

Wolpe states:

The exploitation of migrant labour-power of this kind [i.e., partially expropriated] enables the capitalist sector to secure an increased rate of surplus value. (Wolpe,1980:297)

This explanation is essentially teleological in nature. Pre-capitalist relations, it is suggested, continue to exist and "...are preserved or maintained..." because they are functional to capitalism. Capitalism, these authors agree, needs a source of cheap labour power to be reproduced on an expanded scale (Wolpe,1980; Burawoy, 1974; 1976). Consequently, African migrant labourers, or the class of half-peasant, half-proletariat, must continually be reproduced.

Once more, it must be stressed here that for the articulationists, the process of "destruction/maintenance," is neither specific to one phase of capitalist development, nor is it a transitory process, but rather it accompanies the whole process of capitalist development. This was true for the South African case (Wolpe,1980; Burawoy,1976), the Rhodesian case (Arrighi, 1973) and the Congo experience analysed by Rey (1980).

There is no doubt that some of the conceptual tools provided by the notion of articulation represent an advance over other simplistic notions, for example, the "dependency theory" advocated by Gunder Frank (Frank, 1969). For, unlike the position adopted by the dependency theory, pre-capitalist relations in the framework of articulation, at least at the point of transition, are not perceived as totally unchanging nor are they described as completely dependent upon Metropolitan capital (4). The notion of articulation allows for some room for change --albeit partial and not precise.