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Lesotho: Non-development or under-development

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A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

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Title: Lesotho: Non-Development or Under-Development.

by: Roger Leys

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This paper is intended as a re-examination of current thinking in the social sciences about Lesotho and, by extension, has I think some relevance to the analysis of the social formations and politics of those regions of Africa which Samir Amin has characterized as the economies of the labour reserve. (1) By insisting that migrant labour - which takes about 40 per cent of Lesotho's adult, active, male population - is the key to understanding Lesotho's predicaments nothing new is being said. (2) Furthermore the work of social scientists and planners in Lesotho reveals a fundamental awareness of the dependent nature of the ~~South African~~ economy on the Republic of South Africa. However most of this thinking tends to adopt a passive stance vis-a-vis the basic premises of imperialism, the dynamics of underevelopment and the formulation of alternative development strategies which do not take current market relationships as a given. In this sense, the stance of social science is apologetic. These apologetics can, I think, be shown to rest on the dualist model of economic growth: a model which makes no direct claims to comprehend the "laws of motion" of development but yet a model which serves as a guideline for an approach to the problem of underdevelopment which is passive rather than active and which demands that development be measured from the perspective of the status quo. (3)

A basic trait of current analysis of Lesotho is the use of a type of circular reasoning. For example: the pressure of population on land leads to soil erosion which increases the pressure of population on land. This form of reasoning is frequently used to "explain" Lesotho's dependent status. Certainly, at one level, such explanations are true. That they fail to provide an historical and genetic understanding of a given situation will be regarded by many as an irrelevant objection. Such was not the intention of these studies.

The only relevant criteria are those which can be used to assess the degree to which such studies illuminate reality and give a better understanding of current predicaments. In a word: they tell it as it is. But, at another level, such analyses obscure what they purport to illuminate. (4) This is the level at which such analyses are used as a basis for policy making: for defining plan targets and, even, outlining development strategies. These tasks are inherently political. Not in the banal sense that they are the tasks of the politicans. But in the sense that the shaping of development strategy demands assessing alternatives. It involves asking: why did this situation come about and not another one ?

(1) Samir Amin 'Underdevelopment and Dependance in Black Africa' in Journal of Peace Research 1972, 2, and S. Amin Le Développement Inégal pp 287-291.

(2) "The guiding principle (of colonial rule) was that the territories exist to supply the requirements of the Unions labour markets, without any claim for reciprocal benefits and regardless of the effects on the vitality, the tribal organization or the economic condition of the territories themselves" Leonard Barnes The New Boer War 1932 quoted in Jack Halpern South Africa's Hostages 1965.

(3) I am greatly indebted here to professor Archie Mafeje of the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague and specifically to his paper "The Fallacy of Dual Economies revisited".

(4) For an analysis of the "vicious-circle" explanation see Tamas Szentes The Political Economy of Underdevelopment (1971) chapters 2 & 3.

More specifically, such circular reasoning tends to neglect three factors which are vital for assessing development strategies:-

(1)What are the historical circumstances which assured the dominance of an external market for labour, commodities and evencapital ? Having identified these, a host of questions then emerge that are more specific in nature. For example,, what is the institutional connection between the local market for commodities (eg:Lesotho's trading stations)and the recruitment of migrant labour ?

(2)How does capital in the "core" areas of economic growth - in Lesotho's case primarily the mining and manufacturing sectors of the Republic of South Africa, ensure the conditions for its expanded reproduction ? Will, for example, the use of an increasingly capital-intensive technology in South Africa lead to an increasing marginalization of the Basotho ?
(3)How can the size of Lesotho's surplus -generated by migrant labour but accumulated as capital in the Republic, be estimated ? What are the consequences of this calculation for estimating the opportunity-cost of migrant labour ?

The paper that follows is divided into three sections. The first section begins with a description of some salient features of the political economy of Lesotho and proceeds to analyse recent readings of Lesotho with special emphasis on the way in which Lesotho's "dependent" status is examined and, in particular, the way in wich the phenomenon of migrant labour is treated. The second section attempts a closer examination of the historical development of migrant labour from Lesotho to South Africa. The third section relates the structure of migrant labour to comparative analyses of migrant labour and to the general line of cleavage that separates dual analyses of economic development from marxist analyses of the development of underdevelopment.

A. Background to Lesotho's Economy

Lesotho is an arid, mountain kingdom in the heart of South Africa. It is situated in the middle of South Africa's most mountainous region - the Drakenberg mountains - which rise to a height of nearly twelve thousand feet. To the south and east the land falls away sharply to Natal and Cape Province and, to the west, falls away more gently to the Caledon river which marks the boundary between Lesotho and the Orange Free State.

The total population of the kingdom of Lesotho is estimated at just over ~~one~~ 1.1 million people of whom, at any one time, an estimated 150,000 are living and working in South Africa. Nearly all the rest of the active population are employed either in agriculture or by government.

Apart fromthe strip of fertile land on the east bank of the Caledon, soil fertility is low and soil erosion is widespread. The principal products of Lesotho are maize, (sorghum), wheat, wool and mohair and cattle which are produced both for the domestic market and for export.

Although, geographically, Lesotho lies within the temperate zone, the climate is exceedingly intemperate with extremes of temperature, erratic rainfall. Life in these conditions has toughened the Basotho physically and one reason why so many Basotho work on the pit face of South Africa's mines is that Basotho are famed for their physical toughness.

Although Lesotho became an independent state in 1966 under the leadership of Chief Jonathon, who retained power through a coup d'etat in 1970, Lesotho is a near-perfect example of "flag independence". Economically and politically, Lesotho is a hostage of South Africa. As a part of the South African customs area, Lesotho's customs tarriffs on imports are levied at South African ports and the South African rand circulates freely within the kingdom. South Africans occupy strategic posts in Lesotho's government service. While the United Kingdom still subvents Lesotho's economy, Lesotho is increasingly dependent on South African capital.

The most dynamic element in Lesotho's economy today is the tourist industry, which has undergone an unparalleled growth in the last three years - from an estimated 5,000 tourist in 1970 to an estimated 25,000 today in 1972. The Tourist boom has brought about a rapid increase in sales of Lesotho's cottage and handicrafts. A major force behind this expansion is the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC) which was established in 1966. Its first director, Dr.Anton Rupert, a South African industrialist, was supplied by the South African Government. As a non-tax-paying corporation the LNDC has had access to capital in South Africa on favourable terms and the prestige and contacts of Dr.Rupert have certainly helped. Between 1967 and 1972 the LNDC is estimated to have provided 2o million rand (5) (1 rand = $ 1.40). The LNDC engages in both joint ventures and in outright ownership of enterprises. It is a successful enterprise in its own right and in the year 1971/1972 made a net profit of R.838,591 rand on net assets of R. 1.610.209. (6)
A candle factory, a carpet factory, a pottery workshop, a tyre-retreading plant and substantial investment in the Holiday Inn Hotel have been some of LNDC's successful ventures. The LNDC is fully backed by the government and both the Prime Minister and the Minister of finance, Commerse and Industry are represented on the board. It offers to the investor "concessions on taxes, land and building leases, exclusive manufacturing licenses and the repatriation of capital and profits that are among the most generous in the world." (7)

The strategy of the LNDC is one of close integration in the South African capital market. ~~When Dr. Rupert left his post as director of the LNDC one of his subordinates - Winand van Gran - was appointed in his stead. But Dr. Rupert has continued his work for Lesotho~~. In 1972 the Economic Development Bank for Equatorial and Southern Africa (EDESA) was established with administrative offices in Swaziland and head office in Zurich. (8). EDESA is designed to raise capital internationally for investment in South Africa's neighbour states. By August, 1973, $ 10 million had been raised "largely through the personal efforts of Dr. Rupert." (9)
Furthermore, the Lesotho (national) bank is heavily involved in the South African capital market. The Lesotho Bank announced in March this year that it will create fixed interest Development bonds for sale in the Johannesburg capital market at 7% (ie. a bond with a face value of

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(5). Alan Rake 'Lesotho: Growth Points bring hope to a poor country' African Development, February, 1973.
(6) Lesotho National Development Corporation, Annual Report, 1972
(7) LNDC advertisement, African Development, February 1973
(8) African Research Bulletin, September 15-October 14, 1972

R 100 will be sold for R 71 and redeemed after five years at R 100). (1o)

However, major industrial development has not materialized. Lesotho's great dream has been the Oxbow project (officially known as Malibamatso) a scheme to dam the sources of the Malibamatso and create both hydro-electric and water supply. The world bank has not been enthusiastic about he scheme although the UNDP gave a grant of R. 2 million for a feasibility study in 1969. Lesotho pins hopes on South African capital but South Africa has not, as yet, committed herself. (11) It is hoped that the Malibamatso project would help Lesotho's employment situation and provide other residual benefits. 12) But this is in the future. Nor have hopes of substantial exploitation af diamonds and other mineral ressurces materialised.

The economic structure of modern Lesotho is surely one of the most dependent of any state with formal political independence. According to the Development Plan, per capita income is estimated at R. 63. The primary sector, almost exclusively agriculture, contributes 41.0% of gross domestic product, the secondary sector 2.4% and the tertiary sector 56.6%. As was mentioned earlier, the order of magnitude of the total earnings of Basotho migrant labour is approximately the same as that of Lesotho's GDP. While formally remitted earnings of migrants figure as export earnings in Lesotho's balance of payments the calculation has littler meaning in a country where the secondary sector is almost non-existent: cash earnings are spent primarily on imports.

The foreign trade account of Lesotho is someting of a nightmare: -

External Trade (13)

'000 Rands

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Exports	4,690	4,387	4,168	3,380	4,069	3,716	2,197
Imports	17,525	22,917	23,800	23,938	23,907	22,876	27,997

The foreign trade gap has progressively widened in the last seven years. The gap has been filled partly by remittances of migrant labour, partly by foreign aid and partly by direct grants from the United Kingdom. One third of imports are of food and tobacco and, in the words of the plan "only a small part of imported commodities is used as imports for production."

A look at the account of government revenue and expenditure reveals that the budgetary deficit is equal to 17% of government expenduture. Expenditure on civil service salaries eats up about 45% of total government expenditure. This situation is not new. One observer has remarked that throughout the colonial period "any increase in purchasing power was largely concentrated in the hands of African and European civil servants who, with an increase in income would have a greater tendency to buy import and whose savings would be almost entirely channelled off into the Republic of South Africa. (14)

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(9) African Research Bulletin, July 15-August 14, 1973
(1o) Africa Research Bulletin, February 15-March 14, 1973
(11) "So far the problem has been that the maximum price offered for water by South Africans is well below the minimum at which it would pay Lesotho to produce it" Private Correspondeance from Percy Selwyn.
(12) Among the residual benefits is a ski resort in the Maluti Mountains

Between 1965 and 1966 current expenditure of central government on wages and salaries increased by 21.1%. Lesotho's long-term debt obligations are also quite out of proportion to the national income. As at 31 Dec, 19[illegible] debt repayable in foreign currency alone totalled 7,731,000 $.

Section One: Current Thinking about Development in Lesotho.

A. Industrial Development: Spatial and Social Dualism.

A penetrating and inspiring analysis of industrial development strategy for Lesotho has been made by Selwyn. (15) While this analysis is only preliminary it deserves intensive study by all concerned with economic development in Lesotho specifically and the analysis of labour reserve economies generally. Selwyn's analysis is based on three types of dualism: spatial dualism, sectoral dualism and social dualism. The starting point for his analysis is that Lesotho's economy cannot be studied in isolation but only as a part of the wider study of the South African economy as a whole. The historical and institutional ties that link Lesotho to the Republic of South Africa and, tenuously, to Swaziland and Botswana are so strong as to demand this.

Selwyn emphasizes the factors that tend to drain off both labour and capital from Lesotho to the "core" areas of growth in the Republic. On the basis of an analysis of the projection of the market for labour in South African economy, Selwyn puts forward the cautious hypothesis that Lesotho can benefit from the anomoly that, although she is part of the labour market of the econmy of South Africa, she is not subject to the job-reservation policy of apartheid as practised in the Republic of South Africa. But Selwyn's analysis of the impediments to a strategy of industrial development that would aim at providing skilled labour at a price below that required for white, skilled labour in the Republic. Such impediments as lack of entrepreneurship, the absence of credit and financial institutions for investing in Lesotho, lack of management skills and information of market possibilities in South Africa all operate to obstruct a policy of economic growth. Essentially, Lesotho's economic position at present is that she is a part of the subsistence sector of the dual economy of South Africa - a spatial dualism. But this situation is exacerbated by the social dualism that stems from the apartheid policies of the Republic and effects the economy of Lesotho: particularly, white domination of its trade and market links with the Republic.

B. Interpretations of Lesotho's economy.

Economic analyses of Lesotho are agreed on two points. One is that the economy is dependent on South Africa whose mines, farms and service sector provide over 40 per cent of employment for the de facto population of Lesotho. The other point of agreement is that no alternative strategy other than a perpetuatuation og this dependence is conceivable in the near future. There are, of course, variations and nuances within this broad agreement. In one interpretation, the absence of industrialisation

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"where natural snowfall will be supplemented by artificial means" Alan Rake Op. Cit.

(13) ECA Summary, 1971

(14) Michael Ward 'Independence for Lesotho ?' J.M.A.S. 5,3 1967, page 359

(15) Percy Selwyn 'The Dual Economy Transcending National Frontiers: The case of Industrial Development in Lesotho', IDS Communication 105

in Lesotho is unexplained: it emerges deus ex machina. (16) The development strategy here advocated is one that strengthens the bonds with South Africa: -

> The economic prospects of Lesotho are dim and in the short run it has virtually no hope of becoming commercially viable or independent of South Africa and foreign aid. The needs of both countries thus hang together and sound economic reasons dictate that everything possible should be done to strengthen and improve the links which have already been forged between the two nations. (17)

In a second interpretation, the lack of industrialization is related to the "pull" on production factors of South African industrial growth. (18) But the strategy here advocated is the same. An active government policy "implies the modernization of the economic structure and the gradual disapperance of the subsistence economy" which will, in turn, increase Lesotho's dependence on the market economy of South Africa. Selwyn's interpretation, as we have seen, is based on a less sanguine view of the long-term demand for foreign labour in the Republic of South Africa: it would be "unwise for Lesotho to plan on the assumption that her unemployed can continue to be exported to the Republic." (19)

The difference in interpretation and strategical implications can, I think, be related to the time perspective. The shorter the time perspective, the greater the tendency to accept Lesotho's economic status as axiomatic and the greater the tendency to advocate a strategy which will integrate Lesotho more firmly in the South African labour and capital markets.

C. Migrant Labour

Within the framework of this general view of the Lesothan econmy, how exactly is migrant labour interpreted? Leistner has han interesting analysis of the development of migrant labour derived partly from figures obtained from the records of population census in Lesotho and partly from information from the Transvaal and Orange Free State Chamber of Mines. The latter indicate that in 1904 the number of migrant worker in the gold mines was only 2,3oo - a fugure which rose slowly to 2o,9oo in 193o. Two factors then caused a dramatic rise in migrant labour to the gold mines. One was the effect of the world economic crisis and the other was a serious drought in Lesotho. This led to an increase in the rate of mine recruitment by one-third in 1931 alone. The upward trend continued and, by 194o, had reached a height of over 5o,ooo. (2o)

A number of authorities have attested to the damaging effect of migrant labour on the social and economic structure of Lesotho - ranging from missionaries' concern with the pernicious effects of migrant labour on the spiritual valuel and sexual mores to the concern of agriculturalists and anthropologists who have pointed out that rural development is severely

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(16) Michael Ward 'Economic Independence for Lesotho?' op.cit. p.359
(17) Ibid page 368
(18) G.M.E. Leistner "Lesotho: Economic Structure & Growth" Communications of the African Institute No 5, 1966
(19) Selwyn op.cit. page 8.
(2o) Leistner Op. cit.

hampered by the virtual absence of the able-bodied male population. (21)

The Labour that returns to Lesotho is tired, sick, crippled and infirm. It is also locked into a pattern of recurrent migration by a variety of factors: low level of skills and the shere poverty of the migrants for example. (22) Furthermore, a large part of the migrant labour has, historically, been emmigrant labour. By computing a natural population increase of 1.7 per cent p.a. in the period 1936-1956 and then comparing the census figures of de jure population for 1936 with the figures for de jure population of 1956, Leistner estimates that at least 140,000 Basotho have been permanently absorbed in South Africa - a brawn and brain drain of incredible magnitude given a 1972 population of a littler over one million (de jure). Some authorities, Leistner included, would regard this as an underestimate.

Interpretations of migrant labour in Lesotho have focussed much attention on the factors which re-inforce this migration and produce a type of vicious circle. In analysing non-development in Lesotho Sandra Wallman, for example, argues that non-development is a function of three mutually-interrelated factors: - 1) Poverty - 2) Migration - 3) Ideology. The pressure of population on land forces the peasant to look for work outside the borderes of Lesotho. Migration disrupts the family and wider organization of chieftanship. Furthermore, work in Johannesburg and contact with the urban culture creates expectations and wants that village life cannot satisfy. The ideology or cultural climate of village life creates/engenders apathy. The village and its mores is denigrated by the migrant as bening not 'semate' (smart). (23)

D..Lesotho's Political Development.

Political studies of Lesotho tend to involve a circularity by which current development strategies and political constellations are "explained" by reference to the absence of a meaningful alternative. Studies of Lesotho's political development frequently wmphasize that, almost alone in sub-Saharan Africa, Lesotho is a homogeneous nation. The Basotho speak one laguage, have no significant ethnic divisions and have been united politically for over one hundred years. (24) The history of Lesotho in the twentieth century has been dominated by one threat - the threat of incorporation into the Republic of South Africa. In fact, the Act of Union of 1911 made specific provision for this incorporation and the British, in the face of South African pressure, geared their administrative policies around such an eventual incorporation. And yet, in the face of this challenge to their existence as an independent people, the Basotho did not unite..Modern politics in Lesotho have been both divisive and bitter.

According to the foremost authority on the politics of Lesotho, Weisfelder, the explanation of this paradox is to be sought in a deep conflict within the society as to the nature of the Basotho

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(21) Sandra Wallman Take Out Hunger: Two case studies in Rural Development in Basutoland (1969)
See Summary of the Report of the Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu Areas within the Union of South Africa. (1955) (Thomlinson Report)
(22) Hugh Ashton: The Basutho: a social study of traditional & modern Lesotho (2nd edition, 1967)
(23) Sandra Wallman 'Conditions of Non-Development: The case of Lesotho'

nation and its position in Southern African and world affairs. (25)

The Basutoland National Party came to power after the General Election of 1965. Its leader, Chief Leabua Jonathon, became Lesotho's first Prime Minister. The BNP is buttressed by the catholic church and supported by a majority of the chiefs. It tends towards a definition of Basotho identity in terms of a perspective which focusses on southern Africa to the exclusion of the rest of Africa, and which is prepared to have a "dialogue" with Verwoerd and white South Africa. By contrast the opposition Basutoland Congress Party is a "grievance party" that gathers together the grievances of the migrant workers, the teachers and the unskilled workers and expresses virulent opposition to everything the government proposes. Far from conceptualising Basotho identity in terms of the present power structure in southern Africa, the BCP articulates a strategy which takes international goals as a "starting point." In a recorded interview with the BCP leader, Ntsu Mokhehle, Weisfelder notes that when asked to imagine the place of Lesotho within a liberated South Africa, Mokhehle saw no need for the continuancen of a separate Basutho State.(26)

On Friday, January 30th 1970, while election results were coming in that indicated a victory for the opposition BCP (27) Chief Jonathon declared a state of Emergency and seized power. Given the size of the ideological "gap" between BNP and BCP many had prophesied an authoritarian trend in Lesothan politics. (28).

Setting this analysis against the basic facts of Lesotho's dependence on the Republic, political analysts tend to argue that the only political strategy that is workable is one that accepts the long-term, structural characteristic of migrant labour as a continuing factor in Lesotho's economy. In essence, there is no alternative strategy. A BCP victory, had the Republic of South Africa permitted it - and there is some evidence that Verwoerd might have accepted a BCP government (29) would certainly have conducted a more activist foreign policy, with diplomatic exchange and aid from the socialist countries. But the BCP could not offer an alterna tive economic policy to Chief Jonathon's party. Mchkehle would have been forced to rely on the same kind of piecemeal improvements that the BNP government were carrying out and are described in the current five year plan. (3o)

The key to the argument is that, given the structural nature of contemporary migrant labour and the dependent nature of Lesotho's economy, there is no development strategy open to Lesotho other than a policy of amleriorating the worsk features of the present situation.

E. Lesotho's Current Development Plan.

Lesotho's current Development Plan shows a keen awareness of the problem of migrant labour. In the words of Chief Jonathon "Lesotho is becoming a reservoir of unskilled, cheap labour for South Africa with little hope of creating an indigenous base for economic development. (31)

Journal of Development Studies, Vol 8 No 2 January, 1972
(24) B. Makalo Khaketla Lesotho 197o: an African coup under the Microscope (1972) pages 1-2 & 334
(25) R.F. Weisfelder 'Defining Political Purpose in Lesotho' paper to African Studies Associaltion, October 1968 and 'Lesotho - an unstable irritant within South Africa' African studies Association, 197o
(26) Weisfelder 'Definging Political Purpose in Lesotho' Op. cit.
(27) Khaketla Op.Cit. page 211- This was Mokhehle's view in the mid-6o's.
(28) I must emphasize here that Weisfelder categorically rejects the

The analysis is somewhat ambivalent about the role of labour migration. On the one hand it describes the positive benefits in the shape of the receipts for repatriated earnings from South Africa and puts forward such arguments as that "Basotho are getting used to working for money and for improved standards of living." But, essentially, the analysis emphasizes the negative consequences of migrant labour and hints at the degree to which migrant labour acts as a non-way valve for the export of Lesotho's national surplus: -

> The order of magnitude of the total earnings of the Basutho migrant labourers (43 million Rand for 1965/66) is comparable with the Gross Domestic Product of the country (55,6 M. rand for 1967/68).(32)

Yet the key target of the plan - the creation of 10,000 - 15,000 jobs over af five-year period - makes no attempt to tackle the problem of migrant labour. The strategy adopted is one in which migrant labour, as a national problem, will somehow wither om the vine: -

> For the next five years this policy concentrates on the annual increase of the labour force, which (estimated at an average of 4,000 males and 2,000 females) seem to be in line with the expected annual increase of the employment opportunities in the country. This will provide an indirect solution to Lesotho's almost entire present dependency on uncertain employment opportunities outside the country. If the annual increase of labour can be absorbed in relative sound emplyment opportunities in the country, the relative importance of this problem will be gradually reduced, in the long run, to such an extent that it will eventually cease to be a major problem. Moreover the continuous expansion of domestic employment opportunities will stimulate a repatriation flow. (33)

The economic reasonging here is somewhat hard to follov. The distribution of the male labour force for the year 1969 was: -

> Emplyment in Agriculture 48%
> Paid Emplyment in Lesotho..... 7%
> Employment in South Africa..... 45%
> (in other words, only 15% of paid employment was, in 1969, inside Lesotho).

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facile and racialist arguments of Der Wyk 'Lesotho: a Political Study' Communcations of the Africa Institute No 7 (1967) van Wyk sees political authoritarianism as an inherent factor in black Africa. Weisfelder stresses, rather, the temptations to violence and authoritarianism in a situation where the pre-conditions of democratic pluralism - internal and external - are lacking.

(29) Khaketla Op. Cit. page 212
(3o) Lesotho First Five Year Development Plan 197o/71 - 1974/75 (1970)
(31) Development Plan Ibid foreword
(32) Ibid page 6
(33) Development Plan Ibid pages 21-22

Even if the next two Five Year Plans could sustain the rate of increase of domestic employment opportunities in the plan, the proportion of external paid employment in 1985 would still be more than 50% of all paid employment. The "long run" here is very long. Furthermore the argument that the creation of new employment opportunities within Lesotho will stimulate a repatriation flow of Basotho from South Africa is somewhat unclear. The overall target of growth - 5 per cent per annum - may induce some Basotho not to sign mining contracts but unless the 10,000 - 15,000 new jobs in turn stimulate new employment opportunities this will simply increase the competition for work in Lesotho. Furthermore, we would expect a low multiplier effect in an economy with a high marginal propensity to import.

There are indications that, given the assuption of the plan, the growth targets are set somewhat high. Thus, for example, the plan indicates no clear policy towards the present system of land tenure which, in the plan analysis is considered one of the structural obstacles to economic development. (34) For example, in the sectoral survey, the Leribe Dry Farming project i reviewed. It is described as a scheme which will "test the suitability of a semi-cooperative farm organization system, designed to pernit rapid increases of productivity without conflicting with the present system of land tenure." (35) Given this basic ambiguity, such overall agricultural targets as an increase of maize and sorghum yields per acre of 62.5% in the plan period and a 700% increase in the consumption of fertilizer appear optimistic targets.

Another characteristic of the Development plan is the absence of a clear strategy vis-a-vis the Customs Area of Southern Africa. The industrial development strategy indicated in the plan is one of import substitution for the domestic market. The plan suggests that there is a potential market for handicraf industries, weaving, pottery etc. whic, by operating on a small scale and by using local materials, will promote employment and serve as growth points throughout the country. The plan also points to the alleged advantages of Lesotho's free access to the South African Market for manufactures "in addition to the possibility of applying limited protection to its home market under the revised Customs Agreement with Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland." (36) However, the planners do not consider that large-scale industrial production is practicable because of the high marginal propensity to import.

While the decision not to embark on a policy of large-scale industrialization is problably based on a sound assessment of the political relationship of Lesotho to South Africa, the economic argument is less secure. If South Africa is a free trade area with respect to the movement of capital then, as Selwyn argues, there are good prima facie reasons for an development strategy which would make use of the anomoly that South African job reservation does not apply in Lesotho. Hence, by investing heavily in education, Lesotho might offer a skilled labour force at rates below those prevailing for skilled, white labour in the Republic. The argument would, of course, only apply to industries sited in Lesotho. But Selwyn's argument (37) perhaps takes insufficient account of the political relationship between Lesotho and South Africa. Investors who think they can use Lesotho to create what white South Africans are fond

(34) Both Selwyn an G. Winai-Ström who have provied valuable comments and critisism of this paper do not consider that, taken as a wjole, the existing system of land tenure is an obstacle to economic development.
(35) Development Plan Op.Cit. page 19.
(36) Ibid page 117
(37) Selwyn Op. Cit.

of calling a South African "Hong Kong" tend to be given short thrift.(38) An industrial strategy which emphasizes tourism and handicrafts may show a keen awareness of current political realities.

Section Two: Migrant Labour - a closer look

The first problem encountered in looking closer at the history and structure of migrant labour from Lesotho to the Republic of South Africa is the absence of solid data. There is no reliable record of the total number of Basotho whor are working in South Africa. There are parial records and there are concise data for certain types of labour contracts but the overall total has to be computed and much, consequantly, depends on the assumptions underlying the computation. (39) Furthermore, this analysis is based entirely on secondary sources.

The Labour Department in Masuru - Lesotho's capital - gives the following statistic on recent recruiting to the gold mines and colleries of South Africa: -

Wages Employment in South African Mines (4o)

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Recruitment	80,895	85,264	75,331	80,712	86,420	97,185	83,053
Employment	67,277	80,951	77,414	80,310	83,053	87,384	99,365

Current estimates of the total de jure population working in South Africa are of the order of 150,000. It is also estimated that non-mining migrant labour is employed in agriculture and service sectors. Projections of the demand for labour in the South African economy indicate a tendency toward stagnation, particularly in the mining and agricultural sectors. (41) But the figures given above indicate an upward trend. It is difficult to relate changes in South Africa's demand for labour to the specific demand for Basotho labour.

As was outlined above Leistner indicates two factors that account for the growth of migrant labour from Lesotho (a) The depression of the early thirties, (b) A serious drought in Lesotho. The decline in world trade that followed the collapse of the speculative boomof the 1920 ies' had catastrophic effects on Lesotho's export earnings: -

(in our)

(38) In December, 1972, Lesotho's Prime Minister, Chief Jonathon, accused South Africa of interfering so as to cancel three development projects under negociation between Lesotho and Japan: a motor assembly plant, a Honda assembly plant and a flour mill. Africa Research Bulletin, 3rd March, 1973.
(39) The main sources I have used are the Department of Labour, Maseru which are based on figures given by the South African recruiting authorities, the Annual Report of the Borard of Directors of the Mine Labour Organization of South Africa (Wenela) and secondary sources.
(4o) Source: Economic Commission for Africa, Summaries of Economic Data Lesotho, 1971
(41) Selwyn, Op. Cit. pages 7-9

In 1928, 12.725.153 lb of wool was valued at £610.650
and 1.921.189 lb of mohair at £139.484.
In 1932, 11.832.391 lb of wool was valued at £105,435
and 1.033.863 lb of mohair at £ 1o.136 (42)

As we have seen, Leistner arguet that, from a slow start in 1904, employment in mining grew slowly and, in 193o, still only amounted to 20,900. The expansion in the 1930's was followed by expansion in alternative employment opportunities in the South African economy in the 1940's.

A look at the figures of passes issued for labour to the Republic between 1924 and 1933 reveal no observable trend for the total return of passes issued for mine labour:

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(43) Pim Report Ibid Appendix VIII. Unfortunately I have not been able to obtain a month- by - month break-down of the annual totals such as are given in the Winela Annual Report Op. Cit.

RETURN OF PASSES ISSUED TO BASUTO TO ENTER THE UNION (43)

Year	Labour — M I N E S								visiting	Grand Total	Amount of money sent to Basutoland from gold mines by deferred pay and through remittance Agency
	Gold.	Coal.	Diamonds	Total.	Agriculture.	Railway construction.	Miscellaneous labour.	Total Labour			£
1921				33,853	12,301	2,082	20,843	69,079	49,192	118,271	
1922				23,947	11,578	2,032	20,016	57,663	59,529	117,192	
1923				26,358	15,613	794	33,437	76,202	33,194	109,396	
1924				32,002	14,834	862	40,929	88,627	41,841	130,468	
1925				22,912	13,194	233	43,253	79,592	31,290	110,882	
1926				34,504	19,217	659	41,484	95,864	38,905	134,769	
1927	13,309	1,854	9,697	24,880	9,507	173	23,407	57,947	6o,173	118,140	35.054
1928	15,490	764	9,269	25,523	7,353	284	20,718	53,878	57,962	111,840	30,006
1929	18,995	694	9,016	28,705	13,483	449	32,125	74,762	37,364	112,126	36,973
193o	21,571	572	6,383	28,526	12,778	185	23,298	64,787	48,235	113,022	49,103
1931	24,162	254	2,434	26,850	12,099	-	27,802	66,751	36,955	103,706	73,394
1932	25,542	47	62	25,751	12,678	-	19,628	58,057	38,010	96,067	87,979
1933	25,731	72	-	25,803	15,237	-	10,816	51,856	57,651	109,507	156,182

Note. - (1) No statistics available for specified mine labour or remittances and deferred pay before 1927.
(2) The amount of remittances and defered pay is what has actually been paid out. A large number of natives remit through the post and no statistics are avialable for this.

It is interesting to compare the figures for pass returns export figures for Lesotho's two principal exports, wool and mohair in the same period:

EXPORTS (44)

Year	Wool		Mohair	
	l b quantity	£ value	l b quantity	£ value
1921	12,826,772	211,981	2,330,066	63,756
1922	12,829,330	377,333	2,326,367	104,833
1923	10,264,894	513,644	2,001,564	119,646
1924	11,577,384	715,665	2,455,950	183,076
1925	11,721,411	469,315	1,958,877	119,285
1926	12,131,574	427,047	2,156,603	121,098
1927	12,906,789	508,687	2,132,907	139,226
1928	12,726,153	610,750	1,921,189	139,484
1929	12,937,198	436,083	1,961,746	94,352
1930	9,729,169	156,601	942,725	21,837
1931	9,325,140	98,304	1,241,743	21,442
1932	11,832,391	105,435	1,033,863	10,136
1933	9,864,043	196,146	1,926,180	26,697

There is no clear correlation between export earnings on wool and mohair and variations in the nembers of labour passes issued. Such a corralation might have been expected if production for export and migrant labour are regarded as alternative sources of cash earnings. The junp in recruitment between 1925 and 1926 may, however, have been caused by the poor returns for wool and mohair in 1925.

In sum, the arguments suggesting a "gradual growth" of migrant labour in this period are not substantiated by available evidence. This suggests the need for another way of conceptualising the dynamics of labour migration in Lesotho.

What is the underlying mechanism that "pull" migrant labour from the subsistence economy? Leistner, as we saw, argued that migrant labour starts at the beginning of this century with recruitment to the mines and expands and diversifies with the growth and diversification of the South African economy. What is striking in this interpretation is the absence af any discussion of the factors that (a) promoted South

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(44) Pim Report Op. Cit. Appendix V

African economic expansion generally and (b) the specific "push" and "pull" factors that affected the flow of migrant labour from Lesotho to South Africa. Furthermore, though this is a minor point, census returns do not support the argument that mine recruitement was the only source of employment in South Africa at the beginning of the century. (45)
But a more vital ommission is the absence of any discussion of the economic history of Lesotho in the nineteenth century. Why did labour begin to migrate from Lesotho? The last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the opening up of the gold and diamond mines in South Africa: part of a process - the understanding of which is vital to any understanding of the development of capitalism in South Africa.

In raising the question of why did labour migrate from Lesotho to South Africa we cannot avoid encountering two colliding traditions of economic analysis. Hence a slight theoretical digression is necessary.

According to what I will term the apologtic tradition in economic thought, the transition from feudalism to capitalism is explained by those factors that engender capitalist development. The question - why did labour migrate to South Africa ? - is, according to this tradition not very meaningful. The question is answered by reference to the automatic "pull" of the growth poles on the subsistence sector. The peasant in the subsistence sector, on the basis of a rational calculation of his economic resources, finds the opportunity cots of labour in the modern sector lower than the opportunity costs of labour in the traditional economy. The more so if, as Lewis has argued, there is a surplus of labour in the traditional economy. Hence the question why does the Basotho peasant migrate translates into the question: why does the Basotho peasant behave rationally ?

But according to the Marxist tradition of econmic thought the transition to capitalism requires one basic condition - the creation of a labour market. (46) Hence a process by which the Basotho begin to sell their labour on the market - a process of prletarianization - must be set in motion. Marx does not argue that pre-capitalist modes of production are inherently inferior. The process of primitive accumulation must be historically specified. On entirely abstract grounds there is, according to this tradition, no theoretical case for the argument that growth in the demand for labour in South Africa would automatically pull labour out of the subsistence economy. It is, indeed, theoretically possible to argue that pre-capitalist production is more "efficient" than capitalism. The reward to the factors of production are simply different. The reproductive costs of land use are higher but the costs of other productive factors lower. (47)

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(45) According to the Basutoland Census of 23rd April, 1911, the total number of Basotho employed at mines in South Africa was 20,225 while total "persons in service other than mines" was 9,889 ie. already,in 1911, one third of Lesotho's migrant labour is employed in the non-mining sectors. But the 1920s this figure had risen to approx. 50%.
(46) Maurice Dobb Studies in the Development of Capitalism (1972 edition)page 7.
(47) I am here indebeted to an exegesis of P-P.Rey 'Sur l'articulation des modes de production' in P-P Ray Les Alliances de Classes (1973) by Inger Boesen, Asger Christensen, Michael Harbsmeier and Sten Rehder 'Produktionsformernes samspil: førkapitalistiske produktionsmåders integration i kapitalismen' (the interrelationships of forms of production: the integration of pre-capitalist modes of production in capitalism).

The origins of migrant labour in Lesotho - some hypotheses

In the absence of an economic history of Lesotho in the nineteenth century it is necessary to invent one. There do, however, exist certain data around which further hypotheses can be constructed. (48)

The earliest records of migrant labour since the consolidation of the Basotho nation by MoeShoesh in the second quarter of the nineteenth century stem from the 1980's:

> Labour migration is not new to the Basuto and is, in fact, nearly as old as their contact with Europeans. During the famines and the troubled times of the Free State wars (intermittently from 1851 to 1868) number of men sought employment with the Europeans in Natal and the Cape for money to buy food. After the political settlement of 1868, work abroad became more regular, and considerable scope for employment was offered only 180 miles away by the opening of the Kimberley diamond mines. Thither men flocked in their thousands to work for money for guns, clothes and agricultural implements and for the ten chilling tax imposed in 1869. By 1875, out of a total population of 227,325, of which the number of able-bodies men was estimated at 2o,ooo, 15,ooo men were getting passes to work outside the territory for long or short periods, and by 1884 this nember had doubled itself. (49)

The opening up of the Kimberley Gold Fields in the early 1870's created a huge demand for food that both Basotho and Boer farmers stepped in to meet. In 1873, 1oo,ooo bags of grain and 2,ooo bales of wool were exported from Lesotho. (5o) In the following years there was a considerable increase in the circulation of money and the establishment of trading stations in Lesotho.(51) In 1878, ~~Lesotho~~ Basutoland earned £4oo,ooo from exports of grain and £75,ooo from exports of wool.

The years following 1885 saw the opening of the Witwatersrand Gold mines. Tylden records that, by 1894, "as many as 3o,ooo men were going out each year to work on these and other mines and in the rest of South Africa." (52) During the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-19o2 it is estimated that the Basotho sold 2o,ooo horses to the British army at an average price of £16 each.

It is difficult to piece together an overview of Lesotho's history in this period. Most authorities are agreed that Basutoland was used as a pawn in a three-cornered power struggle between the British, the Government of Cape Colony under the influences of Cecil Rhodes and the Boers. Outmatched in armaments - though hardly ever in political and military

(48) The sources drawn upon here are secondary: H.Ashton The Basuto (1967 2nd edition); G.Tylden The Raise of the Basuto (1950); R. Weisfelder 'The Basutho Monarchy. A spent force or a Dynamic Political Factor? 'African Studies Association, November 1971.
(49) Ashton Op.Cit. page 162
(5o) The Pim Report Op.Cit. page
(51) Tylden Op. Cit. page 118
(52) Ibid page 197
(53) Ibid pages 2o5-2o6

tactics - the Basotho nation under Moeshoesh fought a brilliant but losing struggle. Moeshoesh did not live to witness defeat and the final incorporation of Basutoland as a British Crown Colony (1884) but he was forced to sign the "Peace of the Kaffir Corn" (54) which ended the second war between Basutoland and the Orange Free State in 1866. Under the terms of this treaty the economic base of Basutoland's economy - the rich arable lands to the west and south of the Caledon river - were incorporated in the Orange Free State.

There followed at period of internal disintegration since Moeshoesh's son, Letsie, lacked the charisma of his father. To this was added the customary benefit of British rule - the hut tax (55) - which helped to ensure Basotho participation in the "cash" economy. Meanwhile, the Basotho farmers on the west bank of the Caledon who were now forcibly incorporated into the Orange Free State became share-croppers, then squatters and, finally, after the Act of Union which incorporated the Republic of South Africa, wage labourers on the Boer farms.

The evidence for this argument is perhaps thin and the chain of reasoning long. But rather than ignore Lesotho's pre-tewntieth century economic history it is important to put forward certain hypotheses for further research. The hypothese put forward here suggest that the present structure of migrant labour, with all its "vicious-circles", did not emerge as the Basotho responded to the demands of "modernization" but because a progress of political and military domination was used to distort the Basotho economy and to ensure that the Basotho obeyed the economic laws of "rationality" that served the needs of others. The results of the conquest of south-western Basutoland in the second Orange Free State - Basuto war did not reveal themselves immediately. But the lon-run consequences were a gradual debilitation of the Lesotho economy. The opening of the Witwatersrand Gold Mine occurred at a time when the Basuto were trying to recover from the disastruous "Gun Wars", ~~when Basuto fought Basuto and the political unity of the nation was deeply undermined~~ when the Cape parliament attempted unsuccessfully to disarm the Basotho. By the time of the Boer War, proletarianisation had reached the point when the conditions of subsistance for the household economy of Lesotho required migrant labour in the mines and farms and roads of South Africa.

The absolute numbers of Basoth labour migrants in the nineteenth century and their size in relation to the total population suggests that it would be unwise to ignore these migration currents for a full understanding of the phenomenon of migrant labour today.
Specifically, that the response of the Basotho to the "opportunities" of wage employment in South Africa is not conditioned primarily by the economic depression of the 193o's and the simultaneous drought in Basutoland. Rather, migration is the result of a combination of "push" and pull" factors that begin to operate simultaneously with the economic and political domination over Basutoland by British and Boers. The net result is a situation in which the economic base of a self-sufficient Basotho economy is destroyed. The urgent question facing Basutoland Today is the determination of a development strategy by which this economic independence can be regained.

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(54) The very name of this "peace" says much for the economic "rationality" of the Basotho. It was made to keep the Boer commadoes out of the maize fields on the east bank of the Caledon.
(55) The hut tax was introduced in 1870 when Basutoland was administered by the Cape Government. The rate was 1o shillings. An attempt to raise the to 2o shilling helped spark off the Gun Wars mentioned above. In 1911 the hut tax was abolished and a poll tax introduced - hence unmarried men became liable. In 192o the poll tax was raised to 25 shilling and in 1927 an education levy of 3 shillings was imposed.

It is useful to compare this sketch of the process of proletarianization in Lesotho with a scientific and thorough study of the problem in Rhodesia to the north. (56) In his analysis of the proletarianization of the African peasantry in Rhodesia, Arrighi has argued that the supply of African labour to the European farms and plantations was not, when considered historically, primarily related to wage rates but rather should be seen as a set of structural changes in which:-

(a) In the first stage - 1903-1922 - a set of "non-economic" mechanisms such as land appropriation and the imposition of taxation raisethe "effort price" of African participation in the peasant economy.

(b) In the second stage, 1922 - 1945 ca., a process of self-sustained underdevelopment has been set in motion. In this period an increasing supply of labour is offered on the market without a corresponding increase in wages. The momentum of this process is sustained by a number of "vicious circle" factors - soil erosion for exxample.

The broad conclusion of Arrighi's analsysisis that:-

> While before 1922 African participation in the labour market did not increase in periods of falling real wages, after that year it always increased irrespective of whether real wages were falling, rising or remaining constant (57)

Three elements in Arrighi's analysis further illuminate the process of proletarianization in Lesotho:-

(1) The wages of migrant workers were determined not by market mechanisms but by the custom of the subsistence wage: "Market mechanisms were largely discarded in the determination of wages and the real wage came to be customarily fixed at a level that would provide for a subsistence of a single worker while working in the capitalist sector and a small margin to meetthe more urgent of the cash income requirements of his family (who continued to reside in the peasant sector." (58) For a more general analysis of the conditions governing the development of underdevelopment in southern Africa this point would need elaboration. The establishment of such a "subsistence" wage in the colonial period is not simply the result of a quaint historical tradition. The physical reproduction of the

(56)Giovanni Arrighi 'Labour supplies in historical perspective: A study of the Proletarianization of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia' Journal of Development Studies Vol 6 No 3, April 1970
(57) Arrighi Ibid page 205
(58) Ibid apage 200

family unit requires both food crops and the wages of the migrant worker (59). It was to this phenomenon we referred earlier when arguing that, by the time of the Boer war, the conditions of subsistence of the household economy in Lesotho required adegree of migrant labour. We will return to the point...

(2) Arrighi argues that the term "subsistence requirements" is not to be understood in an exclusive, physiological sense and that a part of the process of the distortion of the Rhodesian economy was the substitution of demands that could be satisfied within the peasant sector for demands that could only be satisfied within the capitalist sector. While in the short run, inperiods of falling real income, this consumption can be cut back, in the long-run the result is that "African people would be compelled to sell their labour time in order to satisfy their subsistence requirements." (60) Arrighi describes this process as the transformation of 'discretionary' cash requirements into 'necessary' requirements.

(3) The process of self-sustained underdevelopment which occurred after 1922 was precipitated by a slump in cattle and maize prices. There followed a sharp increase in labour migration which set in motion a "vicious circle" or "cumulative evil" since: "The future ability of the Africans who had migrated to obtain their cash requirements through the sale of produce was, of course, jeopardised." (61) The very reliance of the household economy on cash remittances from migrant labour meant that it was essential to retain extended family ties at all costs. This peculiar type of economy in which the migrant labour subvents the production of the household plot which in turn subvents the wages of the migrant requires that the social relationships of the family had to be defended at all cost -

(59) Exactly how the subsistence wage is determined is a very complex matter. Under normal conditions, wages must cover the costs of reproduction of the household unit. But, when food crops and cash crops subvent, in effect, wages then wages can fall below costs of reproduction. The sameis true of theprices paid for cash crops whenthese are subvented by food crops and/or labour wages. The point has been made by Bettelheim: "In the countries where there are a large number of producers who produce for the market only to a minor extent, the prices of theproducts placed on the market under these conditions have an extremely complex relation to their cost in money orin labour, for these costs do not directly play the role of regulator. It is thus possible for prices to fall, for an indefinite period, below these costs of production." 'Theoretical Comments by Charles Bettelheim in Arghiri Emmanuel Unequal Exchange (1972) Appendix 1, page 298

(60) Arrighi Op. Cit. page 212

(61) Ibid page 217

even when this deference appeared irrational to agricultural extension advisers and others concerned with the problem of soil erosion and the vicious circle of emmiseration in the peasant economy. (62)

There are many parallels between the Rhodesian experience of proletarianization and that of Lesotho. This is not surprising given the similarities in their historical experience. But there are also dissimilarities and it would be a mistake to apply Rhodesian experience without considering these differences.

In Rhodesia, the slump in Rhodes' speculative bubble in 1902-1903 led to a decision to promote European farms. To do so required control over the African labour supply. In South Africa, there was no parallel crisis - the mining sector continued to expand. Furthermore, the mesures which led to an increase in the "effort price" of Basotho participation in the peasant economy operated differently. As we saw earlier, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century Basutoland responded to an increase in economic activity outside its "borders" by increasing both the supply of cash crops and produce an the supply of migrant labour. Furthermore the penetration, both military and commercial, of Basutoland which resulted in an increase in the discretionary requiremen s of the Basotho - especially of firearm - had taken place much earlier. In sum, the process of self-sustained underdevelopment in Basutoland is brought about in a different way. There is no clear division into two historical periods of preparation and "take-off" for the conditions that lead to the unlimited supply of labour in the dual economy of which Lesotho is a part. The massive extent of the pressure exercised by Boers and British and the exigecies of war have the effect og "concertining" a process that occured over a longer period and a later date in Rhodesia.

The starting pint for this search for an alternative way of conceptualizing the origins and dynamics of migrant labour in Lesotho was partly the inadequacy of such suggested causes as the economic depression of the 1930 s' and partly the a-historical approach to the problem in current social science literature. By focussing attention on the "push" and "pull" factors that brought about proletarianization of African Labour in Rhodesia, Arrighi throws considerable light on the analysis of the process of proletarianization as such. What is particularly fruitful is not the historica' specification of the conditions og fproletarianization - which are, of course, unique to Rhodesia - but the method of analysis.

(62) ie. what appears "irrational" from the point of view of economic man is quite rational from the point of view of the household in the economy of the labour reserve: - "Low wages and lack of security in the capitalist sector maintained the African worker's interest in the security afforded by membership of a rural-based kinship group; at the same time, facing opportunities for African participation in the produce market made the pesantry at large more reliant on wage-workers' remittances for their cash requirements. There was therefore little incentive for all involved to bereak up traditional structures which in some ways tended to hamper innovation in techniques and patterns of production. For example, in the 1930s' 'centralization' of arable land came to be considered as a measure necessary to to prevent haphazard interspersing of arable and grazing land which was one of the main causes of soil erosion. This innovation, however, made it increasingly difficult to provide land for a growing family in the vicinity of the prarents' kraal, with the result that either the f family holding had to be fragmented, or the family itself. As the latter alternative would undermine social hohesion, centralization was resisted or, if implemented it led to exessive fragmentation of holdings and further deterioration in land fertility." Arrighi Ibid pages 218-219.

In doing so Arrighi, as is well known, challenges the hegemony of dualist theories of econmic growth.

His critique of the dualist theory is based on Arthur Lewis' exposition of economic development with unlimited supplies of labouur. (63) Lewis had argued that a strategy of industrial development was possible in the dual economy in conditions of for example acute land shortage where the marginal productivity of labour in the "subsistence" sector was zero or even negative. Under these condition an almost (64) unlimited supply of labour is avialable to capitalist sector at a wage that is sufficient to pull labour out of the "subsistence" sector - a wage which Lewis estimated to be 30-50% above the "subsistence" wage. Certainly, the dualist model of economic growth has undergone considerable changes since 1954. (65) Selwyn's analysis of spatial and social dualism in Lesotho is not based on the Lewis' model as such but on Singer's reformulation of it. (66)

Nevertheless, at least two fundamental weaknesses of the model do remain in Singer's reformulation and in Selwyn's application of this to the economic development of Lesotho. One is the failure to specify the historical circumstances under which the dualist model appplies. We would, perhaps, accept that the dualist model a a descriptive paradigm has been largely true of the colonial period of Lesotho's history (from 1884 to 1966). But there are no inherent reasons for assuming that this will always be so. Vis-avis Rhodesia, Arrighi argues that the dualist model as formulated by Lewis ceases to apply in the post-war period when, because of structural changes in the Rhodesian economy as a whole, wage rates begin to rise and hence the conditions of the dualist model no longer apply. We would need to look closer at the structure of the economy of Southern Africa as a whole in order to determine this.

A second weakness is the tendency to treat the decriptive paradigm as explanation. Hence Selwyn argues that "unskilled labour wages have been kept down not only by the existence of a pool of unemployed but also by the weak bargaining position of African workers resulting from discriminatory legislation." (67) As we have argued above, it is not the existence of af "pool of unemployed" but the conditions that have brought about a perma-

(63) W.A. Lewis Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour the Manchester School, May, 1954.
(64) Lewis has a number of qualifications to the argument: among them the argument that technological develoment in the subsistence sector may lead to an increase in the productivity of peasant labour in this sector.
(65) Lewis has been criticised, in the South African context, in a number of ways. Francis Wilson, for example, argues that Lewis fails to distinguish between the "either-or" migrant and "oscillating" migrant. He writes:"There are two types of workers who come from the 'subsistence' sector of a developing economy. One is the man who makes the either-pr decision; who has to choose wheter he will stay where he is, or pull up his roots and move permanently to town. Making allowance for the attractions of living in a big city, he will decide to go only if his expected earnings there ar at least as large (allowing for cost of living difference) as they would be on the land. In other words, his rural income sets the lower limit on what he must be paid elsewhere. It was this type of worker that W. Arthur Lewis implicitly analysed in his study of economic development with unlimited supplies of labour. But there is a second type of man, typidified by those who work on the gold mines, for whom the subsistence sector has a different consequence. The oscillating migrant does not take an either-or decision, he goes to town primarily to supplment the income. Exactly the reverse is true of the either-or man; the more he can earn on the land the more will he need to earn in town to induce him to go there." Francis Wilson Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911-1969, Cambridge University Press 1971.
(66) H.W. Singer 'Dualism revisited - a new approach to the problem of the dual society in developing countries' Journ. of Development Studies Vol 7, No. 1.
(67) Selwyn

nent distortion of the economy of Lesotho and undermined its surplus-gerating capacity that bring about the low wages. The pool of unemployed cannot be regarded as an independent variable in the analysis of the African labour market. The existence of labour surplus - the reserve army of the unemployed - is treated in the dualist analysis a a cause of the low wages paid in the modern sector. However Francis Wilson's analysis of the factors governing the remuneration of black miners in the South African gold mines emphasizes that a chronic shortage of black labour has been a perpetual feature of South African economic history. The crux of the matter is that the dualist analysis - while insiting on its decriptive character - develops a model of underdevelopment according to which low wages in the modern sector are brought a bout by low opportunity costs in the traditional sector. But it is the structural character of migration that is the root of low wages in both 'modern' and 'traditional' sectors.

Section Three: Migrant Labour and the Devevelopment of Underdevelopment.

A. The Economy of the Labour reserve as a development strategy.

This paper began with a brief sketch of current development strategies in Lesotho and went on to examine current social science interpretations of development in Lesotho. We have, throughout, insisted that the "distortion" of the economy of the Basotho from a fundamentally self-sufficient peasant economy into a labour reserve of the South African economy is the key to understanding Lesotho's current predicaments. And yet, most social science interpretations of Lesotho's sturcture and development choices tend to accept the underlying structure of the labour reserve economy as part of the fundament of their analysis - as a corner stone on which development plans are based rather than as the chief obstacle to a development strategy which could ensure that the economic surplus generated by the labour of the Basotho accumulates in Lesoth and not, as at present, to South Africa and to the international capital which is invested there.

This characteristic of most analyses of labour reserve economies has been attacked by Samir Amin in a recent paper. (68) He argues that it is characteristic of marginalist economic theory to regard the existing destribution of the factors of production - labour and capital (69) - as a given. Amin insists that in Senegal the existing distribution of labour and capital is the result of the development strategy of the colonial period which brought about an extension of peanu agriculture. An alternative development strategy based on the development of intensive, irrigated agriculture of rice, market produce etc. is precluded by the requirements of international capitalism. Hence development policies directed towards the extension of the peanut crop are not for Senegal either more or less "rational". Whether they are rational or not depends on the underlying devlopment strategy. The argument deserves quoting: -

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(68) Samir Amin 'Contemporary Migrations in West Africa'. Paper deliverad to Conference on strategies of economic development - Africa compared with Latin America, 4-17 September, 1972. UN Africa Insttute for Economic Development and Planning, Dakar.

(69) Amin admits that the immobile factor, land, may alter the picture but not for the manufacturing sector.

> There is no "economic rationality" in itself, independent from the pint of view on which it is based. What is rational from Senegal's point of view - the exploitation of the Fleuve - is not so from the point of view of the world system, because self-sufficient economies based on this alternative would have difficult in "reimbursing" capital, which would then appear as real aid. On the other hand, what is irrational from Senegal's point of view - the extension of peanut agriculture - is perfectly rational from the point of view of the world system. Because of the deterioration of the terms of exchange, from which Senegal cannot escape as a reslut of its export based economy (peanuts bust be exported); what is "unfortunate" for this country, will be "beneficial" for the world system and it is this that determines its choice. (7o)

Amin's analysis is also illuminating in that he attempts a cost-benefit analysis of the migration of labour from the West African interior to the c coast. This analysis is not based on the existing distribution of the factors of production. This would not be possible since current development strategy does not provide capital and hence employment opportunities in Est African interior. Amin's analysis contrats current remittances from the labour of migrants (estimated at $18 million per year) with estimates of the profits made by coastal planters from the labour of migrants (at approximately $75 million).

Amin's conclusion is clearly that the whole export-oriented, foreign capital basis of hte economy of the labour reserve must be called into question before an estimate can be made of the cost and benefits of labour migration. But, unless theis calculation is to be a purely academic exercise, unrelated to the considereation of how to effect alternative developmen strategies, the analysis must be tied to the analysis of the social and political forces that could effectuate a challenge to the basic axioms of current strategies of underdevelopment.

B. The Politics of the Labour Reserve Economy

As we have seen, explanations of the diversiveness of political strife in Lesotho tend to emphasize that the two major political parties - The Basutuland National Party and the Basutoland National Congress - have different oonceptions of the nature of the Basutho nation and of its position in South African and world affairs. While the BNP accepts the need for a dialogue with South Africa (though the BNP rejects aprtheid and the racialist policies of the Rhodesian regime) the BCP envisages Lesotho's independence as only one step in a struggle for the total liberation of Southern Africa. Vis-a-vis labour migration, the BCP has demanded greater control and supervision of the contracs, pay and conditions of serviee of Basotho migrant workers whereas the BNP has tended to adopt a more laisser-faire attitude.

These differing conceptions are not the result of a purely "ideological" difference (in the sense in which functionalist analysis interprets ideology - ie. unrelated to social formations) but have their roots in the different classes and strata that Lesotho's historical development has given rise to. The BNP is rooted in the institution of chieftanship and the catholic church. The BCP was established primarily by schoolteachers, with support from Protestants but with its real roots among the migrant workers. Hence to analyse the capacity of the BCP to articulate and effectuate an alternative development strategy requires, among other things, an analysis of migrant labour as a social formation.

(7o) Amin Ibid page 26

~~social science in the analysis of the underdeveloped world~~. Bourgeois social science tends to take the present arrangement of the factors of production as a given quantum and hence to evaluate development policies in terms of existing market forces. Marxist science regards existing arrangements of productive factors as the product of colonial power and, at a more fundamental level, of the contradictions that the imperialist stage of capitalist development in the West has given rise to. But more specific analyses of the mediation of international capitalism in ~~specific~~ particular historical and cultural circumstances - such as the labour reserve economies of Southern Africa - are thin on the ground. Hence the the speculative nature of much of the argument that has been put forward.

A basic problem in assessing Marxist and non-Marxist esplanations of a specific condition of underdevelopment is the question of reconcilability. Is there a fundamental irreconcilability between Marxist and bourgeois social science ? While bourgeois social science has tended to dismiss Marxist analysis by misrepresenting Marxism as a purely "economic" interpretation or by regarding Marxism as an ideology or religion which justifies and re-assures, marxist science has tended to dismiss bourgeois social science as ideology and stressed the "epistemological break" that distinguishes bourgeois apologetics from Marxist science.

Wheter there is a fundamental irreconcilability between Marxist and non-Marxist science is a complex matter. Given that the purpose of Marxist analysis is not to describe but to change, Marxist analysis is inherently revolutionary. Theory and analysis is a weapon in the organizational, cultural and military liberation struggle. Bourgeois social science emerges out of that situation which is the subject for analysis. Theory and analysis have here an ideological fundtion in terms of legitimizing the structure (however disparate and seemingly pluralist) of power and privilege.

On the other hand it is hard to locate, historically, an epistemolocal break in the development of Marxist thought. (73) Clearly, in the development of the thought of Marx and Engels a great deal is owed to a process of selective borrowing. Indeed, on account of the development of Marx's economic thought emphasizes that Marx's major writings hinge on a proper understanding of Ricardo's theory of labour value. (74) Furthermore, all the historical work of Marx and Engels is based on data that could obviously not be regarded as "marxist". Hence the position of the self-proclaimed marxist who rejects the finding os bourgeois social science on the basis of his revolutionary intentions is clearly impermissible.

But the question of compatibility obviously goes deeper than the somewhat trite observation that both Marx and Engels were historians. Given that social science is part of the system of cultural hegemony its domination is only total if class domination is total. The hegemony of modern social science is no stronger than the hegemony of the imperialist system..
The dominant positison of the US in the imperialist bloc is today under challenge. (75) One consequence of this is that the hegemony of US social and political science is undergoing a crisis. The years of facile optimism about political "development" and "modernization" are a thing of the past and the methodology which gave rise to such thinking is also under attack. A body of literature is amerging which offers a trenchant critique of this

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(73) Despite the efforts of Althusser, Balibar and Poulantzas
(74) Ernest Mandel The Formation of the Economic Thought of Karl Marx. (1971) chapter 3
(75) See Ernest Mandel Europe versus America ? Contrdictions of Imperialism (197o) and Christel Neusüss Imperalismus und Weltmarktbewegung des Kapitals (1972)

branch of comparative politics : its ideological and ethnocentric assumptions, theoretical inadequacy and inefficacy as a guide to policy. (76)

The reactions to this critique have been varied. Some have abondoned any claim to theoretical generality and retreated into case studies and area studies. Others are engaed in a frantic effort to resurrect a new "science" og political economy which will borrow some of the terminology of Marxism but strip it of its historical materialism and its revolutionary objectives in the imperialist struggle. The result is, frequently, a hodgepodge of unreleted 'concepts','variables' and 'models' that serve little purpose other than to divert themselves and their students from substantial issues.

On the other hand the existence of this crisis does enable us to operate with an "epistemological threshold" (77) in which we can hope to measure the adequacy of existing explanation to explain reality unencumbered by the methodological baggage of current social science literature on modernization and political development. Were this not so there would be no feasible way of validating or criticising existing social science literature on the economy of Lesotho. Nor wuld there be any point to the exercise.

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(76) A.G Frank 'Sociology of Development and undervelopment of Sociology' in A.G. Frank Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution (1969): James Peck 'The Professional Ideology of America's China Watchers' in America's Asia: Dessenting Essays on Asian-American Relations by Edward Friedman and Mark Selden (ed) (1969): Lars Rudebeck 'Political Development: Toward a coherent and relevant theoretical formulation of the cencept' Scandinavian Political Studies 5/1970: Henry Bernstein 'Modernization Theory and the Sociological Study of Development' in Journal of Development Studies Vol 7 No 2, January, 1971: Maj Palmberg 'Den Funktionalistiska Utvecklingsteorin' (the functionalist theory of develoment) in Häften for Kritiska Studier 1-2, 1971: Jose F. Ocampo & Dale L. Johnson 'The Concept of Political Development' in Cockroft et al. Latin America's Political Economy (1972): Raymond B. Pratt 'The Underdeveloped Political Science of Development' in Studies in Comparative International Development Vol 8 No 1, Spring,1973

(77) The concept has been borrowed, somewhat out of context, from Pierre Vilar 'Marxist History, a history in the Making: Dialogue with Althusser ' New Left Review no 80, July-August 1973.