2006

Towards a Simple Typology of Racial Hegemony

Coates

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/swb

Part of the Human Rights Law Commons, and the Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons

Recommended Citation

Available at: https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/swb/vol1/iss1/5
Towards a Simple Typology of Racial Hegemony

Abstracts

Racial Hegemony, a concept developed by Omi and Winant, provides a critical tool for evaluating the modern racial state. This paper explores this tool and offers some enhancements. These enhancements, recognizing that one size does not fit all, identify different hegemonic types associated with different racial states. Implications are drawn which suggests that our efforts toward evaluating, transforming, and/or eliminating racial hegemonies are best accomplished by understanding the variations of racial hegemonies.

Hacia una tipología sencilla de la hegemonía racial

Le hegemonía racial, un concepto desarrollado por Omi y Winant, proporciona una herramienta crítica para evaluar el Estado racista moderno. Este artículo analiza esta herramienta y ofrece algunos matices. Estos matices, que reconocen que no todos los casos son iguales, identifican diferentes tipos hegemónicos asociados con diferentes Estados racistas. La implicación de ello es que nuestros esfuerzos por evaluar, transformar y o eliminar las hegemonías raciales se realizan mejor si se entienden sus variaciones.

Vers une typologie simple de l’hégémonie raciale

L’hégémonie raciale, un concept développé par Omi et Winant, nous fournit un outil critique pour évaluer l’état racial moderne. Cet article explore cet outil et offre quelques perfectionnements.
Towards a Simple Typology of Racial Hegemony

Where there is injustice, perceived or real, there will also be general failures in the social fabric. That is to say, people respond to injustices by their increasing unwillingness to engage in the collective enterprise. Therefore an axiom may be identified which stipulates that the more widespread the sense of injustice the more widespread the unwillingness to abide by social conventions. For example, this past year we witnessed the general failure in the social fabric as riots erupted in Australia, France, and the near chaos, which resulted from the abandonment of the racialized poor in the aftermath of Katrina in the U.S. Systems of injustice – of which racism is but one – are more easily exploited because of this. This exploitation appears most evident in capitalist situations where various exploited racialized groups are pitted against each other in order to maximize profits and control. To the extent that these situations produce or enhance one racialized group’s profits and control at the expense of others, then we can speak of racial hegemony. Racial hegemony, facilitating the acquisition of capital, has also facilitated the globalization of capital.

The globalization of capital has had several significant developments. Prior to 1950 the most significant instruments of globalization were capitalism through colonialism. After 1950, as we watch colonialism give way (often to post-colonial or neo-colonial societies), it is important to remember that the dominant chords which transcend all is that of racial hegemony.1

While racial hegemony transcends most modern societal types, it is clear that the form of racial hegemony that develops is dependent upon the form

---

1 It is assumed that violence and exploitation are always a part of racial hegemony even when they appear to be hidden. Later in this paper we will explore the various mechanism of control utilized by racial hegemonic systems to preserve, maintain, or create power. By racial hegemony, following Omi and Winant (1994) I mean a system of dominance and exploitation based upon race. Within this system consent and legitimacy is accomplished through consensus between the exploiters and the exploited. Thus racial oppression and exploitation become perceived as being natural and rooted in common sense. This produces an uneasy balance until the hegemonic structures are challenged either by external or internal events, issues, and/or movements.
of society. Political ideology and resources, historical antecedents, and military and industrial sophistication all structure society and serve to structure the form that racial hegemony takes. In the section that follows I will query the changing face of racial hegemony in our modern universe.²

A Simple Typology of Racial Hegemony

While many typologies associated with categorizing societies may be identified, our purposes are best achieved by one based upon the intersections of military and industrial sophistication with political ideology. I will present here a simple typology in two-dimensional form. Although a multitude of political ideologies can be identified, most scholars would group modern societies into two broad categories – those which are non-democratic and those which are democratic. Most authorities would agree that one of the central features, which distinguish the two types, is how political control is maintained. Within non-democratic regimes there tends to be a higher reliance upon military and political mechanisms to ensure control. Alternatively, so-called democratic regimes rely more heavily upon class and political mechanisms. While political mechanisms are a constant across both regimes, it is clear that the political ideologies justifying both are quite distinct. Thus for example, while China subscribes to a political ideology of communism, it relies primarily upon its military (the State) and political apparatus (party) powers to ensure conformity. Alternatively, within the U.S., while there is reliance upon democratic ideologies (which suggests freedom and equal opportunity); there is primary reliance upon its class structure and political system (as in State and values) to ensure conformity.

Levels of industrial and/or military development can also be identified and associated with the ability of a particular regime to exert its control over another. Here when I am referring to a political regime of being weak or strong, I am making reference to the type of control it would exercise over an external society. Thus the U.S. and China – both – could be considered to be high on the industrial and/or military scale, while comparatively Italy

² While modern has a multitude of meanings, I am using it rather vaguely to distinguish the ancient world of say the Greeks and Romans, from the modern one associated with the imperial quest for new lands and resources of the late 1400’s. This demarcation follows most scholars tracking race and racialized systems.
and Syria could be classified as low. Based upon the industrial and/or military resources available to a country, we would expect the type of control to range from strong to weak. Here when I speak of industrial and/or military resources, as being high or low, I am primarily referring to the capacity of a regime to externally control another. Simplistically, I represent the typologies of societies as follows:

**Figure 1: Simple Typology – Racial Hegemony**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military and Industrial Sophistication</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Class Control</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Democratic Military or Political Domination</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further speculations leads me to also conclude that in times of crises (political, social, or economic) both political regimes will utilize the states’ tremendous police powers to maintain stability. Of further interest is the observation that state/national crises are always associated with perceptions of legitimacy, justice or efficacy. Put another way, political crises are the result of significant questions, which challenge the legitimacy, justice, or efficacy of a particular political regime. Violence is the natural by-product when the state is unable to curtail the crises.

**Modern Colonialism and Racial Hegemony**

Imperialism, defined as the imposition of one political structure upon another, has its roots in ancient civilization and has no racial or ideological basis. Imperialism is about power, plain and simple. Modern colonialism is a particular form of imperialism, which results in the cultural, political, and economic subjugation of one indigenous population by another.
The criterion which distinguishes modern colonialism from other kinds of imperialism is that the former is marked by significant racial, cultural, and/or religious differences implying a superior-inferior relationship between rulers and ruled, all of which is reinforced by a political and legal system designed to maintain, if not perpetuate, this definite supremacy and subordination.3

Imperial colonialism represents Janus-headed systems by which European nations exploited other continents and civilizations for the maximization of profits, luxury, and resources (both human and physical). Thus from South East Asia to the Southern tip of Africa, from the continent of Australia to the Americas – hundreds of millions of people were subjugated, hundreds of thousands of acres of land were dominated, and billions of dollars of resources were extrapolated for the initial benefit of a racial elite living in Great Britain, France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and Germany.

While racial hegemony was produced in all of these colonial situations, the form that this racial hegemony took varied considerably. For example, even in the Americas few would argue that the colonial situation created by the French, Spanish, Portuguese, and English were distinctly different. Alternatively, given the variability between and among the American colonies, we can yet distinguish these from those occurring later on the African, Asian, and Australian continents. In this section, my goal is to demonstrate that such differences are more then anecdotal, but have to do with variations in political ideology and resources, historical antecedents, and military and industrial sophistication. These variations not only serve to structure these particular societal types but also define the form of racial hegemony that ultimately develops. The importance of knowing these differences is apparent if we are to develop remedies to the problems of racial hegemony. The point being stressed here is that the face of racial hegemony, to include the method and manner of racial violence and exploitation, is uniquely determined by each societal situation. Based upon our simple typology we can identify 4 types of societal situations which may be labeled 1) Weak Democratic-Class based, 2) Weak Non-Democratic-Military or politically based, 3) Strong Democratic-class based and 4) Strong Non-Democratic Military or politically based. The sections that follow will provide greater clarification of each type

3  Grundy 1966, p. 63.
and identify colonial situations that exemplify the typology. Before we begin, following Max Weber, these are “ideal types,” utilized to highlight the general trends of the specific situation. Consequently, it should therefore be understood that some examples might not be exact but rather a close approximation.4

**Weak Democratic Class-Based Colonial Situations**

Weak Democratic, Class Based colonial situations are typified by an imperial elite that possesses relatively lower levels of military and/or industrial bases as compared to other democratic imperial powers. While, such weak democratic states have significantly higher levels of military and/or industrial bases as the countries they are attempting to control, this control by definition is rather limited. The limited control available under these situations suggests that power-sharing is more likely to be explored. Thus we would expect that the external elite would seek to identify an indigenous elite with which they can create power-sharing opportunities. Because of a relative, but significant, advantage in either military and/or industrial capacity, the external elite may be able to barter for power-sharing opportunities with an indigenous elite seeking to enhance or broaden their bases of power and control over other indigenous groups. In these situations ethnic, religious, familial or territorial rivalries may serve as the basis for imperial interventions. External elites, observing such conflict situations, may tip the scale in the favor of one group over others through their supply of superior military technology, or industrial advantage. External elites are limited however in their ability to totally control the colony due to limitations in their own military and industrial capacities.

---

4 Time and particularly space limitations force me to curtail this paper. Therefore, as is the nature of typologies, this one is overly deterministic and fails to provide a clear discussion regarding agency. In a subsequent paper (Coates 2006) the arguments are extended. Thus this current paper should be seen as a major piece of a much larger project.

5 It is apparent that this typology can be applied across time, situations, and subject to corrections provided by other imperial states. Consequently, we could talk about the type of imperial situation associated with a pre-industrial world - say for the period of the colonization of the Americas, and the imperial situation associated with a newly industrializing world – for example the period of associated with the colonization of Africa. Alternatively, the imperial powers, their colonial victories and/or plans, can also affect the specific form of colonial situation(s) that develop. All of these would therefore affect the specific form of racial hegemony that develops. These complexities, the subject of another paper, will be explored later. For now, our purpose is to explore the typology in its simplest state.
Through the transfer of military and/or industrial instruments, the imperial elite also promote ideologies of their own racial superiority. Ideologies of racial superiority also include the elevation of select indigenous elite at the expense of other indigenous groups. In this manner the contours of each system of racial hegemony is structured and somewhat unique. Several colonial situations come to mind that reflect this typology; none seem better then that of Rwanda.

Prior to colonization Rwanda had an extremely elaborate monarchial system. The first known inhabitants were Pygmy and Twa. Germans first arrived in Rwanda in 1894; they were able to solidify their power by manipulating inter-ethnic conflict among the indigenous groups. By 1895 Rwanda was a German colony. They essentially ruled indirectly through the Tutsi King, and forced the neighboring Hutu areas into their administrative control. Colonial power had to be shared because German military resources were yet to be developed. In an 1868 letter summarizing the German Colonial policy, Bismarck writes:

... our navy is not yet sufficiently developed to take responsibility for the protection in distant states. Finally, the attempt to found colonies in regions claimed by other states, no matter if with or without legitimation, would cause manifold, undesired conflicts.

In 1910, Rwanda’s northern and western borders were solidified by the colonial powers agreement. German administrative divisions were established to coordinate the borders with Tanzania and Burundi. By their 1916 departure, Germany had established coffee as the primary cash crop and suppressed a rebellion.

Germany was required to relinquish its colonies as a consequence of their defeat in World War I. The Belgians replaced them as Rwanda’s colonial masters. The Belgians also instituted an openly racist and more brutal regime in 1920 when they voided the line of succession and selected the Tutsi King. The Belgian official policy was:

---

6 The propagation of “the faith” by religious missionaries have not only made the transfer of racial ideologies more efficient but also more palatable.
8 Quoted in Spellmeyer, 1931, p. 3.

Published by Case Western Reserve University School of Law Scholarly Commons, 2006
The government should endeavour to maintain and consolidate traditional cadres composed of the Tutsi ruling class [Belgium educated males], because of its important qualities, its undeniable intellectual superiority and its ruling potential.9

In 1930 the Belgians attempted to clarify its racial ideology by imposing a more rigid racial hierarchy with themselves at the top, followed respectively by Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa (Pygmy). Their elaborate system, including identity cards, based upon presumed differences in skin color and nose cranial measurements were soon discarded as unworkable. In their place, the Belgians resurrected the German class-based system of control. Thus, a Tutsi was defined as a person who owned at least ten cattle. These class distinctions were rigidly enforced, and social mobility from Hutu to Tutsi was no longer possible. Thus a racial hegemony, under the façade of these class distinctions was established, maintained, and perpetuated. There was never a plan to develop Rwanda, the development of the racial hegemonic system served to preserve the exploitative system of colonialism to the benefit of the Belgian elite.

Over the next two decades, Hutu rebellions were violently suppressed by the Tutsi elite, under the guidance of the Belgian government. Thousands of Hutus were maimed, raped, and killed. Hutus, in the tens of thousands, were forced to flee to Uganda. Growing unrest by Hutu farmers, the shortsightedness and greed, of Tutsi elites – led to increasing labor unrest, and ultimately civil war in 1950. Belgians, unable to appease a growingly hostile Hutu labor force, reluctantly ceded independence to Rwanda in 1961. Independence did little to resolve the inter-ethnic violence. This inter-ethnic violence reached a peak in 1994 as over 500,000 Tutsis were exterminated by ruling Hutus.

Weak Non-Democratic, Military/Politically-Based Colonial Situations

Weak Non-Democratic, Military/Politically-Based colonial situations are typified by imperial elite who possess relatively lower levels of military and/or industrial bases as compared to other imperial powers. Under these situations power sharing may emerge. The weak position of the imperial

---

power may also limit its ability to colonize, and therefore it may rely more heavily upon frontier settlements. In these frontier situations, a small number of primarily males are encouraged to “settle” and slowly establish a trading center to the benefit of both trading partners. Under these settings, the absence of colonizing women (i.e. those from the home or exogenous country) increases the tendencies to develop familial units between exogenous males and indigenous females. This further solidifies the position of the colonizer within the colonized ethnic community. A unique blended community may appear, as such unions increase and become more regularized, legitimized, and accepted (by both colonized and colonizer). As to be expected, these blended communities may also produce a unique frontier culture reflecting elements from both cultures. Within these frontier cultures we would still expect preference to be given to the external racial group’s identity, values, religion, and political structures. Frontier situations of this sort may actually exist for long periods of time, and are only challenged when political, economic or cultural advantage can be enhanced or gained by tighter control. Under these situations, the colonizing elite are more likely to install a military or an administrative center under its control. This tighter control makes the exploitation of resources more efficient. With this control, the nascent racialization of the colonial situation is made more explicit. We thus note the creation or importation of a racial ideology favoring the colonizing elite.10

Through the transfer of military and/or industrial instruments, the imperial elite also promote ideologies of their own racial superiority. Ideologies of racial superiority also include the elevation of select indigenous elite at the expense of other indigenous groups. It is important to remember that racial hegemonic structures are uniquely defined by the specific colonial situation. As the exploitative relationship becomes more established, so also does the establishment of a racial hegemony enforced by a military and/or administrative control center. Again, external elites are limited however in their ability to totally control the colony due to limitations in their own military and industrial capacities. While several examples are possible, the case of the Russian colony in Alaska seems best suited for our purposes.

Vitus Bering (1681–1741) and Aleksiei Chirikov (d. 1748) in 1741, following the directives of Tsar Peter the Great, underwent the “discovery” of Alaska.

10 With the development of the racial state, it is obvious, the intermarriage between colonizer and colonized must be prohibited or at least discouraged as it also undermines the validity of the racial hegemony.
For the next half century the promyshlenniki (fur traders and frontiersmen) exploited native Aleutians’ skills in their quest to secure the rich otter and seal furs so plentiful in the region. Grigorii Shelkhov, a trader, was encouraged by Tsarina Catherine the Great to establish the first colony in 1784. In 1790 Shelkhov, with the blessings of the Tsarina, appointed Alexandr Baranov as the first colonial administrator. In 1794 Catherine established the Alaskan Orthodox Church and placed it under the authority of Shelkhov’s Russian American Company. Over the next few years, the Russian American Company established twenty-five posts on the islands and mainland. The Company also ‘subsidized’ the religious activities of the Russian Orthodox Church and a Lutheran church. Of interests is while the Church preached one set of moral principles, the Company practiced quite another set. Sporadic attempts to ‘Christianize’ the natives by the Church were often followed by sporadic attempts to euthanize them by the company.

Contrary to the good will encouraged by Catherine the Great, in 1763 fur traders often murdered, kidnapped, and enslaved Aleuts in their attempt to secure furs. Aleuts, retaliating, won several victories. The Tsarina responded swiftly and militarily by destroying whole villages, fishing and boating equipment leaving many Aleuts destitute and unable to secure a livelihood. An estimated eighty percent of the Aleutian population was devastated by European diseases (to which they had no defenses) and genocide in the first two generations of Russian contact.

Total domination was achieved in 1799 when Tsar Paul granted the Russian American Company monopoly over both trade and government. The colonial venture had only limited success and the life never deemed suitable for a sufficient number of Russian women. Although many native women were forced into prostitution, several others were ‘encouraged’ to marry. In this frontier situation, wives were taken from the Koniags and families started. Even today vestiges of this period continue as witnessed in such names as Panamaroff, Petrikoff, and Kvasnikof. Creoles, from these unions, filled slots left vacant by a declining number of Russians. Creoles, whether educated by the company or not, were considered ‘russified’ and enjoyed the status of a Russian commoner. Those Creoles that received education at the company expense were indentured to the company for a period of 10–15 years. These company servants often experienced higher mobility due to their training. Thus Creoles assumed positions with the Company in such areas as traders and trappers, officials at various post, and skilled labor. Other educated Creoles
also found positions as ship captains, clerks, bookkeepers, and some actually achieved relative prominence. At the bottom of this hierarchy were the ‘uncivilized’ natives who were most exploited, and for the most part excluded from enjoying upward mobility.

Decreasing profitability, increasing native rebellions, and incursions by British, French and American trading enterprises took their toll. By 1818 it was clear that a firmer administrative format was needed. When the Russian American Charter came up for renewal in 1821 it was stipulated that the chief administrator would be a naval officer. Thus the colonial operation came under the full authority of the military. Overzealous hunting continued to reduce the fur bearing animal population. By 1860 the Russians were looking for a way out, and the United States provided it by a purchase. Alaska formerly came under the United States auspices for slightly more then 7 million dollars.

Under the new American colonial regime, the former colonial elite were racialized and subject to the same type of discrimination as they had subjected the natives before them. Thus:

The Alaska Creole suddenly found himself in a marginal status, a half-breed member of a once dominant but now subordinate culture . . . American and foreign observers characterized the ‘Russians’ as superstitious, filthy, drink addicted, lazy, stupid, immoral, and generally unfit for United States Citizenship.  

Strong-Democratic Class-Based Colonial Situations

Imperial elite that possesses relatively high levels of military and/or industrial resources as compared to other democratic imperial powers typifies strong Democratic, Class-Based colonial situations. Because of this superiority in military and/or industrial resources, these countries are able to dominate the colonial situation. Such domination is typically made possible through their ability to control a particular geographical area through either military force or industrial might. Although the exogenous elite are able to dominate, they tend to rule indirectly through the indigenous elite. While there is some sharing, it is important to realize that the colonizing elite always maintain superiority. Although there may be some sharing of military and technological
resources, initial power imbalances are always preserved. That is to say, the exogenous elite will preserve their dominance by sharing military technology of lower quality or power. In such situations, the capacities to manufacture or the technological skills to improve the weaponry are withheld. And while there may be a willingness to share other forms of technology, this tends to be for the purposes of maximizing trade and extraction of resources. Thus, we would not expect to see manufacturing bases established in the colonial situation as this would lead to direct competition with the exogenous elite. Because of a relative, but significant, advantage in either military and/or industrial capacity, the external elite may be able to take advantage of conflicts between various indigenous groups. As we have seen in previous colonial situations, ethnic, religious, familial or territorial rivalries may serve as the basis for imperial interventions. Through the transfer of military and/or industrial instruments, the imperial elite also promote ideologies of their own racial superiority. Ideologies of racial superiority also include the elevation of select indigenous elite at the expense of other indigenous groups. In this manner the contours of each system of racial hegemony is structured and somewhat unique.

As implied above, the political ideology of democracy, suggests that the exogenous elite will choose to rule indirectly. That is to say, they will align themselves with particular indigenous elite to which and with which they will rule. Such indirect rule, often described as ‘enlightened colonial powers”, provides the illusion of democracy. Under such regimes, we note the colonizing power may establish economic structures, educational, religious, political and administrative institutions. The primary purposes of the latter (starting with educational institutions) are to assure the proper training, leadership, and system integrity to maximize exploitative operations. The whole structure, under the ruse of democratic or enlightened colonial systems, produces the illusion of freedom while maximizing the exploitative capacities of the colonial situation. Racial ideologies, and hence racial hegemony, come into existence through the implementation of these various colonial structures and institutions. As with other colonial are situation, any threat to the productivity, exploited profits or political system are typically and harshly met by domestic, colonial powers. In these colonial situations the naked power of the colonizing power tends to be in the shadows, until or unless domestic, colonial powers are deemed inadequate. Levels of colonial violence will increase to the extent that the legitimacy of the colonial situation is questioned.
British colonial policy changed dramatically after the humiliating loss of the American colonies. Laissez-faire economic liberalism characterized the new colonial policy. This policy recognized that political and economic dominance could still be obtained without the expenses associated with defense and administration. Thus Britain outlawed the slave trade (1807), instituted free trade, and began exploring various types of self-governing colonies. Of note, white colonial settler situations, such as Canada and Australia, enjoyed significantly more ‘self-governance’ than others dominated by non-white indigenous elite. We therefore have chosen the case of Ghana to explore strong democratic, class based colonial situations.

The diverse peoples who comprise modern day Ghana can be traced to political and economic processes that began more than 500 years ago. The first European contact occurred in 1470 when a Portuguese captain made contact with the Fante King of Elimina. A permanent trading center was established with the Portuguese building of Elmina Castle in 1482. Thomas Windham in 1553 made the first recorded English trading voyage. Over the next three centuries Portuguese, Danes, Swedish, Germans, French, and English variously controlled the area. From the Dutch, the Ashanti gained strategic alliances and rifles which helped them consolidate the area against attempts by Europeans, primarily British, to dominate them. The British circumvented the Ashanti by annexing neighboring areas, including the Fante. In 1806 the Ashanti-Fante War resulted as the Fante attempted to shift their allegiance from the Ashanti to the British. Although initially victorious, several wars followed as the Ashanti attempted to restrict European power in the area.

In 1821, the British continued to consolidate their control over trading posts. In 1823, after the death of Asantehene Osei Tutu Kwame, Osei Yaw Akoto ascended onto the Asante stool. Under his leadership attacks against the British coastal outposts, and the Ashante fighting a combined force of Africans and Englishmen led by Sir Charles McCarthy in 1824, were victorious. Just two years later, another battle with African coastal tribes and English, resulted

---

12 Although this was the law of England, it nevertheless took 27 years for it to be totally abolished in all British colonies. Also it should be noted that the system of indentured labor, with all of its oppressive brutality and exploitation endured until 1920.
in the conquest of the Ashanti. In 1831, through treaty, both Ashanti and British borders were decided. For thirty years peace prevailed, until 1853 when another successful Ashanti offensive resulted. It was not until 1874 that a British force comprised of several thousand English, West Indian and African troops successfully conquered the Ashanti. The initial colonization of Ghana began by dividing the Asante state into three distinct imperial entities: the Gold Coast Colony, The Crown Colony of Asante and the Northern Protectorate.

Traditional Ghanaian society provided for a high degree of democracy. Chiefs were selected from families with high ritual status (’stool families’) but could be enstooled only “with the consent of the commoners”. They could similarly be ‘destooled’ for violations of the boundaries of authority or ritual status. Initially the British Gold Coast tried various ruling styles from a Committee of London Merchants to one under the direct authority of the King. Finally in 1843 British government established a colonial authority, utilizing this political structure, established its control while providing the illusion of self-government. Thus Drake observes:

The British government transferred sovereignty from the people to the British Crown, released the chiefs from many of the popular checks, and substituted a system of ‘bureaucratic tutelage’ for one based on ‘traditional authority’.

A council of chiefs, appointed by the Governor, served as the Legislative Council. This council provided the administrative leadership and link to the British government until 1946 when it formally became the elected legislature.

While administrative and governmental power appeared to be under Ghanaian control, in reality the military through stiff discipline controlled the populace. The use of physical and psychic force was necessary to preserve order, and ensure maximum profits and exploitable resources.

In a colonial setting, ideas of racial superiority and modern discipline were closely related; both had to be upheld and advanced not only by example and direction but also when necessary by curt correction. Raw African labour needed to be trained and disciplined, and the most effective and economic

15 Drake 1956, p. 78.
16 Evelyn Baring, Earl of Cromer, in a 1909 presidential address, noted that British imperialism was markedly better then the Roman or Greek variants, and far more civilized then Russian, French, or German. Lord Cromer argues that its goals were to civilize, uplift, and ultimately “to allow local self-government under the crown”.
(Quoted by Conroy, 1960, p. 334.)
17 Drake 1956, p. 78.
way was by physical persuasion. . . . ‘. . . The whip that talks’ was a common and constant form of discipline and coercion.\textsuperscript{18}

Any illusion of local control by the Chiefs were quickly and repeatedly put to rest, as brute force became the method of choice by military and industrial officials alike. In this manner an external racial elite were able to maximize their profits, racialize the colonized, and exploit natural resources. As noted by Kwame Nkrumah:

> The whole policy of the colonizer is to keep the native in his primitive state and make him economically dependent. To ensure increased efficiency in the local handling of colonies’ resources, the colonizer grants loans and invests capital in improving internal communications, social and welfare services . . . (but) The big trade combines exert a rigid monopolist control which effectively prevents the native from sharing in the capitalist profits.\textsuperscript{19}

Continual and escalating unrest, violence and riots marshaled the call for independence from colonial rule. In late 1947 police firing on peaceful former servicemen seeking redress of grievances precipitated a massacre. These were followed by increased violence and riots in 1948. Kwame Nkrumah, who may be considered the father of modern Africa, successfully agitated for the independence of Ghana in 1957.

**Strong Non-Democratic, Military/Politically-Based Colonial Situations**

Strong Non-Democratic, Military/Politically-Based colonial situations are typified by an imperial elite who possess comparatively higher levels of military and/or industrial bases. We would expect for an imperial elite in such situations to dominate the colonial process. Their relative military and/or industrial might will allow them to establish a strong, central administration which will oversee the exploitative ventures of which the colony has been selected. We would not expect to see any extensive power sharing arrangements, but a limited place for indigenous elite may be provided in order to shield the blatant oppressiveness of the exploitation. Indigenous elite may even be allowed to serve in ceremonial leadership positions. Stripped of any real


\textsuperscript{19} Kwame Nkrumah, quoted by Grundy 1963, p. 438.
power, such ceremonial leaders are rolled out for auspicious occasions, holidays, or celebrations to give the veneer of respectability. Similarly, token positions may be provided for lesser indigenous elite, but again this serves as mere window dressing. We would expect a large contingent of military and/or police infrastructure to be established in order to ensure compliance, order, and preserve the peace. Absolute power is achieved through the swift and often brutal suppression of dissent, lest it gives rise to rebellion. Racial hegemony, buttressed by religious, cultural or political ideologies of racial supremacy, serve to reinforce the political order.

Therefore, we would expect elaborate systems of racialization embedded in educational, religious, and political institutions. At the extreme we would also expect to see caste-like societies develop. Within these caste-like societies, extreme control mechanisms are installed to prevent significant interaction between racialized elite and subordinates. Thus, we would expect to see developed racially segregated (segmented) educational, economic, labor, religious, and social institutions. Japanese imperial expansion provides multiple colonial situations which elucidate this typology.

While there is a long history of Japanese expansion, the beginning of Japanese imperialism begins in the half-century beginning from the first Sino-Japanese war of 1894–95. European expansionism into Japan and Asia may have actually served as a catalyst. Thus the Western imposed treaty port system actually served to trigger a more aggressive Japanese response culminating in the 1930’s ideologically with the “New Order of East Asia” and the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity sphere which led to the overthrow of Western imperialism in the region. With these victories, the Japanese substituted its own form of racial hegemony, “The Yellow man’s burden” upon its imperial subjects. Perhaps no colonial situation better emulates this process, and our typology then that of Korea.

Japan was able to consolidate its power over the Korean Peninsula with its victory over the Chinese in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–5. This allowed the Japanese to insert its influence upon Korean politics. Further victories over the Russians, in 1904–05, allowed Japan to convert Korea into a protectorate
and it was formally annexed in 1910. By 1931 Korea, under Japanese rule, was described as a complete ‘police state’. Under this police state Japan assumed control over Korean police, judicial, and military services. And in 1905, it also began administering several domestic services as well to include post, telegraph and telephone. Hegemony was completed with the development of a racial ideology which subordinated Koreans, justified and sustained economic and political inequalities. In 1910, the Japanese-controlled Seoul Press stated:

The present requires the wielding of an iron hand rather than a gloved one in order to secure lasting peace and order . . . [Japan] must be prepared to sacrifice anybody who offers obstacles to her work. Japan had hitherto dealt with Korean malcontent in a lenient way. She has learned from experience gained during the past five years that there are some persons who cannot be converted by conciliatory methods. There is but one way to deal with these people, and that is by stern and relentless methods.

By 1914 much of the land owned by peasants was claimed by the Japanese elite. Thus, under the guise of land reforms, 74% of the peasants lost their lands. And with landownership also went the right to tax, and increasingly the burden of taxes were born by the peasants. Two years later, Generals Terauchi and Hasegawa established the budan seiji (military dictatorship). Under Terauchi, Koreans lost many of their civil rights, and found that their schools, newspapers, and the public square were dominated by Japanese ideologies, and agents.

Under the Terauchi-Akashi regime . . . a policy of intellectual strangulation was vigorously pursued. Some Korean history books and biographies of illustrious Koreans were removed from libraries, schools, and homes – and burned. Religious instruction was forbidden in the new public schools, except for reverence to the Japanese emperor. Japanese scorn for Koreans, manifested in a haughty condescension, was too transparent to go unnoticed. The peculiarities of Korean culture were despicable to the average Japanese, and . . . most Japanese . . . saw Korea as a colony, the annexation as conquest, and themselves as bold colonizers.

22 See, for example, Wales 1942, p. 26.
Through a policy of Japanization, i.e. the stripping of all that was Korean from cultural, social, and political life – the Koreans were promised total equality. Such fanciful dreams, often the product of racial hegemonies, are rarely achieved. In its place we note an increasingly violent racialized elite. Although, the sheer brutality of this racial hegemony is clearly demonstrated on several fronts, the sexual exploitation of Korean women stands out. For it is here that we get the term ‘white slavery’, as untold thousands of Korean women, labeled ‘Comfort women’, were forced into prostitution as sex slaves.27

While Koreans were not complacent during their occupation, even passive protests were met with swift and brutal retaliation by the Japanese military rule. A peaceful demonstration, involving the reading of a Declaration of Independence and the waving of Korean national flags, was met by a savagery almost unheard of in modern times. General Hasegawa responded by imprisoning “…twenty to thirty thousand Koreans… thousands were killed on the spot or executed in prison, and many thousands more were wounded.”28

The fierce Japanese response only served to encourage rebellion and revolution. During the early 1920’s, Japan formerly announced that it was modernizing its colonial policy. Under this strategy, some 13 different reforms were announced ranging from equal treatment and relaxation of formal military rule to greater freedoms and civil rights for the Koreans. Most of these reforms remained on paper; on the streets the average Korean witnessed increased repression, hostility, and exploitation. The racial animus was not limited to official Japanese, as thousands of Koreans were killed in the streets by Japanese mobs. Koreans became the excuse for violence, scapegoats for failure, and victim for racial aggression. And so, with the defeat of the Japanese in 1945 it was with great anticipation that the Koreans looked toward both East and West for their long awaited independence.

Discussion

We have at this point demonstrated the general utility of our model. All case studies conform to expectations. In summary, we identified four ‘ideal types’ of racial hegemonic situations. The typology was understood to be a simple
one, where we were concerned with identifying a generalized model. At the onset it was understood that the model and the cases selected were intended to highlight specific features of racial hegemony. Or, as stipulated by Weber, ideal types represent a type of abstraction from reality. These abstractions, constructed from the logical extraction of elements derived from specific examples, provide a theoretical model by which and from which we may examine reality. From these abstracted models, we are able to derive specific hypotheses, draw specific conclusions, and make clear predictions regarding development, change, maintenance, and permanence.

Our ideal types were therefore drawn from simple observations regarding the type of political ideology and the level of military and/or industrial development. Our first generally type was described as being democratically based and weak military imperial power. We chose Rwanda as our case to demonstrate this typology.

Our general typology for a democratic, weak military imperial power has been demonstrated with the Rwandan case. That is to say, a democratically-oriented German elite, with a weak military force, was able to establish a colonial base in Rwanda. This colonial base, as expected, resulted in a sharing of power, where a racial hegemony was created under the guise and controlled by the class structure. Limited upward mobility, from lower racialized indigenous groups to higher indigenous levels, was possible. While, this limited class mobility gave the system a level of legitimacy in the eyes of the Rwandans, it also clearly established the racial supremacy of the German ruling class. With the Belgian assumption of power, the sharing of administrative power was continued. And although there was an attempt to more rigidly define the racial hegemonic system, the Belgians resurrected the German system. Under the Belgians, this resurrected system assumed a more restrictive and more violently contrived system of racial exploitation. It should be pointed out, however, that this class system was only illusionary. Tutsi status was determined by the ownership of ten or more cattle. By administrative controls and military intervention, Hutus (and other lower status Rwandans) were prevented from achieving higher status. What resulted was a caste like system of racial hegemony preserved by an increasingly vicious military. Violence was the natural bi-product of this system, as the legitimacy of the system came into question by lower status Hutu farmers.

Given the assumptions of my initial typology, it seems that there is some evidence to support the contention that variability of racial hegemonic structures is associated with variability of colonial situations. But at this point evidence
supporting this link has only been provided through the case of Rwanda, and we need to look at other case studies and situations to see if it holds. While we could continue our examination of Belgian colonies, greater confidence in our typology would come from expanding our base of observations.

Secondly, I identified a colonial situation characterized by democratically oriented weak military and/or industrial bases. This was the case with the Russian colony of Alaska. Based upon our model, and as evidenced by this case, the Russian imperial elite were unable to establish dominance, but had to rely upon power-sharing arrangements. The relative weak position of the Russian elite was also exemplified by the ‘frontier’ society which developed. Under this structure, the absence of sufficient Russian women resulted in the sexual exploitation of some native women, and the ‘encouragement’ of others to marry Russian men. Although this frontier society became a cultural hybrid, it nevertheless resulted in the production of a racial hierarchy, racial ideologies of superiority, and a racialized social structure which enhanced the status of Russian racialized elite at the expense of native racialized non-elite. Company educated Creoles – the offspring of Russian men and Alaskan native women – were given marginal access to success and upward mobility. Hegemony was complete with the establishment of both religious and educational institutions which served to indoctrinate, legitimize and perpetuate the racial order. Consent of the governed was thus acquired as they also came to perceive the system as being if not natural, then at least necessary.

Our third colonial situation was typified as being associated with democratic colonial elite possessing either strong military or industrial resources. Within these situations we would expect to see an imperial elite, although militarily and/or industrially relatively strong, to be an able to dominate these colonial situations. But as implied above, the political ideology of democracy, suggests that the exogenous elite will choose to rule indirectly.

Through the brief analysis of Ghanaian colonial history it was demonstrated that although the British recognized a council of chiefs, it was actually British Royalty that ruled. And while this rule was described in rather civilized or humanitarian terms, exploitation resulted nevertheless. Such indirect rule, often described as ‘enlightened colonial powers’, provides the illusion of democracy, was amply illustrated in the case of the British aligning themselves with the Asante indigenous elite. The primary purposes of the latter (starting with educational institutions) were to assure the proper training, leadership,
and system integrity to maximize exploitative operations. The whole structure, under the ruse of democratic or enlightened colonial systems, produced the illusion of freedom while maximizing the exploitative capacities of the colonial situation. Racial ideologies, and hence racial hegemony, came into existence through the implementation of educational, religious, and cultural structures and institutions. As with other colonial situations, any threat to the productivity, exploited profits or political system were harshly met by domestic, colonial powers. Ghanaian efforts to challenge or rebel against these structures were often swiftly and cruelly met by both military and police powers of the state. In those situations when the Ghanaian state were ill equipped to quell the unrest, then the naked power of the British crown came out of the shadows. We concluded that British Ghana provided ample evidence of the utility of our typology.

Finally, we looked at the Japanese colony of Korea as evidence of a strong, non-democratically based hegemonic structure. As expected, given our typology, Japan ruled Korea with an iron hand. Their power was sufficient to rule directly, the system produced merely overlaid the Japanese society upon that of the Korean. All elements of Korea – cultural, social, economic, and political – were subsumed under Japanese racial hegemony. Koreans stripped of their identity, status, and power – although promised equality rarely enjoyed anything but racially motivated brutality, savagery, and exploitation. The supremacy of the Japanese was thus imbrued into all aspects of the Korean society. And while limited rebellion existed, even non-violent protests were quickly and savagely put down. Based upon our typology and theoretical expectations, the Korean case supports our typology.

In conclusion we have demonstrated that all imperial colonial situations are associated with racial violence, racial repression, racial exploitation, and racial oppression. And it is these – violence, repression, exploitation, and racial oppression – which become fashioned into racial hierarchies and racial ideologies. As these hierarchies and ideologies become legitimised, accepted as given (especially by the oppressed) then we can speak of the development of racial hegemonies. (Even though accepted, such structures are nevertheless challenged by various maroons, or indigenous revolutionary groups.)

Our purpose was to demonstrate that while racial hegemonies appear to be constant across the various colonial situations. The type of racial hegemony produced varies according to the form of colonial situation. Simply put, different colonial situations produce different types of racial hegemonies. I
do not argue here that these typologies are the final word. Instead, I offer them as an initial offering. As such they reflect my best thinking to date. If they are successful, then they will produce the necessary scholarly inquiry and intellectual development which will provide refinements, or the wholesale replacement of the entire model. Either way, my goals will have been accomplished as we recognize the variability in racial hegemonies. Such discoveries will also lead to the understanding that, since one size does not fit all, variability among racial hegemony types also requires variability in solutions. Such recognition can only lead to better policies, revolutionary movements, and social justice projects.

References


Spellmeyer, Hans 1931, *Deutsche Kolonialpolitik im Reichstag (German Colonial Policy in the Reichstag (1))*. Stuttgart.

https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/swb/vol1/iss1/5  
DOI: 10.1163/187219106777304368
Wales, Nym 1942, ‘Rebel Korea’, Pacific Affairs, 15, 1: 25–42.


Copyright of Societies Without Borders is the property of Brill Academic Publishers and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.