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# Imperialism, Globalization and Resistance

Abstract : Imperialism is the domination of one state by another. This paper sketches a nonrepublican account of domination that buttresses this definition of imperialism. It then defends the following claims. First, there is a useful and defensible distinction between colonial and liberal imperialism, which maps on to a distinction between what I will call coercive and liberal domination. Second, the main institutions of contemporary globalization, such as the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, etc., are largely the instruments of liberal imperialism; they are a reincarnation of what Karl Kautsky once called ‘ultraimperialism’. Third, resistance to imperialism can no longer be founded on a fundamental right to national self-determination. Such a right is conditional upon and derivative of a more general right to resist domination.

Keywords: imperialism, neocolonialism, domination, exploitation, dependency theory

Imperialism, in general terms, is the domination of one political community or state by another.<sup>1</sup> This paper sketches a nonrepublican account of domination that buttresses this definition of imperialism. It then defends the following claims. First, there is a useful and defensible distinction between colonial and liberal imperialism, which maps on to a distinction between what I will call coercive and liberal domination. Second, the main institutions of contemporary globalization, such as the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, etc., are largely the instruments of liberal imperialism; they are a reincarnation of what Karl Kautsky once called ‘ultraimperialism’. Third, resistance to imperialism can no longer be founded on a fundamental right to national self-determination. Such a right is conditional upon and derivative of a more general right to resist domination.

## Domination

### *What domination is*

Domination, as I understand it, is the possession of subordinating power over others.<sup>2</sup> P possesses a power over Q if P is able to get Q to do things by

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1 Although exploitation is not part of the definition of imperialism, it does seem to be a necessary condition for its reproduction. One important task in social science is to explain how imperial exploitation under capitalism differs in *form* from imperial exploitation under pre-capitalist economic formations. The answer must have something to do with the distinctiveness of so-called informal empire, which I discuss below.

2 An early statement of this view is N. Vrousalis, ‘Exploitation, Vulnerability and Social Domination’, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 41 (2013), 131-157. It is further developed in a paper entitled ‘Reclaiming Domination’, mimeo (2016), which is available from me upon request.

affecting Q's interests.<sup>3</sup> Subordination, on the other hand, is about injury to status. P possesses a subordinating power over Q if P's wielding that power gives Q subordinating normative reasons, that is, normative reasons that subordinate Q. One way to think about subordinating reasons is as Nash equilibria in which Q is the underdog and P the overdog, where this canine hierarchy arises in virtue of P's power over Q. A sufficient condition for the canine hierarchy is strategic interaction in which powerful P induces vulnerable Q to optimize through servility to P.

Now suppose the interaction between P and Q has only one Nash equilibrium, in which P is Q's master and Q is P's servant. Here the *only* best response for Q is to play subordination: that P is superordinate and Q is subordinate is written into the structure and payoffs of their strategic interaction. Note that Q might choose *not* to play the subordinating strategy: on my view, it suffices that Q optimizes through subordination, even if Q's actual *behaviour* merely conforms to the requirements of P's power. This account of domination is therefore not commutative, or transactional, but *structural*.

Domination is concretely exemplified in the mundane space of the school playground; here the menace of the playground bully, P, cuts a distinctive figure. What I will call *coercive domination* involves P getting Q to do things in the following ways: P physically forces Q to do things, or issues coercive threats, or coercive offers that subordinate Q to P.<sup>4</sup> The bully is here at her thuggish best: she beats the kids that will not hand over their toys, threatens their friends, builds alliances with other kids to obtain access to the toys of the weaker kids, and keeps in shape so she can maintain the supervening subordination relationship stable.

Coercive domination is wrong because it is a form of domination, not because it is a form of coercion. On this view, coercion merely *categorizes* domination, but is neither necessary nor sufficient for it. Indeed, coercion can *prevent* P's bullying of Q, as when the teacher interferes (through force or threats of force) to protect Q. In exercising her coercive power, the teacher does not necessarily dominate P. That is, insofar as the teacher's power over P merely removes or attenuates P's subordination of Q, it is only a form of counter-bullying: it just flattens the objectionable status hierarchy constituted by P's bullying of Q.

There is another form of bullying that I will call *liberal domination*,<sup>5</sup> which does not involve coercion. Liberal bullying involves P getting Q to do things in

<sup>3</sup> See S. Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> On coercive offers see F. Zimmerman, 'Coercive Wage Offers', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 10 (1981), 121-145.

<sup>5</sup> I call this form of domination 'liberal' just because the term resonates with the liberal form of imperialism I discuss below.

noncoercive but subordinating ways. P might manipulate or deceive Q, bribe Q, or simply brainwash Q to want what P wants. Manipulation, deception and bribery are undue inducements, all of which entail subordinating power. The most subtle form of liberal domination in this sense is *hegemony*, P's ability to get Q to want what P wants by going to work directly on Q's preferences — as opposed to affecting Q's choice set.<sup>6</sup>

The liberal bully is a true master of the more subtle forms of thuggery: she manipulates other kids into handing over their toys, manipulates her friends into abstaining from sharing their toys unless she gets the lion's share, gets her friends not to lend to those who do not share with her, and accumulates toys just so she can deny access to the kids that will benefit most from playing with them (or indeed from those kids that will benefit most from playing with her). The liberal bully bullies because she takes advantage of her power over others to subordinate them: she makes them abide by her will without engaging them as equals. And she does this without coercing anyone.

### ***What domination is not***

The account of domination just broached contradicts a widely-held theory of domination, republicanism. Republican political philosophers hold that domination is not about P's possession of subordinating power over Q, but rather about Q's subjection to P's *arbitrary* power. As I criticize that view extensively elsewhere,<sup>7</sup> I will limit myself to some brief comments. First, contemporary republicans tend to specify the relevant notion of arbitrariness in excessively narrow terms. Pettit, for example, has maintained that Q is subject to P's arbitrary power if and only if P possesses a power over Q and P's use or exercise of that power is not forced to track Q's 'avowable interests'. Interests are avowable if they are 'interests that you are disposed or ready to avow'.<sup>8</sup> Now, failure to track Q's avowable interests cannot be a necessary condition for domination. For it is overwhelmingly plausible that certain dominating uses of power, such as exploitation, deception, and discrimination, may track Q's interests, or indeed be *forced* to track them. Consider the following example. Q finds herself in a pit. P and T are standing above it. P issues an offer of the form: 'either you work for me for \$1 a day or I leave you there'. T also issues an offer to Q, of the form: 'either you work for me for \$2 a day or I leave you there'. If P does not make the offer, then T will force P to do so. If T does not make the offer, then P will force T to do so.

6 Hegemony, in this sense, is equivalent to what J. Nye, *Soft Power* (New York: Public Affairs Publishers, 2005), has underhandedly called 'soft power'. See Lukes (2005) for discussion of this 'third dimension' of power.

7 What follows borrows from Vrousalis (2016).

8 P. Pettit, *On the People's Terms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 58-59.

In the pit example, P and T force each other to track Q's avowable interests. But, *pace* Pettit, Q is dominated. This example is not mere fancy. Indeed, it reflects the structure of the capitalist labour market: in virtue of their property, capitalists subordinate workers, who, in virtue of their propertylessness, subordinate themselves to capitalists. Capitalists are, in turn, forced — on pain of competitive disadvantage — to do things that constitute the domination of workers. These actions of necessity track the interests of workers, compared with joblessness. If this is correct, then republicanism fails to account for a form of domination that pervades modernity. The explanatory ambitions of republicanism are thus severely circumscribed by its commitment to the notion of arbitrariness. This does not subtract from its critical force in connection with premodern phenomena, such as the arbitrary rule of kings.<sup>9</sup> But republicanism is much less powerful when considering quintessential features of modernity, such as the factory, or, more generally, the domination of labour by capital. For the latter does not seem to entail the possession of arbitrary power in any sense of 'arbitrary': capitalists are as much under the sway of capital as workers.<sup>10</sup> In other words, modernity engenders forms of power that are, in a uniquely relevant sense, nonarbitrary. Those seeking a critical understanding of the vicissitudes of modernity are therefore unlikely to find it in republicanism.

Similar criticisms apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the republican account of global justice.<sup>11</sup> By defining domination as non-interest-tracking power, this account misconstrues the wrongmaking features of colonialism. The case has been made, for example, that the 'imperial liberalism' of the British Empire comprised an institutional framework designed to track the (avowed) interests of colonized peoples.<sup>12</sup> But, as the pit example shows, there is no incompatibility between being forced to track a people's avowed interest and subordinating that very people. I elaborate on this claim in the discussion that follows. If I am right, then those seeking an understanding of the wrongs of colonialism are unlikely to find it in republicanism.

A final caveat: the coercive and liberal forms of domination discussed here are complements. There is, moreover, no reason to think that they cannot be simultaneously employed, by the same person or group, in the same (set of)

9 See for example Q. Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

10 It does not follow that the relationship between capitalist and worker is not one of unequal power. Of course it is. The point is, rather, that there is nothing arbitrary about the will of the capitalist, in her functional and ownership roles. Pettit's recent gestures away from 'arbitrariness', towards some notion of 'alien control', do not seem to constitute much progress in this direction.

11 See, for example, P. Pettit, 'A Republican Law of Peoples', *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010), 70-94.

12 See J. Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), and the section 'Colonial and Liberal Imperialism' below.

action(s). In the context of international relations, the sometimes alternating, sometimes contemporaneous, rhythmic employment of the coercive and the liberal modes of bullying is called diplomacy. I now offer some definitions that extend this account of domination to international relations.

### Community and State

Imperialism, I said, is the domination of one political community or state by another. A political community is any large-scale association of people capable of self-rule that claims a *de jure* right to self-rule. A state is a political community that possesses such a *de facto* right. I now discuss some corollaries of this definition.

The account of nondomination provided here is individualistic, in the sense that the domination of state B by A is morally relevant if and only if it entails the domination of B's *members*. That is, community A dominates community B only if there is some nonempty subset of  $B_i$ , such that  $B_i$ 's members are dominated in virtue of A's domination of B.

An important corollary of this definition has to do with the relationship between imperialism and humanitarian intervention. On my (moralized) definition of imperialism, states that do not engage in bullying — they do not wield subordinating power over others — are not agents of imperialism. It follows that humanitarian intervention is not, *in principle*, tantamount to imperialism. Suppose agent P is bullying Q by holding a gun on Q's head. R forcibly removes the gun from P's hand. If this is all that R does, then R does not dominate P. For, although R possesses a power over P, she does not subordinate P. As in the teacher example above, all R does is flatten the normative landscape such that P no longer gives Q subordinating reasons. So if imperialism is defined in terms of domination, if humanitarian intervention obtains *for the sole purpose* of protecting people from domination (that is, to disarm the bully), and if it succeeds in so protecting them, then humanitarian intervention is not *eo ipso* tantamount to imperialism. When these three conditions hold, humanitarian intervention is merely a form of counter-bullying.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, one can go further: just as a bully can sometimes be engaged in acts of mere counter-bullying (as when the bully's sole purpose in an action is to protect potential victims of bullying), likewise an imperialist can sometimes be engaged in acts of mere counter-imperialism (as when the imperialist's sole purpose in an act is to protect potential victims of imperialism). In these kinds of cases the imperialist's actions do not constitute

<sup>13</sup> The conclusion applies even if counter-bullying harms nonbully supporters of the bully. Suppose state A invades B in order to prevent B's government from murdering its citizens. B's government has widespread social support. Other things equal, that support is tantamount, morally, to the cheering the bully receives when bullying her victims. If the supporters of the bully have, in addition, supported or benefited from the bullying, then they are not only blameworthy for cheering; they are blameworthy for the bullying itself.

imperialism, just as the bully's actions do not constitute bullying — as opposed to *mere* counter-bullying, which is not a form of bullying.

Now note that, on this set of constraints — which includes the 'sole purpose' clause above — instances of non-imperialist humanitarian intervention may turn out to be quite rare. Indeed, on the widespread 'realist' assumption that powerful states never act to oppose bullying unless it is in their interest to do so, *no* actual humanitarian interventions count as non-imperialist. More succinctly: on realist assumptions, all humanitarian intervention is tantamount to imperialism. It follows that realists about international relations cannot *both* favour humanitarian intervention *and* oppose imperialism. This might not make all actual humanitarian intervention unjustified, but does furnish a domination-grounded reason to regret the form it tends to take.

### Colonial and Liberal Imperialism

Historians of imperialism, especially of the British Empire, have long laboured a distinction between 'formal' and 'informal' empire. The distinction was popularized by John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson in a celebrated paper entitled 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', published in 1953.<sup>14</sup> The term has also been used by Hobsbawm in his famous tetralogy of the ages of revolution, capital, empire, and extremes, and has gained currency among imperial historians such as Cain, Hopkins, and others. These concepts are still useful today, in a world where colonies are much less ubiquitous than they used to be, but where imperialism of the informal variety, embodied in the contemporary institutions of globalization, is no less ubiquitous. I shall discuss these institutions in the next section. In this section I sketch the connections between formal and informal empire, or *colonial* and *liberal imperialism*.<sup>15</sup> I will argue that the former presupposes coercive and the latter liberal domination.

Gallagher and Robinson contrast British overseas expansion during the 19th century through 'informal empire' with 'dominion in the strict constitutional sense'.<sup>16</sup> Hobsbawm likewise asserts that Britain's informal empire consisted of 'independent states which were in effect [its] satellite economies',<sup>17</sup> but is not troubled by the joint ascription of independence *and* satellithood to these states. In a similar vein, Ernest Mandel writes:

'On the morrow of the Second World War, the colonial revolution shook the foundations of the imperialist system. In order to continue

<sup>14</sup> J. Gallagher and R. Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *Economic History Review* 6 (1953), 1-15.

<sup>15</sup> Liberal imperialism contrasts with what Pitts (2006) calls *imperial liberalism*, which is, in fact, the form of colonial imperialism advocated by liberals such as J.S. Mill.

<sup>16</sup> Gallagher and Robinson (1953), p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), p. 74.

to exploit the colonial countries the capitalists of the metropolitan countries were increasingly obliged to go over from direct to indirect methods of domination. One after another the colonial countries were transformed into semi-colonial countries, that is, they attained political independence.<sup>18</sup>

Formal empire, according to Mandel, consists in the domination of state B by state A, through the direct exercise of both political and economic control by A over B. Informal empire does not involve exercise of political control. But what is meant by ‘political control’? In response to this question, A. G. Hopkins appeals to the related notion of ‘sovereignty’:

‘the concept of informal empire... is in principle a valuable means of categorising conditions of domination and subordination whereby a major state acts as an integrative force, exercising power in ways that infringe the sovereignty of smaller countries.’<sup>19</sup>

On any set of definitions of imperialism, India at the end of the 19th century must count as part of Britain’s formal empire, whereas Argentina must come under the ambit of informal empire.<sup>20</sup> But what is the ‘sovereignty’ that looms large in these definitions? Crucially, how does its violation under colonial imperialism contrast with its violation under liberal imperialism? The historians’ answer seems to be that liberal imperialism is just colonial imperialism minus ‘sovereignty’. That is, state A exercises liberal imperialism over state B only if A controls a substantial proportion of B’s means of production, but not B’s political process, including the appointment and operation of government. By contrast, A exercises colonial imperialism over B only if A controls *both* B’s means of production and B’s political process. This way of drawing the distinction is misleading. For liberal imperialism *also* involves a measure of control over B’s political process, if only through A’s control over B’s means of production. In other words, loss of sovereignty does not suffice to distinguish between colonial and liberal imperialism, for it is common to them both.

If sovereignty does not suffice to buttress the distinction, then perhaps that distinction is existentially dependent on the *mode* of domination, coercive or liberal, that I sketched earlier. The rest of this section defends this claim. I will first discuss pure cases of colonial and liberal imperialism and then briefly allude to hybrid cases.

18 E. Mandel, *Marxist Economic Theory* (London: Merlin Press, 1962), p. 480.

19 A. G. Hopkins, ‘Informal Empire in Argentina: An Alternative View’, *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26 (1994), 469–84, p. 483.

20 Hopkins (1994), p. 476, cf. E. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire* (New York: New Press, 1999), C. Marichal, *Bankruptcy of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Colonial imperialism, in its pure form, entails coercive domination. The maintenance of the British colony in India during the 19th century, for example, consistently involved the coercive mode, through occupation, blockades, and engineered famines, initially at the behest of the East India Company, and eventually of the British Crown. The fact that some Indian leaders, and a portion of the population, were loyal to the Empire does not absolve the latter of coercive bullying. In light of examples like this, one might object that colonial imperialism is coextensive with alien territorial control. As a consequence, the concept of coercive domination is superfluous. There are conceptual and normative problems with this objection. First, the concept of alien territorial control is itself slippery: if state A withdraws armies from B's land, but maintains a credible threat of, say, invading B, does B regain control over its own territory? Likewise, suppose state A issues a credible threat to starve the residents of B, unless B hands over half of its annual agricultural production. Does B possess control over its territory? More importantly, insofar as imperialism is a form of domination, its wrongmaking features cannot be captured, without remainder, by appeal to territorial entitlements. Suppose P owns the only well in the territory, Q needs access to water, and Q has access to no other water source than P's well. In addition, P has a moral right to *exclusive* use of the well, either because her original appropriation of it was morally legitimate, or because Q has waived or forfeited a right of access. It is still *pro tanto* wrong for P to use the power conferred on her by exclusive control over the well to create subordinating reasons for Q. A more compelling hypothesis as to the wrongmaking features of this relationship between P and Q appeals not to territorial entitlements but to domination.<sup>21</sup>

Liberal imperialism, on the other hand, entails liberal domination. For example, liberal imperialism will sometimes involve the addition of genuine options, such as a lucrative trade deal, leading to improvement in the situation of dominated states. Recall that the liberal bully never gets her hands dirty: all she does is mobilize her superior power to induce her victims to optimize through subordination. Liberal domination will therefore sometimes involve the bully enhancing her victim's options in a way that increases her hold over her, much like the drug pusher who increases her hold over the addict by offering drugs.<sup>22</sup>

21 For an account of the wrongs of colonialism congenial to this conclusion, see L. Ypi, 'What's Wrong With Colonialism', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 41 (2013), 158-191.

22 The underdevelopment literature seems to have gone awry precisely in its assumption that imperialism is incompatible with economic development. See A. G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (London: Monthly Review Press, 1967) and I. Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) for exposition on the main underdevelopment themes and G. Lichtheim, *Imperialism* (London: Allen Lane, 1971) for trenchant criticism. Hopkins (1994) offers an illuminating defence of the case for informal empire, while rejecting the main conclusions of dependency theory.



A pure instance of liberal imperialism is Britain's relations with Latin America during the period from 1870 to 1914. This is the era of free trade and the 'gentlemanly capitalism' of the City of London. Here 'the very process which weakened British production – the rise of new industrial powers, the enfeeblement of the British competitive power – reinforced the triumph of finance and trade.' (Hobsbawm 1999, p. 110. See also Barratt Brown 1963, p. 63).<sup>23</sup> Consider, as an instance of this general phenomenon, the imperial relationship between Britain and Argentina. Prior to the sovereign debt crisis of 1890 (the 'Barings' crisis), Argentina had embarked on an ambitious debt-financed railway-building programme. Its largest creditor was the London-based Barings Bank. When the Argentinian state became unable to finance its debt obligations to Barings, the Bank of England intervened by orchestrating an international rescue for Barings, with the direct involvement of Nathan Rothschild and other prominent British bankers. British and Argentinian banks raised interest rates and the Argentinian government embarked on a decade-long recessionary programme of debt refinancing. The country's national income only recovered to its pre-crisis levels by the turn of the century. The recovery itself was fueled by intensified exploitation of workers and peasants, significant reductions in real wages and pensions, and a surge in unemployment and poverty. An integral part of this early 'structural adjustment' programme was the full resumption of interest payments to British banks and a return to the Gold Standard by 1898. Hopkins remarks, in this connection:

'This reaction was fully in accord with London's judgement, which was formed in the knowledge that Argentina had no alternative sources of external capital and was managed by an elite that... could be trusted in the end to conform to the rules of the game. This was not a deal between peers: the parties had joint interests, but not equal power in pursuing them.'<sup>24</sup>

The British Empire possessed subordinating power over Argentina, without coercing it. Britain thereby dominated Argentina. This is an instance of liberal imperialism.<sup>25</sup>

I now offer definitions of colonial and liberal imperialism, beginning with

<sup>23</sup> Hobsbawm (1999), p. 110. See also M. Barratt-Brown, *After Imperialism* (New York: Hillary House, 1963), p. 63. The term 'gentlemanly capitalism' is due to P. G. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 135-150, who track the ascendancy of British liberal imperialism in Latin America through the rise of finance capital.

<sup>24</sup> Hopkins (1994), p. 481.

<sup>25</sup> The Argentinian case may sound familiar to those who have followed the Eurozone crisis of 2010-15. One need only replace 'British Empire' with 'Germany', 'Barings Bank' with 'Deutsche Bank' and 'Latin America' with 'PIIGS' (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Spain) to get another instance of liberal imperialism, this time in the context of the contemporary European Union.

the former. Coercive domination is necessary but not sufficient for colonial imperialism. For state A can coercively bully B in order to *eschew* colonization. Suppose, for example, that A wants or needs access to B's market or resources, and B is unwilling to, or incapable of, facilitating such access without coercion. A uses coercion to throw B's door open, thus obtaining unimpeded access to B's markets or resources thereafter. Forcing a door open is a convenient way to ensure unforced traffic — in people or goods — that serves A's interests at the expense of B's. The open door analogy suggests that it is possible to enlist coercion in the interests of *not* having to use coercion. When this is the case, A enlists an army but installs no viceroy; the bouncer paves the way for the pusher.<sup>26</sup> These are therefore instances of coercive domination that are not tantamount to colonial imperialism. What completes the set of sufficient conditions for colonial imperialism is some form of enduring and direct political control: A enlists an army *and* installs a viceroy in B's territory.

Liberal domination, on the other hand, is both necessary and sufficient for liberal imperialism. If A possesses a sufficient degree of control over B's means of production, either through A's financial institutions or through foreign direct investment, then A possesses a power over B that grounds a subordinating reason. A thus dominates B.

To sum up, I have broached three possibilities. First, colonial imperialism, in which state A coercively bullies B and A has some form of direct political control over B. Colonial imperialism entails an army and a viceroy. Second, liberal imperialism, in which A liberally bullies B without direct political control over B. Liberal imperialism does not entail armies or viceroys. Third, there are hybrid instances of imperialism constituted by a combination of coercive domination — A forces B's door open — and liberal domination — A buys B's furniture for a pittance once the door is open. Such hybrid instances involve armies but no viceroys.

The social theory of liberal imperialism has important implications for our understanding of contemporary institutions of globalization. I turn to these presently.

### **Globalization, the Highest Stage of Capitalism?**

A necessary condition for the reproduction of imperialism is the exploitation of *indigenous* by *metropolitan* states. The metropolis dominates, in part with a view to facilitating its own enrichment. This section has two parts. The first sketches the main connections between states and classes. The second sets out a simple model that purports to answer the 'who dominates whom?' question.

<sup>26</sup> The US post-war policy of the 'open door' had already been put to good use by the British Empire in its 19th century dealings with China and Egypt. For a wealth of examples from recent history supporting the view that the international economic order has a strongly coercive dimension, see E. Cavallero, 'Coercion, Inequality and the International Property Regime', *Journal of Political Philosophy* 18 (2010), 16-31.

**States and Classes**

Imperialism by definition involves the domination of one political community or state by another. It follows that any comprehensive class analysis of imperialism must furnish a class analysis of the state. I will not enter into that debate here. I will instead clarify some assumptions underlying the class analysis of imperialism under globalized capitalism.

Suppose there are two states, rich ( $S_R$ ) and poor ( $S_P$ ). On a rudimentary model of domination under capitalism, each state comprises two classes: capitalists  $C_i$  and workers  $L_i$ ,  $i=R,P$ . Inside  $S_R$ , for example,  $C_R$  exploits and thereby dominates  $L_R$ ; this is a structural fact entailed by the relative position of  $C_R$  and  $L_R$  in the economy and the definition of domination provided above. More precisely, given that  $L_R$  does not own any means of production (or, more broadly, net wealth) and  $C_R$  does,  $L_R$  is vulnerable to  $C_R$  and  $C_R$  has power over  $L_R$ . In the case that exercises Marxists,  $C_R$ 's ownership of the means of production systematically gives  $C_R$  a decisive bargaining advantage over the distribution of the social surplus that  $L_R$  alone produces.<sup>27</sup>

We therefore have six agents, where

$$C_R, S_R, C_P, S_P, L_R, L_P$$

stand for capitalists, states, and workers in states  $R$  and  $P$ , respectively. On the assumption that states can themselves dominate other states and social classes, the variables above are ordered such that, for any agent  $i$ , the agent to the left of  $i$  possesses subordinating power over  $i$  — thus dominating  $i$  — and every agent  $j$  to the right of  $i$  is dominated by  $i$ . This generates a total of 15 possibilities, schematically presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1** Who dominates whom (noninstrumentalism)

$C_R$	$S_R$	$C_P$	$S_P$	$L_R$
dominates				
$S_R, C_P, S_P, L_R, L_P$	$C_P, S_P, L_R, L_P$	$S_P, L_R, L_P$	$L_R, L_P$	$L_P$

<sup>27</sup> For a sustained argument to the effect that exploitation entails domination, see Vrousalis (2013).

These are too many variables. To reduce the degrees of freedom, I will assume an *instrumental* view of the state: instrumentalists maintain that the state is but a weapon in the hands of a class. In this case, that class is the capitalists. This is an unrealistic assumption. But unrealistic assumptions are admissible if they help to generate novel predictions. The classical theories of imperialism developed by Hobson, Hilferding and Lenin did generate such predictions.<sup>28</sup>

On the instrumentalist assumption, the agency of  $S_i$  is simply absorbed by  $C_i$ , for all  $i$ : capitalists use the state as a battering ram for colonial or noncolonial expansion. The schema of Table 1 therefore simplifies to the special-case schema of Table 2.

TABLE 2 Who dominates whom (instrumentalism)

$C_R$	$C_P$	$L_R$
dominates		
$C_P, L_R, L_P$	$L_R, L_P$	$L_P$

**How Imperialists Dominate**

I turn now to the basics of a sociology of imperialism. I have stipulated that  $C_R$  dominates  $L_R$ . How does  $C_R$  dominate  $L_P$ ? The case that preoccupied classical theories of imperialism was capital exports. The source of surplus-extraction here is activities like FDI: by investing directly in P’s land, equipment and machinery, and by offering higher wages than  $C_P$ ,  $C_R$  is able to directly exploit  $L_P$ , thereby dominating  $L_P$ . This is what sweatshops are all about, for example. There is, however, another source of surplus at  $C_R$ ’s disposal: the terms of trade. Here unequal exchange of labour obtains through the market exchange of a unit metropolitan labour for a greater amount of indigenous labour. One euro’s worth of Indian wool, for example, contains more labour than one euro’s worth of a British DVD.<sup>29</sup> It follows that British DVD industrialists benefit at the expense of Indian wool producers from every euro of trade. Deteriorating terms of trade for India further increase this gain at the Indian producer’s expense.<sup>30</sup>

28 These theories predicted the rise of colonial imperialism and how it would lead to war. They went something like this: capital has an inherent tendency to expand beyond the borders of the state. But the state always follows capital in the pursuit of market share as its guardian and protector; it is capital’s bouncer. Clashes between different capitalist states are therefore inevitable, and so is war. Thus capitalism reaches its ‘highest stage’ when it makes world war inevitable. That *stage* Lenin calls imperialism (note that Lenin’s definition precludes the possibility of liberal imperialism). An alternative to instrumentalism sees the state as capable of some degree of autonomy, indeed sufficient autonomy to dominate non-state agents, including certain types of capitalist. All of these possibilities are discussed in the appendix.

29 This conclusion does not presuppose the labour theory of value. Rather, unequal exchange is defined as follows. Suppose A’s consumption bundle embodies X hours of labour time (however defined), B’s consumption bundle embodies Y hours of labour time, whereas A’s product embodies Y and B’s product embodies X. Unequal exchange obtains if  $X > Y > 0$ .

30 There is considerable evidence that corroborates this deterioration in the case of primary commodities (the so-called Prebisch-Singer hypothesis). See, for example, I. Harvey, N. Kellard, J. Madsen and M. Wohar, ‘The Prebisch-Singer Hypothesis: Four Centuries of Evidence’, *Review of Economics and Statistics* 92 (2010), 367-77.

Thus different answers to the source-of-surplus question imply different answers to the ‘who dominates whom?’ question. In the case of capital exports the answer is straightforward, indeed equivalent to the domestic case.  $C_R$  exploits  $L_R$  by setting up a business in R, and  $L_P$  by setting up a business in P. In the case of trade it is possible that metropolitan capitalists,  $C_R$ , exploit indigenous capitalists,  $C_P$ .<sup>31</sup> As it happens, this is one of the main sources of exploitation of poor countries, particularly those specializing in manufacturing and primary commodities.

**TABLE 3** Mode of surplus-extraction

SOURCE	COLONIAL IMPERIALISM	LIBERAL IMPERIALISM
Capital export	1	3
Unequal exchange	2	4

Table 3 sets out the different modes of surplus extraction under colonial and liberal imperialism. The classical theories of imperialism are virtually exhausted in the first column (cells 1 and 2). The exploitation of India under British rule, for example, took place through coercive enforcement of preferential treatment for British investment and Britain’s trading partners. British capital’s exploitation of Argentina, by contrast, was marked by that variant of liberal imperialism that Kautsky<sup>32</sup> called ‘ultraimperialism’, that is, a form of liberal domination by a catallaxy of industrial and financial interests, under the aegis of the British Empire. The rest of this section discusses surplus extraction under liberal imperialism (cells 3 and 4). I discuss free trade first and capital exports second.

### *Free Trade*

Suppose that the playground bully owns all the cool toys. You want to play with them, so the bully makes you an offer: ‘You can play with one of my cool toys. But I demand, in return, an increasing amount of your less cool toys: for every day you play, you’ll give up an increasing amount of your toys. Take it or leave it.’ The upshot is that you find yourself with an ever-diminishing rate of exchange between your toys and the bully’s. The bully is in a position to demand this just because she possesses a power over you. The bully thereby dominates you. Now imagine that the bully, along with the rest of her cool-toy-possessing friends, make the following offer to the less-cool-toy-possessing kids: ‘You can

<sup>31</sup> Note that, if this is true, then it follows that exploitation can occur outside the point of production. ‘Market exploitation’ is not a meaningless term. See J. Roemer, ‘New Directions in the Marxian Theory of Exploitation and Class’, in J. Roemer (ed.), *Analytical Marxism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), for discussion.

<sup>32</sup> K. Kautsky, ‘Der Imperialismus’, *Die Neue Zeit* 32 (September 11, 1914).

all play with our cool toys. But we demand, in return, an increasing amount of your less cool toys: for every day you play with any one of our toys, you'll give up an increasing amount of your toys. Take it or leave it.' Again, the bullying faction can benefit asymmetrically in virtue of its possession of a power over the others, indeed a power that subordinates those others. The bullies dominate.

We now have something like a playground equivalent to the World Trade Organization (WTO). For consider: by enforcing the rules of free trade, rules that include bilateral free trade agreements between states with large markets and states with small markets, the WTO perpetuates a deterioration in the terms of trade of the poor.<sup>33</sup> It thereby underwrites an increase in the surplus extracted by the rich through unequal exchange. As in the original bully case, this is an instance of liberal domination. The WTO therefore functions as an instrument of liberal imperialism.<sup>34</sup> It is worth noting that this anti-WTO gambit is independent of the claims made famous by Thomas Pogge,<sup>35</sup> to the effect that WTO rules violate the negative rights of the poor. Suppose Pogge is right. Suppose, further, that global trade is completely denuded of pro-rich export subsidies, pro-rich institutions of technological transfer and the like. Insofar as superior economic power can still be brought to bear on terms of trade and investment, the WTO continues to institutionalize liberal bullying. In other words, the WTO remains an instrument of liberal imperialism. Note, finally, that this argument is independent of the pro-positive rights arguments of Peter Singer.<sup>36</sup> The WTO simply institutionalizes the market domination of the poor by the rich on a global scale, whether or not such domination violates positive rights, and whether or not it improves the condition of the poor.<sup>37</sup> This concludes my discussion of liberal imperialism through free trade.

### *Capital Exports*

I turn now to liberal imperialism through capital exports. Here again Lenin's famous epigram applies:

'The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces

33 See also T. Pogge, 'The First United Nations Millennium Development Goal: A Cause for Celebration?', *Journal of Human Development* 5 (2004), 377-397.

34 R. Miller, *Globalizing Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) has recently defended a variant of this argument. Miller claims that when the US brings its market size and level of development to bear on openness to trade by the poor, it illegitimately uses its superior bargaining power at their expense. In allowing such agreements, the WTO rules are intrinsically exploitative. H.-J. Chang, *Throwing Away the Ladder* (London: Anthem Press, 2002), arrives at a similar conclusion, starting from a premiss about first-mover-advantage.

35 T. Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008)

36 P. Singer, *One World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

37 It bears noting that if exploitation is Pareto superior to nonexploitation, then the injustice of exploitation may be all-things-considered justified. This concession does not, however, make the injustice of exploitation—among other things—go away.

them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. And they divide it “in proportion to capital,” “in proportion to strength,” because there cannot be any other method of division under commodity production and capitalism.’<sup>38</sup>

Lenin’s synthesis of Hilferding<sup>39</sup> and Hobson<sup>40</sup> assumes that the exploitation of indigenous workers by metropolitan capitalists will occur mainly through the proliferation of formal empires. The vehicle of that proliferation, moreover, is assumed to be ‘finance capital’, that is, ‘capital controlled by banks and employed by industrialists’.<sup>41</sup> How does financial capital dominate? The case of Argentina, discussed at the end of the previous section, exemplifies domination through finance. In that example, metropolitan financial institutions do their bullying by offering loans either to indigenous capitalists,  $C_P$ , or to indigenous workers,  $L_P$ . In the case of  $L_P$ , metropolitan banks tend to offer loans at more attractive rates than indigenous banks, as they have better access to risk-pooling instruments and more collateral. In the case of loans to  $C_P$ , the situation is subtly different, for finance capitalists do not control the means of production. They only own money capital, the means to mobilize the means of production that industrial capitalists control. The metropolitan finance capitalist is therefore relevantly like the kid who owns the stick and lends it to the bully, on condition that she receives a return on that loan. That makes the kid into a bully. That is, insofar as either  $C_R$  or  $C_P$  dominates  $L_P$  by enlisting metropolitan finance capital, the latter is directly implicated in that domination. Bullies exploit in packs, and so do capitalists. This concludes the discussion of liberal imperialism through capital exports.

A final note on globalization. Contrary to Lenin’s prognoses, finance and liberal imperialism seem to go well together. For why would metropolitan capitalists go to war when their banks control a substantial proportion of indigenous assets and debt (and therefore of the surplus product)? All they need is an economic architecture that includes a bailiff for the international financial system; enter the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and related instruments of globalization. These are, I claimed, the instruments of liberal imperialism. If this is correct, then Kautsky was right to suggest that ultraimperialism is possible: contemporary globalization is, in this sense, ultraimperialism writ large. It also follows that Lenin was wrong to think it

38 V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), p. 75.

39 R. Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital* (Vienna: Wiener Volksbuchhandlung Ignaz Brand & Co, 1910).

40 J. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (Albion Press, 1902/2015).

41 Although the level of synergy between banks and industry envisaged by Hilferding and Lenin never materialized, the dominance of financial capital, broadly construed, is with us today more than ever before.

inevitable that inter-imperialist rivalry will lead to inter-imperialist war (which is not to say that inter-imperialist war won't occur).<sup>42</sup>

### **How (Not) to Resist Imperialism**

This section argues that there is a right to resist imperialism, a right entailed by the more general right to resist domination. The former right does not, moreover, entail an unconditional right to national self-determination, as some anti-imperialists maintain.

### ***The Right to Resist***

It is relatively uncontroversial that persons and groups have a right to resist domination. In the most general case, they have a paired Hohfeldian<sup>43</sup> liberty and claim-right to resist those who fail to comply with duties entailed by their antecedently held claim-rights. If Q has a moral claim-right not to hand over her wallet at gunpoint, and P violates that right by threatening Q at gunpoint, P violates Q's antecedently held claim-right. In the course of P's attempt to violate Q's right, Q can therefore permissibly take steps to prevent its violation. When this happens, it is normally the case that (i) Q can permissibly employ certain means to resist the theft (Q has a Hohfeldian liberty to do so) and that (ii) third parties have an obligation not to interfere with Q's employment of these means (Q has a Hohfeldian claim-right to do so). What means Q can permissibly employ is in part constrained by proportionality considerations.<sup>44</sup> This is the kind of right justified resistance needs. It is not a right to resist coercion, for there is no such right. It is also not a right to resist general injustice, for there exists injustice one has no right to resist.<sup>45</sup>

If there is a moral right to resist domination and if imperialism is a form of domination, then there is a moral right to resist imperialism.<sup>46</sup> Any community or state capable of wielding such a right has it. There is, however, a caveat: those who dominate others normally forfeit not just the right to do what constitutes domination, but also the right to resist — and sometimes also the right not to

42 None of this implies, of course, that a genuine globalization of freedom is undesirable. All that follows is that such a globalization is impossible under the existing institutional setup.

43 W. N. Hohfeld and W. W. Cook (eds.), *Fundamental Legal Conceptions as Applied in Judicial Reasoning and Other Legal Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920).

44 In some cases, the only steps that Q can permissibly take consist in shouting for help, calling the police, and so on. But if there is reason to think that such measures are unlikely to succeed in thwarting P's bullying, then Q can permissibly take steps to resist it directly. See S. Caney, 'Responding to Global Injustice: On the Right of Resistance', *Social Philosophy and Policy* 32 (2015), 51-73, for discussion of proportionality and related matters.

45 Suppose there is a brute-luck inequality between P and Q. The inequality does not ground a power of P over Q or vice versa. Suppose, further, that levelling down P and Q is the only way that Q can effectively resist the imposition of that inequality. In this and similar cases Q has, I think, no right to resistance. A right to resist is not a right to punish.

46 This right becomes all the more urgent, as far as there is no system of institutionalized counterbullying built into the global order.



be dominated by — those whom they dominate.<sup>47</sup> For consider: the perpetrator of a crime normally forfeits certain rights, including the right to freedom of movement. She thereby also forfeits the right to resist being deprived of freedom of movement. By the same token, the perpetrator of bullying forfeits both any right to resist counter-bullying and, if bullying is necessary for effective resistance on the part of the bullied, the right to resist bullying. If, as a matter of structural necessity, capitalists bully workers, then capitalists forfeit any rights to resist workers and, if bullying is necessary for effective resistance on the part of workers, their rights not to be bullied by workers (as before, what counts as a legitimate means of resistance is subject to proportionality and efficacy considerations). Furthermore, if, as some Marxists maintain, metropolitan imperialists bully indigenous workers as a matter of structural necessity, then the former forfeit any rights to resist counter-bullying, and in some cases their rights not to be bullied.

The most difficult cases in connection with imperialism are cases where workers exploit, and thereby dominate, other workers. In the case of Table 2, the assumption is that  $L_R$  dominates  $L_P$ . This is an old idea, sometimes travelling under the name of ‘labour aristocracy’. The existence of a labour aristocracy entails that  $L_P$ , the party which is *least* able to resist domination, is also the *most* justified in resisting it. This divisive structure obtains not just because indigenous capitalists exploit indigenous workers, but also — crucially — because some metropolitan workers exploit indigenous workers. That is, insofar as  $C_R$  extracts a surplus from  $L_P$ , a small part of that surplus redounds to  $L_R$ .  $C_R$  and parts of  $L_R$  are therefore jointly implicated in the exploitation of  $L_P$ .<sup>48</sup>

These conclusions are consistent with the widespread tendency of  $C_R$  to deprive  $L_R$  of jobs by resettling from  $R$  to  $P$ , when doing so is most conducive to profitability. That is, being possessed of the metropolitan means of production,  $C_R$  has a number of options. It can exploit  $L_P$  through through FDI or trade, and then throw  $L_R$  some breadcrumbs. Alternatively, if  $L_R$  becomes too unruly,  $C_R$  can threaten to relocate to  $P$ , where wages are lower. That threat is credible. It is therefore sufficient to rein in on  $L_R$ . When the threat does not suffice, its consequent is carried out. In these cases,  $L_R$  must suffer the consequences in terms of unemployment and poverty. This is how the free transnational

47 The objects of a rights-forfeiture might vary, however:  $P$  might forfeit her claim-right not to be bullied in her relations with  $Q$ , but might retain that right in her relations with  $R$ . Consider, for example, the criminal,  $P$ , who forfeits her right to freedom of movement vis-à-vis political community  $Q$ , but fails to forfeit that right vis-à-vis political community  $R$ . By the same token, the bully might forfeit her right not to be bullied vis-à-vis subordinates without forfeiting her right vis-à-vis other bullies.

48 Perhaps the case can be made that those members of who benefit from 's exploitation do not exploit , but merely benefit from the domination of . is still objectionably implicated in 's exploitation, however.

movement of capital stacks the deck against workers: it gives metropolitan capitalists room to play  $L_R$  against  $L_P$ , while maintaining the inequality between them within the limits circumscribed by profitability. This is a basic structural feature of imperialism.<sup>49</sup> These conclusions have important implications for the ascription of rights, including rights to resistance and self-determination.

### ***How Not to Resist***

The remainder of this essay discusses and rejects a widely-held Marxist account of resistance to imperialism. That account holds that  $L_P$ 's right to resist  $C_R$  is best realized in a right of national self-determination for  $S_P$ . To make things simple, I preserve the instrumentalist assumption that, if  $S_R$  engages in imperialism vis-à-vis  $S_P$ , then the relations of Table 2, and only those relations, hold (this assumption is relaxed in the appendix).

In 1909, Rosa Luxemburg wrote:

‘The duty of the class party of the proletariat to protest and resist national oppression arises not from any special rights of nations, just as, for example, its striving for social and political equality of the sexes does not at all stem from any special rights of women which the movement of bourgeois emancipation refers to. This duty arises solely from the general opposition to the class regime and to every form of social inequality and social domination, in a word, from the basic position of socialism.’<sup>50</sup>

Luxemburg's argument was a response to Lenin and those Bolsheviks who wanted to defend a fundamental ‘right of nations to self-determination’.<sup>51</sup> The polemic was symptomatic of a deep ambivalence among Marxists, including Marx himself, on the national question.<sup>52</sup> Lenin's view consisted in drawing a distinction between ‘oppressed’ and ‘oppressor’ nations,<sup>53</sup> assigning a right of national self-determination only to the former.<sup>54</sup>

There are at least two problems with the Leninist view. The first is that state B can be dominated by A while dominating C: the bully of one relation may

49 See J. Galtung, ‘A Structural Theory of Imperialism’, *Journal of Peace Research* 8 (1971), 81-117 for a simple model.

50 R. Luxemburg (Horace B. Davis, ed.), *The National Question: Selected Writings* (London: Monthly Review Press, 1976), p. 110.

51 V. I. Lenin, *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2004).

52 See S. Avineri, ‘Marxism and Nationalism’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 26 (1991), 637-657, and E. Hobsbawm, ‘Some Reflections on *The Break-Up of Britain*’, *New Left Review* 105 (1977), 3-23, for a summary of these debates

53 ‘Oppression’ is too generic a concept. I shall instead refer to domination, which is part of the definition of imperialism offered in this paper.

54 Lenin's position seems to contradict the views of Marx and Engels, who were vocally opposed to the self-determination of ‘reactionary’ nationalisms, such as the Czech and Croatian nationalisms of the Austro-Hungarian empire (see Avineri (1991), p. 641).

be bullied in another.<sup>55</sup> The conditions of ascription of the right to national self-determination are therefore less determinate than its defenders assume. More importantly, unlike the right to *popular* sovereignty, a right to *national* sovereignty is more amenable to morally arbitrary exclusion; it easily lends itself to segregation, xenophobia, or outright racism, especially within dominated states. This is why, after decades of experimentation with the Leninist strategy, its overall balance sheet seems to be in the negative. As Hobsbawm puts it:

‘There is no denying the fact that only in a few cases have Marxists succeeded in establishing or maintaining themselves as the leading force in their national movement. In most cases, especially when such movements were already in existence as serious political forces or under the auspices of state governments, they have either become subordinate to, or been absorbed by, or pushed aside by non-Marxist or anti-Marxist nationalism.’<sup>56</sup>

Hobsbawm adds that the disappearance of colonies ‘has snapped the main link between anti-imperialism and the slogan of national self-determination.’<sup>57</sup> If this is all true, then it remains doubtful that  $L_P$ ’s right of resistance against  $C_R$  is effectively realized in a right to national self-determination.

An important question lurking in the background pertains to the relevant notion of ‘nation’. Nationalists of every stripe believe that a people has a—possibly defeasible—moral claim to self-determination. However, a ‘people’ may be ethnically, culturally, or politically constituted. Hobsbawm seems to have in mind the ethnic nationalisms of the 20th century, all of which entail a broad-scope right to exclude. Such nationalisms are practically certain to run afoul of the anti-imperialist emphasis on nonexploitation and equal freedom for metropolitan and indigenous workers alike.<sup>58</sup> In other words, if the exercise of a right to self-determination promotes the interests of, say,  $L_R$  at the expense of  $L_P$ , then the right does not serve the cause of resistance in the right way. There are, however, forms of nationalism that emphasize collective self-determination, as opposed to ethnic or cultural identity.<sup>59</sup> Such views ground the right to exclude on contingent, as opposed to ascriptive characteristics of

55 In 1975, when Vietnam beat the US invader, the international anti-imperialist movement celebrated one of its greatest victories. Three years later Vietnam invaded Cambodia. Similar concerns extend to most contemporary candidates for national self-determination: the Basque country, Catalonia, Quebec, Scotland, etc. For any of the above might appear bullied vis-à-vis one community, but a bully vis-à-vis others. Finally, note that, on any account of domination, no case can be made that, say, Wallonia dominates Flanders in contemporary Belgium, or that Southern Italy dominates Northern Italy. There is no justice to these claims for self-determination, such as they are.

56 Hobsbawm (1977), pp. 10–11.

57 Hobsbawm (1977), p. 11.

58 These considerations also seem to rule out cultural nationalisms of the variety defended by A. Margalit and J. Raz, ‘National Self-Determination’, *Journal of Philosophy* 87 (1990), 439–461.

59 See, for example, A. Stilz, *Liberal Loyalty* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

affected parties. For example, immigrants who share neither ethnic nor cultural background with other members of a state, but are subject to its laws, are not permissibly excludable from the rights and obligations of citizenship. Former members of  $L_P$ , for instance, are not permissibly excludable from  $S_R$ , as long as they are subject to  $S_R$ 's laws. Even this view, however, makes the claims of equality and nonexploitation contingent upon membership of a political community:  $L_P$  is still exploited by  $C_R$  through FDI, free trade, and other forms of liberal imperialism. This is, again, to run afoul of anti-imperialist commitments. So perhaps the ascription of a right to national self-determination must be *subject to* these commitments. That is, states whose members are victims of imperialism have a right to national self-determination if and only if the ascription of such a right strengthens the hand of the victims of imperialism taken as a whole. Then the right to national self-determination is conditional upon, and derivative from, a more general right to resist domination.

### ***How to Resist***

What is the form of 'the general opposition to... social domination' alluded to by Luxemburg? The answer must have something to do with the nature of the general right to resist domination. I now sketch some fundamental features of that right.

A right is *conditional* if it has the following structure: P has a right to X if Y obtains, where Y is some triggering condition. A right is *derivative* if its ascription is part of a conclusion to a syllogism that has a non-derivative right as a premiss. P's derivative right to swear in the centre of the town, for example, is ascribed to P as a conclusion to a syllogism that has P's non-derivative right to free speech as a premiss. In the case of the right to national self-determination, that right is conditional upon whether its ascription and exercise promotes the overall cause of nondomination as defined above for the whole class of the dominated;<sup>60</sup> it is, moreover, derivative of a non-derivative right to resist domination.

What is it to promote the cause of nondomination for the *whole class* of the dominated? Suppose P is bullying Q and R. If the amount of bullying suffered by each of Q and R is reduced when they independently barricade themselves in their own homes, then the whole class of the dominated suffers less domination.

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<sup>60</sup> In the quote above, Luxemburg defines that cause as socialism. Nothing of substance hinges on this proviso. Indeed, if capitalism is defined as the generalized domination of labour by capital, then the cause of nondomination implies the cause of socialism.

In this case, self-determination succeeds in fending off domination.<sup>61</sup> What the anti-imperialist defender of a right to self-determination must show, however, is that the self-determination strategy (Q and R individually barricading in their own homes) makes their resistance more effective — that is, reduces domination by more — than jointly barricading in the same home. The balance of evidence from the recent history of nationalism is far from conclusive that this is the case.

Now suppose that the account of imperialism provided so far is correct: imperialist states dominate through subordinating power. Then, like the proverbial bully, imperialist states forfeit their rights to act in imperialism-constituting ways, including their rights to national self-determination. It follows that imperialist states can be permissibly compelled — whether through coercive or noncoercive proportional means — to do things that contradict (what they perceive to be in) their national interests. Imperialist states, can, for example, be permissibly compelled to abstain from engaging in war, to join international institutions, to enter into binding environmental treaties, to drop export subsidies or protectionism, to accept export subsidies, protectionism and capital controls on the part of poorer states, and so on. *Who* can permissibly compel imperialists to do these things? One answer might be: dominated states, or coalitions thereof. This response is unstable, for the victims of imperialism might turn imperialist (see fn. 55). Removing this kind of instability requires that any counter-imperialist coalition be sufficiently inclusive across  $L_R$  and  $L_P$ . That is, only a coalition of workers' democracies—democracies in which the means of production are democratically controlled by the people and not by capitalists—can guarantee the stable abolition of the forms of imperialism discussed in this paper. The conditions for a worker's democracy, or indeed for a coalition between workers' democracies, are difficult and urgent questions for another time.<sup>62</sup>

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61 There are going to be cases where the individualistic strategy causes Q to be dominated less and R to be dominated more than before. In these kinds of cases, one solution could be to sum up the gains to Q and the losses to R and make overall nondomination a positive function of that sum. Another solution, which is more sensitive to the plight of the worse-off, is to attach greater weight to Q's gains if and only if Q is worse off than R.

62 I want to thank Lea Ypi for helpful discussions on this topic, and Annie Stilz and the editors of *Global Justice* for helpful and incisive written comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

## Appendix

This appendix discusses the full logical partition of possibilities broached in Table 1. Dropping state instrumentalism is compatible with the view that states and markets are class-constituted. The state might, for example, possess relative autonomy from the interests of any particular class of capitalist.<sup>63</sup> The relative autonomy view goes some way towards explaining heterogeneity across the  $s$ , depending on the nature of class struggle in  $i$  and the mode of subsumption of labour by capital underlying it.

(a)  $C_R$  exploits  $C_P$ : TRUE

The simplest illustration of (a) is trade flow. The source of surplus extraction, in this case, is the terms of trade.

(b)  $C_R$  exploits  $S_R$ : FALSE

Consider the case of debt: finance capitalists lend money to the state by buying bonds at interest. Suppose that  $C_R$  thereby exploit. Do they thereby exploit  $S_R$ ? Or do they exploit  $S_R$ 's main funders, that is, tax-paying workers  $L_R$ ? The answer is not obvious. Say Z gives money to Y for safekeeping. Y finds herself in a pit. Then X comes over and asks for the money as reward for rescuing Y. Y obliges. Does X exploit Y or Z? It would seem that Y is exploited here. But this presumption is mistaken. For Y merely acts as a middleman for Z: it is as if Z found herself in the pit, X asked for the money, and Y acted as Z's lawyer. X exploits Z. If this is correct, then  $C_R$  does not exploit  $S_R$ , but only  $L_R$ .

(c)  $C_R$  exploits  $S_P$ : FALSE

By reasoning similar to (b).

(d)  $C_R$  exploits  $L_R$ : TRUE

This is a corollary of the original assumption about the nature of the relationship between capital and labour.

(e)  $C_R$  exploits  $L_P$ : TRUE

This is the theme that preoccupied classical theories of imperialism: capital flow. The main channel through which  $C_R$  exploits  $L_P$  is foreign direct investment (FDI). That is, the only difference between (d) and (e) is that  $C_R$ 's investments take place outside her own country. By investing directly in land, equipment and machinery, and by offering better wages than  $C_P$ ,  $C_R$  is able to exploit  $L_P$ . This is what sweatshops are all about, for instance.

63 See N. Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes* (London: New Left Books, 1973), and J. Elster, *Making Sense of Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

(f)  $S_R$  exploits  $C_P$ : TRUE

Say  $S_R$  bureaucrats demand a large bribe in return for furnishing  $C_P$  with advanced technology. If the bribe is accepted, it is beneficial to  $S_R$ , and  $C_P$  is sufficiently needy, then  $S_R$  exploits  $C_P$ .

(g)  $S_R$  exploits  $S_P$ : TRUE

The main channel here is debt:  $S_R$  charges high interest rates for a low-cost loan that  $S_P$  needs. The recent 'bail-out' packages offered to the PIIGS by the troika of the IMF, the EU Commission and the ECB are an instance of this phenomenon.

(h)  $S_R$  exploits  $L_R$ : TRUE

By levying taxes on workers,  $S_R$  can exploit and thereby dominate  $L_R$ . Some of these taxes might return to  $L_R$  in the form of public good provision, but a good deal will go to the coffers of banks to repay the national debt (see (b) above).

(i)  $S_R$  exploits  $L_P$ : TRUE

Imagine a large state-owned company that charges foreign workers an exorbitant amount for some basic necessity, such as oil or gas (this seems to be the standard practice of Gazprom, for instance).  $S_R$  exploits  $L_P$ .

(j)  $C_P$  exploits  $S_P$ : FALSE

By reasoning similar to (b).

(k)  $C_P$  exploits  $L_R$ : TRUE

By reasoning similar to (e). Note that FDI flows overwhelmingly between metropolitan areas, and not between rich and poor countries (perhaps with the exception of China).<sup>64</sup>

(l)  $C_P$  exploits  $L_P$ : TRUE

By reasoning similar to (d).

(m)  $S_P$  exploits  $L_R$ : TRUE

By reasoning similar to (i).

(n)  $S_P$  exploits  $L_P$ : TRUE

By reasoning similar to (h).

(o)  $L_R$  exploits  $L_P$ : TRUE

This is the labour aristocracy argument.

<sup>64</sup> See D. Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

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