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**THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTENT OF TEXTBOOKS
AND THE TEACHING OF CULTURE IN FOREIGN
LANGUAGE PROGRAMS**

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of teaching culture in Foreign Language programs has been in the professional literature for over three decades. Since its introduction in a seminar held in the United States of America in 1953, and sponsored by the Modern Language Association, the conceptualization of culture as a necessary element of foreign language programs has gone through a series of transformations. Culture was initially perceived as an adjunct to language study in what Crawford-Lange and Lange (14: 169) call the linear model. The teaching of culture was further integrated in the communicative approach to language teaching (Crawford-Lange and Lange, 14: 161; Widdowson, 46; Brumfit and Johnson, 8) with the latest transformation represented in the integrative language/culture model proposed by Crawford-Lange and Lange (14: 146). These successive transformations were aimed at the development of a more systematic study of culture, but the implicit context of the various proposals for the study of culture has been that culture should be explicitly and consciously integrated into the curriculum. Thus, cultural materials should be specifically selected and developed for that purpose. Cultural objectives and culture learning should be process oriented and connected to an active, conscious process of learning. Many of the textbooks used today are grammar oriented, yet one must not overlook the fact that their dialogues, exercises, and readings contain some cultural information. Even though the focus of the materials is on the linguistic content, whatever cultural learning occurs should be regarded as incidental. It is this incidental nature of possible culture learning that makes it necessary to analyze what and how cultural information is being transmitted to the students of the foreign language. This issue is of particular importance in underdeveloped nations because of the potential socio-political consequences.

This article develops an overall evaluation-framework for the teaching of culture through the discussion of the role of culture in foreign language programs, the role of textbooks in relation to the teaching of culture in these programs, and a description of the context of underdevelopment in which foreign language programs may be implemented. This framework is followed by a discussion of development theory from the perspective of underdeveloped countries. Finally, the role of education within this conception of development is discussed in order to set criteria for the assessment of foreign language textbooks in relation to the overall framework provided. The article makes use of the concepts of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), development, underdevelopment, domination, cultural domination, culture and ideology. The definitions for these terms are provided in a glossary.

Culture in Foreign Language programs

The re-evaluation of the goals and practices in the teaching of culture, within foreign language education, dates back to a 1953 seminar organized by the Modern Language Association (MLA) in the United States of America (Brow, et al., 7). For several years the teaching of culture was a theme of the Northeast Conferences on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in that country (Bishop, 4; Dodge, 18; Bom, 5; Bragaw, Loew and Wooster, 6). Culture has also been widely recognized as an essential element in any foreign language curriculum. By the 1972 Northeast Conference (18) the profession had reached consensus on the anthropological definition of culture as the total way of life of a people. Lippman (33), Bragaw (6), and Crawford-Lange and Lange (14), have postulated the teaching of culture as part of the rationale for Foreign Language Education, with the overall goals of developing cross-cultural awareness and understanding.

Although the profession had reached a consensus on the definition of culture, the choice as to how to approach the «way of life» culture remains at present an unanswered issue. Do we see culture as a constituted whole or as an ongoing totalization? Do we look at culture from *within* or from *without*? What role is the individual ascribed in society? Do we see the individual as a spectator in society or as one who is active in society, who affects it, and is affected by it? Do we emphasize deep culture—the invisible aspects of culture such as values, premises, beliefs, fears, and attitudes—or surface culture—the readily visible, observable aspects of culture such

as artifacts and behaviors? Certainly, whatever answer is chosen, it is bound to have consequences affecting the learner.

The overall goals for the teaching of culture in foreign language programs (Bragaw, 6; Seelye, 41; Nostrand, 35) have been stated in terms of perspective consciousness, cross-cultural awareness, and international understanding. However, if those goals are to be properly reached, it is necessary to evaluate not only the cultural content in textbooks and curricula, but also the manner in which it is presented. Bragaw (6: 54) argues that cultural study based on superficial aspects of culture, on factual recall, and on systematic emphasis of differences between the peoples and nations is what constitutes its mythical base. This focus needs to be changed if we intend to develop consciousness, awareness, and understanding of other peoples. Although trends in the study of culture are moving toward real-life experiences, understanding, and a perspective of historical development—all of which are necessary for deriving the meaning of another's contemporary way of life—this perspective is not the norm, but rather the exception in the study of cultures.

Textbooks and the teaching of culture in foreign language programs

The literature on the teaching of culture reveals the frequent assumption that culture in the foreign language classroom is dealt with through cultural readers, and explicitly designated cultural sections within the curriculum. But the literature also shows a lack of concern for the textbook and its connection to the teaching of culture. Because of the linguistic orientation in foreign language textbooks, there is a tendency to overlook the fact that the dialogues, exercises, drills, and readings contain cultural information. In fact, it is in the «non-cultural» sections of a textbook where one is more likely to find a considerable amount of cultural information being transmitted to the student. For De Meo (17: 12), the textbook's choice and presentation of linguistic and cultural materials is determined by a particular perspective on language, culture, and learning. Thus, there is a need to be aware of the cultural content and ideology of any foreign language textbook whether it be in designated cultural sections or not.

There is also the assumption that textbooks portray two types of characters. First, the *native culture characters* symbolize the foreign language learners using the textbook. This native culture character is the one with whom the student is expected to identify. The successful portrayal of

this archetype depends upon the degree to which the character is «abstracted», or left relatively undefined so that the learner may supply the mental construct of the complete character. The second type is the *target culture characters*, who are perceived by the students as representative of the target culture. Since these characters are viewed as sources of information about the target culture in general, successful target culture characters must necessarily be more fully defined than native culture characters, in order to provide insights into significant aspects of the target culture.

Because target culture characters in textbooks are the source of insight into that culture, it is important to identify those characters, how they are depicted, and what essential elements of the target culture they depict. However, problems with the cultural content of textbooks have been indicated by a number of studies. Bidwell (3), Freudenstein (22), Nuessel (36), Stern (44), Schmitz (42), have reported on the mistreatment of females in foreign language textbooks. Other studies of textbooks and magazines by Berelson and Salter (2), Costo and Henry (13), Wirtenberg (47), have found mistreatment and stereotyping of minorities and older adults.

Other studies (De Meo, 17; Pfister and Borzilleri, 37; Moreau and Pfister, 34; Levno and Pfister, 32) have indicated a series of problems with the socio-cultural content of foreign language textbooks. These studies support Ariew's claims that biases and compromises in textbook production affect the treatment of target cultures, resulting in inaccurate descriptions and characterizations, the neglect of certain topics, or the mistreatment of others to avoid controversy (1: 12).

The impact of textbooks on the reader has also been addressed by different writers (Bidwell, 3; Carroll, 11; Stein, 43; De Fleur, 16; Fisher, 20; Quillen, 38). The claims made indicate that textbooks influence opinions and attitudes of the reader, and that much of the cultural learning that occurs has an incidental nature. This incidental nature has a propagandistic effect on the communication of stereotypes, and on the reinforcement of existing prejudices and conceptions.

The Socio-Cultural Content of Textbooks and Cultural Domination

The various problems outlined above regarding foreign language textbooks have different meanings depending upon the context in which the

textbooks are used. The problems of exclusion, stereotyping, and distortion in foreign language textbooks would have a different meaning if the texts were used in the United States, or if they were used in an underdeveloped country. Even the meaning itself of cross-cultural understanding as a goal in teaching culture would vary, depending on whether the goal is seen in the context of an underdeveloped or a developed nation.

Camacho (9: 20) states that relations between human groups require the exchange of cultural elements in order to establish and maintain contact. When one group enriches its culture through contact with other groups, we call it diffusion of culture. There are, however, two ways in which the cultural exchange can take place: between equally strong groups, or between a strong group and a weak one. It is the latter which we refer to as *acculturation* (Camacho, 9: 120). In both cases, there can be reciprocal exchange, but the consequences will be different. In the first case, one of the strong groups accepts the cultural elements from the other under the condition of deriving benefit or of not being negatively affected. In the latter case, the weak group is not strong enough to reject the influence from the strong group; the influence can be labeled irreversible (9: 120).

Often acculturation is undesirable from the point of view of the receptive group, because the cultural elements emerge in the dominant group as a result of its own particular structure. A dominant society can accept cultural influences from outside as long as they fit its structural reality, but this is not the same for a dominated society. In under—development, acculturation— a product and condition of economic domination—allows political and military domination; and it contributes to the maintenance of economic control as well. The economic dependence of an underdeveloped country allows the penetration of cultural patterns and elements from the dominant economy, which in turn reinforce further economic dependence. The desire in underdeveloped countries to participate in the material culture of developed nations, appears to be induced by the mass media and foreign commercial pressures, through advertising drives to achieve this purpose.

The Costa Rican sociologist Camacho (9) agrees with Wells (45), in that the equilibrium between the needs and the resources is broken when the underdeveloped countries move into an unbalanced model of consumption through contact with societies that have much heavier consumption habits. Camacho indicates how Costa Rica is forced to consume according to

models imposed by the central nations, with the consequent transfer of local monetary surplus to the dominant economy (9: 109).

Cultural domination is thus the dialectical unit resulting from the struggle and identity of two opposites: the imposed culture from the dominant society, and the subsumed culture. Operationally, cultural domination can be understood as the transmission of cultural elements from developed to underdeveloped countries, as a result of economic relations, aided by the local dominant social classes of the underdeveloped nations. Camacho (9: 112) discusses three dimensions of cultural domination: the role of the social classes, the ideological dimension, and the material dimension. The latter two are more relevant here. The material aspect of culture includes tools and instruments developed and used by a given society. Every material element of culture conveys ideological messages; thus each tool or instrument taken in by the dominated culture conveys some ideological content. An automobile, for example, brings profound changes in habits and tastes, wherever it is introduced. There are also cultural instruments such as newspapers, cinema, radio, television, and books that, due to their very nature, transmit messages.

Tools and material instruments such as automobiles and television have caused great changes in privileged groups in underdeveloped nations. Members of these groups in Latin America have been ready to imitate the "American way of life" with enthusiasm and pride. These imitation patterns have consequently affected the local economies in the form of inflated imports, decreased consumption of traditional products, and lack of savings. Means of cultural diffusion such as television, radio, and books are objects of consumption as well as carriers of culture. They play an important role in the assuring necessary contact, and in building positive images of the dominant society, through the diffusion of ideological culture with simplified messages for easy acceptance. Books, as a means of diffusion of culture, contribute to foreign domination over underdeveloped countries. The selection of cultural elements and the choice of manner of presentation of that cultural information occurs in the dominant countries; information comes to the underdeveloped nation filtered through a particular vision elaborated in the central nations.

Cultural domination also has positive aspects that can contribute to development, but this is desirable only when the underdeveloped nation is

capable of controlling the foreign influence, by adopting only what is beneficial and rejecting what it considers negative and counterproductive.

Development Theory: An “Underdeveloped” Point of View

The relationship between native culture, the cultural content of foreign textbooks, cultural domination, and indigenous development processes in underdeveloped nations is central to the argument presented here. The most recent concepts in development theory are of a normative nature, that is, they are stated in terms of how it should take place. They call for an indigenization of the process, in which the native culture plays a very crucial role; they are aimed at a kind of development that can take place according to the underdeveloped country's own, historically derived characteristics. The proposals assume that a development strategy must be created around, among other things, the nation-state control of foreign influences and the enrichment of the indigenous local culture. This development strategy addresses the often ignored issue of the purpose and meaning of development. According to Hettne (27: 76), this approach is characterized by: 1) its orientation to meeting basic needs, 2) the premise that each society defines in sovereignty its values and vision of the future, 3) a reliance of the society primarily on its own resources and strength, and 4) commitment to structural transformation.

This indigenization of development thought is a result of a process of intellectual emancipation born out of the confrontation of Western concepts and theories on the one hand and the reality of underdeveloped nations on the other. This movement toward indigenization of development thought seems a necessary phase in the search for a more comprehensive and relevant concept of the process, a concept that is more valid in the specific geographical and historical context of an underdeveloped nation.

Presently there is confrontation between those who study development as it actually takes place in developed nations, in the light of certain theories, and those who argue, at a theoretical level, about what development should imply according to certain values. Many studies are easily dismissed as ideological because of biases in the social sciences against research that makes explicit the use of preferences and values in the definition of problems to be studied. All social science theories are based on certain values, however.

Development theory, says Hettne (27: 138), should be explicitly normative and carry out a critical assessment of ends and means. In the formulation of normative principles, one can, for instance, adhere to certain ethical values. In fact, development is above all a question of values, involving attitudes, preferences, self-defined goals, and criteria to determine what are acceptable costs to be born in the course of change (Goulet, 25: 205).

The changes which are usually proposed under the banner of development (availability of information, material goods, services, etc.) can threaten the survival of a society's deepest values. What is traditionally termed development—namely a dynamic economy, modernized institutions, availability of abundant goods and services—is simply one option among many, of development in a more critical and global sense. Authentic development for Goulet (25: 206) aims at a full realization of human capabilities, where men and women are creating their own personal and societal histories.

Goulet (25: 212) has used the concept of existence rationality to propose the existence of core and boundary values in societies. According to him, the core values are indispensable for a society to maintain cohesiveness, and for its members to identify with the group. Minimal demands exist for survival, identity, solidarity, and dignity. Thus, all pedagogies aiming at change must structure and expand the outer values of a society's existence rationality, but never eliminate its core values.

Alternative development strategies stress three basic elements: meeting basic human needs, promoting self-reliance, and minimizing native culture damage. These strategies also propose that the goals of development must not be borrowed from "developed" nations; instead, these goals must be drawn from critical assessment of latent dynamisms found in traditional values and institutions.

Certainly, the idea that development and modernization is accessible to traditional cultures only by committing value suicide is wrong and unacceptable. A more beneficial and positive course views traditional wisdom as harboring latent dynamisms capable of giving birth to new indigenous forms of development. Alternative development models should be based on development from tradition, and valid options can only be created through social experimentation by communities living out new kinds of development in harmony with their own values (24: 300).

Obviously, there is great contradiction between what indigenous development implies and what cultural domination entails. This contradiction, however, can be more explicitly stated if we look at education, and how indigenous development ties education to native cultural development and to the problem of foreign cultural penetration and domination.

Education and Development Theory

Within indigenous development, education is closely related to the developmental process in underdeveloped nations, as well as to traditional culture. Jones (28: 39) indicates that in colonial and quasi-colonial situations there are examples of schools imposed from outside without particular sensitivity to local culture, customs, or values. These impositions extend to the curricular content that is imparted in schools in underdeveloped and industrialized nations with respect to education, advancing an oppressing role of education and creating new forms of dependency. Santiago (40: 123) claims that many underdeveloped nations have extended their dependency by turning to the industrialized nations for guidance, curricula, technology, books, and research agendas. These impositions have also caused educational and development planning to be approached in an uncoordinated and purposeless way. Carnoy (10: 70) even adds that schools stressing socialization into European language, values, norms and culture in general, tend to degrade all that is native.

Educational planning and education in its relation to development in underdeveloped nations have been widely criticized. Levin (31) indicates that educational planning has lost its sense of purpose, and that its relevance and legitimacy have been challenged by both clients and practitioners. The failure of the policy of educational expansion and its promises in poor nations during the 60's is an example of an external idea being unsuccessfully imposed upon these nations, with little or no analysis of the socio-cultural and political context into which the ideas were imported. The technocratic approach to educational planning avoided considerations of values, political issues, and the validity of their assumptions (31: 88).

Educational planners rarely seem aware that alternative patterns of educational development exist, many of which could best serve indigenous needs and minimize dependence on external entities and/or nations. These alternatives focus more closely on qualitative issues such as quality of

teachers, facilities, didactic materials, and effectiveness of the curriculum. For D'Aeth (15: 3-15), educational problems have to be assessed in a broader context. Practical questions such as how to teach literacy are closely linked to much broader issues such as traditional culture and its relationship to the nation's development.

Development must go beyond material aims; it must be expressed in terms of the quality of living, which involves human characteristics as well as the culture and traditions of each country. Negative cultural domination must be controlled in order to produce individuals without a mental dichotomy, who are fully integrated in harmony with indigenous culture, and no longer ignorant of their own language, literature, traditions, and customs. Congruent with an indigenous development strategy, education should be part of an orchestrated overall national strategy for development, which must be independent and more responsive to locally established goals, control, and realities.

The relationship of education to indigenous cultural development, to cultural domination, and to development processes is central to the argument presented here. Education may provide specific skills (i.e. in agriculture), but it should also raise the level of understanding and cooperation in a community and encourage the growth of leadership to enable the community to take its own initiatives. The educational system in underdeveloped nations must decide if it is going to be more responsive to the outside, or if it is going to aid the individual and the society to define and take control of itself.

Furter (23) has addressed the issue of cultural domination and its relationship to cultural development. He claims that domination affects the educational system, and that it corrupts and destroys the necessary conditions for local, autonomous, intellectual and cultural activity. Education, as it is presently organized and administered in many underdeveloped nations becomes a direct contributor to the blocking of indigenous, autonomous development processes.

The specific, specialized intervention of the school should be placed within a broader context of cultural and formative action in the society, the framework of national cultural development. Cultural development, thus, has two basic imperatives. First, it should address its action to the integration of the population, eliminate specific group privileges, and lead

to cultural democratization. Secondly, it must adhere itself to a cultural policy that pursues national creativity, intensifying cultural and scientific productivity. In fact, to assure originality and national identity, it is necessary that new values be created, that new symbols appear, giving direction and significance to the indigenous development process.

Certainly, if education is to integrate itself into an indigenous development process, it is essential to understand that local cultural development demands a radical revision of specific aspects, that the educational system could provide for cultural action reaching beyond the school building. Within this context, a thorough revision of the curricular content in all areas of the educational system becomes imperative, in order to identify its affinity with and contribution to the general aims of cultural action and cultural development of the educational system. The curriculum of a school is understood in the broad sense in which Doll (19: 6) defines it: the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and values, under the auspices of the school. It must be added that the purpose of the curriculum is also an essential aspect to be considered in the definition of the term. The foreign language curriculum in general, and more specifically foreign language textbooks, as one of the components of the total curriculum of secondary schools in underdeveloped nations, need to be evaluated in terms of: 1) their affinity with the goals of cross-cultural understanding, 2) the role of foreign language teaching in relation to the broader context of local cultural development, and 3) their relation to the issue of foreign cultural domination and to indigenous national development.

The socio-cultural content of foreign language textbooks needs to be evaluated to determine if that content promotes a distorted or highly selected view of the central nations on which the underdeveloped peripheral nations depend, or if they present a more realistic, comprehensive portrayal of the culture, allowing the foreign language learner to develop understanding of that culture. It is necessary to ascertain if foreign language textbooks promote cross-cultural understanding, or if they present selected, disparate surface culture elements and unrealistic, romanticized images that serve as cultural propagation, which in turn may serve as potential means of foreign cultural penetration. It is also important to determine whether potential means of cultural domination are being institutionalized through the use of

textbooks, that, because of their socio-cultural message, are antagonistic and contradictory to the process of national cultural development, and consequently, to more autonomous, indigenous development.

Foreign Language textbooks: The teaching of Culture

The theoretical arguments presented above complete an overall framework within which the teaching of culture in foreign language programs and the evaluation of the socio-cultural content of foreign language texts can be accomplished. What is clear from the discussion is that the teaching of foreign languages in underdeveloped nations faces an ethical dilemma with respect to national development. Judd (29) synthesizes the problem with the argument that English instructors in other countries ought to plan language programs more in light of surrounding socio-political and cultural factors. This problem regarding teaching foreign languages in underdeveloped nations is particularly acute in the area of teaching culture.

Because textbooks play an important role in foreign language programs in underdeveloped nations, the aspects of selection of and approaches to the presentation of culture in those textbooks, become very sensitive issues in the teaching of culture within the context of underdevelopment. These issues become of primary importance in the context of education and indigenous development as discussed here. In the study of culture in a foreign language program, the students of the target language and culture may adopt an “insider’s” view conceptually only to the extent that they are allowed to do so by the choice of material itself, the context in which the material is presented, and the nature of the questions related to it. Objects of culture can be described synchronically if our interest is to grasp just a moment of their existence, but the diachronic dimension must inseparably join the synchronic if we are to have full understanding of the object. The synchronic approach to the study of culture, as a constituted whole at a given time, reifies culture. Culture is seen as a closed system which leads to confusion of culture and nature, because culture is considered as something fixed, no longer a process in evolution.

When culture is viewed as a totality, as information and formation seen both synchronically and within a historical perspective, the inductive and dialectical grasp of internal links is facilitated. When paired with a heuristic teaching method, the student will be able to understand the foreign culture more clearly. Such an approach aids the student in the understanding

of the foreign culture as a totality, as a product of historical processes; it also helps the student develop a better understanding of his own culture, and his role as an individual member in that culture.

In terms of cultural content in instruments of cultural diffusion (e.g. television, radio, books) several issues need to be outlined. In a study of television in Latin America, Wells (45: 121) found that about 80 % of the television programs in the hemisphere were produced in the United States, and that the suitability of these programs, which constantly depict selected North American life styles and folklore, is open to serious questioning for poor Latin American countries. Camacho (9: 227) reports on the preponderance of foreign information and commercial advertising in the most widely circulating Costa Rican newspaper. Both authors agree that the effect of this type of programming and content in mass communications, is to promote stereotypical and positive, but distorted images of the United States, and to encourage a local sector to live in North American style without the sacrifices necessary for indigenous development. This aspect of content in instruments of cultural diffusion is important. The dominant industrial society is known to export its values and ideological views, in order to influence the mentality and institutions of the dependent nations, all in an effort to make the local populations become somewhat like those in the metropolitan center. Thus, colonization becomes, beyond the economic and political domination, a "brain washing" enterprise, in order to destroy the deep seated personality of the people of underdeveloped nations (9: 143).

Beliefs in a society are closely attached to ideology, myths, and stereotypes. Myths are fictitious explanations of the origins of social customs and natural phenomena; stereotypes are unscientific generalizations and false images of the economic and social reality (objects, persons, relations, events, processes) based on a subjective, affective, and inconsistent conception of that reality. All three are used to diffuse and maintain dominant ideologies. From the scientific point of view, the stereotype represents a distortion of reality, since it leads to erroneous explanations of physical and social phenomena. The myth, on the other hand, makes a selection of facts that are supportive of such selected views; it hides those facts that contradict the view the myth is supposed to diffuse.

Foreign controlled mass media in Latin America has used myths and stereotypes to manipulate the population. Means of diffusion of culture such as films, radio, television, and books are often diffusers of those myths,

stereotypes, and ideological culture. Therefore, it becomes important to assess the extent to which cultural instruments such as EFL textbooks, that are produced in/and exported from the United States of America, England and other English speaking countries to underdeveloped countries, may be promoting stereotypical images, myths, romanticized views, favorable sentiments or opinions, and favorable attitudes toward the dominant society, at the expense of more realistic and comprehensive portrayals of the culture and society of those nations.

The central contention of this article is that EFL textbooks which promote myths, stereotypes, and use a synchronic approach in the presentation of cultural information, with questions of a factual recall nature, will be counterproductive to: 1) the goals of cross-cultural awareness and understanding, and 2) the aims of education for cultural and indigenous development. In this sense, the actual role of EFL textbooks in the potential promotion of foreign cultural domination will not be any different from that of radio, the newspapers, or television as the studies by Camacho (9) and Wells (45) have indicated.

GLOSSARY

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): This term describes a function of English in countries where English is not the native language. EFL occurs when English is studied as one of several foreign languages serving little communicative function for the majority of the population, because it is geographically removed from native speaker populations. This is the case of the teaching of English in Costa Rican public secondary schools.

Development: There can be no fixed or final definition of development; however, some suggestions as to what development implies in particular contexts can be stated. Development can be contextually defined as an open-ended process which is continuously redefined as understanding of it deepens, and as new problems to be dealt with emerge. Development is concerned with societal change, involving political, social, and economic transformation (Hettne, 27: 7). Paraphrasing Rodney (39: 6), development should not be seen purely as an economic issue, but rather as an overall social process that is dependent upon the results of the relationship of man with the total environment.

Conventional notions of development as dynamic economic

performance, modernization of institutions, and proliferation of goods and services are considered inappropriate here. Authentic development, according to Goulet (24: 299), aims at the realization of human capabilities in all spheres. Development is above all a question of values and it involves human attitudes, preferences, self-defined goals, and criteria to determine acceptable costs in the process of change. The goals of development must not be borrowed from anywhere, but drawn from a critical assessment of latent dynamisms found in traditional values and institutions within a culture (24: 277).

Underdevelopment: Underdevelopment is not the absence of development, since peoples have developed to a greater or lesser degree. Thus, underdevelopment makes sense only as a means of making comparisons of levels of development. For Rodney (39: 13), the concept is tied to the fact that human social development has been uneven. Economically speaking, some human groups have advanced further than others by producing more and becoming wealthier. Thus, one of the main ideas behind underdevelopment is one of economic comparison.

A second component of underdevelopment, continues Rodney, is that it expresses a particular relationship of exploitation of one country by another. All countries classified as underdeveloped have been or are being exploited by others through trade, extraction of surplus, ownership of means of production, uncontrolled foreign investment, cultural domination, and various other forms of exploitation.

Underdevelopment, claims Camacho (9: 23-24), is the necessary result of relationships of central capitalist countries with dependent societies or with economies in stages which are different from the capitalist mode of production. In these relationships, the dominant economy penetrates the less developed ones and makes them part of the world capitalist structure. This is the case of many Latin American nations in their relationships with the United States and Western Europe (Chilcote, 12; Frank, 21).

Cultural domination: The dependency of the underdeveloped societies on the central nations of the world capitalist structure, and the appropriation of the surplus value by foreign entities is based on cultural domination (9: 24), which, in turn, is a product of such dependency and appropriation. Cultural domination is a process of transmission of cultural elements from the developed nations to the underdeveloped ones, through the cooperation

of the dominant social classes; it originates in economic relations. These foreign cultural elements displace, nullify, weaken, or superimpose themselves on the culture of the receptive nation (9: 24). An illustration of cultural domination is the rise of consumerism in Latin American nations.

Culture: The definition used was constructed on the basis of the discussion of concepts and definitions of culture presented by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (30). Culture refers to behavioral patterns, their underlying values, beliefs, and assumptions, which are socially acquired and transmitted through symbols. Culture includes the intellectual elements (language, making of tools, arts, sciences, law, government, morality, and religion), as well as the material elements through which culture manifests itself (instruments, machines, communication media, art objects, etc.).

Ideology: This term is understood as a world view, a system of ideas about the nature of the world and the place of man in it. Ideology implies norms of human behavior, and it implicitly manifests itself in art, law, economic activity, and in daily individual or collective life (Gramsci, 26: 369). Gramsci delineates two types of behavior with respect to ideologies: spontaneous and critical. The first points to the spontaneous acceptance of an ideology imposed from the outside, the mechanical behavior. The second type assumes the conscious participation of a specific ideology. However, the frequent occurrence among the “common person” is the spontaneous acceptance of the externally imposed ideology; there are few individuals who question or attempt to build a more coherent view of the world (26: 364). Gramsci also points out that in a class society it is the leading and dominant class that extends its ideology to all the activities of the society (26: 361).

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