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Political and social hegemony has always extended to control over water, food and land. Transnational corporations are the ones now appropriating and exploiting nature and native knowledge of how to utilize it – a practice known as biopiracy. This refers to genetic or biological resources being patented and used without the consent and financial compensation of the land of origin, the local communities or the indigenous peoples who previously maintained and used those resources. Biopiracy concentrates on the “mega diversity” countries of Mexico, India, Brazil, Indonesia and Australia, known for their exceptionally high level of cultural and biological variety.The access to and development of cheap fossil and biological raw materials, as well as the progressive capitalization on social areas that have not yet been directly exploited for monetary gain, are distinguishing features of Fordism. This process is also referred to as “internal conquest” in analogy to the “external conquest” of colonialism, and, like the latter, opens up new opportunities for capital expansion. Systematic, and just as illegal, was the biopiracy that historically took place and is still being practiced in the botanical gardens of the North.

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