, London, 1978), pp. 219-235.
65. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, William Glaiser (London, 1909), p. 451.
66. See, for example, the massive orthodox Marxist onslaught on Andre Gunder Frank's continuing work on world capitalism and his response in chapter 7 of his book *World Accumulation, 1492-1789* (The Macmillan Press, London, 1978), pp. 238-271. See also the following reviews of his recent books: Geoffrey Hawthorn, "Case Unproven," *New Society* 48 (1979): 863; Cecilia Green, *Two Thirds* 1:3 (1978-1979); Quentin Skinner, "Taking Off," *New York Review of Books* 22 March 1979, pp. 15-16; Martin Bronfenbrenner, *Journal of Economic Literature* 18; David Booth, mimeographed review for *Journal of Development Studies*; Kit Sims Taylor, in *Science and Society* 63:4 (1979-80); 490-492; Ruth Pike, *Journal of Economic History* September 1979, pp. 305-06.
67. See Terence Hopkins, "World-System Analysis: Methodological Issues," in Kaplan, ed., *Social Change in the Capitalist World Economy*, p. 217, where he says that "so far as constructing interpretative accounts is concerned, we have barely begun to appreciate the power of the 'internal'/'external' sets of contradictions — let alone sketch a 'logic' for them." In particular, see Wallerstein, "World-System Analysis," p. 228, in response to Walter L. Goldfrank, "Fascism and World Economy," both in Kaplan, ed., *Social Change in the Capitalist World Economy*, pp. 75-117.
68. The increasing calls for a New International Economic Order are a good example. See my essay "Foreign Policy Strategies for Achieving the New International Economic Order: A Third World Perspective," in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Pat McGowan, eds., *The Political Economy of Foreign Policy Behaviour* (Sage Publications,

London, 1981), pp. 233-253, and my more detailed essay on the subject, "Approaching the New International Economic Order Dialectically and Transformationally," and other essays forthcoming in my edited volume on the NIEO entitled *Transforming the World-Economy?: Nine Critical Essays on the New International Economic Order*, 1981-1982.

69. For a good treatment of Fanon's view and orthodox Marxist criticism of it, see Immanuel Wallerstein, "Fanon and the Revolutionary Class," in *The Capitalist World-Economy*, pp. 250-68.
70. See Gareth Stedman Jones, "Utopian Socialism Reconsidered," in Samuel, ed., *People's History and Socialist Theory*, pp. 140-141, where he says:

The attitude of early theory toward the worker was distant and paternalist. Both Owen and St. Simon before the late 1820s focus primarily upon their lack of education. It is the middle class (when not the sovereign himself) as the enlightened section of the population which is most likely to form the vanguard of progress toward socialism (because of its educational level). After 1830, the working class is seen in a more hopeful light. Working-class enthusiasm for co-operation could show them to be harbingers of a purer morality (in Owen's view); or more widely, workers and women as the most oppressed groups were likely to adopt the socialist cause, as slaves had led the movement toward Christianity. Since the coming of Christianity was the main allegorical model for the coming of socialism . . . a movement of the oppressed at the bottom of society did not exclude the possibility of its ultimate promulgation from the top (the emperor Constantine).
71. See Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade* (Monthly Review Press, London, 1972), especially the exchanges between Bettelheim and Emmanuel, pp. 271-431.
72. Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange*, p. 263.
73. See Amin, *Unequal Development and Class and Nation*.
74. For the nature of the original debate, see Rodney Hilton, ed., *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism* (New Left Books, London, 1976).
75. For the resurrections of the original debate, see Ernesto Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America," *New Left Review* 67 (1971); Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange*, pp. 271-431; Ernesto Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (New Left Books, London, pp. 15-50); Frank, *World Accumulation, 1492-1789*, pp. 238-271; Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy*, pp. 138-151; R. Brenner, "Dobb on the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 2 (1978): 121-140; R. Brenner, "Reply to Sweezy," *New Left Review* 108 (1978); and R. Brenner, "The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism," *New Left Review* 104 (1977): 25-93.
76. Samuel, *People's History and Socialist Theory*, p. 1.

77. Ibid., p. li.
78. Ibid.
79. Surely the time has come for us to assess the distribution we need to make between anti-systemic and anti-regime movements and forces. The former are transformationally-oriented since they aim to turn the system into a genuinely different system, while the latter aim to change not so much the system but incumbent political regimes, without necessarily doing much about the nature of the system. Given our conception of the world-system as capitalist, this distinction is important to make in identifying radical carriers of genuine change.
80. Nandy, "Science in Utopia," pp. 33-34.
81. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
82. Ibid., p. 32.
83. Recall the Dobb-Sweezy debate and its resurrections.
84. One should be careful in pointing to misuses of this or any other methodology. No one has a monopoly over its correct use. However, as W. Ladd Hollist and James Rosenau candidly admit in recent special issues on "World System Debates" in the *International Studies Quarterly*, 25:1 (1981): 3,  
the world systems perspective is a relatively new and evolving body of scholarship; as with any body of scholarship in its nascent development, ambiguities, contradictions, and paradoxes are apparent and remain unresolved. There is uncertainty over whether or not certain writings are, in fact, appropriately labelled as being within the tradition. There are interchanges among authors who clearly subscribe to the central tenets of the tradition over matters of terminology, definition, "correct" inference and interpretation, and so on. The contents of this volume, appropriately titled "World System Debates," reflect these uncertainties and contradictions, and, at the same time, convey the excitement, the newness, and the creativity that accompany grappling large and important questions in novel ways.
85. Hopkins, "World-System Analysis: Methodological Issues."
86. Ibid., p. 199.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid.
90. Ayi Kwei Armah, *Why Are We So Blest?* (Heinemann, Nairobi, 1974), pp. 222-23.
91. One may not like what Carlyle says, but he is very clear and very honest about it; with Carlyle, one always knows what the problem is.
92. Williams, *British Historians and the West Indies*, p. 95.

93. Ibid., pp. 95-96.
94. Nandy, "Science and Utopia," p. 1.
95. Ibid., p. 4.
96. Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method* (Verso, London, 1979), p. 17.
97. Ibid.
98. Amin, *Class and Nation*, p. 225. See also my manuscript "Caribbean Prospects for the 1980s: The Plight and the Destiny" (1980), or its shorter version, "Deducing the Small-State Problématique from the Capitalist Problématique" (1981).
99. See Frank, *World Accumulation, 1492-1789*, pp. 238-271.
100. Williams, *British Historians and the West Indies*, pp. 89, 95.
101. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 76.
102. Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Healers* (Heinemann, Ibadan, 1979), p. 176.
103. The term *maji*, as Armah uses it, expresses a sort of self-actualizing transformational philosophy.
104. There is a sort of pervading nervous ambiguity about the roles that scholars allot intellectuals and revolutionary leaders in the whole process of transforming societies. This nervousness shows clearly in Freire's works, but at least he concedes that they are allowed, as the maximum, to do the "initial unveiling" for us all. See *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 169.
105. Ayi Kwei Armah, *Two Thousand Seasons* (Heinemann, Ibadan, 1979), p. xi.
106. Ibid., p. xvii.