

nor a humanitarian concern, rather it resides in the contention that it is a woman's choice to bear children or not to bear children and that this choice will begin to assert itself in the development of women's struggles under capital. This is generally true, but especially true in a society where women as mothers are given sole responsibility for the lives of their children in the absence of that society granting women any control over adequate resources for the procurement of their children's subsistence.

To a greater or lesser degree, this is the essence of women's oppression: responsibility in reproduction devoid of control in production (regardless of their particular class affiliations). The prescription arising from such an identification of women's oppression is simply stated, but never simply realized. Women's struggle is two-fold: to assume control in reproduction and in production. With regard to production, women must wage a protracted struggle for the democratic sharing of control with men within the general class struggle. With regard to reproduction, women's struggle is unique. Women are naturally childbearers, but their responsibility for, or exercise of control over, childbearing is social. Women's childbearing and childcare responsibilities are socially delegated and within this social context it is women's prerogative to assert control over childbearing.

The Ghanaian village women Bukh has written about are forced to begin their struggle for control with the assertion of control over childbearing, as an imperative strategy for survival. This control is a necessary precondition for any democratic sharing of control over production with their men.

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Ann and Neva Seidman, U.S. Multinationals in Southern Africa, Tanzania Publishing House (Dar es Salaam, 1977)

The book is written by a mother and a daughter team. Ann Seidman in particular is well qualified to write on this topic both from the point of view of her academic experience as well as her sustained interest in African Affairs.

The authors point out right in the preface that the book is incomplete due to the paucity of information and also due to the currency of the topic. Nevertheless the task they set for themselves is "... to explore the underlying and contradictory reality of the Southern African political economy and its growing ties with U.S.-based multinational corporations". It is our task in this review to find out if this task has been achieved by the authors.

The book is written in five parts each part composed of one or more chapters. In part I (Introductory) the authors put forward the theoretical framework adopted for their study. Briefly, the theoretical framework adopted is a combination of Seidman's dual-economy thesis first operationalized in her 'The Dual Economics of Eastern Africa' with Osvaldo Sunkel's - Centre - periphery dependency theory. For the uninitiated, these theories have one feature in common - all of them accept that colonialism was a major force in bringing about underdevelopment but having noted that they stop there! No attempt is made to explore the contemporary relationship between the centre and the periphery in terms of an enduring historical movement. Thus they do not have or indeed negate Lenin's conception of imperialism and as a consequence they have little grasp of finance capital as a specific feature of imperialism. This then is the fundamental weakness of the model. Although the authors try to argue (p. 8) that the model is not static, it is our contention that any attempt to examine dynamic dialectical change must assimilate history, not in its truncated form but in its totality. By history here we mean at once the development of capitalism as a mode of production as well as the historical transformation of society brought about by this historical development of capitalism. By failing to see this historical development particularly as it relates to the concentration and centralization of capital on a global scale, the upholders of this theory are entirely unable to establish an organic link between the centre and the periphery beyond the mechanical manifest forms. Thus for example in the following statement, the authors display deep rooted uncertainty regarding the links between local and external forces, (p. 8) they say:

"The African workers built the farms, the mines, the factories. The white settlers and foreign based multinational firms, through which the

regional economy was enmeshed into the world capitalist system creamed off the surpluses."

The above statement is probably a truism but it does not tell us analytically how and why this situation came about.

Apart from this, though fundamental weakness, the book provides us with masses of data and descriptive information on the nature and organization of the South African economy in Part II. Typical of the Centre - periphery theory, South Africa now stands on her own. We are told for example, (p. 23) that the low wages to Africans in South Africa are a function of the Apartheid system and thus our authors inform us that:

"... Black wages are held down by limiting the kinds of work blacks may do. The white workers get inflated wages and unite with the employers to hold down African wages". (p. 25)

This in a way tends to suggest that the removal of apartheid would automatically result in abating exploitation. This absurd conclusion is of course a necessary consequence of the author's perception of apartheid, for them it is the cause of low wages, for us however, it is the relations of production which determine the social structure, thus it is the struggle between capital and labour that lies at the root of apartheid. Apartheid therefore is a consequence of the system of social production.

The authors specifically name Part II of their book 'The South African Sub-Centre' but no where in this part is an attempt made to substantiate its 'sub-centre' status. In Chapter III for example all we have are vague assertions as we quote in extenso below:

"The peculiar historical conditions in which South African development took place shaped the emergence of a White South African capitalist class, increasing monopolization of industry, and eventually a virile state capitalism. The entire system was, from the outset, enmeshed into world capitalist commerce (sic) dominated by giant multinational firms". (p. 37)

It is not clear from the above statement whether increasing monopolization of industry was taking place on a global scale or whether this was simply in S. Africa. Further we are at a loss to decipher the analytical meaning of 'enmeshed'. Our contention is re-inforced by the authors' attempt to show that South African capital has largely been indigenous. Thus in reference to diamond mining, the authors say; (p. 39) "a handful of large, locally based capitalist enterprises emerged with sufficient funds to

purchase the needed technology". Is this to suggest that De Beers was South African and not a London based firm? Even in gold mining where the authors admit the presence and necessity of foreign capital at an early stage, they nevertheless uphold that "But this was indirectly and remained under the control of local mining finance houses". Thus when the authors finally introduce the question of U.S. multinational we are given neither the historical link nor the organic connection. Once again we are vaguely told that:

"It is apparent, nevertheless, that the oligopolistic companies and financial interests dominating South Africa remain extensively enmeshed into the multinational corporate world, dependent upon it for both finance and advanced technologies". (p. 72)

The diffidence of these authors on the question of U.S. imperialist interests in South Africa is further illustrated by their analysis of the U.S. National Security Secret Memorandum 39, of 1969. While this document was drawn up to map out U.S. strategy in the region, the authors assert that it was in response to South African 'blandishments'. The choice of Option No. Two clearly indicates that U.S. interests were at the bottom of the formulation of U.S. policy in the region. To suggest that U.S. was formulating policy in response to South African overtures alone implies that the U.S. has no global economic strategic and political interests. This would be a travesty of the most elementary facts of the contemporary world situation.

It is within the above framework that the authors present a lot of factual data in chapters VI to X, of Part III. This part gives information on U.S. investments in mining, manufacturing and in the petroleum industry. It is indicated that the U.S. obtains the greatest percentage of its strategic minerals from S. Africa and further that in terms of dollar investments, manufacturing rates higher than oil or minerals with a tendency for South Africa to exert pressure on neighbouring countries to absorb not only manufactured goods but also investments. Chapter IX illustrates the conceptual weakness of this book particularly regarding the nature of finance capital. Here U.S. financiers are treated separately and it is noted that these 'accompany' or 'facilitate' investments. This of course is completely naive considering that most such houses, in vindication of Lenin have steadily integrated their industrial and financial operations.

Save for this part III the rest of the book is not on U.S. Multinationals so that the title seems to be couched more for commercial purposes than to reflect the substance in the book. Part IV, deals essentially with the problem of rising South African hegemony over her neighbours in the Southern African region. South Africa's policy of 'Outreach' is treated as an independent phenomenon although characteristically the authors assert in passing that "U.S.-based multinational corporations with investments in South Africa have been inextricably bound up in this process. Note that here they substitute 'bound up' for their usual 'enmeshed' - all the terms without any analytical precision. Useful factual data is adduced in order to illustrate the growing dependency in the neighbouring countries as well as strategies of struggle adopted by some of these countries and Liberation Movements; but again the authors fail to situate the Southern African situation within the broader framework of the global strategy of imperialist nations. As a result, they fail to present a consistent and synthetic argument. Consciously or otherwise, they seem to summon but acquit U.S. Multinationals shifting the greater burden on South Africa.

In conclusion, let me say that the book is essentially written for an American audience appealing to anti-apartheid liberal sentiments. It offers useful descriptive data and may serve as introduction to the contemporary situation in Southern Africa. It is my contention however that due to the handicap imposed by the centre periphery conceptual framework the authors ended up with a rather impressive journalist effort. If this were all, the case would rest there but such incomplete and hushed up efforts are dangerous. The authors set out to indict U.S. Multinationals but end up acquitting them. By so doing they divert attention from the general anti-imperialist struggle which is the struggle of the South African people to resolve the National Question. Needless to say, the book does not achieve the objective the authors set for themselves.

As G. Plekhanov put it in his polemic against subjective sociologists:

"It is shameful to say it, but sinful to hide, that the Utopian enemies of capitalism prove in reality to be accomplices of capitalism in its most coarse, shameful and harmful form". (Plekhanov, G. Development of the Monist View of History. Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1974, p. 248).

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