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Subscription to
Editorial

Of the four articles that comprise the bulk of this issue, the first, by Markakis, returns to an analysis of the Ethiopian state, that most difficult of countries to comprehend, since the removal of Emperor Haile Selasse. The Review has already sponsored the publication of Addis Hiwet's *Ethiopia: From Autocracy to Revolution* (1975) (which is now out of print) and Markakis's own book, with Ayele, *Class and Revolution in Ethiopia* (1978). Here, Markakis develops a conception of the society as one governed by a 'garrison socialism'. Second, we are publishing two articles, by Snyder and Bernstein, that bear in different ways on the commoditisation of peasant agriculture. While Snyder is particularly concerned at the process whereby legal forms alter in response to the new economic forces that impinge on a rural community, Bernstein is preoccupied with the changes in the circuits of peasant economy itself and on how the peasantry relates to the state and to its practices. Finally, Jacklyn Cock's article on white women and black domestic servants in South Africa examines the conditions for the reproduction of labour power, dwelling on the household as the site of important contradictions within South African society.

The discussion of garrison socialism by Markakis raises — explicitly and implicitly — three important issues. Firstly, and most obviously, there are the manifest contradictions produced by an attempt to promote socialism through revolution from above. The project would seem to be daunting enough in the context of the underdevelopment and the variety of modes of production found in Ethiopia. That it is being attempted by a military regime intent on subordinating all political expression to its own state apparatus only makes the problems all the more stark. Nor can the implications of this analysis be confined simply to this type of regime for there are clearly lessons to be learned by all revolutionary movements. As Markakis notes, there has been a tendency on the part of many intellectuals, impatient with the seeming inertia of mass action, to espouse the implantation of socialism from above. The problem tends to be that as it becomes increasingly difficult to build genuine mass organisations, regimes settle for central direction and coercion. Even attempts to create a mass party are, as described by Markakis, all too resonant of less-socialist experiments such as those attempted by Nasser, Ayub Khan or Mobutu. Clearly the question of liberty cannot be divorced from that of building socialism.

The question of democracy in socialism is the second issue raised by this
paper. Markakis shows clearly that the roots of the repressive character of military rule is to be located in the nature of the institution itself, rather than in its class character. The army incorporated soldiers and officers from various classes and regional interests. It was for this reason that they could identify with mass grievances and promote both the coup which unseated Haile Selassie and later embark upon a programme of building socialism. But the ruling officers have not turned out to be ‘organic intellectuals’ of the popular classes. Instead they have asserted a coercive and increasingly bureaucratic dominion over various class interests and have asserted a determination to preserve a unitary and highly centralised state in the face of regional grievances. That armies are by definition authoritarian, hierarchical structures is well known and the authoritarian tendencies of this one are not surprising. But the matter goes further than that. As Markakis shows, the army has continued to perform the functions for which it was created and trained under the imperial state. It does so now in the name of an increasingly bureaucratic and repressive socialism rather than of an imperial despotism but it is perhaps not so surprising that some Ethiopians have difficulty in identifying the difference.

Finally, Markakis raises a set of extremely important questions which need further exploration (something the Review hopes to do in a later issue), namely the precise nature of interests variously described as nationalism or the nationalist question, as the problem of ‘ethnicity’ or as ‘regionalism’. Clearly the most immediate and profound challenge to the regime in Addis Ababa stems from the various national liberation and/or separatist movements which seek to secede from Ethiopia and which have not so far been successfully defeated through war. Markakis’ paper is not addressed to the problems of conceptualising and explaining the nature of this political tide, but his analysis suggests clearly that it has a material basis, deriving from a history of subordination and exploitation of peripheral areas and communities by the Abysinian heartland of the Ethiopian empire. So pervasive has this experience of oppression been that in a number of cases the separatist movements have managed to unite populations across class lines against the government in Addis Ababa. To this extent the government has inherited an intractable problem from the ancient regime and perhaps should not be blamed for the problems that have ensued. But Markakis also argues that the failure of the regime to give adequate recognition to these aspirations has exacerbated the situation. More interestingly, he indicates that such movements have frequently been fueled by the regime’s repression of the radical intelligentsia and of peasant class demands, resulting in these interests then being articulated through regional organisations. The implications of the analysis are that, contrary to a view often proposed in Marxist circles, such movements cannot be relegated to formulae about ‘false consciousness’ or ‘imperialist intrigue’ but must be understood as concrete material interests rooted in the peculiarities of incorporation into the capitalist mode of production and closely articulated with class interests.

Snyder's empirical material is by contrast, drawn from the case of Banjul rice production in southwest Senegal. He shows how this small social formation had its major social institutions undermined by the penetration of merchant capital (1850-1900) and how, since that date, the way in which
labour power is reproduced has been fundamentally altered. Snyder carefully plots how rice production was originally organised by the circulation of rice, labour and land, the principal production units being the 'household' and the 'cell'. For those readers unfamiliar with anthropological usage it might be necessary to explain that 'agnates', a term used frequently in the paper, are defined as 'kinsfolk, men and women, related to each other by descent from a common male ancestor' (Dictionary of Sociology). In the case of the Banjul household, the typical unit comprise two male agnates, their wives, unmarried children and dependents. But while males held more dominant positions (e.g. in terms of access to rice plots), the sexual division of labour was generally complementary, if not entirely equal. A major form of reciprocity was gamoen, a precapitalist legal and social relationship which, if we understand Snyder correctly, acted to regulate the allocation and hierarchy of social goods, especially the labour of dependents, in a situation where labour-power had not yet taken the form of a commodity.

The arrival of capitalist social relations of production and exchange altered these former patterns of reciprocity. Migration, taxation and a more specialised division of labour combined to radically change the relationships between elders and dependents and between individual peasants. Snyder goes on to meticulously chart the shift in the meaning and practice of gamoen, as it adapted to the new social forces. His studies lead him to propose four major hypotheses which should inform our understanding of the evolution of legal norms in rural African communities. First, the transformation of legal ideas and processes cannot be understood without reference to the subsumption of local economic activities to national and international relations of production. Second, he convincingly argues that so-called 'customary law' is nothing else but the legal expression of the integration of rural people into the framework of peripheral, colonial capitalism. Third, that the transmutation of local practices and concepts varies with the forms of capital and the historical circumstances accompanying its penetration. Finally, he hypotheses that, though precapitalist legal forms may not be formally replaced by those associated with advanced metropolitan countries, the appearance of continuity (as in gamoen) is belied by a profound change in usage. Though Snyder provides a damaging critique of many conventional anthropological and legal accounts, his article also has implications, as he hints, for those of us who are concerned with base/superstructure relations and the concrete social processes that arise after we've formally adopted the phrase 'the articulation of modes of production'.

Bernstein is also concerned with the consequences that arise from the commoditisation of peasant agriculture, this time in Tanzania. His article should be read in conjunction with his earlier piece 'Capital and the Peasantry', which appeared in the Review 10. Here he successfully shows how the state and the parastatals have enormously expanded their functions and power in the rural sector — in effect to secure the intensification of peasant labour. The ideological appeals to the Arusha Declaration cannot disguise the fact that 'the modernisation of agriculture' is sustained only by what Bernstein calls 'utopian voluntarism' and an authoritarian bureaucratic intervention.

In what is certainly the most sophisticated reading of peasant-state relations
in Tanzania that we are aware of, Bernstein illuminates the contradictions that arise from the state's attempt to raise the level of peasant production, against a background of the declining terms of trade for Tanzanian agricultural products. Within the state, the technical and managerial apparatuses conflict with political and ideological demands. While the managers press for instrumental effectiveness, they are confronted with inadequate technical, financial and political means to effect their programmes. Further, while the agricultural parastatals drift out of the control of the party, their technical functions are impossible to sustain unless the party acts as a 'mobiliser' of peasant labour. Mobilisation on any extended scale in turn requires a degree of coercion that does not square with the ideological commitment to egalitarianism and the provision of basic amenities. The result is a good deal of demoralisation and the growth of collective forms of resistance by the peasantry.

Jacklyn Cock's article is concerned with the relationship between domestic labour — performed in South Africa by white wives and especially black domestic servants — and the reproduction of capitalist wage labour. She starts from the insights provided by the 'domestic labour debate'. For those readers who are not familiar with this debate which has scarcely featured in this journal, it may be necessary to outline its elements (a short Bibliography is provided at the end of her article). Briefly, the debate arose from the fact that from a Marxist theory of capitalist wage labour it proved impossible to understand gender divisions in social production — the way in which men and women occupied different positions in the wage labour force. The debate therefore focused on women's 'core' role in the household and argued that domestic labour performed two vital functions for capital. First, it produced new labourers on a generational basis (the bearing and rearing of children) and secondly, it reproduced labourers on a daily basis (feeding, clothing etc. the labourer). The function of domestic labour was to keep the cost of reproduction of labour power low and therefore domestic labour, with its peculiar property of being privatised and outside capitalist relations of production, was nevertheless a prerequisite of capital accumulation.

The initial conclusions of this debate, conducted at a high level of abstraction, failed to address several problems crucial to feminist struggle. First, why did women perform domestic labour: what was the reason for gender division and women's oppression in the family and did not men, as well as capital, benefit from women’s services and therefore from women’s oppression? These questions raised the ideological and material functions of the family. In what way was women’s subordinate position in the family part of the process of reproduction of capitalist relations of production including the acceptance of divisions within the working class? Cock touches on this point when she talks of the way in which the institution of black domestic service socialises whites into the dominant ideological order of race in a way parallel to that of sexism. Indeed, the conditions under which black women are employed as quasi-family labour and their wages often paid as if they were pocket money corresponds in many ways to women’s subordination in the capitalist household.

Secondly, it became apparent that from an historical perspective the private
character of domestic labour, and therefore its fixed value in relation to the reproduction of labour power, had not been constant. In periods of economic growth, for example, the socialisation of domestic labour (creches, convenience foods) financed by the state and/or capital has been associated with the increased participation of women in wage labour, particularly in secondary industry, the expansion of which concerns the increased production of commodities for workers' consumption made possible by higher wages. In periods of recession, the socialisation of domestic labour is arrested, domestic labour is intensified and women's participation in wage labour declines. The sexual division of labour in the household, therefore, also forms part of the process of reproduction of a reserve army of labour. Women enter into wage work on the assumption that part of their costs of reproduction are covered by the male wage and therefore women are low-paid and governed by poor working conditions and job insecurity characteristic of this major division in the working class.

It is the implication of these tendencies that Cock explores in a preliminary way when examining the relatively low level of socialisation of domestic labour in South Africa. The existence of black women's domestic labour (in the Bantustans as well as in the proletarian household) keeps the costs of reproduction of black labour low even though the basic assumption that black women have access to a male wage is scarcely guaranteed. Their employment in white households releases women for wage labour and sustains the high level of subsistence of the white working class. She highlights many of the contradictory tendencies present in the conditions of reproduction of wage labour arguing, pace the domestic labour debate, that its characteristics can only be understood at the level of concrete class practices. She suggests that despite their lack of organisation, black women servants are less prone to accept their subordinate position than are white women (although it might be pointed out here that there are many factors which would lead white women to identify with their husband's class position). Finally, she considers possible trends in the institution of domestic labour in South Africa taking into account the fact that any amelioration of the extreme exploitation of black women workers under the present conditions of capitalist accumulation is likely to exacerbate the acute levels of unemployment to which they are already subject.

We also wish to draw our readers' attention to two major Briefings on two of the Francophone states of West Africa — Chad and Upper Volta. The bankruptcy of France's pre-Mitterrand policies towards its ex-colonies and the intervention, real or imaginary, of Libya in the geo-politics of the Saharan and Sahel states, have altered the conditions for nationalist struggles in these areas. Joffe describes the processes which have made Chad a battle-ground for fifteen years. Libya's intervention brought temporary respite but few of the many factions supporting the GUNT favour its continued influence within Chad's boundaries while surrounding states are equally resistant to any consolidation of Libyan suzerainty. Libya's withdrawal from Chad, he argues, would enhance its own stature within Africa and provide FROLINAT with the opportunity to implement its democratic nationalist political programmes. Taylor's short article on Upper Volta shows that the ending of that country's 'special democracy' was nothing to grieve over. Such democracy as there was was sustained by the
activity of the trade union movement and not by the people's elected representatives. But the basis of trade union resistance is very narrow; it has as yet built no links with the oppressed peasantry and the new military government will not be any more progressive than the previous civilian one.

Robin Cohen, Pepe Roberts, Morris Szeftel

The *Review of African Political Economy* is planning to produce a special issue on the Sudan towards the second half of 1982. And we would like to extend now an invitation for possible contributions.

Possible themes and subject areas include:

— debate on the role of the national bourgeoisie in the national democratic revolution;
— systems of colonialism and neo-colonialism in the Sudan;
— the position of the Sudan in regard to imperialist strategy for the region;
— agrarian structure and agrarian reform;
— history and experience of the working class and progressive movements;
— the post-colonial state and capitalist development;
— the question of the South;
— underdevelopment and regional planning.

This list is by no means exhaustive and papers dealing with other matters relating to the Sudan will be welcomed and reviewed for possible inclusion in the issue.

We would like to invite those who are interested to contribute to the successful appearance of this issue. Contributions in any form (articles, briefings, debate, etc.) should adhere to the standard format and style of the *Review*, a summary of which appears on the inside back cover of all past issues. Potential contributions should be submitted not later than June 1982 and should be sent to:

Carolyn Baylies  
Ibrahim Kersany  
School of Economic Studies  
The University of Leeds  
Leeds LS2 9JT, U.K.
The Military State and Ethiopia’s Path to ‘Socialism’

John Markakis

This paper describes the course of Ethiopia’s revolution since 1974 and the problems inherent in attempting to build socialism from above, through the agency of the military. The collapse of Haile Selassie’s absolutist empire followed, and encouraged a groundswell of mass demands for the amelioration of numerous class, regional and other experiences of exploitation and oppression. Although these interests were represented within the army that took power, the military state has asserted its primacy over all class forces, and its commitment to a highly centralised Ethiopia against all regional demands. Markakis shows that ‘garrison socialism’ has thus resulted in increasing coercion as attempts at independent class action are crushed, in mounting regional opposition from the peripheries of the old empire — itself often a consequence of frustrated class aspirations — and an intensification of wars against nationalist and separatist movements.

Socialism nowadays comes in many guises. In black Africa in recent years it has appeared in military uniform in Benin, Congo (Brazzaville), Madagascar, Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia. Quite likely this will become the fashion in the continent, where conventional methods of engineering political legitimacy have been discredited and orthodox strategies for promoting development have failed. Unlike the routine intervention of the military in politics designed to shore up the sagging post-colonial system, the radical military coup is aimed against that system. As a result it inspires visions of a badly needed social transformation and attracts, initially at least, significant popular support. When the soldier-politicians make bold to invoke Marxism and use the rhetoric of the class struggle, then the vision becomes that of a socialist revolution regardless of the objective conditions in their society. Such invocations generate sympathy in progressive circles abroad among those who, having despaired of popular initiative in Africa, are inclined to disregard the contradictions inherent in attempts to impose socialism from the top. Sooner or later these contradictions manifest themselves, forcing a reappraisal accompanied with a sense of betrayal. Both the initial elation and the subsequent letdown have been greater in the case of Ethiopia, where the intervention of the military has proved more radical, violent and controversial than elsewhere in Africa. While there is no doubt that the revolution of 1974 in that country was the outcome of class conflict and that it set off a process of social transformation, the direction this process has taken under military rule is a matter of continuing bloody dispute. The discussion in this paper traces and interprets the course of
events since 1974, following what might be termed Ethiopia’s path to ‘gar-
risson socialism’.

The Ancien Regime
The collapse of the ancien regime was caused by a juncture of elemental
forces arising out of national and class conflicts. The old regime’s favourite
appellation, ‘Ethiopian Empire’, was not a misnomer. The Empire had been
created during the last quarter of the 19th century by the Christian feudal
society of the northern highlands, the Abyssinians of old, through the con-
quest of the southern half of the present state. The northerners took most of
the good land in the south as the spoils of victory, and reduced the Muslim
and pagan inhabitants of the region to the status of vassals. Class and ethnic
divisions — the lines separating Abyssinian and others, lord and peasant,
Christian and non-Christian — coincided ominously within the empire. Lit-
tle changed in that equation during this century. In 1974, most of the large
landowners in southern Ethiopia were Christians of northern origin, while
their tenants comprised the majority of the indigenous population. It was
the landless peasantry in this region that joined the revolution spontaneous-
ly and was to gain most from the land reform enacted subsequently.

Because the Abyssinian system of feudal rule could not be transplanted easi-
ly in the midst of an alien and hostile peasantry in the south, it became
necessary to reform the state by reinforcing and renovating its central struc-
ture under the throne. A process of centralisation-cum-modernisation was
promoted during the first half of this century. The functions of government
were institutionalised in a bureaucratic form. Standing army and police
forces were established. A system of modern education was founded also to
produce the required manpower for the state’s new apparatus. Interrupted
by the Italian occupation from 1936 to 1941, the process of centralisation
was resumed in the post-war period and raised the power of the throne to its
absolutist zenith, in the familiar final phase of feudalism. Haile Selassie’s
remarkable reign spans the entire period.

In the post-war period the renovation of the imperial state was substantially
assisted by the involvement of western powers in the internal affairs of
Ethiopia. The emergence of the Middle East as an arena of great power
competition greatly enhanced Ethiopia’s strategic importance in the region.
In the early 1950s, the United States replaced Britain as the patron of the
imperial regime, providing military aid, economic assistance, capital invest-
ment and trade links. Nourished with American aid the Ethiopian army
became the largest force in sub-Saharan Africa in the mid-1960s. In the
course of two decades (1950s and 1960s) Ethiopia received more military aid
from the United States than the rest of the states in Africa combined. In
return, the United States acquired a pliable ally in that volatile region, and
was allowed to establish a huge, self-contained air base at Samara devoted
to communication and intelligence functions.

The expansion of the state’s repressive apparatus was required to meet an
assortment of increasingly serious challenges to the integrity of the empire
and the position of its ruling class. The latter was a hybrid group comprising
a stratum of imperial retainers with modern education groomed to manage
the newly-established administrative and military apparatus at the centre,
and the feudal aristocracy which, though it had relinquished most of its
traditional ruling functions and some of its power, retained intact its provincial authority and held on to its massive landholdings. The army and police were continually engaged against nationalist movements and peasant uprisings, while more recently they were also used against workers and the radical student movement which harassed the regime during its last decade.

Dissident nationalism posed the first and gravest challenge. The struggle of the Ogaden Somali against the imperial regime spanned the entire post-war period. Inevitably, it turned to irredentism when the Somali Republic attained independence in 1960, and the conflict kept Ethiopia and Somalia on the brink of war for several years. In the early 1960s it spread into the adjacent Bale province, where the Muslim Oromo population made common cause with their Somali coreligionists.

The nationalist struggle in Eritrea began in 1961. The area had come under Italian colonial rule late in the 19th Century, at the time of the Ethiopian expansion southwards. The expulsion of the Italians in 1941 brought Eritrea under British rule and launched a struggle concerning the region’s future. The desire for independence, particularly strong among Muslims, who comprise one-half of the population, was countered by a claim for unification with Ethiopia, forcefully promoted by the imperial regime. A compromise worked out by the great powers and sponsored by the United Nations in 1951 gave Eritrea self-government within a federal union with Ethiopia. Eritrea’s model constitution and open political system made it an unsettling contrast to the feudal domain of Haile Selassie, and offered no guarantee against the growth of dissident nationalism. No sooner had it been agreed upon than the regime in Addis Ababa set about undermining the arrangement. Ten years later it succeeded in incorporating Eritrea into the imperial state as a simple province. Immediately thereafter, the Eritrean liberation movement began an armed struggle for independence which continues to this day, having earned already the unenviable title of ‘Africa’s longest war’.

The development of the urban sector during the post-war years and the appearance of new social groups produced additional sources of conflict. Welcomed by an obliging Ethiopian government which offered every possible inducement and also itself invested heavily in the development of infrastructure, foreign capital was attracted into manufacturing for import substitution during the 1950s and 1960s. With only minimal participation from private domestic capital, Ethiopia acquired a modest, modern economic sector which was mostly foreign-owned. By the end of the 1960s, three-quarters of the private paid-up share capital in manufacturing was in foreign hands, as was the management of nearly all member concerns of the Federation of Employers of Ethiopia. Foreign firms also controlled import and export trade, while expatriate communities settled in the country dominated the intermediate trade sector. Confined to local and retail trade, the Ethiopian trader community, which was predominantly Muslim, nursed a double grievance against the imperial regime which championed Christianity and protected foreign merchant capital. Thus instead of fostering the growth of an Ethiopian middle class with a base in the modern economic sector, nascent capitalism actually inhibited the development of such a class, thereby precluding a bourgeois succession to the ancient regime.
Nevertheless, capital created its counterpart, wage labour. The Ethiopian working class grew to a very modest size by the mid-1960s. Thereafter it ceased to grow, as preference for capital intensive production methods reduced the capacity for labour absorption in industry to nil. Employment in manufacturing never rose much above 50,000, out of an estimated total of 400,000 in urban productive employment; at the close of the 1960s the population of Ethiopia was estimated at about 25 million. In order to maintain a cheap, docile labour force as an incentive for foreign investment, the imperial regime forbade labour organisation until 1962, when its absence became an embarrassment. Thereafter, it closely regimented the nascent trade union movement, which proved unable to defend its members against the crude exploitation characteristic of infant capitalism. Wages of unskilled workers remained the same for more than 15 years, despite the inflationary trend in prices during the last years of the regime. Young and raw though it was, the Ethiopian proletariat could not fail to perceive the linkage between the imperial state and foreign capital. Frequent, forceful intervention of the first on behalf of the second during industrial disputes provided a constant demonstration of this fact, and helped develop the political consciousness of the workers.

The intelligentsia, yet another social group spawned by the ancient regime, comprised the administrative and technical salariat in the public and private sectors. Its size was small; according to one estimate, the number of university and secondary school graduates in 1967 did not exceed 40,000. Until then, while the public and private sectors expanded steadily and offered secure employment, educated Ethiopians enjoyed an enviable standard of life and rising social status. Despite growing intellectual alienation and political frustration, they appeared a submissive group. This was not to last, because the long term prospects for this group were unpromising. The ancien regime had relegated it to a permanently subordinate position in the social structure. The intelligentsia could not aspire to the role of a national bourgeoisie, since foreign capital and management had largely preempted this role. Nor could many educated Ethiopians hope to rise to the higher levels of bureaucratic oficialdom, because promotion to that level, always limited by the presence of the imperial retainer clique, proved increasingly difficult as the public sector became crowded with relatively young people.

The complete alienation and political radicalisation of the intelligentsia in the late 1960s coincided with the onset of unemployment and inflation. The closure of the Suez Canal in 1967 caused a sharp decline in trade and contracted the main source of state revenue. A parallel decline in the price of coffee, Ethiopia's main export, further diminished state revenue. As a result, the expansion of the state sector was halted, and the educated stratum was deprived of its main source of employment. This coincided with the stagnation in the employment capacity of the private sector, and produced an employment crisis that remained unresolved until the demise of the regime. Unemployment hit the educated group for the first time and even university graduates had to scramble for positions. Furthermore, world inflationary pressures were manifested locally by 1969 in rising import prices, and were reinforced by the impact of domestic drought which drove food prices upward in the early 1970s.
The ‘February Revolution’
The popular upheaval that became known as the February Revolution erupted in the middle of that month in 1974. It began with a strike of taxi drivers in Addis Ababa provoked by an increase of 50 per cent in the price of petrol. During the months that followed, a mounting wave of strikes, boycotts and demonstrations hit the urban sector with cumulative force, loosening the eroded foundation of the regime. The movement involved all the alienated social groups in the urban sector, including students, teachers, workers, civil servants, traders, Muslims; even a section of the Christian clergy joined it. The teeming crowds of the urban unemployed participated enthusiastically. At the same time, scattered peasant attacks in the southern provinces put landlords and officials to flight and paralysed the provincial government in that region. Soon the peoples’ demands became explicitly political, ranging from the dismissal and punishment of corrupt officials to a call for constitutional government. Class alliances were forged in action, as workers and the intelligentsia joined forces in a direct attack on imperial offici aldom and foreign capitalism. Both these groups championed the cause of the landless peasant and attacked the landlords. In the midst of it all, Ethiopians were stunned by revelations about the lethal progress of a major famine in the northeastern region, which had begun a year earlier and was to claim ultimately an estimated 200,000 lives. Though forewarned, the imperial government had taken no action to prevent the catastrophe. It had exerted some effect only for the purpose of suppressing public mention of it. To that end, it rejected all offers for assistance from abroad, and involved the international aid agencies in a conspiracy of silence through which it sought to smother the calamity. When the truth became known, it was skillfully used by the opposition to dissolve the remnants of imperial mystique still clinging to the minds of the common people.

The class struggle that was tearing the fabric of Ethiopian society was faithfully reflected within the ranks of the military, producing a series of mutinies that shattered the regime’s main instrument of repression. The initial mutinies were provoked by the harsh conditions of continuous service in remote areas of Eritrea, Bale and the Ogaden, while fighting inconclusive wars against nationalist guerrilla forces. The inadequacy of salaries and allowances were additional grievances, exacerbated by contrast with the prerequisites with which Haile Selassie sought to buy the loyalty of the higher officer corps. The initiative in these affairs was taken by non-commissioned officers and ordinary soldiers who arrested all officers and took command of their units. This element in the military represented the peasant class from which it was recruited.

The majority of the junior officers shared the social background and aspirations of the intelligentsia. Founded in 1957, the Military Academy at Harar drew its students from among the better secondary school graduates, while another training school at Holeta put capable non-commissioned officers through an abbreviated officer training course. By 1974, the oldest graduates of the Harar academy had reached the rank of major. The junior officers proved highly sympathetic to the mutinous mood of the soldiery, and were able to participate from the outset in the military rebellion. Eventually they assumed a guiding role, and emerged ultimately as the dominant element in the Co-ordinating Committee of the Armed Forces which took
command of the military establishment in June 1974.

The Dergue (‘Committee’), as it became known, was partly elected and partly co-opted to represent the various branches and units of the military establishment and, later, the police and territorial army. Initially it was composed of 120 persons, ranging in rank from plain soldier to major. Subsequently the Dergue rejected demands to renew its membership through election, and to fill the vacancies created by the purging of over one-half of its original members. Within a short time after its formation, the Dergue decapitated the military hierarchy by decimating the higher officer corps through execution, arrest and dismissal. A series of arrests during the summer months netted also most of the high officialdom of the ancien regime, and isolated the octogenarian Haile Selassie, who made no serious effort to stem the encroachment into the imperial prerogative by what foreign journalists dubbed the ‘creeping coup’.

While the Dergue felt its way cautiously towards a coup d’etat, a powerful ideological current flowed through the popular movement. Its source was a group of radical intellectuals who had espoused Marxism in the 1960s. They formed the core of two generations of university and secondary school students who had mounted a militant opposition to the imperial regime during its last decade. Now the radicals aimed to raise the class consciousness of the masses and to guide the popular movement towards a social revolution. They defined the nature of the struggle as anti-feudal, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. They urged the soldiers to acknowledge the class character of the conflict, and demanded the overthrow of the imperial regime as a prerequisite to fundamental change. While urging the military in that direction, they also warned against a military takeover of the state. Pointing out that a social revolution could not be achieved without popular participation, they called for the formation of a Peoples’ Government. The radical message was formulated in clear and concise form, had a widespread circulation through a regular underground press, and gained immense influence among the urban population. It had a catalytic effect by providing a common ideological focus for the aspirations of the various social groups swept into the revolutionary current that was battering the regime. Though barely familiar with ideological notions, the disadvantaged classes instinctively responded to the radical initiative, thus making it the dominant orientation of the uprising against the ancien regime. In the course of the year, all organised groups, such as workers, teachers and students adopted resolutions which reflected vividly the influence of the radical left.

Military Rule and Class Conflict
At the outset, the Dergue appeared ideologically innocent and without any programme. Its motto ‘Ethiopia First’ seemed a typical nationalist clarion call. The Dergue’s initial list of objectives, issued in July 1974, was a familiar catchall which included, among other worthy goals, the promotion of tourism. It proclaimed the ‘dignity of labour’, but made no mention of the class struggle, nor did it betray any ideological affinity. The soldiers’ conception of social transformation at the time appeared to encompass simply the elimination of corruption, nepotism and tax evasion, as well as the promotion of literacy, hygiene and other instrumental notions of development. When the Dergue removed one prime minister in July, it
replaced him with another member of the high aristocracy. The Dergue seriously considered retaining Haile Selassie on the throne as a constitutional monarch and when, after months of hesitation, it deposed him (on 12 September 1974), the soldiers named his son as his successor. At the same time, the Dergue renamed itself the Provisional Military Advisory Council (PMAC) and assumed the powers of the state.

The new regime could hardly afford to ignore the social forces that had enabled it to seize power. In fact, it proved keen to accommodate them and gain their support. The soldiers themselves were quite receptive to the radical formulation that had captured the popular mood. In fairly short order, they sought to make up for their ideological naiveté and lack of programme by adopting the radical orientation of the Marxist intellectuals and by appropriating most of their programmatic suggestions as well. This alignment seemed natural enough, given the congruence of class between the popular and the military movements. It was also an expedient one, for it was calculated to win popular support and provide a legitimising ideology for the new regime.

Once in power, the PMAC came under great pressure to establish its revolutionary credentials by dismantling the socioeconomic foundations of the old regime. The radicals advanced their own motto, 'The Broad Masses of Ethiopia First', and subjected the inexperienced soldier rulers to withering criticism of their every move or failure to move. Specific policy proposals came from youthful radicals who gained rapid promotion in the civil service under the new regime, and from a coterie of radical intellectuals who acted as advisers to leading members of the Dergue. These and their followers formed a minority faction within the radical intelligentsia which chose to collaborate with the military regime. Under this pressure, the PMCA began the nationalisation of the means of production at the beginning of 1975 by taking over most large scale manufacturing concerns in the urban sector, as well as banking, financial and insurance institutions. A 'Declaration on Economic Policy of Socialist Ethiopia' was issued at this time. It envisaged a three-tiered structure with state ownership of basic industry, a state-private joint sector in some areas, and a private sector of considerable extent, including trade, transport, food processing, hotels and small-scale manufacturing.

In March of the same year, a sweeping land reform decree was proclaimed, which went further than most Ethiopians had anticipated. All agricultural land was nationalised, possession was limited to a maximum of ten hectares, and the sale or rent of land was prohibited. Thus both landlordism and tenancy were eliminated at one stroke. Peasant associations were formed to implement the provisions of the reform, which included the redistribution of available land into equal shares within each association. All matters concerning land came under the jurisdiction of the associations, thus putting the notoriously venal Ethiopian judiciary out of business in the rural areas. The associations were also entrusted with the administration of local affairs and maintenance of law and order, thereby greatly reducing the scope of action of the equally corrupt police and provincial administration.

In July 1975, urban land and extra housing were also nationalised, ownership being limited to one housing unit per family. As in the case of
agricultural land, no compensation was offered. Urban dwellers associations were formed to administer housing and neighbourhood affairs. Rents were substantially reduced for the cheaper housing, benefiting the lowest income group.

The reforms were enthusiastically received, and popular organisations associated with their implementation sprang into life overnight. The emancipated southern peasants rose to the occasion by their eager participation in the peasant associations, which showed promise of becoming instruments of genuine local self-government. The peasants received enthusiastic support in this unfamiliar task from the many thousands of students and teachers who were deployed in the countryside on a government sponsored campaign for rural development that was to last until mid-1976. In their eagerness to foster peasant self-assertion and to rid the countryside of landlords and officials, the students came increasingly into conflict with the military regime which depended on the existing state structure to maintain control of the country. Even so, the upper level of that structure was purged of the imperial retainer and aristocratic elements, which were replaced by members of the intelligentsia.

Despite the 'provisional' tag in its title, the PMAC was quick to formulate an appropriate rationalisation for prolonging its rule indefinitely. The defence of the socialist revolution was defined as the primary task of all progressive forces. Given the absence of political organisation in Ethiopia, this task had to be assumed by the armed forces. The 'men in uniform', as the soldiers were called, had become the vanguard of the revolution by historical necessity. The insistent call of the radical left for a peoples' government was rejected as untimely, and its proponents were dealt with increasing severity. To ensure its monopoly of power, the PMAC set about dismantling the few existing organisations that could possibly serve as vehicles for political opposition.

The first victim was the Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Unions (CELU) which claimed about 50,000 members at the time. CELU had come into its own as the workers' representative in March 1974, when it staged an unprecedented general strike, and succeeded in forcing the resignation of the imperial cabinet, another event without precedent in Ethiopia. During the hectic months of 1974, this formerly docile labour organisation staked increasingly radical positions under pressure from the rank and file and the goading of radical intellectuals who infiltrated its inner councils. Barely a week after the military takeover, CELU called a general strike in support of the demand for a peoples' government. Premature and ill-prepared, the action failed and brought CELU under heavy pressure from the new regime, which determined to turn the labour organisation into an instrument of its own rule. A year of harassment followed, during which CELU's leadership languished in prison, while the regime manoeuvred unsuccessfully to place its own agents in control. Throughout 1975, the labour movement lay dormant. Pending the appearance of a new labour code, all labour activities were banned, all collective agreements were suspended, and new ones could not be negotiated, nor could the trade union movement organise workers in areas from which it had been excluded by the previous regime. A promise to form worker councils in the workplace was never implemented. A wage
freeze lowered real wages in a time of continuous inflation, and unemployment rose substantially as many foreign-owned enterprises shut down. Force was readily used to suppress spontaneous worker protests and several shooting incidents occurred.

Repression failed to cow CELU, whose last congress, held in September 1975, passed a series of resolutions defying the PMAC. The latter responded in December of the same year with the proclamation of a new labour code, which abolished CELU and replaced it with a new organisation called the All-Ethiopia Trade Union (AETU). This was a pyramidal structure, in which authority was centralised and hierarchical, a bureaucratic monolith designed to regiment labour and render it pliable to state control. The new labour code proved to be a conventional document. Although 'socialist principles' are mentioned, the word 'class' does not appear in it. Worker rights and conditions of labour are defined according to conventional bourgeois standards. Apart from a vague reference to the promotion of collaboration between workers and their 'allies', the stated objectives of the labour movement are strictly productionist in nature, and the provisions concerning industrial dispute settlement are designed to eliminate strikes. Neither a minimum wage nor any social security provisions — both basic labour demands — were included in the new code.

The predicament of organised labour under the new regime stemmed from a cause more basic than the overt political challenge posed by CELU. In fact, the nationalisation of the means of production in the urban sector had dissolved the ephemeral conjunction of interests that had brought the intelligentsia and the proletariat together in the uprising against the ancien régime. The incorporation of production into the state domain expanded the bureaucratic sector considerably. Elements of the intelligentsia that chose to collaborate with, or simply acquiesce in, the rule of the military — and that included practically all those who neither fled the country nor joined the active opposition — assumed the role of management and the inevitable concern with labour productivity, costs and discipline. The new management proved no less attached, than the old one was, to the existing relations of production predicated on the centralised, hierarchical and authoritarian organisation of the work process. In order to assert its authority, increase productivity and fulfill its development goals, the bureaucracy had to ward off the challenge posed by the rise of working class consciousness and the militancy of the labour movement.

The outcome of this and similar confrontations which pitted the expanding bureaucratic sector against popular organisations formed or invigorated by the initial surge of the revolution, was decided by the forceful intervention of the military regime. Ultimately, the reassertion of bureaucratic control over labour was accomplished fairly easily, because the new regime chose to anchor itself in the existing and familiar state structure, rather than risk being carried away by the strong populist current in an unknown direction. The state apparatus of the ancien régime survived the revolution essentially intact. The military regime not only preserved this structure and enlarged it considerably through the expansion of the economic role of the state, it also strove to complete the process of centralisation begun by the old regime, and strongly reinforced its authoritarian character by investing it with
unlimited (‘revolutionary’) authority backed by the concentrated force of the military establishment. This was hardly surprising, since the military itself had been a key part of the old structure. Despite the purging of the senior officer corps and the radicalisation of the soldiery, the Ethiopian military remained a conventional institution. It could hope to rule the country only through the mediation of state institutions that corresponded with it, i.e., were of the same vintage as itself. Consequently, it had to defend the bureaucracy against the populist aspirations of the mass organisations spawned by the revolution. These were to become pawns in a violent contest between the PMAC and the radical Marxist opposition.

The PMAC’s conversion to socialism and the proclamation of the reforms split the ranks of the radical intelligentsia into two uneven factions. The majority remained strongly opposed to military rule, regarding it as the major obstacle to a genuine social revolution. Fundamental change, they argued, could not be achieved by fiat from above in the imperial manner. A social revolution could not be carried out when the masses were limited to the role of an audience. The dominant presence of the junior officer in the Dergue, it was feared, pointed to a military dictatorship with petty bourgeois aspirations. The irreconcilable radicals saw indications of this in the Dergue’s appeal to chauvinism, as expressed in the ‘Ethiopia First’ slogan, in the rapid escalation of the war of repression in Eritrea, in the regime’s reluctance to acknowledge the class struggle, in its reliance on the bureaucracy, in the attack on the trade union movement, in the proscription of voluntary associations, in the re-imposition of stringent censorship, in the ready resort to violence against critics, etc. The majority of the radicals maintained that the formation of a peoples’ government is the indispensable prerequisite in the transition to socialism. By obstructing the advance of the revolution in that direction, the military regime was performing a counter-revolutionary role, and the radicals who grouped themselves in the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP) in 1975 prepared to make war on it.

On the other hand, a minority of the radical intelligentsia believed there was no realistic alternative to military rule at the time. Convinced that the Dergue itself was ideologically divided, they proposed to manipulate it through its ‘left wing’ and to steer the regime in the desired direction. This faction proposed to give the PMAC ‘tactical support’, that is, to support or oppose it according to the merits of its actions. Leading members of this group functioned as advisers to the emerging strongman of the regime, Major Mengistu Haile Mariam, whom they regarded as the leader of the Dergue’s left wing. They also formed a political organisation in 1975, the All-Ethiopia Socialist movement (MEISON) which, like the EPRP, aspired to become the vanguard of the socialist revolution. The radical intellectuals who led MEISON became the ideological mentors of the military regime, and their followers spearheaded the campaign of repression against the EPRP.

While competing to gain control over the urban and peasant associations, both radical factions promoted these structures as rivals of the state bureaucracy, which was added to the list of enemies of the revolution, alongside feudalism, capitalism and imperialism. The EPRP lost an initial advantage in 1976, when the regime removed the first elected leadership of
the urban associations, and replaced it with one screened by MEISON. A
Provisional Office for Mass Organisation Affairs (POMOA) was establish-
ed to mobilise support for the regime, and to co-ordinate the struggle
against the EPRP. Placed under the direction of MEISON, POMOA cadres
took control of the urban associations, the official trade union organisa-
tion, student, youth and women organisations. The EPRP, in turn, set up
similar organisations underground.

Buoyed by the enthusiastic support of the students who returned to the
towns when the campaign for rural development ended in the summer of
1976, and heedless of its limitations, the EPRP began an armed struggle in
the form of urban guerrilla warfare in the autumn of 1976. The regime's
response was to enlist the popular organisations, controlled and guided by
MEISON and POMOA, in the battle against the EPRP. Previously, the
PMAC had resisted pressure from the left to extend the jurisdiction of the
associations so that they could function as instruments of popular local self-
government, and had refused to allow the formation of armed units in the
associations to combat counter-revolutionary activities in the rural areas.
When the challenge of the EPRP was forcibly manifested, and the associa-
tions had come under POMOA control, this attitude changed. The urban
associations formed militia units recruited from the lumpen element in the
cities. Directed by POMOA cadre, these were thrown into the internecine
struggle against the EPRP. The peasant associations were also allowed to
form defence squads. During 1977, under the pressure of the Eritrean and
Somali offensives, a peasant militia numbering hundreds of thousands was
raised and thrown into battle. Thus, while the military regime was fighting
for survival against a multitude of foes, the popular organs attained con-
siderable importance and largely supplanted the traditional agents of the
state at the local level. The militia of the associations replaced the police,
most of whose members were sent to the war front. The judicial tribunals of
the associations supplanted the judiciary, and tax collection in the rural
areas was taken over by the peasant associations.

While the EPRP struck selectively at prominent targets, the reaction it pro-
voked was massive, savage and indiscriminate. It took a heavy toll, par-
ticularly among the youthful supporters of the EPRP who defied the regime
openly. They were exterminated methodically, sometimes in groups of hun-
dreds, and without regard to age. The officially proclaimed 'Red Terror'
gave the regime's henchmen authority to apply 'instant revolutionary
measures', i.e., execution, against known or suspected opponents. The Red
Terror raged throughout 1977. In the middle of that year, it engulfed those
who had inspired it, the MEISON group. The PMAC had become wary of
its radical associates, who constantly strove to weave a mass political base
through linkages to the popular organisations, the functions and powers of
which they sought to augment at the expense of the bureaucracy. When the
Soviet Union and its allies threw their massive weight behind the regime,
radical support was no longer indispensable for the PMAC. MEISON over-
reached itself when it tried to gain control of the peasant militia, a potential
counterweight to the military itself, arguing that it ought to be placed under
revolutionary control. Alarmed, the regime turned on its radical mentors,
and MEISON was suppressed in a bloody purge in mid-1977. POMOA was
rendered inactive and was finally abolished in 1979. MEISON influence in
the official labour organisation was eliminated through two successive purges of the Executive Committee of the AETU.

The EPRP struggled a while longer until its forces were decimated, and the remnants split over the wisdom of continuing the struggle in the cities. Thousands of young Ethiopians were forced to flee their country. A small number joined their comrades in the mountains of the north, where an armed unit called the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Army had maintained a precarious existence for sometime. This belated attempt to establish a rural base failed, and the EPRA disbanded in 1980. Several coterie of radical intellectuals were allowed to lead a semi-clandestine existence in Addis Ababa and to hope that they would form the core of a ‘proletarian party’. Their presence served to lend credence to the regime’s oft-repeated and much-discussed promise to create such a party. These hopes were dashed in 1979, when it was announced that the party would be formed by the recruitment of ‘individual communists’, not the merger of existing factions. The remaining radical factions were suppressed at that time. Thus, within five years, the radical left, the conscience of the revolution, was eliminated from the political scene in Ethiopia.

At first glance, the ruthless suppression of political initiative on the left indicates an understandable desire to preserve the military monopoly of power. More was involved, however, than the perpetuation of ‘provisional’ military rule. The political purges destroyed the radical left movement, whose goal was to maintain the momentum of the revolution through the mobilisation and participation of the masses in structures born of the revolution. The challenge to the state structure inherited from the ancien regime was clearly manifested. This did not concern simply the bureaucratic base that became the foundation of military rule. It concerned the fate of the military itself as an institution. The programmes of both the EPRP and MEISON called openly for the establishment of a peoples’ army. What this meant was spelled out in a student publication:

The army must be a part of the people and the people a part of the army. Thus, we call for the formation of armed militias of the people, for the military to be organised on a new and democratic basis, for the salary of military men to be compatible with that of the working class, and for the army to be engaged in productive work and be able to maintain itself.

From the soldiers’ point of view, the key issue in the struggle over a popular government was the fate of the military under such a regime. Self-preservation dictated that the momentum of the revolution in Ethiopia be reined in and kept under control.

**Military Rule and National Conflict**

The organic link between the military establishment and the structure of the imperial state determined the new regime’s attitude to the national conflict within Ethiopia. As indicated by a succession of mottoes it adopted — ‘Ethiopia First’, ‘Unity or Death’, ‘All for the Motherland’ — the PMAC regarded as its primary task the preservation of the structure and authority of the state it had taken over. This was hardly surprising, for this had been the task of the Ethiopian army since its creation this century. It is worth noting again that, despite purging and radicalisation, this army has remained a conventional institution, with rigidly centralised and highly
authoritarian internal processes; features that have become characteristic also of the state under military rule. It was to be expected that the PMAC should resist violently the loosening of centralised state authority, an essential prerequisite to any possible solution of Ethiopia’s manifold nationality conflict. Precisely the maintenance of this system of state authority remains the raison d’etre for the existence of the military in its present form. Any rearrangement forced by dissident nationalism would be bound to have a serious impact on the military establishment; it might be required to vacate regions, integrate nationalist guerrilla elements into its ranks, tolerate militia units under local control, etc. Any compromise in this area would also undermine the regime’s rationale for military rule, i.e., that it guarantees the integrity of the state.

The military in Ethiopia were not insensitive to the festering conflict provoked by the exploitation and chauvinism of the imperial regime. Many of the soldiers and numerous officers were recruited from the subject nationalities of the empire. The army had long been engaged in a fruitless effort to subdue dissident nationalism. The affinity of the soldiers’ rebellion to the popular movement reinforced military sensibility of this problem. Confronted with the challenge of Eritrean nationalism, and following a lengthy and agonising soul-searching in the late 1960s, the radical left in Ethiopia had resolved to support the right of national self-determination up to and including independence. The EPRP demanded an immediate end to the protracted effort to subdue the Eritrean nationalist movement by force. Consequently, the national issue was at the top of the political agenda when the soldiers seized power.

The PMAC, unlike its predecessor, did not attempt to ignore the issue. From the outset, it firmly denounced the policy of the ancien regime, raising extravagant hopes among the dominated national groups in the country. Insofar as it had a relevant policy, the ancien regime reduced national divisions to cultural differences, and sought to eliminate them through gradual assimilation into the language and culture of the northern Christian society. While rejecting assimilation, the military regime also chose to interpret the national conflict as an issue of cultural pluralism. Accordingly it proclaimed the equality of all cultures, and began to redress old wrongs by granting official recognition to Islam and allowing the printing and broadcasting of other languages. Drafted by MEISON ideologues, the official ‘Programme for the National Democratic Revolution’, issued in 1976, acknowledged the right of nationalities in Ethiopia to self-determination, but envisaged only an unspecified degree of regional autonomy. Concerning the struggle waged by dissident nationalist movements for liberation, the PMAC’s attitude was unequivocal, albeit clothed in Marxist terms. National conflict, it was stated, arose under the ancien regime due to the oppression of the feudal ruling class. Since the overthrow of this class had liberated all the peoples of Ethiopia, there was no longer any justification for the demand of national liberation. Cultural differences among the many nationalities in Ethiopia could be accommodated on the basis of equality and within the framework of local self-government. National liberation movements were termed ‘secessionist’ and ‘counter-revolutionary’, because objectively they sided with international reaction against socialist Ethiopia. The slogan ‘Ethiopian Unity or Death’ was hoisted to the mast of the revolution.
Relegating the national conflict to the realm of cultural diversity, the military regime denied its political nature and precluded any negotiated solution to it. It was on this basis that the PMAC made an initial approach to the Eritreans in the autumn of 1974 and was rebuffed. The offer of regional self-government had a hollow ring, particularly for the Eritreans, who had learned from bitter experience earlier that regional autonomy is incompatible with a state whose central government claims absolute power. Subsequently, the war in Eritrea intensified greatly. A split in the nationalist movement there had produced another organisation, the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front, which proved far more successful in mobilising mass support for the nationalist cause than the first group, the Eritrean Liberation Front, had been able to do. Adopting a radical social orientation in the Marxist mould, a policy of self-reliance, and a struggle geared to mass mobilisation, the EPLF turned the struggle for national liberation into a social revolution. Intermittently warning against each other, the two Fronts managed, nevertheless, to take the offensive while the PMAC struggled against a multitude of foes. By the autumn of 1977, only three towns in Eritrea remained in Ethiopian hands, and the nationalists seemed to be within sight of victory.

The Eritrean success was facilitated by the eruption of another national struggle in the southeastern region of the Ogaden, which developed into a full-scale between Ethiopia and Somalia. By early 1977, Somali nationalist activity in the area, supported by the Somali Republic, had reached alarming proportions. The Western Somalia Liberation Front contested control of the vast, arid region from the Ethiopian troops which seldom ventured outside their fortified garrison towns. An affiliated organisation, the Somali Abo Liberation Front, was similarly active in the adjacent Bale province. Another nationalist movement, the Afar Liberation Front, organised by a local ruling family that had been dispossessed by the land reform, was active in the eastern lowland, menacing the sole road link to Assab, where Ethiopia's only oil refinery is found.

The embattled Ethiopian regime was faced at this time with a grave shortage of war material, due to the increasing reluctance of the United States to provide an avowedly Marxist regime with the means required for its survival. The Soviet Union, until this moment Somalia's patron, now offered to underwrite the PMAC as well, apparently thinking it would be possible to reconcile the two neighbours. The Ethiopian alliance with the Soviet Union was sealed on 1 May 1977, and soon afterwards the delivery of weapons and advisers to Ethiopia began. The Somali decided to attack before the Ethiopians had had time to assimilate Soviet military technology. Their forces launched a full scale invasion of the Ogaden in September of the same year. Rolling back the Ethiopian troops before them, Somali units laid siege to the town of Harar, where the battleline was drawn for the next five months.

During the winter months of 1977-1978, the Soviet Union staged a massive supply operation via sea and air to Ethiopia. Its Eastern European allies helped train Ethiopian soldiers in the use of Soviet weapons, and Cuba sent its own soldiers to the battle. Planned and directed by Soviet officers and spearheaded by Cuban combat units, the counter-offensive against the Somali was launched in February 1978. Within two months it had forced
the invador to abandon the Ogaden. This victory, of course, did not resolve the issue. The Somali liberation movement did not renounce the struggle, and before long it had resumed guerrilla activity in the Ogaden and Bale regions. Cuban troops were permanently stationed in the area to bolster the Ethiopian defence. The people of the region suffered grievously. Nearly a million of them were forced to seek safety in refugee camps in the Somali Republic by 1980. During the summer of 1978, the Ethiopians mounted a major offensive against the Eritrean nationalist forces. Confronted with a vastly superior enemy enjoying Soviet logistical support, the Eritreans were forced to abandon all the towns they had captured, save their one stronghold at Nacfa. Undaunted by this setback the nationalists reverted to guerrilla tactics, and the struggle in that war-torn province continued without hope of early resolution. Hundreds of thousands fled from the area to refugee camps in the Sudan.

While Eritrean and Somali nationalism matured under the ancien regime, other dissident nationalist movements have made their appearance since 1974. The timing was not accidental. The gradual disintegration of the imperial regime during 1974 loosened the restraints on communal mobilisation, and inspired hopes of dramatic change in the status of the subject nationalities in the immediate future. Both the Tigrai Peoples Liberation Front and the Oromo Liberation Front were founded in 1974. Expectations of change were bolstered by the early pronouncements and some actions of the PMAC in connection with national oppression. Subsequent events dashed such hopes, particularly among the intelligentsia of the dominated nationalities. These groups were deeply frustrated by the failure of the revolution to transform the Ethiopian state. Elements among them came to regard ethnic political mobilisation as the only way to resist continual domination. The smashing of the radical left reinforced this trend, because both the EPRP and MEISON offered an alternative strategy and constituted a serious obstacle to the growth of dissident nationalist movements. Moreover, the destruction of these organisations prompted many radicals to espouse ethnic nationalism with the same dedication they had fought to promote a socialist revolution in Ethiopia. Success in rallying the peasant mass to the nationalist standard hinged upon the extent to which the correlation between ethnicity and class affected under the ancien regime was modified by its successor. Specifically, this relates to the impact of the land reform, which was not uniform throughout the country. It had minimal impact in the north, where land was already minutely divided and tenancy was a minor phenomenon. Its maximum effect was felt in the southern region, where the tenant majority acquired land and was rid of the Abyssinian landlords and officialdom.

The northern province of Tigrai was considered part of the Abyssinian nation, though it spoke a different language (which was suppressed along with others), and nourished a distinct sense of ethnic identity rooted in history. The Tigrai aristocracy became a pillar of the imperial regime and acquired vast landed property in the conquered south. The peasantry in Tigrai gained nothing from the southern expansion, save the dubious privilege of migrating there during times of famine. Tigrai remained among the poorest provinces in Ethiopia, neglected by the regime and bypassed by any kind of development. It was also hard hit by the famine of the early 1970s. The
revolution brought no change in this region, for there was precious little land to be redistributed. These factors may explain the success of the Tigrai People's Liberation Front, whose appeal to the peasantry is couched both in ethnic and class terms. Their response, as well as support from the Eritrean nationalists across the border, enabled the Tigrai movement to maintain an active presence in the region, menacing the major road link through central Ethiopia to Eritrea.

Much more ominous in prospect for the PMAC was the appearance of the Oromo Liberation Front, whose potential constituency encompasses the bulk of the population in the southern region. Comprising a number of distinct groups with different histories, modes of production and socio-political organisation, the Oromo population shares mainly its language, a vague sense of common origin in the distant path, and a vivid sense of oppression under the Abyssinian dominated *ancien regime*. One group of Oromo, the Muslim pastoralists in Bale province, had long fought alongside their Somali coreligionists against the Ethiopian state. Led by traditional elements, they define themselves primarily by their devotion to Islam, call themselves Abo, and their movement the Somali Abo Liberation Front. The Oromo Liberation Front is led by elements of the intelligentsia, which define the Oromo nation on the basis of language and regard the Somali Abo leadership as misguided. Their efforts to rally the Oromo peasantry have been confounded till recently by the impact of the land reform, a timely class action that satisfied the basic aspiration of the peasantry for land, and also dissolved the material foundation of Abyssinian domination. Thus, the correlation of class and ethnicity no longer obtained, making the task of the Oromo nationalists much more difficult. Understandably, their strategy has been to persuade the peasantry that in essence things have not changed; that the land does not belong to them but to the state, and the state is still in Abyssinian hands. Recent actions of the military regime, noted below, may lend credence to this allegation, thereby facilitating the task of the Oromo Liberation Front.

**Garrison Socialism**

By the end of the decade, thanks to the forceful intervention of the Soviet Union and its allies, the PMAC had managed to dispose of all rivals for power and to regain the initiative in the battle against the various dissident nationalist movements. During that time, it had also purged itself of rival factions within the Dergue, which was now under the undisputed leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam. It was now possible to devote some attention to the economic situation of the country, which had deteriorated steadily during the preceding years of bloody strife. The most obvious sign of this was what Col. Mengistu himself described in September 1978 as 'a frightening situation in urban areas regarding the shortages of food'. The shortages were caused partly by the disruption of production and distribution due to the armed conflict throughout the country, also by the requisition of foodstuffs for the military; that is, causes that could be deemed temporary. Another factor was the scarcity of manufactured goods for which peasants trade their produce; to remedy this situation would take some time. Most significantly, the shortages reflected increased peasant consumption from what was previously the landowner's share, and unwill-
ingness to sell at state imposed prices that stood at one-half to one-third of those obtained on the black market. In other words, the regime faced the problem of extracting the agricultural surplus from the peasantry through extra-economic means.

The method chosen, with the blessing of Soviet advisers, was collectivisation. ‘We have to appreciate more than ever the value of collective farming’ declared Col. Mengistu proclaiming the National Revolutionary Economic and Cultural Campaign on the fourth anniversary of the revolution in September 1978. The Campaign was the PMAC’s first venture in the field of economic reconstruction since the nationalisation proclamations of 1975. Its main target was the peasantry, whose individualism and petty bourgeois inclinations were denounced by the Chairman of the PMAC, for they ‘could lead us not towards socialism, but towards capitalism’. To guide the peasantry in the proper direction the regime produced a new breed of functionary, untainted with radical left notions and presumably more reliable. Possessed of limited educational qualifications, the so-called Production and Political Cadres were put through short training courses at a military school, and then were attached to all enterprises, associations and mass organisations to spur production and political education. According to Col. Mengistu, ‘since attitudes cannot change overnight, the role of the political cadres is paramount... Without this new breed, socialism can only be dreamt of, not realised’. In the rural sector, their task would be ‘to agitate the peasantry to abandon individual cultivation and get organised into cooperatives’. It seemed that the state bureaucratic apparatus was being reinforced for the looming confrontation with the peasants.

Never at ease with the self-assertion of the peasantry during the early, turbulent years of the revolution, the regime had made several attempts to bring the peasant associations under centralised control, by integrating them into national bureaucratic structures. The All-Ethiopia Peasant Association is a typical bureaucratic monolith of the Soviet type, designed to stifle initiative at the base. In 1975, a pyramid of Revolutionary Administrative and Development Committees was erected to co-ordinate governmental activities in the rural areas. The scheme was placed under the Ministry of Interior — as had been the case with similar ventures under the ancien regime. The composition of the committees was heavily bureaucratic, with peasant association representation comprising a small minority at the district and sub-province levels, and being non-existent at higher levels where policy was to be made. This scheme was superceded by a similar one established for the Economic and Cultural Campaign. At the highest level, the Supreme Economic Council includes the entire top officialdom of the administrative and military apparatus, but has only one representative each from the All-Ethiopia Trade Union and the All-Ethiopia Peasant Association. Neither of these two are included in the Executive Committee of the Council. The same holds true for the corresponding organs at the provincial and sub-provincial levels. The Council at the district level includes the chairmen of all the peasant associations, but none of these is included in the Executive Committee even at this level.

By this time, the peasants had already had some experience with the regime’s penchant for using their associations for its own ends, and the
heavy handed reaction of its agents when those ends were ill-served. Recruitment for the peasant militia used as cannon fodder in Eritrea and the Ogaden was one such instance. After repeated levies and the failure of many recruits to return to their villages, the associations balked at new demands. The regime then resorted to forced recruitment, often snatching unsuspecting peasants visiting the market towns. The expansion of the state farm sector often forced associations to surrender land and people to leave their homes. Collectivisation was promoted by discrimination, in taxation for example, in favour of what are called production co-operatives. On the other hand, general taxes for rural producers, initially set quite low, were subsequently tripled. Resistance to these impositions brought the wrath of the regime down on the heads of the elected association officials, many of whom were arbitrarily removed through the simple device of ordering the peasants to elect new leaders. Not a few lost more than their office.

Perhaps the most resented imposition in the south was the PMAC’s policy of encouraging the return of former landlords to that region. The peasant associations were asked to provide an equal share of land for them. Coupled with the policy of resettling large numbers of peasants from crowded and drought-stricken northern provinces in the south, this is a potentially explosive issue, for it raises again the spectre of ethnic conflict that had faded after the land reform. Giving credence to the claims of the Oromo Liberation Front, it enhances its nationalist appeal.

By the end of the decade, the PMAC has attained a degree of internal coherence that enabled it to commence erecting a political facade for military rule. This coherence was achieved at the cost of successive, bloody purges, in the course of which the first two chairmen, one vice chairman, most of the prominent members of the early years, and over half of its original membership of 120, perished. Each purge cleared another step for the ascent of Colonel Mengistu. Since his assumption of the PMAC chairmanship in February 1978, most of the surviving members of the Dergue have been dispersed through appointment to various posts in the state apparatus. A large number of other military personnel, mainly officers, have been appointed to state posts. The provincial administration became the exclusive preserve of the military and officers were increasingly appointed to the formerly civilian Council of Ministers. This might be seen as a way of reinforcing military control over the state apparatus. It also served to facilitate promotion within the military establishment of men loyal to the Chairman of the PMAC. Colonel Mengistu’s titles proliferated rapidly; he was also Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council, Commander in Chief of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, and Chairman of the Commission for Organising the Party of the Working Peoples of Ethiopia (COPWE).

The formation of COPWE was announced in September 1979 and was heralded as an event of major historical importance. Though formally not a political party in itself, COPWE was structured as such with a nationwide organisation running parallel to the structure of the state. It was endowed with sweeping powers of control over all other state institutions, and had a broad range of functions, including the recruitment of party members. It appeared that the working peoples’ party would emerge through a simple
transmutation of COPWE at some future time. In that case, it should prove an exact replica of the regime. All seven members of the Executive Committee of COPWE were members of the Standing Committee of the PMAC, the regime's inner core. Of the 123 members and alternate members of the Central Committee of COPWE, more than half were military men, including the top command of the armed forces, and the rest represented the highest echelons of the bureaucracy. The Chairman of COPWE, Colonel Mengistu, was given an extraordinary degree of personal control over this organisation, including the appointment of officials at all levels, and the determination of the procedures, functions, policies and activities of all its organs. Should things turn out as planned, the party of the working peoples of Ethiopia ought to prove a pliable instrument of military rule.

Bibliographic note
A condensed version of this paper was presented to the conference of the Political Studies Association of the United Kingdom, University of Exeter, April 1980. The following are among the more useful works related to the topics covered by this paper.


Labour Power and Legal Transformation in Senegal

Francis G. Snyder

Historical materialist studies of law, especially in Africa, are relatively recent. One question they raise concerns the ways in which the subsumption of African peasants within capitalist relations of production has affected legal ideas in formerly precapitalist social formations. Using an example from Senegal, this article examines recent changes in the meaning and significance of a particular legal concept. It shows how the change in the social form of labour power during the colonial period resulted in the transformation of a precapitalist conception of ‘childwealth’ into a material and symbolic equivalent of urban labour power as a commodity. In conclusion, the article outlines four general theses about the transformation of legal forms in rural Africa during the 20th Century.

Introduction

The historical expansion and contemporary dynamics of capitalism are central themes in the transformation of law in rural Africa. Recent historical materialist studies elaborate these themes and raise several questions: First, what roles did law play in processes such as the consolidation of the colonial state or the transition, complete or partial, to capitalism in agriculture? Second, how did these processes affect legal ideas and institutions in formerly precapitalist social formations? Third, how does law influence relationships among peasants, capital and the state within the contemporary international division of labour?

This article concerns the second question. It shows how the subsumption of formerly precapitalist rice producers in Senegal within capitalist relations of production has altered the meaning and significance of a particular legal concept. It concentrates on a segment of the Senegalese peasantry that is characterised today by the co-existence of several different types of commodity relations but among whom the dominant type is rural production of urban labour power. This discussion has two related purposes: to examine the relationship between a specific type of capitalist penetration and changes in a concrete legal form, and to outline four theses about the transformation of law in rural Africa during the 20th Century.

The Banjal rice producers of southwestern Senegal belong to a congeries of linguistically related groups who compose the 300,000 Joola (Diola, Jola) in the Lower Casamance area between the Gambia and Guine-Bissau. Today the rural Banjal comprise about 5,000 people. Their 10 villages still con-
stitute a dialect zone, although capitalist commodity relations have eroded many social relationships that previously made them a relatively discrete, though not historically isolated, entity.

Elsewhere I describe the 19th Century Banjal formation as being characterised by a tributary mode of production. The social formation then included a rain priesthood that resembled a weak divine kingship, the physical person of the rain priest being associated with a delimited area and the well-being of its inhabitants. Between 1850 and 1900, the merchant capital and the emerging colonial state gradually undermined the economic bases of the office, partly by modifying the previous circuits of exchange and thus affecting household production, and partly by imposing a ‘colonial peace’ and effectively ending the slave trade. By the end of the century, the priesthood was relatively closely circumscribed by elders, who controlled the circulation of rice land and reproductive capacity essential to the production of labour. This article emphasises primarily the production of labour within rural households between 1900 and 1975.

The article is divided into seven sections. The first two discuss Banjal rice production and the production of precapitalist labour in the 19th Century. The third considers two related forms of reciprocity, especially gamoen, a counterpart of reproductive capacity. The following two sections sketch the establishment of capitalist commodity relations and the individualisation of the basis of simple reproduction during the colonial period. The next analyses the relationship between the change in the social form of labour power and the transformation of gamoen as a concrete legal concept. The last section, summarising the discussion, presents four theses about the transformation of law in rural Africa during the 20th Century.

**Banjal Rice Production in the 19th Century**

In the 19th Century Banjal formation, rice agriculture was ‘the one specific kind of production which predominate(d) over all the rest, whose relations thus assign(ed) rank and influence to the others’ (Marx). The production of rice was accomplished by specific labour processes within production groups and by means of forms of co-operation. Perpetuation of these productive forms required the distribution of people and of the means of production, principally land. It entailed specific social relations and legal forms which were themselves reproduced in the process of production.

Banjal rice agriculture followed an annual cycle that was modelled on human reproduction, centred on rice cultivation and determined primarily by rainfall. The timing of rainfall, which was subject to important monthly and annual variations, underlay the schedule of rituals, particular phases and a specific labour process in rice production. The transition from dry season to rice agriculture was marked, usually in mid-May, by the garumo ritual celebrated by the Banjal and other Joola groups among whom rice plots were allocated to women as well as to men. People then completed the preparation of rice nurseries, which men sometimes began as early as April. The sowing of seeds into nurseries opened in late June or early July with a rite performed by the rain priest, who, as during garumo, depended partly on elders to fix the date and prepare offerings. If rainfall were sufficient, men began in early August to prepare plots for transplanting. In late August, the rain priest ritually opened the period for transplanting; women
then began to transplant seedlings from nurseries to plots. The end of the period of intense labour required by transplanting was marked by a rite in late October. The rice harvest began in November and continued until late January when the slowest maturing varieties were ready. The commencement of the harvest was signalled by a brief first-fruits ceremony. A harvest ritual under the auspices of the rain priest marked the end of the harvest.

We may delineate production groups in rice agriculture by distinguishing between units and cells of production. Defined at the level of the process of production, units of production were those groups that constituted the essential framework for the organisation of work, the recruitment of labour and the valorisation of the product. Production cells were groups into which people within the production unit were organised at the level of the labour process.

The basic production unit was the household, comprising, in simplified form, two male agnates, their wives and their unmarried children or other dependents. Its membership overlapped but did not coincide with that of the patrifilial group, discussed later. Household formation entailed the co-residence of women. Household members lived in a large impluvium house built around a central courtyard open to the sky. They co-operated in defence and shared in fertiliser produced by animals, especially cattle. The household head, usually the eldest male, supervised the rhythm of agricultural work, principally through his ritual role. He represented the household in relations with other units, particularly in recruiting extra household labour. He usually had the most land and benefited from the labour power of other household members.

Though farmer and married sons sometimes worked together on the former's rice plots, usually the household did not form a single entity in the labour process. Banjal rice production was based on a form of complex cooperation, a sexual division of labour in which men and women performed complementary tasks during an annual cycle. The irreducible cell of production was the couple, sometimes comprising merely two persons of opposite sex but usually resting on marriage. Marriage was a precondition of continued access to rice land; plots worked by members of a production cell derived from the spouses' respective patrifilial groups. Husband and wife co-operated under the general direction of the former and his household head to produce rice from this land. The birth and patrifiliation of children or the recruitment of other dependents to the household potentially added labour to the elementary cell. Exceptional circumstances apart, the household constituted a single production cell only if all its male members except for the head were unmarried. Generally, each household comprised two or more production cells, the household head forming part of a cell separate from that of each of his married, co-resident male agnates.

Types of marriage gave the production cell two characteristic forms. In a nuclear family in which the husband was monogamously married, the cell's composition was transparent: Husband, wife and any children worked the land of each spouse. Polygyny, however, transformed the cell. Husband and each wife (and her children) separately then worked the land of each woman, while the co-wives and their children worked together with the husband on the latter's plots. The developmental cycle of the household
modified the composition of individual production units and cells; but, viewed from the standpoint of the entire social formation, it did not alter fundamentally the nature of the production unit or the two basic forms of the production cell.

The Production of Precapitalist Labour

The organisation of agricultural production both conditioned and required the circulation of rice, land and labour, which in turn formed the basis of relationships that Banjal envisaged as between agnates and uterine kin. Banjal conceived of their social organisation partly in terms of relationships among people related to a presumed sibling pair by real or putative filial ties. Such people, who shared a common patronym, composed dispersed patrilateral groups usually between three to five generations deep. Thus, a patrilateral group might include one or two male agnates and their dependents, including male and female children, and sons' children. The patrilateral group, qua group, was unlocalised. Male agnates usually belonged to the same household or compound, but female members joined their husband's households on marriage, even though they retained their natal patronym and participated in rituals and maintained strong economic ties with male agnates. The patrilateral group was the social form for the production of labour, partly through fostering and capture but mainly through marriage and childbirth.

Marriage was, first, a means for the circulation of biological reproductive capacity. It was a set of social relations and ideological forms that linked patrilateral groups and potentially permitted the recruitment, through childbirth, of new dependents by the elder of a husband's patrilateral group. Second, marriage established a new production cell or transformed an existing cell within the household, and it resulted in the creation of a new consumption unit. It involved the circulation of female labour and rice land, and therefore the potential production of food that made possible the reproduction of labour. Finally, both aspects of marriage permitted the reproduction of relations between elders or household heads and dependents that characterised the Banjal formation as a whole. Marriage was arranged by patrilateral group elders, and until very recently the Banjal zone constituted a single matrimonial area.

Marriage was a precondition of adulthood for any individual, male or female. It was also the principal occasion for the allocation of rice land to male and female dependents within the patrilateral group. Banjal sons and daughters each received a marital share of rice plots, though women were generally allocated fewer plots than were men. With the allocation of marital shares, dependents began to form new production cells and units of consumption.

Banjal accorded only minimal importance to relations qua affines between two patrilateral groups allied in marriage, emphasising instead the continuing relationships between an out-married woman (erimen) and her agnates (e.g., brothers) and the uterine ties to which the birth of her children (esëbul) gave rise. Every individual or set of full siblings was linked to uterine kin who resided in different, specific households or compounds. A fundamental element in uterine ties was an emphasis on place. Banjal gave two complementary explanations, which referred to food, for this spatial
conception of social relations. During infancy a child nursed at the breast of its mother, who belonged not to the child’s patrilateral group but to that of her agnates, the child’s uterine kin. Later, the child ate rice produced from its mother’s land, allocated as dowry on her marriage and worked by the child after her death.

Food consumption exemplified the contribution of two allied patrilateral groups to the formation and sustenance of the production cell, hence the household. Banjal usually ate two meals a day during the rainy season and either two or three in the dry season. One spouse ate rice from the granary of the other only during agricultural work on the other’s land, on specified ritual occasions or in exceptional circumstances. Otherwise, each spouse supplied, each from a separate granary, sufficient rice for his or her own food. In contrast, except for infants in the mother’s charge or older children allocated some plots to produce part of their own food, responsibility for feeding children born of a marriage was divided between the spouses according to an annual cycle. This cycle began when children were weaned; its commencement for boys was marked by a rite at which small boys first publicly ingested solid food. The day preceding the annual garumo ritual opened the period during which the father was responsible for feeding his children, who as part of the potential labour force returned to their paternal household for the rice cultivation season. This responsibility included all children of different mothers, even though the latter may have divorced, remarried elsewhere and taken small children with them. The first fruits rite nominally opened the period during which each woman was responsible for feeding her own children. Children usually went to reside with uterine kin in their mother’s natal compound during the dry season, and they were fed from the portion of their mother’s rice stored there.

The household, the unit of production, and the patrilateral group, the social form for the production of labour, were not congruent units; and no single household or patrilateral group could be self-sufficient. Both rice and children were necessary to the continuity of the household, children as labour for rice production and rice as food for the production of labour. Between these two elements there existed, ideally, a delicate balance such that, first, the labour of each unit and cell of production sufficed to work the agnatic land allocated to members of these groups and, second, the harvested rice was sufficient to nourish the producers. The circulation of land and reproductive capacity was therefore essential. While a woman’s dowry ‘united the two groups’ allied in marriage, dowry was only one element in the relationship between two patrilateral groups (and their elders) in the production of household labour. Here I concentrate on two other aspects of this relationship, namely the claims made by uterine kin after the death of any offspring (ësëbul) of an out-married female agnate.

**Forms of Reciprocity**

One set of claims concerned funeral goods, particularly animals sacrificed after the death of any offspring of a female agnate. Animals were not sacrificed on the death of an uncircumcised man or an unmarried woman, but otherwise the sacrifice of cattle, pigs or goats was a central feature of Banjal mortuary rites. The deceased’s agnates usually retailed the head of the largest animal themselves and also designated an animal whose head was
taken by the deceased’s mother’s full brother or his representative. In the division of funeral meat, certain portions were reserved for the deceased’s mother’s full brother or their descendants who took by representation. If the deceased was a married woman, no further distribution of meat occurred after the initial funeral rites. If the deceased was a circumcised man, however, a share of the meat or additional sacrifices were reserved for the deceased’s agnates later. This division of meat represented symbolically the different roles of male and female offspring in the reproduction of the deceased’s patrifilial group.

The final funeral rites, held at least one year later, set the stage for a second claim by uterine kin. This claim was the request for gamoen, an animal, land or, occasionally, a woman for which the deceased’s uterine kin asked on behalf of each offspring of their female agnate and which, reciprocally, the deceased’s agnates were obliged to provide. Gamoen was due only on behalf of a married woman (whether or not she had children) or a circumcised man. It was requested, ideally, by the eldest male among the group of full siblings entitled to address the deceased’s mother as asom (father’s father’s sister, father’s sister). It usually fell, therefore, to the deceased’s eldest mother’s brother’s son, who ‘really gave birth to’ the deceased. In his absence, priority devolved upon his full siblings, then his step-siblings of the same father and finally patrilateral parallel cousins. This procedure presupposed the unity and co-operation of the agnatic group, especially full and step-siblings under the direction of the eldest male. Full siblings shared equally in gamoen due to their agnatic group. They were considered to hold cattle in common or, if animals were allocated to specific individuals, each was in principle given an animal in turn. Similarly, land obtained as gamoen was, so far as possible, taken for cultivation by each sibling, beginning with the eldest.

The exact item given as gamoen varied according to the sex of the individual (esèbül) on whose behalf it was owed and claimed. A heifer was due on behalf of a male and a bull on behalf of a female. Once the animal was transferred as gamoen, the givers had fulfilled their obligation. If, however, the deceased’s agnates were unable to pay the appropriate animal, they could give a specified equivalent in rice land for which, reciprocally, the deceased’s uterine kin were entitled to ask. This substitution was possible because of the practice of evaluating all rice plots in terms of animals. The plot was regarded as only a temporary pledge, subject to redemption by payment of the animal. Finally, if the deceased’s agnates were absolutely incapable of providing either the animal or land, they were entitled to arrange the marriage of their daughter to the deceased’s uterine kin. Judging from my survey of land transfers and marriages, this form of exchange marriage was rare.

Though transferred at different times, funeral prestations and gamoen were therefore closely associated elements in rural social relations. Nonetheless, both in the Banjal view and for analytic purposes, they were distinct. Banjal notions of funeral prestations, especially meat, emphasised that uterine kin ‘ate their child’ just as the latter had eaten their food. The Banjal conception of gamoen was starkly expressed in the saying ‘gamoen is an asom’ (father’s sister, father’s father’s sister). Funeral prestations reimbursed
uterine kin for their contributions in food to the deceased and hence to the latter's patrilocal group. In contrast, gamoen constituted a counter-presentation for the transfer between patrilocal groups of a woman's reproductive capacity through marriage, in other words, the birth and effective patrifiliation of children. Banjal considered that these reciprocal transfers represented complementary facets of the role of uterine kin in the reproduction of the patrilocal group. Despite differences in the mortuary rites for a circumcised man and a married woman, on the one hand, and of an uncircumcised man and an unmarried woman, on the other, funeral prestations were due on the death of all except infants. Gamoen, however, could not be claimed on behalf of an uncircumcised man or an unmarried woman. Neither of these individuals had completed before death the phases of effective patrifiliation viewed as a process; in neither instance had uterine kin fully realised their potential contribution to the reproduction of the deceased's patrilocal group.

This logic of reproduction also underlay the Banjal association of male gamoen: female animal; female gamoen: male animal. Gamoen was a symbolic equivalent of a woman's reproductive capacity, considered not merely as biological fecundity but in its more general social sense. The more valuable (because potentially reproductive) heifer or the more productive rice plot symbolised the contribution that a woman made to her husband's patrilocal group and its households by giving birth to a son. The latter perpetuated the male core of the agnatic group and its control of marriage and land. The birth of a daughter potentially enabled her agnates to claim gamoen on the death of the daughter's own children; but the daughter married out, produced children for another patrilocal group and received dowry that her own children worked after her death and that was often difficult to recuperate. The Banjal conception of gamoen in terms of animals expressed these differences in the contribution made by a woman and her agnates, the deceased's uterine kin, to the deceased's patrilocal group.

While a rice plot that could potentially be used as gamoen was allocated to a person on marriage, the allocation of land, including dowry, did not constitute the basis of the obligation to make a reciprocal transfer for reproductive capacity. Similarly, in relation to funeral prestations land was an essential but nevertheless secondary element. Its significance was as a source of food in the production of labour and thus in the reproduction of relations within and between households. Rice-land was a necessary material element in the constitution of social relations for the production of labour that gave rise to transfers of funeral prestations and gamoen. But it was invisible if these reciprocal transfers are considered in their symbolic aspect.

If we accept Marx's point that 'every form of production creates its own legal relations', gamoen was a precapitalist legal concept that formed part of the process of production of rural household labour. It was a type of childwealth that denoted items due in reciprocal exchange for a transfer of reproductive capacity culminating in effective patrifiliation, which was the principal means by which Banjal elders recruited dependents as a labour within the household. Labour power was not a commodity. It was produced within the social form of the patrilocal group and necessarily entailed relationships among different patrilocal groups which Banjal envisaged as links.
between a group of agnates and their uterine kin. *Gamoen* was, to paraphrase Sumner, one of the forms of social consciousness or institutionalised social relations which had as its generic function the expression, regulation or maintenance of the dominant social relations within the social formation. More importantly, it was an historically specific, concrete legal form, not in the sense that it was necessarily limited to a single mode of production but rather in the sense that it formed part of a specific combination of legal forms as concrete concepts in a particular historical form of production.

**Establishment of Capitalist Commodity Relations**

The subsumption of the Banjal within capitalist relations of production during the colonial period transformed the social form of labour power and the meaning and significance of legal forms, such as *gamoen*, that were integral to its production. The central feature of this transformation, as Bernstein has argued, was the establishment of commodity relations that ruptured the previous cycle of simple reproduction by converting some elements in the cycle into money or commodity form. Among the Banjal, this process encompassed the transformation of exchange, the initiation of capitalist migration and the consolidation of simple commodity production.

Between 1880 and 1920, the increasing centralisation of merchant capital and its orientation towards the export of a limited range of primary products for the French market directly influenced Banjal relations of production, at first through exchange. A first, fundamental shift in the nature of Banjal exchange mediates, hence in their control and circulation, resulted from the demise of the Casamance rice trade with northern Senegal. Without removing producers from juridical control of the means of agricultural production, economic mechanisms divorced them from the combination of production and exchange by which they might potentially realise exchange-value from rural labour processes in rice agriculture.

Capitalist migration, involving the movement of people to sell labour power or goods as commodities, is a basic feature of the relations of production in contemporary Senegal. Seen in an historical perspective, it comprises some older forms of population movement that colonial capital and the state transformed during the 20th Century and others to which these forces directly gave rise. Both the transformation of previous forms and the initiation of new types of population movement may be traced to colonial enforcement of a head tax. Nominally imposed in parts of the Lower Casamance as early as 1861, the head tax was required to be paid in cash from 1906 and collected by force until 1915. Stimulated by the head tax, migration drew the Banjal into capitalist relations of production. Initially, elders both relied on dependents' migration as an economic necessity, consistent with rural production and colonial imperatives, and encouraged it as a potential means of extracting surplus labour from dependents in money form. They sent female dependents to nearby Ziguinchor to sell labour power and male dependents to sell rural produce for cash.

An historical study of migration that I conducted in 1975 showed clearly the ways in which, during the course of five decades, the productive activities of almost all contemporary adult residents of a Banjal village increasingly formed part of capitalist relations of production. Before and since the
1920s, Banjal migrants have almost invariably been unmarried individuals, marriage marking the point when a person established a separate production cell, either rural or urban, and ceased seasonal migration. Throughout the period from 1920-1975, the principal purpose of migration was the sale of rural produce or labour power for cash. Male and female migrants usually performed different kinds of work. Women first worked as dockers in Ziguinchor; later they sought employment as maids in Ziguinchor or Dakar. Although some men worked as dockers or domestics in the 1920s, rural activities, such as gathering palm produce, predominated among men even after World War II. After the war, a number of men worked as factory hands in the Ziguinchor peanut processing industry. Beginning at that time, Banjal migrations increased in duration; migrants travelled farther from their natal villages; and urban activities began to replace forms of rural production. After World War II seasonal labour migration was a regular feature of rural Banjal life. Today seasonal migration and urban schooling draw young people from rural villages for most of the year.

Unmarried men who sold rural produce were subject to their elders but otherwise were essentially simple commodity producers. They produced value for merchant capital but employed the same labour processes as in the past. In contrast, the early migration by women entailed the sale of labour power. Workers did not control the means of production, the location of work or the product of their labour. Such labour was not free in the classic sense, since unmarried women were also subject to elders’ authority. Forged initially by a combination of force and class interest, the integration of women into capitalist relations of production was (like that of men) shaped by the rural division of labour and relations between elders and dependents. But unmarried women (and unmarried men later) were subordinated directly to capital in production and produced surplus value. Wage labour thus began with exchange, but the appropriation of labour by capital was ‘a process qualitatively different from exchange, ( . . . which stood) directly opposite exchange (. . . as an) essentially different category’ (Marx). This form of capitalist migration embodied the transmutation of labour power into commodity form.

Individualisation of the Basis of Simple Reproduction
Neither the historical presence of merchant capital nor the increasing circulation of cash suffices alone to explain the dissolution of Banjal relations of production since the beginning of the century. Nor do these factors in themselves account for the extent to which and the forms in which aspects of previous social relations and legal forms persist today. The fundamental processes of rural transformation lay instead in changes in the social form of labour power, in its mode of reproduction and in the dissociation of the peasantry. Depending for its nature and effects on the character of the previous mode of production, this transition necessarily occurred in forms which were in some respects specific to the Banjal.

The development of migratory wage labour and the establishment of simple commodity production linked the Banjal to European capital and inserted rural individuals and households in the reproductive circuit of colonial capitalism. They initiated and later reinforced a series of interconnected, yet uneven, changes in rural social relations, which culminated in the subsump-
tion of Banjal agriculture within capitalist relations of production. These changes were especially profound, though not always most easily apparent, at the level of production.

For an observer who compares Banjal life today with what is known of its past, an appearance of historical continuity at the level of labour processes, especially in rice agriculture, masks two related shifts. The first was the internalisation of commodity relations in the simple reproduction cycle of the household. Commodity production is an economic necessity for Banjal households today. The second was the increasing reduction or assimilation of the unit of production to the production cell. It encompassed several distinct, secular trends: the fragmentation of large households; a tendency for households formed during the past two decades to remain small in size and simple in composition, frequently comprising a nuclear family; a continuing, large seasonal variation in household size and composition; and a tendency towards relative stagnation in the total number of households.

Perhaps the most striking manifestation of these changes was the destruction or gradual abandonment of many impluvium houses. Especially after World War II, married male agnates often separated to establish individual nuclear households. Though superficially resembling previous patterns of patrilineal group fission, these residential changes were in fact an aspect of the dissolution of precapitalist relations of production resulting from the penetration of commodity relations, particularly the change in the social form of labour power. Capitalist migration gave rural labour power a commodity form. This transmutation increasingly permitted dependents access to cash independently of elders. It also accentuated conflicts between household heads and their married male agnates over the labour power of dependents. Each married man sought individual control of the new commodity. In these conflicts, a new, narrower version of patrilineage was emphasised as the ideological form through which elders extracted surplus labour from dependents. The household thus tended to become assimilated to the nuclear family, the rice production cell, as the basis for the production of labour power through rice agriculture and agricultural commodity production.

Simultaneously, the nuclear family has partially supplanted the patrilineal group in the circulation of reproductive capacity and thus as the social form for the production of labour power. The change in the social form of labour power as mediated through different types of commodity relations directly affected the process of marriage. Commodity relations penetrated marriage transactions early in the century. Partly as a consequence of the greater reliance by elders on dependents for cash, dependents played a greater role in the formation of rural marriages. The establishment of limited peanut production in the Banjal zone after World War II consolidated the conversion of many matrimonial prestations into money or commodity form and led to an increase in the cost of matrimonial alliances.

Christian missions, which extended their activities in the Lower Casamance at the same time as capitalist migration was established, also influenced the partial transformation of relations between elders and dependents and hence the creation of contemporary legal forms. Through proselytisation, schools and labour recruitment, they provided a basis and an ideology for
the individualisation of labour and greater independence of youth. Missionaries devoted considerable effort to urging the creation of a Catholic personal status, which would constitute state legal recognition of conversion. These efforts bore partial fruit in the colonial Mandel and Jacquinot decrees of 15 June 1979 and 14 September 1951, respectively. The former established a minimum marriage age of 14 years for women and 16 years for men and made the individual consent of the prospective spouses a precondition of valid marriage. The latter regulated bridewealth, although by its terms it did not apply (nor did missionaries or administrators recognise its possible application) to gamoen, the Banjal equivalent. Together these two statutes expressed clearly the French ideal of a stable monogamous nuclear family, created by marriage and established by the freely given consent of the individual spouses. Cutting against the predominance of rural elders in the production of labour, they formed an essential part of Christian ideology that missions sought, with at least partial success, to promote through the state. They culminated in the elaboration by courts of a ‘Catholic customary law’, and ‘Diola Catholic custom’ was partly incorporated into Banjal norms and practices.

Visible among the generation of contemporary household heads, these changes emerge more clearly in the pattern of marriages among their children. Fifty four per cent of the married children of household heads in one Banjal village had non-Banjal spouses as of 1975. All who were married to non-Banjal resided outside the Banjal zone; this group comprised 61.5 per cent of married female children and 40.9 per cent of married male children. Moreover, regardless of the origin of spouses, a very high proportion of married sons (90.9 per cent) and married daughters (71.8 per cent) lived outside the Banjal area. While half of the men who married a Banjal spouse resided outside the zone, women who married a Banjal spouse tended to live within the zone. Whereas the origin of a spouse had little apparent effect on the post-marital residence of men, whether a woman married a Banjal husband effectively determined her post-marital residence. This erosion of Banjal endogamy manifested the transformation of the previous control by elders over the circulation of dependents.

The gradual erosion of Banjal endogamy and elders’ efforts to restrict the circulation of rice land have reduced the extent to which rural women today have rice plots independently of their husbands. Elders have reduced the direct access to patrifilial land by their female dependents and uterine kin, partly through changes in the intergenerational transmission of dowry and partly by allocating less land to women on marriage. These changes were intimately connected with seasonal migration, which tended in effect to subsidise the wife and her agnates at the expense of the husband. The absence of youth during the dry season left the wife’s store of rice more or less intact, though during their period in the village migrants and students worked on the land of each spouse. Elders reacted by diminishing the marital shares allocated to daughters, which in turn contributed to the abandonment of the feeding cycle in newly established households.

The partial abandonment of the feeding cycle has accompanied the emergence of a new (though not yet exclusive) form of rural marriage, namely monogamous marriage subject to dissolution only by the death of a
spouse. Such marriages, which are consistent with Diola Catholic custom, do not necessarily depend on the allocation of dowry and typically imply the joint assumption by spouses of responsibility for feeding children from the husband's land. While consistent with the narrower ideology of patrifiliation, they emphasise relations between husband and wife and accord less importance to relations with agnates or uterine kin. In these marriages, the wife is often dependent on the husband for food, since the rice produced by their joint labour derives from his land and is stocked in a joint granary under his ultimate control.

Gamoen and Labour Power

The insertion of rural households into the circuit of urban wage labour had other, contradictory implications. Following new ideologies that derived from and reinforced the change in the social form of labour power and individualisation of the basis of simple reproduction, many peasants refused to make funeral prestations. Christians withdrew from most non-Catholic rituals; they refused to sacrifice animals at funerals; and many early Christian marriages, in which non-Banjal wives had no land, lacked the material basis for a form of reciprocity symbolising food contributed by uterine kin. Nonetheless, Christians hoped their new religion would not outlaw gamoen, which acknowledged and symbolised effective patrifiliation. Contemporary Christian elders say their fears were dispelled by priests, who apparently did not recognise the significance of gamoen. Thus, while funeral prestations have partially disappeared, gamoen continues to underlie the network of matrimonial relations.

The subsumption of Banjal peasants within commodity relations, however, has altered gamoen in two different ways. First, the fragmentation of the partifilial group into nuclear families has sharpened competition among potential claimants. People increasingly view the prestation as an object of individual accumulation, and those with greater wealth and influence are frequently able to over-ride legitimate claims by poorer siblings. Second, commodity relations have fundamentally transformed the meaning and significance of this legal form.

Most peasants try to maintain potential claims to the gamoen of individuals who leave the area after rural marriage. Thus, the rice plots of an emigrant or other non-resident are usually entrusted to an agnate to whom later demands for gamoen may be addressed. But people recognise clearly that if a person leaves the zone definitively before marriage or marries elsewhere without receiving a marital share, he or she has no land from which a gamoen plot might, if necessary, later be drawn. In intra-Banjal marriages in which husband and wife live in urban areas, the spouses and their children do not, with occasional exceptions, depend continually on rural rice land for food. One might expect, therefore, that in such marriages neither spouse would receive a marital share. In fact, the husband typically does not; but regardless of the couple's post-marital residence, the kin of both husband and wife commonly exert pressure on the husband to ask for the wife's dowry.

Young men sometimes refuse to accede to these pressures, leading to conflicts concerning the allocation of land. Thus, for example, one young man, who had been fostered by his father's brother after his own father's death,
worked outside the Banjal area for several years before his marriage in 1973. His wife was from another Banjal village, but the man refused to ask her kin for dowry since he intended to continue his employment. He argued, much to the consternation of his kin, that he did not want to create a debt (in gamoen) for his children’s children, as yet unborn. He said that he and his wife wanted a ‘European life style’ in which, independent of wider kinship networks, they lived on their own resources under his direction. His father’s brother and his wife’s kin accused him, ultimately in vain, of laziness for not wanting to work additional plots. In 1975, the young man continued to cultivate with his father’s brother (on the latter’s plots) during part of the rainy season. The elder thus benefited from his dependent’s labour power despite the latter’s urban residence. He doubtless realised also that, if his brother’s son had asked for dowry, his own holdings would, in effect, be increased; indeed this land might be recognised by state law as his own once the Senegalese National Domain Laws of 1964 were implemented in the area.

These pressures by rural elders should not be ascribed to the hopes of kin that, in such marriages, the couple or one spouse might eventually return to the Banjal zone. Nor does anticipation of the implementation of state legal reforms, which has tended simultaneously to encourage accumulation of land and to inhibit transfers, explain desires of rural affines to allocate some plots to their daughters married to Banjal men who work and reside elsewhere. Like the reactions of young men, they derive instead from the specific way in which rural social relations and legal forms such as gamoen are integrated today into capitalist relations of production.

Formerly, the circulation of dependents and the circulation of land were associated elements in the production of rural labour. Both were controlled by elders, underlay the extraction of surplus labour by elders from dependents and formed part of intra-household relations and of relations among households. Commodity relations transformed each of these processes partially and unevenly. The penetration of commodity relations ruptured the formerly general connection between the rural production of food and the reproduction of household labour, which was manifested in the allocation of rice land on marriage and expressed in distinct, related transactions. The transmutation of dependents’ labour power into commodity form gradually dissolved elders’ control over marriage, while the decline of the rice trade and the orientation of capital and the state towards export production resulted in the stagnation of rice agriculture rather than in the production of rice as a capitalist commodity. In the conclusion of marriages the previous relations between elders and dependents have been virtually eroded, whereas in the allocation of rice land elders have struggled to maintain their control and have largely succeeded thus far.

Today, rural households work rice land to produce food not only for children who may form future peasant households, but also for dependents who eventually leave the village and produce commodities by the sale of their labour power. Contemporary marriage patterns have the effect that, without the allocation of marital shares, the transfer of female reproductive capacity potentially contributes little to the reproduction of rural households. Usually, in fact, this contribution is realised by some combina-
tion of two extreme forms. The spouses and their children may continue to reside in the Banjal zone as peasants producing both food and commodities. Alternatively, both spouses reside in urban areas; their natal households have produced dependents' labour power as a commodity, and later rely essentially on the circuit of commodities, including this labour power, for their simple reproduction. These processes form part of the reproduction of relations between peasant households and also of relations, within individual households, between rural elders and either rural or urban dependents.

Each of these forms depends on the allocation of rice land; here I consider only the second. It incorporates the use of rice plots as a source of food in the production of labour power. Subsequently, it depends on dependents' labour power as a source of the universal commodity, money, to obtain other commodities, including rural labour power, to produce food. The rice land worked by household members derives from its allocation by elders to dependents as marital shares, including dowry, at one phase in the household reproductive cycle. Even in a husband's absence, his rural kin benefit from dowry plots allocated to his wife. Later in the cycle, this land allocation forms the basis for claims to the fruits of this labour power by those who (or whose ascendants) contributed to its production. These claims are advanced partly as demands for gamoen.

Rural elders now consider gamoen as a counterpart of dowry rather than of the transfer of reproductive capacity alone. They specify that no gamoen can be paid on behalf of an individual without land and that if a woman has no dowry, no claims can be made for gamoen on behalf of her children. Despite the apparent continuity of the legal form of gamoen, this recent equivalence gives it a substantially new meaning. Land, a means of producing urban labour power as a commodity, has replaced the transfer of reproductive capacity as its basis.

The different positions of rural elders and urban dependents in relation to gamoen claims underlie the conflicts between them that appear to concern only the allocation of dowry. From elders' standpoint, the allocation of dowry is a means of placing advance claims on the earnings of the offspring of urban dependents, hence precisely on their future sale of labour power. Gamoen constitutes the means by which and the idiom in which uterine kin seek to redeem these claims later. Dependents also understand this process, though not necessarily the reasons for its historical emergence. Young men living in towns often express their opposition to the allocation of dowry to their wives in terms of a preference for the nuclear family instead of wider kinship ties and obligations. Having themselves worked on elders' land until marriage, they refuse to ask for dowry in order to avoid imposing on their children's children the obligation to repay rural elders outside their natal household for the production of labour power.

Today gamoen usually takes the form of rice land. Pending the implementation of state legal reforms, every person born in the Banjal area remains entitled to rice land, which out-marriage and the stagnation of rice agriculture have made more readily available. In principle, rice plots are not sold for cash, though they are sometimes evaluated in cash terms and may be pledged for cash, often definitively. Banjal continue to use cattle as a standard of
value in calculating the worth of land for purposes of gamoen. Unlike rice land, however, cattle are restricted to a relatively small number of elders, and this concentration is accentuated by the fact that cattle are now an expensive commodity.

By positing gamoen as the material and symbolic counterpart of the new commodity, labour power, rural elders have opened the possibility that it may be paid directly in other commodities. As early as 1965, the uterine kin of one man requested a bicycle as his gamoen (due later). This particular request was refused, and Banjal tend to joke with embarrassment about similar occurrences; but they report that such demands have sometimes been granted. In these cases, gamoen is detached entirely from its previous context. It serves directly to renew through commodity production and circulation two sets of social relations that form part of capitalist relations of production in Senegal: first, between rural elders who allocate land for food production and urban dependents who earn cash by the sale of labour power, and, second, between individual peasants themselves.

Four Theses about Law in Rural Africa
How did the transition to capitalism affect legal ideas and institutions in formerly precapitalist social formations? Available evidence, including this case study, indicates that four theses are either established or beginning to emerge.

First, during the past century rural African communities have been integrated decisively into the world capitalist economy. Today they often compose the agricultural sector of recent social formations and are integral to a new, emerging international division of labour. Formerly precapitalist producers are now subsumed within capitalist relations of production; subsumption is used here to signify the subordination of some forms of economic activity in the economic system to principles determining the functioning of the economy as a whole. The integration of African peasants within capitalist relations has been accompanied by a transformation of rural legal ideas and processes. These changes were related to, yet distinct from, changes in legal, forms at the level of the state.

Second, these changes in rural legal forms are also analytically distinct from the creation of customary law, though of course the two processes were historically connected. Contrary to widely held notions that customary law represents indigenous African law, ‘folk law in the process of reception’ or a neo-traditional ideology stemming from primarily political interests during the colonial period, customary law is not only relatively recent in origin but also derived specifically from the subordination of African social formations to capitalist relations and was articulated through the state. Customary law was a concept and a legal form that originated in specific historical circumstances, namely the period in the transformation of precapitalist social relations that saw the consolidation of the colonial state. An ideology of colonial domination, the conception of customary law supplied a framework for the insertion of rural classes into peripheral capitalist social formations. Simultaneously, it expressed the subordination of these social forces to the dominant local classes and metropolitan legal ideologies associated directly with the state and foreign capital.
Third, the processes of rural economic and legal change occurred through complex mechanisms and assumed many forms, which varied enormously among different communities. Different forms of capital and the ways they combined in specific historical circumstances sometimes had quite different effects on legal concepts in similar precapitalist formations. Conversely, the specific characteristics of precapitalist modes of production and the distinctive features of different precapitalist social formations shaped the effects of capitalist penetration. Consequently, the different ways in which producers were subsumed within capitalist commodity relations resulted in striking differences throughout Africa in the manner and extent of changes in precapitalist legal concepts.

Fourth, despite the fundamental nature of these legal changes, the transition from one historical form of production to another did not necessarily entail the replacement of rural legal concepts by the legal forms often considered typical of 'mature' capitalist formations, though many such forms are incorporated into the law of the state. Indeed, this transition has usually been consistent, at least superficially, with the conservation of many precapitalist legal ideas. This appearance of continuity is misleading, however, for it conceals the changes in historically specific, concrete legal forms.

The concept of gamoen provides a pertinent example. This paper began by situating the concept in its historical context in the 19th Century Banjal social formation. Gamoen was a form of childwealth denoting items due in reciprocal exchange for a transfer of reproductive capital that culminated in effective patrifiliation, the principal means for the production of rural household labour which was not a commodity. Like other Banjal legal ideas, it resembled concepts which were widespread in Africa, but it derived its historically specific character from its combination with other legal forms in a particular mode of production.

This discussion of gamoen might appear superficially either to confirm the emphasis placed by Rey and Meillassoux, for example, on the reproduction of labour as the central element in precapitalist formations, or to bear out Fortes' description of filiation as the nodal mechanisms and crucial relationship of intergenerational continuity and social reproduction. But these conceptions do not describe Banjal legal forms adequately or provide a satisfactory basis for explaining the role of legal concepts in precapitalist formations, for they consider reproduction as primarily a demographic process or as occurring mainly within a domestic domain. The principal Banjal legal forms indeed concerned the circulation of the means of production rather than the process of immediate production, but the former embraced land as well as labour. The main Banjal legal concepts manifested and represented the unity and dispersal of both labour and land as the basic means of a single process of social production and reproduction. Only the concept of gamoen masked the circulation of land.

Although gamoen might therefore seem unusual among the range of Banjal legal forms, I considered it here in order to show the relationship between changes in a concrete legal form and a specific type of capitalist penetration in agriculture. The penetration of capitalism in this part of Africa did not entail a great concentration of land. It occurred primarily through the
establishment of different types of commodity relations during the colonial period, and the eventual integration of peasants into different types of production, whether for food or for sale, that were subject to capital and regulated by the state. These include the production and sale of labour power as a commodity; a form of simple commodity production marked by the increasing subordination of peasants to capital and the state; and the production of rice as a use-value that depends on the production of commodities. So far, the first type is the most important. It would be overly simplistic to draw a direct correlation between the development of different types of commodity relations and changes in all Banjal legal forms. Clearly, however, the change in the social form of labour power resulted in fundamental changes in the concept of gamoen.

This legal change is not merely an example of a disjunction between the continuity of legal ideas, on the one hand, and a change in their economic basis, on the other. The analysis of the transformation of African legal ideas during the past century must transcend any simplistic distinction between base and superstructure; the conception of a social formation composed of relatively autonomous levels, including legal forms remote from the process of production; and theories of the articulation of precapitalist modes with the capitalist mode of production. Gamoen, like other Banjal legal concepts today, manifests the specific characteristics of a particular peasantry within capitalist relations of production. Banjal peasant households today operate primarily to produce urban labour power as a commodity. If the relationship of peasants to capital is conceived in this way, the concrete concept of gamoen forms part of historically specific, capitalist production relations. The appearance of continuity that characterises Banjal legal ideas conceals the profound transformation of concrete legal forms.

Notes
1. The Banjal previously used unhusked paddy rice as an exchange item. As a result of the centralisation of merchant capital in the Casamance area, the larger French colonial firms oriented towards exports were increasingly able to determine both goods offered locally and items accepted in exchange. They had little interest in absorbing processing costs or in exerting pressure on the state to coerce the same peasants who sold their labour power or produced more lucrative crops to do so. Beginning in the late 1920s, rice from France’s Asian colonies was imported into Senegal under a customs regime that offered no protection for small merchants or local producers.

Bibliographic Note
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On basic concepts such as modes of production, commoditisation and subsumption, see J. Banaji, ‘Modes of Production in a Materialist Conception of History’, Capital and Class, 3, 1977; K. Takahashi, ‘A Contribution to the Discussion’, in R. Hilton et al., The Transition


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Notes on State and Peasantry: the Tanzanian Case

Henry Bernstein

This paper is complementary to the author’s previous ‘Notes on Capital and Peasantry’ (Review 10). In that article, the role of the state in promoting the commoditisation of peasant agriculture was alluded to, a theme which is pursued further here. This is done through a number of provisional hypotheses which ‘map out’ three connected areas of contradictions: contradictions in the circuits of peasant economy, in the apparatuses and practices of the state, and in the sphere of state-peasant relations. These schematic hypotheses are presented with the intention of contributing to current debates about the nature of the agrarian question, and of the state, in contemporary Africa.

Introduction

The intensity of debate concerning the historical experience of mainland Tanzania since Independence, and since the Arusha Declaration in particular, is well known to readers of the Review. The notes presented here reflect a process of working through the debate and the positions it contains, without referring to them explicitly. The ideological pertinence of the debate stems from the significance of the Arusha Declaration as an attempt to formulate a broad strategy of (African) Socialism and Self-Reliance, and the interest and sympathy it initially evoked among a wide spectrum of progressive opinion. Empirically, the terms of the debate have been set by two critical processes occurring over the last decade — (1) the massive expansion of the state in Tanzania to an extent that appears to attempt to ‘swallow’ civil society, not least through reconstituting the conditions of peasant existence, and (2) the generally dismal performance of the Tanzanian economy, especially in agriculture.

One problem which remains unresolved in the debate is establishing the specificity of the Tanzanian experience, as most positions reflect more general arguments of which Tanzania provides only an illustration or example — ideas about the essential practical rationality of peasants and the ‘irrationalism’ of modernising bureaucracies; about the superiority of large-scale agriculture, whether capitalist or socialist, to peasant farming; about the extent to which the ideology and practices of the Tanzanian state either conform to or fail to satisfy the aspirations of a ‘populist’ programme; about the general character of the post-colonial state in the conditions of contemporary imperialism and ‘dependency’, and so on. The present notes also suffer from this lack of determinacy concerning the specificity of Tan-
zania, but it is hoped that they might highlight some considerations important to understanding both the nature of the agrarian question in Africa more generally and its specific manifestations in particular social formations.

The Enlargement of the State in the 1970s
At the end of 1973 it was decreed by TANU and endorsed by President Nyerere that ‘To Live in Villages is an Order’. The theme of the development benefit of peasants living together in nucleated villages, as opposed to the patterns of scattered settlement prevailing in most areas of Tanzania, was a familiar one. It was manifested in various ways during the colonial period, was emphasised in Nyerere’s inaugural speech as President in 1962, and was incorporated in the wide message of *ujamaa* introduced with the Arusha Declaration in 1967. Significantly, socialist rural development was expressed in KiSwahili as *Ujamaa Vijijini* or *village socialism*: its very conception encapsulates the need for the peasantry to live together in villages.

In his pronouncements of 1967 and 1968 Nyerere stressed that the process of coming together, in order to evolve ways of living and working together, can only succeed if it is voluntary and democratic. The role of the Party is to mobilise the peasantry through political education, that of the state to provide material and technical support to those peasants trying to establish *ujamaa* villages.

From 1967 to 1973 the number of those living in officially designated ‘*ujamaa* villages’ increased from about half a million to about two million, or 15 per cent of the rural population. The great majority had been ‘mobilised’ to form villages by local Party and government officials whose recourse to commandist methods is well documented. Of particular significance in this period was the implementation from 1969 of a number of centrally approved and highly organised ‘operations’ (a characteristically military metaphor of mobilisation) to move the rural populations of entire Districts and Regions into nucleated settlements. These operations provided the prototype for the carrying out of villagisation on a national scale ordered at the end of 1973, and to be completed by 1976.

‘We had talked villagisation since 1962 . . . and it was time to act’, Nyerere observed bluntly in his major speech on the tenth anniversary of the Arusha Declaration. A senior official involved in the operation in Shinyanga District spelled out the rationale with exemplary clarity:

The 1974 Operation Villages was not be a matter of persuasion but of coercion. As Nyerere argued, the move had to be compulsory because Tanzania could not sit back and watch the majority of its peoples leading ‘a life of death’. The state had, therefore, to take the role of the ‘father’ in ensuring that its peoples chose a better and more prosperous life for themselves.

On the most conservative estimate, around five and a half million people were physically resettled in the space of three years, whether they wanted to move or not. (In some areas, notably densely populated highland areas with long established and permanent cash crops, villages were established by drawing administrative boundaries around existing patterns of settlement rather than by physical resettlement.) The ways in which people were moved, when they were moved (in terms of the agricultural calendar), and not least some of the sites to which they were moved, in many cases seemed to represent the apotheosis of ‘bureaucratic irrationalism’ in its disregard of
some of the elementary environmental and seasonal conditions of peasant farming in different parts of the country (see Coulson in the Review 3 and Review 10). Villagisation, however, was only the most dramatic measure among a number of others in the 1970s. These are briefly summarised in what follows, and their overall coherence as elements of a new strategy is then suggested.

The 'Villages and Ujamaa Villages Act' (1975) establishes the conditions for the registration of villages as corporate bodies which are 'legal individuals'. They must have between a minimum (250) and maximum (600) number of households, demarcated and recorded boundaries, and a duly elected Village Council and number of functional committees. Village Chairmen and Secretaries are Party office holders, elected by Party members in the villages, and since 1978 are full-time salaried officials. Village governments are supposed to draw up annual work plans and targets for agricultural production and infrastructural projects, and to ensure their implementation. It is projected that a number of technical cadres will be stationed in all villages, with a state-appointed Village Manager acting as a kind of 'Chief Executive Officer' to the village government. Villages act as multi-purpose co-operative societies, deriving income as crop buying agents for parastatal corporations, and from running village shops and other projects. When village budgets are established on a sufficiently firm basis they are expected to pay the salaries of village based specialists (clerks, accountants, the village Manager), as well as to contribute funds for village development schemes.

It should be noted that any effective notion of ujamaa is conspicuous by its absence in the process of villagisation, and in the conception of the new villages (it appears only as a rhetorical gesture and occasionally as an embarrassment). It has been decided recently that all villages must establish communal farms of at least 100 ha., and it was interesting to see these referred to as 'village government farms' (rather than ujamaa farms) in the Tanzanian government newspapers.

A process of 'decentralisation' of government administration has occurred following a major policy statement by Nyerere in 1972. This involved a devolution of control from Ministries to government terms at the Regional and District levels, headed by appointed Party Secretaries who are effectively the Chief Ministers of their areas, and have the rank of Cabinet Ministers. Their teams include administrative and planning staff as well as a number of functional officers who sit, along with locally elected members, in Regional and District Development Committees. Proposals for development projects can be forwarded from any level from the village upwards, and with their applications for funds more through District and Regional committees to the Prime Minister's Office which has overall responsibility for decentralised government. It is important to stress that Regions and Districts have no revenue of their own and depend on allocations from the central government budget for approved projects. Expenditure on agricultural and livestock projects submitted through the Regions is projected as 17 per cent of total investment in these sectors during the Third Five-Year Plan period, 1978-1981. Regional Development Funds granted to Regional governments to spend at their own discretion amounted to only
2.6 per cent of total development funds allocated to Regions in the 1978-9 Annual Plan.

The agricultural parastatal companies trace their origins to the old colonial Marketing Boards. There are now parastatal corporations for each of the major industrial and export crops and for livestock, and the former National Milling Corporation (currently being decentralised into a number of Regional Corporations) had, in principle, monopoly control over the marketing of all major food crops. The 1970s have witnessed an enormous expansion of the functions (and budgets) of parastatals to encompass research, provision of inputs and credit, transport, storage, and processing as well as marketing. Their control over marketing was enhanced by the abolition, coincident with villagisation, of the previous three-tier marketing system linking primary co-operative societies, Regional Co-operative Unions and crop parastatals, to bring the latter into direct contact with crop marketing organised through the new villages.

The resources and influence commanded by parastatals are considerable, and in areas geared to the production of a major cash crop the relevant parastatal authority and its personnel often manifest a more strategic presence than the local government structures. Parastatal corporations enjoy considerable autonomy enhanced by their control of nationally planned crop programmes, and the direct involvement with foreign aid donors that these have increasingly entailed. There is also a tendency for parastatals to establish their own large-scale agricultural enterprises, so far notably in food grains (maize, wheat, rice). This may reflect the tendency of one line represented in the higher levels of the state to secure the marketed supply of food through other means than relying on erratic sales by peasants. The latter should first of all secure their own food requirements, with parastatal farms supplying the stocks for a Strategic National Food Research programme which can feed the urban population, and those rural areas which experience periodic food deficits.

During the course of the 1970s the proportion of Tanzania's development budget financed directly by foreign aid has increased to at least 65 per cent of the present Five-Year Plan. A number of the most strategic aid schemes are in the agricultural sector, and are of two main types. The first concerns particular crops, whether industrial and export crops or food crops which have received a new emphasis from both the state and its principal donor, the World Bank. The prototype of the new food programmes was the National Maize Project (NMP), initiated in 1975 and financed by the World Bank, under which 1,000 villages have been selected for intensive maize cultivation using packages of improved seeds and fertilisers. NMP has been absorbed into a 20 year National Agricultural Development Programme which is similarly selecting areas for the specialised production of various food grains. The financing of the NMP was organised through the Tanzania Rural Development Bank (TRDB) which is the principal channel for supplying credit to agriculture, usually via parastatals.

The second type of programme is the Regional Integrated Development Programme (RIDEP). Plans for each of the country's Regions were drawn up in the mid-1970s by planning teams provided through a variety of external development agencies. In the wake of these plans a number of RIDEPs
are now being implemented, mostly with World Bank finance or under its management. Another recent innovation is the setting of Regional and District production targets for particular crops. It can be suggested that given the scale and strategic nature of the involvement of the World Bank, its Dar es Salaam office which is at the centre of a network of linkages connecting important Ministries and parastatals is effectively a state apparatus in its own right, albeit of a distinctive kind. Certainly, the procedures and practices through which project aid on a large scale is solicited, provided, administered and evaluated have contributed significantly to the enlargement and centralisation of Tanzania's version of the 'modernising state'.

These various measures and tendencies, taken together, amount to a new type of strategy for the development of agricultural production in Tanzania. Essentially it is a modernisation strategy incorporating elements that are familiar enough from elsewhere: raising yields through new input packages and improved practices under close supervision, developing infrastructure, economies of scale, greater specialisation, technical coordination and direction from the centre, and so on. However, it is given a particular interest by some of the specificities of the Tanzanian context — the generally 'backward' though extremely diverse nature of peasant farming in Tanzania; the scale of the enlargement of the state, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, and the specifically political mechanisms of its drive to promote commodity production, notably through draft villagisation; the carrying out of this process under the umbrella of Tanzania's populist ideology, which may well have some 'effectivity' of its own that contributes to the contradictions manifested within the state as well as in state-peasant relations.

The components of the new strategy can be summarised as follows:

a. the development of a planned division of labour with greater Regional (and District) specialisation in particular crops for a strategic national food reserve, for processing by national industries, and for export;

b. considerably enlarged technical and administrative apparatuses at all levels to act as 'transmission belts' for the implementation of programmes conceived at the national level, which entail both packages of new inputs and practices and the fulfilment of production targets;

c. the incorporation of the rural population in concentrated villages, constituted as a new kind of state apparatus with uniform legal and administrative structures, and equipped with full-time salaried political officials and technicians to direct their economic performance in line with the kinds of programmes indicated.

The first striking feature of this strategy is that it involves the intensification of peasant labour in several ways. In relatively 'backward' areas with low levels of marketed output the first aim is to expand commodity production; in well-established cash cropping areas the aim is to intensify commodity production in terms of specialisation and improved cultivation to raise yields. Intensification of peasant labour includes either or both lengthening the farming season (through the introduction of new crops of new varieties), and intensifying labour within it through the requirements of the new packages. The latter demand not only an increase in labour time expended in cultivation, but also a higher 'quality' of labour for their success:
more exacting methods of soil preparation, planting, weeding, fertiliser application, as well as a generally tighter scheduling of labour processes. In addition to intensifying the labour involved in agricultural production, seasonally unemployed or underemployed 'surplus' labour is to be utilised for the creation of economic and social infrastructure — feeder roads, wells, crop storage facilities, school buildings, dispensaries, and so on. Together with the stipulation of minimum acreages of food crops (and often cash crops as well) for every person able to cultivate, these measures amount to various ways of 'lengthening the working year' in Kjaerby's suggestive phrase.

The Third Five-Year Plan documents make it clear that intensification of peasant labour is the key element in raising agricultural production, and that villagisation was seen as a necessary condition for establishing control over the uses of that labour. On the latter point:

In the rural sector, the Party had great success in resettling the rural peasantry in villages where it is now possible to identify able-bodied individuals able to work and also to identify the acreage available for agricultural purposes . . . the plan intends to make sure that in every workplace, rural or urban, our implementing organs set specific work targets each year . . . the village government will see to it that all Party policies in respect of development programmes are adhered to.

This rationale also lurks behind the sectoral allocation of projected development expenditure. I have calculated that industrial and urban related sectors (including mining, construction, and power) account for 42.4 per cent of the development budget, and agriculture and livestock 13.5 per cent (although certain expenditures on agriculture such as seasonal fertiliser loans appear in different budget categories). The Plan spells out the reason for this allocation:

Agricultural development in our present day conditions calls for good organisation in the rural areas involving setting up work timetables and production targets and adhering to them, and not only on making large investments . . . agriculture has been given top priority although industry will receive the lion's share of financial resources but this is because a big part of agricultural production does not require government investment and hence will be implemented through the farmer's own efforts.

Finally, it is of some importance to note the division of functions embedded in the expanded and elaborated state apparatuses. The crop parastatals (and related parastatals such as the TRDB) have technical, financial and managerial hegemony over the various processes that link peasant production to the national and international markets, and promote their programmes with the blessing of the major policy organs of the state (the Economic Committee of the Cabinet, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Treasury), and in conjunction with the major foreign aid donors. The decentralised government apparatuses (Regions and Districts) have the political and administrative tasks of 'mobilising' the villagised peasants of their areas for the fulfilment of targets. They also initiate campaigns for specific objectives, often the enforcement of minimum cultivation acreages stipulated in local directives and by-laws, and infrastructural schemes.

This sketch of the 'new strategy' is no doubt contentious, and several comments might serve to avoid unnecessary polemic. The first is that most, if not all, of these measures were historically prefigured in the colonial period and the 1960s. My point is not that they appear for the first time in the
1970s, but that they are combined more systematically as a programme (of a particular technical and political kind) that accompanies a new stage in the expansion and centralisation of the state. Second, to list the elements of this programme is not to explain its appearance at a particular time nor its particular forms — these issues are the object of a conjunctural analysis of the key 'moments' of confrontation and struggle, through which the contradictions of the social formation have been articulated. No such conjunctural analysis is attempted here; the most important examples to date of this kind of analysis are the work of Issa Shivji (Class Struggles in Tanzania) and Michaela von Freyhold (Review 8). Having outlined my version of the enlargement of the state, particularly as it affects agriculture and the peasantry, I will move on to suggest some of the contradictions from which it developed, and which it intensifies and further generates.

Contradictions of Peasant Production
Conceptualising the contradictions of peasant production does not mean that these contradictions apply in any blanket fashion to all peasantries, which have to be investigated concretely in terms of a number of (variously combined) differentiations: the persistence of different pre-capitalist relations and practices; regional and ecological variations in their conditions of existence; the effects of an extremely uneven history of commoditisation; the forms and extent of social differentiation (class formation); the range of variation in the circumstances of individual households within each regional ‘type’ or stratum of the peasantry. Peasants in Tanzania occupy a diverse range of ecological environments or zones, the variation of which is compounded by the uneven history of commoditisation. The latter itself has major effects for different zones and the modes of appropriating nature (the labour processes in both their technical and social dimensions) within them.

Rather than attempting to elaborate a matrix which incorporates all the above aspects of the variant conditions of the production and realisation of the peasant labour product, I will mention several strategic issues connected with the performance of peasant agriculture in Tanzania. The first concerns the persistence of pre-capitalist relations and practices, and the ways in which these affect and are affected by the development of commodity production. Undoubtedly the most pervasive and important category of these relations and practices concerns gender differences, that is, particular sexual divisions in
a. the labour processes of agricultural (and pastoral) production,
b. the range of other activities entailed by household reproduction,
c. the distribution of income within households in the form of both use-values and cash. Some of the major consequences in the development of commodity production for the position of women in Tanzania have been analysed by Debbie Bryceson in Review 17.

In terms of the contradictions of peasant production we can point to (a) ways in which sexual divisions of labour prevent a fuller utilisation of household labour time in agricultural production, and (b) ways in which women are ‘doubly’ oppressed by virtue of gender relations and their associated practices, as well as by their position as peasants. With respect to these, villagisation may have had some unexpectedly progressive, if still far from transformational, consequences. On one hand, it has long been com-
mon (in 'ujamaa villages') for men to 'delegate' their wives and other women of the household to perform the duties prescribed for all in collective undertakings. On the other hand, and no doubt in exceptionally 'favourable' circumstances, collective production has been organised much more successfully by women (i.e. when they have had the opportunity to organise themselves, and to decide on the distribution of the product). René Dumont reports one such instance in a labour reserve area of southern Tanzania where male domination has been undermined by the absence of many men working or seeking work elsewhere in the country. More generally, villagisation has given many women more opportunity to engage in social interaction among themselves than was previously the case, and I have been told in some villages that the more 'public' nature of village life has curbed some of the worst excesses of wife-beating at least.

In addition to gender differences of a specifically pre-capitalist kind, there may well be other pre-capitalist social and ideological relations which place limits on the (further) development of commodity production, for example, those which determine and limit the labour available to households, and those through which certain elements of generational reproduction — the establishment of new households with an initial stock of means of production — are secured. In short, one should be alert to the continuing 'effectivity' of pre-capitalist relations and practices which inhibit the commoditisation of land and labour power, and consequently the extent of class formation resulting from the extension of petty commodity production. It is suggestive that those few areas of Tanzania where capitalist farming was established by Africans (as distinct from settlers) were 'frontier' areas of new settlement, where the constraints on commodity production imposed by pre-capitalist relations were more easily dissolved.

Other types of contradictions of peasant production are located within the processes of commoditisation. One critical issue concerning the differential conditions of existence of peasant production is the place that different peasantries occupy in the social division of labour, and the character of that division of labour — whether it is articulated at the level of the national economy, the limitations to which it is subject, and so on. This is particularly relevant for the degree to which the extension and intensification of commodity production is determined (limited) by the degree to which each peasantry (at the level of the individual household or of the local economy) has to produce its own food supply or can secure it in other ways. This relates in turn to the contradictions of what I have termed the 'simple reproduction squeeze' (Review 10), given effect in the cycle of household economy as the struggle to secure simple reproduction in deteriorating conditions of production and/or exchange.

With respect to the latter, the decline in the terms of trade for peasant produced commodities has been so marked in Tanzania in the past decade that some commentators see this as the single most important cause of the stagnation of marketed crops, reinforced in recent years by dire shortages of the most basic 'peasant wage goods' in many rural areas. Different strategies are available to peasants in the face of the simple reproduction squeeze, the most important determinant of these being the extent to which, and the forms in which, their reproduction is secured through commodity
circuits. This defines the possibilities of (relative) withdrawal from the sphere of commodity production — an 'option' which decreases to the extent that a peasantry is involved in more specialised types of commodity production, particularly of permanent crops. World Bank figures on peasant production and income by regions in Tanzania, roughly corresponding to different degrees of the scale and specialisation of peasant commodity production, indicate that a 'withdrawal' into use value production has occurred most of all in those areas where commodity production is least developed.

It remains necessary to make some observations on the vexed question of the differentiation of the peasantry in the sense of class formation — the customary way of breaking down what otherwise tends to remain a conceptually homogenous category, at the same time introducing some notion of contradictions among the peasantry. It seems to me that the issues of class differentiation can only be pursued adequately through an analysis of the conditions and effects of differential commoditisation, rather than the assumption of any intrinsically necessary transition from petty commodity production to capitalist production on the one hand, or, on the other hand any intrinsically egalitarian quality attributed to the 'peasant mode of production', 'peasant community' etc. This is a theoretical point, which inclines me to scepticism concerning the extent of class formation among peasants in Tanzania which I think has often been exaggerated in the service of polemics (e.g. kulak 'power' as an explanation of the failure of ujamaa vijiji).

Certainly there have been 'kulaks' in some areas of Tanzania, and their political no less than economic conditions of existence are important; they have achieved political representation as a bloc in some localities through Party and non-Party organisations (e.g. the marketing co-operatives, which are often cited in this context, but also the churches — the sociology of which remains a much neglected area, especially for the period since Independence). However, there has never been an effective presentation of kulak interests at the higher levels of the Party and the state, and the ideology and practice of the leadership towards kulaks has been inconsistent and erratic in its effects. The proponents of a strong differentiation thesis in Tanzania have failed to appreciate the important qualitative distinction between 'kulak' and agrarian capitalist. Given the evidence of a relatively coherent 'kulak' formation over a long period in certain areas, why was the development of capitalist agriculture exceptional? One can hypothesize that in certain conditions, including limitations on the commoditisation of land and labour power set by pre-capitalist relations and by state intervention, those who have accumulated some capital from agriculture will invest in the sphere of commodity circulation (crop trading, transport, shops, bars), and in extending the political base of their families (investment in political influence, in education and bureaucratic careers for sons, younger brothers, cousins, and so on). The former contributes to the extension of commodity relations, but their further development will inevitably encounter the barriers presented by the lack of any substantial accumulation and development of the productive forces within the sphere of agricultural production.
Contradictions of the State

Colonialism was, in the first place, not the imposition of the capitalist mode of production but of a derived form of ‘administrative state’, in Worsley’s phrase. The colonial state was not the product of processes of transition in the social formations on which it was imposed, nor were its ‘functions’ those of regulating class struggles rooted in these formations. The history of the colonial state is the history of the creation of its own conditions of existence: first military and political ‘pacification’ of the various pre-capitalist formations it encountered in the course of drawing its boundaries; second, establishing the conditions and mechanisms of its administration, including communications, political structures and procedures (‘Indirect Rule’), and the securing of revenue. Together with the effects of certain ideological contradictions (which remained unresolved to the end of the colonial period) it was these dimensions of state-building that established some of the major conditions of, and limits on, ‘economic development’ — the emergence and entry of capital and capitalist enterprise (in Tanzania almost exclusively in agriculture, finance, and commodity circulation), and the commoditisation of peasant agriculture. The policies and mechanisms of the colonial state, including its forms of intervention in peasant economy, were by no means ‘optimal’ for the development of commodity production and capital accumulation (colonial or metropolitan).

The point I want to derive from these considerations is that the state constituted the only systematic set of social relations at the territorial level at the time of Independence. Any ‘national economy’ consisting of a social division of labour at the territorial level, including markets for capital, labour power, means of production, and other commodities, was very limited. The dominant form of production — household petty commodity production — was only exceptionally inserted in and reproduced through circuits of production, distribution and exchange operating at the level of a national division of labour. Those areas in which peasant commodity production was most advanced were involved in local or regional divisions of labour on one hand, and in the commodity circuits of the world market on the other. Corresponding to the very limited development of national economy was a fragmented and mostly ‘pre-national’ civil society in which class formation was similarly limited, and the articulation of class interests ‘overdetermined’ by the characteristically racial division of labour of colonialism.

It is not surprising therefore that the leadership of the nationalist movement was drawn mainly from those whose political formation occurred through the places they occupied within the state (teachers, civil servants), or within corporate bodies constituted through a close, if sometimes antagonistic, relationship with the state (the large marketing co-operatives and trade unions). Of these two categories the former became dominant through a series of struggles in which its more ‘national’ (because statist) character was asserted against the incipient class forces of both labour and indigenous capital (represented in the regional kulak-trader blocs of the few large and locally powerful co-operatives). The ‘governing class’ that coalesced through the nationalist movement and the subsequent history of the post-colonial state bears the imprint of its original formation within the state, and its initial ‘inheritance’ of many of the state forms and practices.
deposited by colonialism, not least those pertaining to state intervention in peasant economy. Of the original nationalist coalition, therefore, that section which was directly rooted in commodity production and private property has been subordinated, leaving a governing class which as a class (and omitting the propensities to individual accumulation of those within it) can only exert any control of the economy through the political means at its disposal. Its programme for the development of a national economy necessarily proceeds through the creation and extension of state property, through acting as capital as well as satisfying the political and ideological conditions of its authority and legitimacy. These considerations, which I shall try to elaborate, allow the possibility of separating the structural causes of contradictions within the state (and in its relationship to civil society) from what is by now a fairly dense symptomology describing the effects (modes of appearance) of those contradictions: inefficiency, corruption, demoralisation, and the various indices of ‘bureaucratic irrationalism’.

The creation of state property has proceeded through nationalisation of the major branches of exchange, finance and industry (documented by Shivji) to the present stage in which the distinctive device of villagisation — concentration of the rural population without collectivisation of production — means that the state confronts the great mass of producers at the immediate threshold of their organisation of production. The other critical dimension of the specificity of this form of state is that it has no base in civil society in terms of classes whose interests it can articulate or appeal to, and whose support it can mobilise. On one hand, the governing class has moved against class elements whose location in the economy carries the possibility of some independent political expression i.e. private capitals, and in particular merchant capital, kulaks (as a political bloc), and the working class. On the other hand (as von Freyhold has suggested), the state in a sense creates its own social base through the sheer expansion of the numbers of people it employs, the scope of the functions of state institutions and corporations, and the operation of the budget.

This process also has its contradictions, as I shall suggest below, the most immediate of which is the growing gap between that part of state revenue which is provided from the national economy and the costs of the ‘expanded reproduction’ of state apparatuses and employment, including expenditure on social welfare. The programmes to provide clean water supply, basic health care and primary schooling to the whole rural population consume a part of state revenue that otherwise could be directed to productive accumulation, but the claim to be satisfying the ‘basic needs’ of the peasantry is a central component of the state’s claim to legitimacy, however, ideologically overdetermined and bureaucratically ‘distorted’ in practice this conception is. The last point can be amplified in suggesting the general character of a politically and ideologically overdetermined mode of state intervention, encompassing both economy and civil society. Headed by a governing class lacking any independent or direct connection with production and base in civil society, and which only comes to be consolidated and reproduced as a class through its aggrandisement vis-à-vis civil society, the programme of the state manifests itself in a particular combination of (utopian) voluntarism and modernising adminisirirovanie (‘government by ad-
ministrative order, irrespective of the opinion and interests of the masses’).

The former projects the memory of the ‘heroic’ periods of mass mobilisation, originally in the nationalist movement against foreign political rule, and ‘replayed’ at the time of the Arusha Declaration against foreign capital. The anti-colonial mobilisation of the 1950s was a more ambiguous social process than the political folklore recognises. Certainly widespread peasant opposition to the regulations imposed by the rural development schemes of the late colonial period coincided with the campaign of TANU for national independence, and could be channelled into support for it, but it is interesting to note a contemporary statement by Nyerere that ‘We (in TANU) had to choose whether to exploit the daily grievances of the people of whether to ignore these and concentrate quite simply on Uhuru, Freedom. I advised against pursing the former course . . .’. It is a sad comment on the leftist mythology of ‘peasant nationalism’ in Tanzania, that it has been left to writers of the political modernisation variety to point out (a) the limited and conditional nature of the support of most peasants for the demand of national independence, and (b) the subsequent decline in state control over the peasantry in the years after Independence, which is particularly important for the period (since 1967) when the state has intensified its demands on the peasantry.

Bureaucratic modernisation has a potent historical legacy from the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of the late colonial period, and the particular schemes conducted under their aegis in Tanzania. Mwapachu’s statement on the need for villagisation, quoted above, is the apotheosis of the state’s despotism in order to be benevolent — to secure both development and welfare — in this conception. While development programmes are mostly conceived in technical terms (reflecting the influence of aid donors, above all that unique ‘state apparatus’ the World Bank, and of an increasingly important stratum of technocrats in the governing class — that section of it most directly concerned with the management of state capital), it is the party, lacking any experience of economic management, which is charged with mobilising the effort to implement them, which exhorts and commands. What the major economic policy organs and the parastatals decree is ‘covered’ by the authority and legitimacy of the Party, which in turn are eroded by the failures of policies and their effects on the real incomes and standards of living of the peasantry, as well as by the indignities and oppression to which they are subjected.

Thus what we witness in the post-colonial period is the persistence of an agrarian economy that has not undergone any major structural changes at the level of production, with the formation of a state that inherits certain forms of organisation and practices from colonialism but with a marked break in its social character. In the first place, this is because the nature of ideological and political legitimacy — the terrain on which stability and continuity are struggled over — changes radically with Independence, confronting the governing class with quite different conditions of reproduction than those experienced by its colonial predecessors. In the first few years of Independence, its survival was at stake in confrontations with the trade unions and the army, episodes which constitute critical moments in its formation as a class. Second, the development programmes of the post-
colonial state are much more ambitious, and promise far more, than anything that existed under colonialism, and after 1967 are articulated through the medium of a comprehensive and transformational ideology. The ways in which these programmes are conceived and practised through an uneasily juxtaposed voluntarism (an idealist politics of enthusiasm and almost continuous mobilisation) and a commandist bureaucratisation, is the key to the accelerated expansion of the state. The extension of political control entailed by the latter involves at different times further episodes of confrontation with merchant capital, with identifiable organisational forms of representation of kulak interests (the abolition of District Councils in 1969, of Regional Co-operative Unions in 1975), with the working class in the early 1970s (see Mihyo in *Review* 4), and ultimately with an elusive peasantry.

What is at issue in relations between the state and the peasantry is that part of the peasant labour produce that is realised through exchange, and realised through mechanisms of exchange that the state is able to control and derive revenue from. Given the combination of the limits of an agriculture largely based in household production on one hand, and the rapidly escalating costs of an expanding state on the other (together with limited, and often negative, returns from other sectors of the state economy), then increasing pressure of the state on the peasantry is a predictable outcome. This is manifested in the first place in the extension of state control over the conditions of exchange, charted in the institutional development of a kind of monopolistic state merchant capital (the operations of crop and transport parastatals, the annual setting of pan-territorial prices for all major crops, as well as growing monopolisation by the state of the supply of peasant means of production and ‘wage goods’). Resistance by peasants to the decline in the terms of trade for agricultural commodities (through ‘withdrawal’ from commodity production, smuggling and other forms of illicit marketing), along with limitations to further commoditisation at the level of the conditions of production, contributes to the stagnation of marketed output, thus intensifying the fiscal problems of the state. At this juncture the momentum of the process of state expansion, and the objective need to finance it, moves from attempted monopolisation of that part of the peasant labour *product* which is realised through exchange, to the attempt to control the conditions of existence and uses of peasant labour itself. The rationale now is to increase the absolute size of peasant output and the proportion of it that is marketed.

**Contradictions of State-Peasant Relations**
It is now appropriate (and overdue) to consider the state as an ensemble of apparatuses and practices, and to raise the question of the effectiveness or otherwise of their articulation in relation to the social character of the state and its agents, and to the terrain it has invaded so comprehensively if not ‘captured’ definitively, namely the (range of) conditions of peasant existence. More succintly, to what extent does the state in its totality dispose of the capacity to act as an ‘instrument’ of the strategy elaborated by the governing class at its centre? While suggesting that there is a new strategy which has a certain coherence, it should not be forgotten that it makes its entry into a specific historical context which includes the accumulated experiences and practices of different peasantries and of a rural development
bureaucracy originating in colonialism.

In the first place, it seems that the different levels and branches of the state are poorly articulated, thus undermining their ‘instrumental’ effectiveness. Some of the reasons have been indicated and can be summarily reformulated in the light of the above question. At the most general level there are those contradictions located in the ‘overextended’ nature of the state itself, overextended in the scope of its programmes, and the means it has at its disposal (political and technical as well as financial) to pursue them in relation to the fragmented and ‘pre-national’ character of the peasant economies which are their target. One manifestation of this type of contradiction is the problem of physical communications in many parts of the country, which are problems not only of the efficient movement of inputs, commodities, and people, but also problems of effectively monitoring the performance of local state apparatuses and personnel by those at the centre. (This problem was reflected in the tendency to locate new villages along roads, even when these sites are areas of less favourable farming land, access to water, etc. — this does not signify an essential ‘bureaucratic irrationalism’ pace Coulson, but a clear example of a contradiction between an economic programme which involves raising levels of peasant production, and the political mechanisms of extending control over peasants as one of its necessary conditions.) In short, at least some of the contradictions of implementing the strategy are directly related to the lack of an infrastructure adequate to it (a system of communications that has developed very unevenly as both cause and effect of differential commoditisation).

Within the structure of the state there seem to me to be major contradictions in the articulation of technical and managerial apparatuses with those of a political and ideological kind (including the Party). First, the tendency to autonomy of the major parastatals makes it difficult to monitor and control their functioning in the implementation of strategy. This is expressed in their lack of accountability and discipline (obvious in their financial practices, for example) and is the effect of the political weakness of the Party and government. The latter confront civil society as political apparatuses engaged in extending their control over it, but their lack of any wider class base means that they are politically weak in relation to the parastatals as specialised agencies of state capital, concentrating technical and managerial expertise and ‘the lion’s share’ of resources for development. Party and government are unable to exert any effective hegemony over the parastatals, their nominal hegemony finding expression in sporadic anti-corruption drives and purges (otherwise, of course, they attempt to subordinate the working class employed in parastatal enterprises through Party branches and the state-run trade union). The tendency to autonomy and lack of accountability of large parastatals manifests itself not only in the lack of control over them by Party and government, but also in the lack of coordination of parastatals — competition for resources, rivalry, secrecy, duplication, etc. — which holds back the development of a national division of labour effected through a planned state sector.

Concerning peasant production there is a division of functions between the agricultural parastatals as the managers of crop development programmes, providing inputs and technical expertise, and the political apparatuses as
‘mobilisers’ of peasant labour. In the latter case, technical considerations are not infrequently neglected altogether (as in many instances of villagisation) or are subordinated to the political and ideological practices known as ‘mobilisation’. In relation to peasant production these are typically expressed as targets of *acres under cultivation* (stipulated for each able-bodied cultivator, or village, or District) in contrast to the planning targets of *output* — any notion of *yields* (and their determinants) as the vital link between the two is lost. Political apparatuses do sometimes mount local campaigns for improved practices such as planting or weeding at a certain time, but their effects for production are limited by the fact that (a) whatever technical ‘rationality’ they may possess often violates the mode of calculation of peasant farming oriented to securing the means of subsistence (a classic example is the exhortation, and even compulsion, to plant before the rains in areas where seasons are notoriously erratic as to timing, duration, and quantity of rainfall); (b) they identify and abstract only one or two agricultural practices from the usually complex totality of labour processes in which different peasants engage; (c) at best such political means of ensuring compliance with prescribed practices, even when they produce results, tend to be one-off operations — they strain the capacities of already overburdened local state apparatuses, as well as intensifying the tension latent in state-peasant relations.

I am suggesting that the political mechanisms and effects of ‘mobilisation’ in Tanzania, which often contain an implicit or explicit coercive element, cannot provide any basis for the systematic and productive transformation of peasant economy. Apart from the question of peasant resistance (on which more below) the mode of perception of the performance of political apparatuses and their agents is quite detached from considerations of production and its efficiency — the ‘productivity’ of political apparatuses is measured in terms of area under cultivation rather than yields, in terms of the numbers of village buildings and water projects constructed, and the numbers of those mobilised for the task, rather than their social utility for (or degree of utilisation by) those whose labour was ‘mobilised’. There is the familiar syndrome of village ‘communal’ farms of a certain official size — thus satisfying the political accounting of ‘implementation’ — which reveal to the visitor a wholly neglected and weed-infested desolation.

Another way in which the ideological practices of the state come into contradiction with its new programme has already been referred to, namely the commitment to egalitarianism and the provision of basic amenities as central to its claims to legitimacy. Thus part of state revenue (and the energies of local state apparatuses) is expended in programmes to raise general social welfare in the countryside (education, clean water supply, health facilities) rather than being invested in production or productive infrastructure. The allocation of resources is also influenced by the commitment in the official ideology to overcoming regional disparities and inequalities, thus paying special attention to ‘backward’ areas which contribute marginally to aggregate marketed output, rather than a more consistently state capitalist rationale of ‘betting on the strong’, i.e. concentrating resources in ‘high potential’ areas where major gains in increased production would (in principle) be realised more quickly.
A further major issue is how ideological overdetermination affects the practices of different categories of state agents. This is a particularly tricky problem for analysis (as distinct from the descriptive symptomology of inefficiency, corruption, demoralisation etc.). One path of investigation has been suggested by Michaela von Freyhold, namely the tension between reproduction as members of a class (this applies to the governing class), involving mechanisms for ensuring class cohesion and discipline (and at the subjective level commitment to the class programme), and individual reproduction through the use of resources made available by senior state office to increase consumption, and possibly even to engage in accumulation of a suitably disguised kind.

The subjective effects of cynicism, a sense of hopelessness, and demoralisation (and even sympathy for the peasants) are particularly potent for those agents at the lower levels of state apparatuses who directly experience peasant intransigence, or at best ritual compliance with policies in the rural areas (frequently expressed in the official discourse as the 'laziness' or 'in-gratitude' of the peasants in the face of all what is being done for them). These agents, located in-between the higher levels of Party and state which bombard them with demands and orders to mount campaigns and an often recalcitrant peasantry, are most vulnerable to the contradictions in the mixture of a voluntarist and populist ideology and one of bureaucratic modernisation, that encapsulates and ostensibly legitimates their prescribed roles and practices.

There remains the strategic question of the effectiveness of the state's penetration of rural society, i.e. a civil society which has its own economic forms and political and ideological relations. The patterns of the latter (including the effects of differential commoditisation on them) have yet to be established in any systematic way. However, Hyden's scepticism about the assumption of state 'power' as automatically given by the institutional expansion of the state is a necessary corrective to much of what has been written, and his suggestion that lower level state apparatuses are 'captured' by the forces of civil society, rather than the other way round, deserves consideration. The question of what forms of domination/subordination or accommodation exist in the relations of the state (and particular state apparatuses) to civil society in the rural areas (constituted 'horizontally' by different types of peasantry, and 'vertically' by social classes) cannot be answered in general terms. This is both because of the variant degrees of articulation of the state at the local level, and the kinds of political 'space' that result from this, and because of the different local formations of civil society that the state confronts. While no bourgeoisie based in private property and accumulation is constituted at the national level nor has political representation within the governing class (except in the peculiar sense that some have argued for international capital as the 'ruling class'), it seems likely that there are what might be called regional bourgeoisies in several regions, which are able to secure representation of their interests vis-à-vis state political apparatuses and/or parastatals. Limits of space prevent elaboration of this hypothesis, except to say that they have specific conditions of existence, both economic and political, and can be divided into those which are authentically capitalist with an original base in capitalist agriculture (Arusha and Iringa), and those which are more 'kulak' in type.
but link with capital in the sphere of transport and circulation (Kilimanjaro, Bukoba, Upare).

Coming to the peasantry more generally, it remains to illustrate how the contradictions of state-peasant relations are manifested in individual and collective forms of resistance by peasants. While some general points can be made for the purpose of identifying the reasons and the bases of peasant resistance (the degree of generality being related to the comprehensive character of the state’s offensive, and the unitary nature of its mechanisms, at least in a formal/institutional sense), its concrete forms vary a great deal from area to area, as already indicated. Individual peasant resistance to the state is based in the individualised nature of household production. The reconstitution of the latter in different circumstances through villagisation has tended to intensify existing trends in the deterioration of the conditions of production and exchange, as well as introducing new pressures on those conditions (e.g. with respect to the conditions of production, the ecological and spatial effects of villagisation in many areas; with respect to the conditions of exchange, limiting the possibilities of evading state marketing channels for crops, and selling at above official prices). At the same time individual cultivators are subjected to a barrage of technical prescriptions and political commands.

However, the point of greatest significance is precisely that villagisation has reconstituted individualised household production: the state has not expropriated the peasantry nor subjected it to a Soviet-style collectivisation. On one hand, this was a political impossibility (marking one of the limits of the state’s capacity vis-à-vis the peasantry); on the other hand, it means that however circumscribed the processes of household production are by the political presence of the state in its attempts to ‘pump out’ surplus labour, the state is still unable to penetrate the household production process to control it fully. The continuing status of peasants as possessors of the means of production locates the direct production process as the ultimate site of state-peasant confrontation. While it is one thing to villagise people who are reluctant to move, to conduct labour turn-outs for various purposes (familiar in peasant memory from colonial days), and to satisfy the political accounting of ‘implementation’ (x million people in villages, y thousand villages with school or dispensary buildings), it is something else to try to direct the production process and to increase production through political means which in this case remain external to the organisation of production.

The persistence of household forms of production suggests the theoretical basis of individual peasant resistance at the point of production (through evasion, ‘sabotage’ etc.) but villagisation has changed and broadened the sociological basis of peasant resistance. There is little systematic evidence concerning the sociology of the new villages, but impressionistic evidence seems to confirm the view that the incorporation of the peasantry in a new kind of state apparatus is not the same thing as their definitive ‘capture’. In some cases the populist spectre of ‘kulak power’ continues to manifest itself through the new political structures, that is, ‘kulaks’ or ‘kulak’ factions are able to gain control of village governments and to maintain or develop links with local state functionaries (though rarely beyond the District level).
However, even less than before, does this mean that they use these positions and links to engage in any productive accumulation.

In other cases, lineage or generational conflicts involving interests based in pre- or non-capitalist relations (which are material interests if not reducible to those of 'economic classes') continue to assert themselves, whether through struggles to capture village governments (or to oppose them), or conducted through alternative (non-state) political frameworks. These struggles do not necessarily express direct resistance to the state's strategy per se, but certainly contribute to undermining the village as a form of state apparatus instrumental in implementing the strategy. Village-level state agents — both those from outside (Village Managers, extension officers, clerks, schoolteachers) and those from inside the village (Village Chairmen and Secretaries) bear the brunt of their location in the 'front line' of state-peasant relations, and tend to be most constrained by their contradictions. The sanctions that can be brought to bear against them range from ostracism and intimidation and witchcraft to physical violence, including the occasional murder.

The state in Tanzania has brought a comprehensive ensemble of means of pressure to bear on the peasantry, in pursuit of its programme of extending and intensifying commodity production, including legal coercion which has not been detailed here. The mechanisms of legal coercion, as well as a number of instances of the fining and jailing of peasants for non-compliance with prescribed cultivation practices and minimum acreage norms, have been documented by Fimbo and Williams who both stress the growing authoritarianism of the state in the context of villagisation and after. The formal nature of that authoritarianism is evident enough, and is experienced as oppressive, but its practice at the village level is extremely uneven for reasons that I have tried to indicate, a proposition that applies a fortiori to any effectiveness it may have in implementing the new strategy of 'rural development' in Tanzania. In 'mapping' the contradictions of the latter, I have tried to emphasise those which are produced by a specific process of state formation, with a 'dual nature' as both capital and political and ideological apparatuses, and how these combine with the contradictions of forms of civil society which the extension of the state might well 'swallow', but is not necessarily able to digest.

Bibliographic Note
These notes are a revised version of a paper given to the Peasants Seminar of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, in December 1980, and on several subsequent occasions. They draw on work done while the author was a Research Fellow at the University of Kent, funded by the Social Science Research Council. The original paper drew a barrage of such wide-ranging comments and criticisms that I have been unable to accommodate most of them here. These notes are presented in the hope of conveying to a wider audience, and provoking their response to, certain issues that I feel have been neglected in debates about the peasantry and the post-colonial state in Africa. However, I have included some specific corrections and points suggested by Debbie Bryceson, Andrew Coulson and John Sender. Concerning bibliography, there are provocative recent contributions to the 'Tanzanian debate' by Goran Hyden: Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania. Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry (London, 1980), and Susanne Mueller: 'Retarded capitalism in Tanzania' in The Socialist Register 1980 (London); J. Boesen and A.T. Mohele: The 'Success Story' of Peasant Tobacco Production in Tanzania (Uppsala, 1979) is the best analysis to date of peasant production and its conditions of existence in Tanzania. A theoretical analysis of differential commoditisation and the ways in which it informs a detailed historical reconstruction of the uneven development
of commodity production, is only one of the merits of G. Kitching's outstanding work on *Class and Economic Change in Kenya* (New Haven, 1980). The concept of the 'lengthening of the working year' is contained in an important paper by Finn Kjaerby on 'Agricultural productivity and surplus production in Tanzania. Implications of villagisation, fertilisers and mixed farming' (Dar es Salaam, 1979, mimeo). The definition of 'administrirovanie' is from M. Lewin *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power* (London, 1968). The quotation in paragraph 5 is from J.V. Mwapachu: 'Operation Planned Villages in Tanzania: a revolutionary strategy for development', *African Review* Vol.6 No.1 (1976), that in paragraph 35 from J.K. Nyerere's 'Foreword' to K.M. Stahl: *Tanganyika. Sail in the Wilderness* ('S-Gravenhage, 1961). The political modernisation writers referred to in the same paragraph are Hyden (cited above) and H.W. Stephens: *The Political Transformation of Tanganyika 1920-1967* (New York, 1968). The sources referred to in the last paragraph are unpublished conference papers by G.M. Fimbo: 'The state and the peasantry in Tanzania: a study of agrarian law and administrative institutions' (1977), and D.V. Williams: 'Authoritarian legal systems and the process of capitalist accumulation in Africa' (1979). Finally, the example of successful co-operative production organised by women in one of the villages is contained in a report on villagisation and its effects by Rene Dumont, which was prepared for the Tanzanian government and handed over in 1979, but which has not been made public.
Disposable Nannies: Domestic Servants in the Political Economy of South Africa

Jacklyn Cock

Roughly 89 per cent of domestic servants in South Africa are black and of these about 88 per cent are women. Domestic service accounts for the employment of 38 per cent of black women whose conditions of work are the least protected within one of the most regimented labour forces in the world. The institution of black domestic labour socialises whites into the dominant ideological order of race and exposes servants to its most humiliating practices. Black servants are coerced into dependency upon their employers but white women are also dependents within the patriarchal structures of capital.

In this article the author explores the ideas generated by the domestic labour debate to understand the role of domestic labour in South Africa in the reproduction of labour power and examines some of the contradictory trends in the conditions of reproduction within the capitalist economy.

This paper offers some tentative and exploratory comments on the problem of how to locate domestic labour within the totality of social relations in the South African social formation. The precise relation of domestic labour to capital has been the subject of much controversy within 'the domestic labour debate'. All the contributors have stressed the importance of housework — previously neglected because of its social invisibility and privatised nature. However the debate has been conducted at a very high level of theoretical abstraction, although many of the questions raised within it — such as the relation between domestic labour and the value of labour power — are questions which can only be posed at the level of concrete class practices within a specific social formation. Furthermore, many contributors have reduced a materialist analysis of women's subordinate position under capitalism to an analysis of domestic labour. To avoid this narrow economism Molyneux has effectively argued the case for moving 'beyond the domestic labour debate' to include 'a consideration of the broader significance of the household and the relations within it for the wider society, without losing sight of the specific position of women within these structures'. This is the insight this paper attempts to build upon. It attempts to show that the household is the site of important contradictions.

Note
There are two sorts of quotes:
1. Quotes from a white employer in medium.
2. Quotes from a black woman in bold.
and that domestic servants are ‘bearers’ of some of the characteristic antagonisms of the social formation as a whole. It suggests that the reproduction of labour power which takes place within the household is a crucial subject of struggle: what constitutes adequate reproduction for the various categories of the working class is a subject of class struggle; the fact that women perform most of the domestic labour involved in the reproduction of labour power is a subject of feminist struggle. The relation between class and feminist struggle is the main point of contention in current Marxist-feminist analysis.

**Domestic Labour and Capital**

In South Africa class relations define the forms of patriarchy to which women are subject. The existence of a cheap, unorganised black working class means that the responsibility for menial domestic labour can be largely displaced from members of the dominant classes onto women of the subordinate class. In South Africa black women do the bulk of all domestic work. Through this labour they maintain existing workers and reproduce new workers. Black women perform this labour on a dual level; they are responsible for these functions in their own households, and fulfill a large part of these functions in the households of the dominant classes as domestic servants. Their double load implies a double exclusion: there is a sense in which domestic servants are squeezed between two households, their own and their employers. Their subordinate status as servants and the long working hours exacted by their employers means that they are full members of neither.

Neither the domestic labour they perform as wives in their own households, nor as servants in the households of the dominant classes, is productive labour. The domestic servant is subject to the discipline of the wage but

... not every wage labourer is a productive worker. Whenever labour is purchased to be consumed as a use-value, as a service and not to replace the value of variable capital with its own vitality and be incorporated in the capitalist process of production — whenever that happens, labour is not productive and the wage labourer is no productive worker. His work is consumed for its use-value. The money that he (the capitalist) pays for it is revenue, not capital. The money functions here only as a means of circulation, not as capital. (Marx, 1976:1041.)

The domestic labour of the wife or servant does not create value because its immediate products are use values for immediate consumption within the household.

... the cook does not replace for me (the private person) the fund from which I pay her because I buy her labour not as a value-creating element but purely for the sake of its use value. Her labour as little replaces for me the fund with which I pay for it, that is, her wages; as for example, the dinner I eat in the hotel in itself, enables me to buy and eat the same dinner again a second time. (Marx, 1968:165.)

The employers of domestic servants are engaging in unproductive consumption.

While domestic servants are unproductive workers, the institution of domestic service has a special importance. The structures which control the distribution of power and resources in South Africa define the relationship between whites and blacks as ‘a master-servant relationship in all spheres, enforced through a variety of effective controls and sanctions’, as Johnstone put it. There is thus a very real sense in which the institution of
domestic service is a microcosm of the inequality which is refracted through the entire social order. The institution also contributes to these inequalities through reproducing the existing relations of domination and subordination.

Firstly, domestic servants provide services which are essential for the reproduction of labour power, both on a daily and a generational basis, for which there are no substitutes provided in a comparably cheap form by either capital or the state. Daily reproduction (the maintenance of the current work force) involves numerous tasks of domestic labour such as cooking meals, washing, mending, cleaning and shopping. Generational reproduction (replacement of the work force) includes child care. It has been suggested that unpaid domestic labour is 'productive' or, even if unproductive, produces 'value' because the product of domestic labour is a commodity — labour power.

Labour power has three special qualities as a commodity: it creates value and is thus the crucial element of productive capital; it is produced outside capitalist relations of production, though in a manner determined by them; and its value 'contains an historical and moral element' because the subsistence level of the working class is subject to historical and cultural determinants. Marx wrote,

The value of labour power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour time necessary for the production and consequently also the reproduction of this special article . . . Given the existence of the individual, the production of labour power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance. For his maintenance he requires a certain quantity of the means of subsistence. Therefore the labour time necessary for the production of labour power is the same as that necessary for the production of those means of subsistence; in other words, the value of labour power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of its owner. (Marx, 1976:274.)

Marx appears to make the determination of the value of labour power on the basis of the value of the commodities which would be necessary to maintain the health, strength and historically defined standard of living of a worker — i.e. the value of the commodities produced by the worker during necessary labour time. But these commodities are not immediately in consumable form when they are purchased with the wage. Additional labour must be performed upon them before they are transformed into regenerated labour power. It has consequently been argued that while domestic labour is unproductive, it creates value which is embodied in the commodity, labour power. Seccombe argues that when the domestic worker (in this case the housewife) acts directly upon wage purchased goods and necessarily alters their form her labour becomes part of the congealed mass of past labour embodied in labour power. The value she creates is realised as one part of the value labour power achieves as a commodity when it is sold and that this is merely a consistent application of the labour theory of value to the reproduction of labour power itself — namely that all labour produces value when it produces any part of a commodity that achieves equivalence in the market place with other commodities.

However, as Smith shows, Seccombe's formulation, far from being a mere application of Marx's theory of value, as he claims, represents a serious challenge to it in that it suggests one commodity, labour power, is always
sold below its value, since this would be equivalent to the value of the means of subsistence bought with the wage plus the value said to be created by domestic labour.

As Smith argues, it is not 'all labour' that produces value, but labour performed within the social relations of commodity production which takes the form of socially necessary and abstract labour. Thus Smith's argument is that domestic labour transfers the value of the means of subsistence to the replenished labour power but does not add to that value.

Nevertheless it is tempting to try and apply Seccombe's formulation to the second function domestic servants have in South Africa: releasing women not only for a more leisurely life style, but for wage labour. In all capitalist formations, women's participation in the labour force has been increasing, but their participation differs markedly from that of men. It is structured upon their position as domestic workers in the privatised sphere of the home so that the vast majority work in 'women's jobs'. These are characterised by lower pay, training requirements, job security and levels of unionisation. This discourages many women from taking up employment so that the link between domestic and wage labour operates in two directions to reinforce women's subordinate position in society.

There is an obvious contradiction between 'the ideology of domesticity' which locates women in the home in their 'core' roles of wife and mother, and the increasing participation of women in the labour force. Milkman suggests that this stems from,

a contradiction basic to the structure of capitalism. On the one hand there is the continuing need for the family, particularly women's unpaid labour in it, and, on the other hand, the tendency for an increasing amount of human activity to be integrated into the sphere of commodity production in the course of economic growth.

However, this contradiction may be more precisely located. The household is the main site of the reproduction of labour power which is necessary to the capitalist accumulation process. But the reproduction of labour power increasingly involves the transformation and consumption of commodities produced by capital. It is the purchase of these commodities that increasingly draws women into social production as wage workers. Clearly, as Braverman points out, this situation of 'multiple job holding' generates strain and tensions in advanced capitalist formations. In South Africa this tension is alleviated for women of the dominant classes through the employment of domestic servants. It is aggravated for the black women propelled into domestic service by the need to support themselves and their families, and who suffer most from inadequate child care provisions by the state. This is the context in which the participation of women in wage labour in South Africa has been steadily increasing.* By 1981 white women will comprise 37 per cent of the white labour force. They are largely employed in the service sector as sales and office workers, where their wages are considerably higher than those paid to their domestic servants.

Now Seccombe's analysis might be stretched to argue that the labour of the domestic servant becomes part of the congealed mass of past labour embodied in the labour power of her employer who is also a wage worker.

* In 1975 there were 412 registered creches providing day care for 20,228 white children and only 81 creches for black children. The total number of 'economically active' women increased from 907,450 in 1951 to 2,723,995 in 1970.
Thus the value the domestic servant might be said to create, would be realised as one part of the value labour power achieves as a commodity when it is sold by her employer. But one of the difficulties with Seccombe's analysis, whether it is applied to the domestic labour of the housewife or the servant, is that 'it conflates the commodity labour power with the person of the worker'. Maconachie means that under capitalism workers are not themselves commodities, as is the case under slavery. The product of domestic labour is a 'living individual' who possesses the capacity, labour power, which may or may not be sold as a commodity on the market. The servant (and wife) produce use values which are essential to the reproduction of labour power, but labour power only becomes a commodity by being exchanged on the market. As Smith points out, labour power is produced and reproduced, irrespective of whether or not it is to be exchanged as a commodity on the market. Whether this capacity of women is realised or not depends on the pace of capital accumulation as this affects their role in the industrial reserve army.

Beechey points out that because of the patriarchal family, in which married women have access to a source of income other than their own wage, capital is able to draw on female labour in particular ways as a form of industrial reserve army. Female labour power has a lower value than male labour power; many females are temporary and part-time workers who can be drawn into production in times of boom but are vulnerable to redundancy in periods of recession. Thus they constitute a cheap, flexible and disposable labour force. They can be drawn into wage labour when needed, and disappear almost without trace into the family when they are redundant. In periods of intensive accumulation of capital, the amount of labour power tied to domestic work in the privatised sphere of the home is an objective obstacle. Thus Hansson has argued that in advanced capitalist formations 'the development of state policies towards diminishing the amount of private domestic work aims at making more of the time formerly used in domestic work an object for capital and production of surplus value'. In South Africa such state policies have not been developed on any large scale precisely because of the availability of domestic servants.

**The Household and the Reserve Army of Labour in South Africa**

Married women form a hidden reservoir of labour power — the employment of domestic servants creates a particular flexibility in terms of which capital may draw upon this reservoir according to its needs. 'Nannies' release their employers for wage labour and the effect is an increase in production under capitalist relations of production and hence an extension in the labour force which produces surplus value. Their role in child care arguably increases the value of labour power of their employer's children because of the extra training (private schools, universities) that the dual family income allows. Thus they expand their current work force, both directly and indirectly, and increase their value of labour power of some members of the future work force. The first function depends entirely on the pace of capital accumulation.

In the present situation of growing structural unemployment the institution of domestic service absorbs large numbers of mainly unskilled black workers. It thus takes up some of the surplus labour power of those who
cannot gain wage employment in the dominant levels of the economy. It could also be viewed as a category of 'disguised underemployment' in that earnings are abnormally low, and of 'visible underemployment' in the case of domestic servants who are involuntarily restricted to part-time jobs.

This suggests that the household acts as a source of the reserve army of labour in a double sense: firstly for white married women who comprise an important part of the 'floating' relative surplus population; and secondly for black women who are part of the 'stagnant' relative surplus population, those irregularly employed in domestic service, living close to bare subsistence levels in an occupation characterised 'by a maximum of working time and a minimum of wages' (Marx, 1976:796).* For those women in the 'homelands' mainly involved in agriculture, forming part of the 'latent' relative surplus population, domestic service in the past has represented a strategy for survival.

Thus it might be argued that there is an analogy between the homelands and the home in the political economy of South Africa. Both could be said to operate as important sites of the maintenance and reproduction of labour power, and as sources of the reserve army of labour. Both migrants and women have less training and are assumed to have access to means of subsistence apart from their own wage. Thus, Wolpe has argued in the case of migrants and Beechey in the case of married women, capital is able to pay the worker 'below the cost of reproduction, because wages are fixed at the level of subsistence of the individual worker'. The value of labour power is set at the level of maintenance but not replacement. It might even be argued that both the homelands and the home are structured on the existence of non-capitalist modes of production — the home on a 'client mode' as Harrison called it or 'domestic mode of production' as Delphy describes it. While the positing of a separate domestic or client mode of production is extremely dubious, it is clear that increasing capitalist penetration has undermined both 'economies'. The collapse of the homeland economies has eroded the economic basis of cheap, migrant labour power. Capitalist penetration in the home has increasingly drawn women into wage labour in a direct and visible relation with capital. This has eroded the material basis of the patriarchal family. The result is that the social control functions of both the homelands and the home is increasingly important.

White Wives and Black Women Domestic Workers: Dependency and Coercion

In this respect the institution of domestic service has an ideological function which operates in two opposing directions. On the one hand it socialises whites into the dominant ideological order. Often it is the most significant inter-racial contact whites encounter, and they experience this relationship in extremely asymmetrical terms. Many white South African children learn the attitudes and styles of racial domination from domestic relationships

* In the random sample of 225 white households investigated in the Eastern Cape during 1978-9 'full-time' wages ranged from R4 to R60 a month with an average cash wage of R22.73. The average cash wage paid to full-time domestic servants in the rural areas was R11.35 a month. No strong positive correlation was found between wages paid and hours worked; full-time servants worked an average of 61 hours a week ranging up to 85 hours. R2 = £1.00 approx. in 1981.
with servants, particularly ‘nannies’. It might be thought that servants are similarly socialised into subordination, and in this sense domestic service would operate to reinforce existing class relations. Certainly they are subject to numerous practices and rituals of inferiority — ‘servant’s rations’ and ‘servant’s blankets’ are synonymous with cheap products of inferior quality; uniforms and vastly inferior living quarters underline their subordinate place in the household; the prohibition on using the same toilet or bath as their employers express the latter’s fear of contamination. However the servants’ response to these practices is the precise opposite of what might be expected. It will now be argued that servants — as well as the wives who are their employers — are both in an extremely dependent position; that this dependence is secured through the state and through an ideology of subordination to which wives and servants respond very differently.

The pivotal point of the relationship between employer and servant is their mutual dependence. Employers are dependent upon their servant’s labour, but with unemployment rising most sharply among black women, an individual servant is easily replaceable. Servants are dependent upon their employers for most of the necessities of life to support themselves and their children. In the Eastern Cape study each domestic servant had an average of 5.5 dependents and in 58 per cent of the cases was the sole breadwinner. This dependence of the servant on her employer is secured through the state. Servants are bound to their employers through influx control and a system of national labour bureaux. Influx control is the major instrument whereby the state controls black labour. But unlike other black workers, domestic servants (as well as agricultural workers) are situated in a legal vacuum within this coercive structure. They are not protected by any legislation; there are no laws stipulating the minimum wages, hours of work, or other conditions of service. The lack of disability and unemployment insurance, maternity benefits and paid sick leave, imply that they are an extremely insecure group of workers. They are vulnerable to instant dismissal by their employers who often fail to observe the common law provisions.

No matter if I work here for 100 years I can be dismissed for breaking a cup and get nothing. Not even a thank you.

Dismissal increasingly means endorsement out of a prescribed urban area or from a white owned farm to the homelands.

The tightening up of influx control since Riekert has intensified this dependence of the domestic servant on her employer. Announcement of the state’s decision to strengthen influx control by increasing the maximum fines from R100 to R500 on employers of illegal black workers resulted in many domestic servants — particularly in the Western Cape — being dismissed. On the Rand thousands of illegal workers flooded to pass offices to be registered. After near panic the Minister of Co-operation and Development announced a three month moratorium until 31 October 1979, to enable employers to ‘regularise’ their position. The concession granted applies only to people who have worked for one employer for at least a year, or for more than one employer over three years. Before workers can be registered proof of accommodation has to be presented. This is a major obstacle in view of the desperate shortage of housing in most black townships, and means that servants’ accommodation on their employer’s
premises is especially valued. But even those workers who do qualify for registration do not gain permanent residence rights. They will be registered under Section 101 (d) of the 1945 Black (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, thus becoming migrants on one-year contracts. As long as they remain in the same job their contract may be renewed annually. As with other migrants, changing jobs requires that the new employer make a special application to the administration board proving that no local labour is available. Thus the effect of the new legislation is effectively to bind workers to their present employers. As Sheena Duncan points out, the concession ‘will help many people to be registered in the jobs they already hold. It is very welcome in the present unemployment crisis, although one must realise that it ties workers to their present employers’. (Sunday Times 22.7.1979.) In the case of domestic servants these ties may be especially onerous.

This dependency relationship has other ramifications. Both wives and servants are domestic workers. Even where servants are employed to perform the majority of manual tasks, the sexual division of labour within the home lays most administrative responsibility for household consumption and organisation on the wife. In the Eastern Cape study the majority of married respondents said their husbands never helped them with domestic work. Some resented this.

He should occasionally cut himself a slice of bread, or pull up a chair.

But the employment of servants reinforces the exclusion of men from domestic labour.

Men should help if there are no servants. On farms here we usually have lots of servants, so it’s not necessary.

In addition to their responsibility for domestic labour both wives and servants are isolated in the privatised sphere of the home and have a subordinate status within it. Both are subject to extensive control which involves a submission to personal authority. By analogous terms that servants are bound to their employers through labour contracts and influx control, wives are bound to their husbands through marriage contracts.

The marriage bond is a subordinating one for women and secures their economic, legal and sexual dependence. For instance the father is the sole legal guardian of children born in wedlock. More than half white South African marriages are in terms of community property with inclusion of the marital power. Under this system the husband acquires guardianship of the wife and she is considered a minor even if she is over 21. Having the marital power means, for example, that a wife cannot enter into any binding contract, even a hire purchase agreement, or open a credit account, without the prior permission of her husband. Immediately upon marriage the wife comes into possession of half the joint estate of the two spouses, but she has no control over her half share until the termination of the marriage. As far as black women are concerned, those married by a marriage officer without an antenuptial contract are automatically married out of community property. But the husband retains the marital power, which means they suffer the disadvantages of both the present marriage regimes. The marriage contract also secures a wife’s sexual dependence in that a husband cannot be
convicted of raping his wife. The implication is that she is a form of sexual property to which he has the right of access.

Many working-class housewives, both white and black, are separated not only from the means of production, but also from the means of exchange. They are therefore dependent upon the redistribution of their husband's wage which is conducted in private between them. Their position thus involves an economic dependence. Over a third of the married women interviewed in the Eastern Cape study did not know their husband's incomes. When I asked how the family finances were arranged I was told:

I've never been able to find out his income. I have to ask him for money. He gives me pocket money when he feels like it.

The fact that the cash income of both wives and servants is often given as 'pocket money' underlines the economic dependence of both types of domestic workers.

Such economic dependence promotes 'deference' from wives. Bell and Newby describe the relationship between husband and wife as a deferential one in that it is hierarchic, traditionally-legitimated and embedded in a system of power. Most of the white middle-class wives I interviewed accepted the relations of male domination and female dependence as natural and inevitable. For instance,

A woman is a womb — her primary function is to be a good mother.
Our submission to men is God's law.
The man should be the head of the house.

Clearly, the dependence and control of wives is not only mediated through the state, but also through an ideology of subordination which they internalise.

These 'deferential wives' also accept the relations of racial domination as natural and inevitable. Sixty eight per cent of those interviewed regarded blacks as indubitably inferior.

They're stupid and irresponsible . . . in short, very raw.
They've just come out of the trees.
Putting them into European clothes doesn't make them civilised.

The common equation of blacks with children provides an ideological space for turning middle aged domestic servants into family dependents. Thirty per cent of the employers interviewed described their servants as 'one of the family'. They are widely viewed as 'loyal', 'obedient' and 'deferential' workers who accept the legitimacy of their own subordination in the social order, and defer to their 'natural' superiors. Research in the Eastern Cape suggests that the deference attributed to the domestic servant is more apparent than real. 'Deference' is a mask which is deliberately cultivated to shield the worker's real feelings. It is a protective device generated by the powerlessness of her situation which blocks any overt expression of dissatisfaction.

Of course subordinate groups within society do 'accept' their position to some extent. But Mann made an important distinction between 'pragmatic acceptance, where the individual complies because he perceives no realistic
alternative, and normative acceptance, where the individual internalises the moral expectations of the ruling class and views his own inferior position as legitimate'. Evidence from the Eastern Cape research suggests that domestic servants show a 'pragmatic acceptance' of their subordinate position in society, but their occupational socialisation involves the adoption of a mask of deference in order to conform to employer expectations and manipulative practices.

In the workplace the disparity in income and lifestyle between worker and employer is highly visible. The work situation acts as a model of the wider society as a whole in the minds of many workers; the inequalities of power and wealth they experience at the micro-level at work are reflections of general inequalities. Most domestic servants interviewed reject the legitimacy of these.

The great majority thought the difference between their living standards and those of their employers was 'unjust'.

It makes me angry to look at their gardens and the food they buy for their dogs. It is better than what they buy for us. And the dogs eat off their dishes but we don't.

All showed a sense of relative deprivation and thought they should be paid at least double their present wage.

Because I work hard... I look after the house and even the dogs, cats and chickens. I have to sort the eggs very carefully and check if they are first grade. (This woman was earning R7 a month in 1979.)

All thought that blacks and women were not treated fairly in South Africa.

We are dying like flies because of poverty.

The whites are standing on our necks with their boots.

However some seemed to have a sense of personal superiority to whites:

We are more capable than whites. That is why they try by all means to keep us under their feet. You can put a black person in the forest and just leave water with him or her. We can manage because there is a lot we can do.

Their dependence on their white employers does not appear to be transformed into a sense of collective weakness. Perhaps their employer's dependence on their labour operates to reinforce their sense of their own capabilities. Several comments emphasised the helplessness and weaknesses of employers:

She is lazy. She sits a lot on the step outside while I have to rush around.

She couldn't manage without a slave like me.

Perhaps this is a device for maintaining a sense of dignity in a demeaning role — a subtle inversion of the asymmetrical nature of the relationship. All thought that domestic servants as a group are 'badly treated', and some consciousness of a community of interests emerged here: 'We are all singing one song. We need the same help with low wages and bad treatment'. Fundamental change was seen as inevitable, but, as one woman expressed it, 'it will take time. It is not easy to take a piece of meat out of your mouth and share it'.

Does the institution of domestic service contain tensions in this society
through the promoting of deference relationships which exact feelings of loyalty and gratitude? If this were the case domestic service could be said to undermine solidarity among the oppressed by linking them as individuals to their oppressors. It might then afford a fragile bridge across the contradictions of a society based on racism and exploitation. However the Eastern Cape research suggests that the institution of domestic service inflames rather than dissipates such tensions.

Nevertheless the political potential of this should not be overestimated. Giddens has suggested that the most important factor advancing conflict consciousness is 'visibility of class differentials'. Close and immediate exposure to the class differential can almost be described as the essential job experience in the domestic servant. However 'revolutionary consciousness' involves not only a perception of the existing socio-economic order as 'illegitimate', but a recognition of modes of action which can be taken to reorganise it on a new basis... The experience of deprivation... is simply one element in the picture; feelings of resentment of a diffuse nature only take on a revolutionary character when they are fused with a concrete project, however vaguely formulated, of an alternative order which can be brought into being'. The only 'concrete project' formulated by a single informant (made to a black woman interviewer) was: 'What we need is a chance to kill all these whites'.

What this section has attempted to argue is that the dependence and control of both types of domestic workers — wives and servants — is not only mediated through the state in the form of marriage contracts and influx control, but also through an ideology of subordination to which wives and servants respond very differently. However the analogy between wives and servants cannot be stretched too far. In South Africa black women are coerced into an occupation none of them would choose. The privatised nature of the work, its monotonous and repetitive character, the close control and supervision it often involves, the length and irregularity of working hours, low wages and demeaning treatment, were among the reasons cited by respondents for the unpopularity of domestic service. None of the servants interviewed said they enjoyed their job or derived any sense of fulfilment from it.

You never knock off.
The worst thing is cooking the dog's food and not eating it.
I never sleep at home with my husband and children. Even if I have a half day off I have to come back and sleep here at night.
The children are rude. They don't count us as people. They think one belongs to their parents. She tells me to do one hundred things a day.

The fact that the mother of two out of every three respondents in the Eastern Cape sample were domestic servants suggests that the occupation involves a degree of ascription in a quasi-caste status. At the very least they are trapped workers caught up in a structure of constraints which creates their vulnerability and dependence on their employers.

Black workers generally in South Africa are among the most regimented labour forces in the world, but there is a particular edge to the domestic servant's vulnerability. The absence of protective legislation, the high degree of observability in work performance, and the highly personalised relation-
ship with her employer, the lack of collective bargaining and worker rights, all mean that she is particularly exposed to the vagaries of employer's moods and demands. It is arguable that blacks employed as domestic servants experience apartheid in a peculiarly humiliating way. Their duties as workers force them into situations where as blacks their rights are denied or restricted. In Port Elizabeth, for instance, 'domestic servants looking after white children are allowed on white beaches but are not allowed to swim'. (Municipal Director of Parks. Eastern Province Herald, 15.1.1977.) In one case three domestic servants were charged for doing so.

Overall, as an occupational group domestic servants are trapped in a condition of subjugation and immobility within which they are subject to oppression. This oppression is subjectively expressed in the servants' sense of being slaves. This was the image most frequently used by domestic servants in the Eastern Cape to describe their situation.

I have been a slave all my life.
We are slaves in our own country.
Our employers should treat us like people and not like slaves.

Unlike the slave the domestic servants' existence is not guaranteed. But like the slave the servant's ability to resist oppression is extremely narrow.

Mphahlele has stressed the non-committal antlike way in which blacks serve whites; the employer's helplessness against her servant's cheerful incompetence; the servants' determination not to be known by their employers.

This non-committal attitude of the silent servant is his most effective weapon against the white master who has all the instruments of power on his side. Both of them know this.

The domestic servants' silence and secret mockery of employers might thus be viewed as muted rituals of resistance. They involve a mode of adaptation that enable her to maintain her personality and integrity intact in a demeaning role. The petty pilfering, in which all said they engaged, might also be seen as an expression of situational rebellion. The crucial point is that servants, as well as wives, rebel as isolated individuals. Both are atomised workers who in situations of dissatisfaction confront individuals (whether employers or husbands) in the privatised sphere of the home. A collective response is displaced by individual attempts at negotiation — men sharing more of the housework, giving more 'pocket money' in the case of wives; requesting small wage increases or a day off in the case of servants. In neither case do their actions directly contest the relations of capital. Both lack a direct relation with capital which makes it difficult for either to locate the source of their oppression beyond the immediate agent of the employer or the husband. Isolated and impotent, the only weapon of a dissatisfied wife or servant who finds her situation intolerable is to withdraw and attempt to find a more congenial place. But while the rates of divorce and remarriage are rising, the work histories of most domestic servants interviewed in the Eastern Cape showed a marked stability. The great majority had worked for the same employer for between five and 25 years, the implication being that it is not a very mobile occupation.

In it's transformation into a predominantly black female occupation
Domestic service in fact reflects changing patterns of racial and sexual domination and control. Marx observed that capitalism

... develops a hierarchy of labour powers to which there corresponds a scale of wages. If, on the one hand, the individual labourers are appropriated and annexed for life by a limited function; on the other hand the various operations of the hierarchy are parcelled out among the labourers according to both their natural and their acquired abilities. (Marx, 1976:371.)

'Natural and acquired abilities' are subject to racial and sexual determinations as James explains:

Racism and sexism train us to acquire and develop certain capabilities at the expense of all others. Then these acquired abilities are taken to be our nature and fix our functions for life, and fix also the quality of our mutual relations. So planting cane or tea is not a job for white people and changing nappies is not a job for men.

In South Africa — as well as in other colonial societies — racism cuts across the sexual division of labour so as to include the employment of a considerable number of black men as domestic servants. 'Dusting a room or making a bed' is then said to appeal to 'the comic side of their natures' (Theal, 1919:220). But domestic labour is best suited to women in terms of both their 'innate' abilities, and vocational destination. In 1932 the Carnegie Commission concluded that:

Domestic service provides the girl with a poor family with an opportunity of being trained in the duties of a housewife; it also suits the nature of most girls.

However as other occupational opportunities opened up for white women, they together with black men increasingly escaped from domestic service as black women were coerced into it.

Domestic Labour and the Cost of Reproduction of Labour Power in South Africa

So far it has been suggested that the household and relations within it are of considerable significance in the political economy of South Africa — not only reflecting inequalities, but reinforcing them in a contradictory way. However the large-scale employment of domestic servants within white households is anomalous in two senses.

Firstly, domestic servants are anomalous in an industrial society. Katzman, in his analysis of domestic service in the USA between 1870 and 1920 characterises it as a 'non-industrial' rather than a 'pre-industrial occupation'. The occupation has a number of characteristics which define the difference between domestic servants and other wage workers. Other wage workers sell their labour power as a commodity for a definite period of time in exchange for a money wage. Work relationships are impersonal and involve a clear separation between work place and home, both in temporal and spatial terms. The domestic servant by contrast frequently works irregular hours, she receives part of her payment 'in kind' and the 'live-in' domestic servant is accommodated at the workplace. Employer control often extends into the servant's 'private life' — for example the regulation of visitors and the inspection of servant's rooms and goods. The highly personalised nature of the servant's relationship with her employer and the low level of specialisation in domestic roles, are both anomalous in a modern industrial society moving towards specialised and impersonal work relationships.
Secondly, the large-scale employment of domestic servants is anomalous in capitalist society. While the work they do in the maintenance and reproduction of labour power is essential to capital, their employment as wage workers is not. Braverman writes,

... the multitude of personal servants was, in the early period of capitalism, both a heritage of feudal and semi-feudal relations in the form of a vast employment furnished by the landowning aristocracy, and a reflection of the riches created by the Industrial Revolution in the form of similar employment furnished by capitalists and the upper middle class.

The number of domestic servants in South Africa is similarly a heritage of feudal relations and is a reflection of the high standard of living enjoyed by most whites. But here many white working class households employ black women as domestic servants.

There are two ways of looking at this. It could be argued that cheap, black domestic labour subsidises the white working class in South Africa, enabling their necessary means of subsistence to be cheaper than it would be if creches and day nurseries were provided by the state, or if commodities had to be purchased in an immediately consumable form within the capitalist sector. The implication of this is that through her labour the domestic servant cheapens, for capital, the cost of maintaining and reproducing white labour power. Domestic servants would thus have the same function as the informal sector arguably has for the black working class. On the other hand, the widespread employment of domestic servants by the white working class could be argued to mean that the necessary means of subsistence of the white working class is more expensive than it would be if the housewife was solely responsible for domestic work. The implication is that the price of white working class labour power is increased and capital's profits are correspondingly lowered.

The question at issue is how the white workers' necessary means of subsistence comes to be defined. Since the earliest colonial penetration this has included the employment of cheap black labour. Van Onselen argued that because of the particular form colonial domination has taken in South Africa, 'the white proletariat built the price of a black servant into the cost of reproducing itself'. Obviously such an economic concession to white workers is a relatively small burden to capital — the wages of servants being so low, and black workers being the large majority upon whose exploitation capital is dependent.

This illustrates the point that there is no invariant relation between domestic labour and the value of labour power. It has been widely argued within the domestic labour debate that there is; that domestic labour invariably lowers the value of labour power. As Molyneux writes,

... the value of labour power ... is subject to a variety of cultural and political conditions which establish what the standard of living for different strata and categories of the working class might be. It not only varies according to the different categories of labour, (skilled/unskilled, black/white, male/female), but also according to the different circumstances which affect the bargaining position of labour at any given time, such as labour supply and the level of class struggle.

Molyneux has pointed out that it is only possible for women to remain in the home as housewives where the value of labour power of the male worker is sufficiently high to cover the cost of maintaining the entire family.
The maintenance of the domestic sphere as the main site of biological reproduction under capitalism is economically possible only where the value of labour power is sufficiently high for wages to cover the cost of the family’s reproduction.

By the same terms it is only possible for the wife to employ a substitute — in the form of a domestic servant — where the value of white working class labour power is sufficiently high for wages to maintain the enlarged household. In the same way that the ability of a section of the working class to maintain a wife at home has come to represent a particular index of working class power, the ability of the white working class to maintain a servant is an index of their privileged position in South Africa.

Domestic servants are caught up in a pincer-like movement here. In South Africa the value of black male working class labour power is not uniformly high enough to cover the costs of maintaining a wife and family (i.e. replacement). And this propels black women into wage labour largely as domestic servants. But because of the particular form class struggle has taken in South Africa in the past, with the exception of the depression years, the wages of the white working class were uniformly high enough to cover the costs of both maintenance and replacement. This might go some way towards explaining the low participation of white women in the labour force. With the expansion of the service sector, current inflation and the increasing discrepancy between the ‘needs’ of family consumption and the wages of the individual male worker this is changing, so that to maintain it’s income the white working class family is increasingly obliged to send women into the labour force. This has the potential for decreasing the economic dependence of women on men, and so weakening the basis of patriarchy within the family. Thus while patriarchy has a specific effectivity within capitalism, capitalist expansion generates contradictory effects for patriarchy.

This question of the ‘family wage’ is an important line of tension between the two structures which work together to define the matrix of women’s subordination. It was the product of class struggle but in effect maintains women in a dependent position in the home. Marx wrote,

> The value of labour power was determined not only by the labour time necessary to maintain the individual adult worker, but also by that necessary to maintain his family. Machinery by throwing every member of that family onto the labour market, spreads the value of the man’s labour over his whole family. It thus depreciates his labour power. (Marx, 1976:518.)

In 19th Century Britain the working class demand for a family wage can be seen as an attempt to avoid the worst excesses of child and female labour abuse. But this demand can also be viewed as an expression of patriarchal ideology, as Foreman found: ‘Wives should be in their proper sphere at home, instead of being dragged into competition for livelihood against the great and strong men of the world’. The implication is that labour power is a male capacity and the wage should reflect that fact. The crucial question at issue with respect to the value of labour power is the unit of measure; is it the individual male worker, the working class family, or the working class as a whole. It could be argued that the working class as a whole gains from being able to keep its female members at home, because it means less members of the working class are directly exploited by capital. But this also secures women’s economic dependence. For this reason McIntosh has sug-
gested that the family wage was not only a product of class struggle, but also of a struggle in which the interests of women and wage would be a considerable advance for the black working class as a whole. Clearly the relation between class struggle, feminist struggle and the family wage is a problematic question, and a crucial one in any attempt to situate domestic labour within the totality of social relations under capitalism.

The other crucial line of argument which needs to be taken up is the question of the 'social wage'. Here the distinction Gardiner makes between the value of labour power and the overall standard of living of the working class might be useful. A definition of standard of living includes those benefits received by the working class as a result of the interventions of the capitalist state — the educational, health and welfare benefits which go to make up the social wage.

Now the social wage represents one aspect of the progressive socialisation of domestic labour that has taken place in capitalist societies over the last century and a half. By the socialisation of domestic labour is meant 'the replacement (and at the same time the transformation) of the work done in the home by goods and services produced for the market or provided by the State' (CSE 1975:13). In fact domestic labour involves

... the production and reproduction of the capitalists' most indispensable means of production: the worker ... The maintenance and reproduction of the working class is, and must ever be, a necessary condition to the reproduction of capital. But the capitalist may safely leave this to the workers' drives for self-preservation and propagation. (Marx, 1976:718.)

The implication is that the question of the maintenance and reproduction of labour power is relegated to a private, peripheral sphere. Again, the question turns on the unit of analysis. While the individual capitalist is not concerned about the conditions in which the worker reproduces his labour power, it has become a matter of some importance from the point of view of capital as a whole. Thus McIntosh writes of Britain, 'capitalists as a class have done much to sustain the appropriate household institutions, through state policies concerned with marriage and the family'. This might be thought to imply an instrumentalist view of the state. We have to distinguish between 'the economic requirements of capital on the one hand and the political pressures on the state on the other since the two are not the same and do not always work in the same direction' (CSE 1975:25).

However state involvement in the reproduction of labour power is a product of these two opposing forces, but in this case working in the same direction: (i) the growing demands on the worker from capital, as regards both the quantity and quality (qualifications) of labour power; and (ii) the growing demands of the working class on the state.

Consequently during the last 150 years in what are now advanced capitalist societies there has been a replacement of some aspects of domestic labour by state services. For example, the state has taken over tasks such as the teaching of the young and the care of the sick which were previously performed by women in the home. In South Africa state institutions for the reproduction of labour power have mainly benefited the white working class. In fact the state is only marginally involved in the maintenance and reproduction of the black working class, and the inadequacy of education, housing, welfare and health services for blacks is evidence of this.
The other aspect of the socialisation of domestic labour is the replacement and transformation of some of the work done in the home by goods and services produced by capital for the market. Domestic labour has been atomised and different functions mechanised in the form of the vacuum cleaner, washing machine, dishwasher and so on. In this process 'the personal and living domestic slave was replaced by the socialised and dead mechanical slave' (Mandel, 1978:386). The development of labour-saving devices and services, such as laundromats, convenience foods and nappy services, are among the reasons why domestic work today is less arduous than 100 years ago. However it is arguable that standards of home and family care have also risen so that housework remains extremely time consuming. For example in the USA Vanek found that the majority of housewives, particularly those not employed, continue to spend as many hours doing household tasks (55 hours a week) as women did 50 years ago. The growth in women's employment in wage labour has meant a double shift for increasing numbers of women because this has not been accompanied by any significant socialisation of child care or any notable shift in the sexual division of labour within the home. But whereas in advanced capitalist societies, such as Britain and the USA, there has been a progressive shift away from the employment of full-time, 'live-in' domestic servants to the employment of 'chars' and a reliance on labour-saving devices. In South Africa this has not occurred partly because of the exploitability of black labour which makes cheap domestic labour easily available.

Yet in South Africa domestic service is no longer an expanding sector of employment. A trend has been reported away from the employment of full-time servants whose numbers decreased by eight per cent in 1979, and an increase in the number of part-time servants by 30 per cent in 1979, compared to the previous year. In the 11 metropolitan areas of South Africa the number of white households with no domestic servants at all in their employment increased by four per cent between October 1977, and October 1979. At the same time a 25 per cent increase in the sales of labour-saving devices has been reported since June 1979. Are over one million domestic servants becoming redundant?

There is a danger of economistic analysis here. Research done in the Eastern Cape found that many white households contained both servants and labour saving devices. Several employers were reluctant to allow their servants to use these — a pattern that was also reported by Shindler in her Johannesburg study. The importance of this is that it underlines the non-economic reasons for employing servants. Servants are an important component of the social display of dominant class lifestyles. Several employers in the Eastern Cape cited social response for employing servants. For example, 'security'; 'I don't feel safe on my own during the day'; or to overcome a sense of social isolation, 'I feel very alone in the world when the servants go off in the evening'. In addition many servants take considerable responsibility for child care.

She gets the children up in the morning, gives them their breakfast, walks the youngest to nursery school, has our lunch ready for us when we return.

This responsibility for child care involves one of the central contradictions in the institution of domestic servants.
Several servants interviewed stressed that they had to look after two families and neglect their own in the process.

We leave our children early in the morning to look after other women’s families and still they don’t appreciate us.

We have to leave our children and look after our madam’s children. We have no time to look after them even when they are sick.

One respondent said that the employment of domestic servants explained ‘why white people’s children don’t grow up criminals’. It is not from having everything they need, but ‘having nannies who watch them every minute of the day’ and instill discipline. Often the person looking after the servant’s children is a daughter who is kept out of school to do so. This perpetuates a vicious circle of poverty, inadequate child care and interrupted education.

While the reproduction of labour power can be increasingly achieved by means of commodities produced by capital or provided through the agency of the state, this has not yet included the provision of child care on any large scale. Molyneux emphasises that it is the work of child care which ‘is of the most benefit to the capitalist state’. Child care is expensive if it emphasises child development rather than custodial care. Therefore in advanced capitalist societies ‘the only large scale possibility that could bring about the socialisation of child care would be for the state to expand it’s provision’ (CSE, 1975:14). But state organised institutions for the reproduction of labour power are financed by state expropriation of parts of the total amount of surplus value produced by capital. Thus since the state provision of child care centres, kindergartens and creches would add to the costs of reproduction of the labour force borne by capital, ‘this would only be likely to occur in a boom situation in which there was rapid accumulation of capital and consequent productivity increases’. In such a situation it would be to the advantage of capital to release women for wage labour which would mean an extension in the labour force which produces surplus value. But in South Africa the availability of cheap, black domestic labour creates this flexibility whereby women can be incorporated and expelled from the labour force according to the pace of capital accumulation. Hence this is not a demand likely to be made on the state by the white working class. The only possible exception to this pattern is a war situation — this was the only period in Britain, for example, in which the socialisation of child care occurred on any large scale.

The Future of Domestic Labour in South Africa

There are seven possible trends in the future which could affect the employment of domestic servants:

i. The increasing militarisation of the South African state. In an escalation of conflict, increasing racial distrust may make white women reluctant to employ black servants, and demand the state provision of creches, day care centres and nursery schools. This would both release them for wage labour and extend the control of the state over the early ideological formation of children.

ii. The increasing involvement of white women in an expanding service sector of the economy who remain dependent on servants for domestic work, particularly child care.

iii. The increasing employment of domestic servants by a relatively affluent
and privileged urban black middle class which the South African state and capital is committed to creating as a buffer against progressive change.

iv. The progressive socialisation of domestic labour by capital could mean the increasing employment of black women in precisely those areas of domestic production which have been socialised. While the domestic servant is an unproductive worker, the same women employed in a commercial restaurant or laundry would be a productive worker producing surplus value for capital (at least according to Braverman’s formulation of productive labour). However many of these industries are highly mechanised.

v. The spiraling inflation rate could affect consumption patterns. Women could substitute their own labour power for domestic servants and purchasable commodities such as expensive dry and frozen convenience foods. This together with increasing unemployment could lead to an ideological offensive to convince women that their place is in the home.

vi. The organisation of domestic servants to increase their bargaining power could make their employment more expensive. However unionisation is unlikely to succeed because of their atomised situation as workers, and the fact that they do not have any bargaining position from which they could launch demands. The organisation of domestic servants into co-operatives of skilled workers who corporately owned the mechanical equipment with which they worked would not cover child care.

vii. The further penetration of monopoly capital. This is becoming dominant in all sectors of production and relies to a large degree on the use of capital-intensive, sophisticated technology, the operation of which requires a small, semi-skilled stable work force, rather than a large, cheap migrant labour force. This is one reason why black unemployment is rising. In this situation losing their jobs could mean the permanent exclusion of domestic servants from employment.

This vulnerability makes any reforms to alleviate the oppression of domestic servants problematic. Protective legislation such as restrictions on hours of work, the provision of annual leave, paid sick leave, confinement leave, overtime pay, and paid public holidays would be difficult to enforce. The effect of minimum wage rates are debatable. Callinicos has recommended ‘benefit societies in which the advantages of collective organisation can be practically demonstrated and solidarity can be developed’. ‘Clearly’, she writes, ‘such a pressure group would push for the introduction of protective legislation which is necessary to bring domestic workers into the wider working class movement’. But such a movement must eventually aim for the disappearance of domestic servants.

The importance of domestic workers, both wives and servants, lies in their role in the reproduction of labour power — the maintenance and most especially the replacement of the current work force. A necessary condition for the liberation of women is that this work should be collectivised. The implication is that the feminist struggle is inseparable from the struggle against capitalism. Under socialism,

Cooking, cleaning, washing, repairing, child care etc. . . . would no longer be done by single households and living groups. It would either be shared in collective households and living
groups or it would be more formally and publicly performed by brigades of workers, men and women (my emphasis), in nurseries, playcentres, laundries, restaurants etc., and by cleaning and mending brigades who could service whole streets, but whose labour would be regarded as essential as any other and comparably rewarded. (CSE, 1975:32.)

But for men to undertake their part in this necessary labour a specifically feminist struggle has to be waged.

It is widely recognised that there is a structural crisis in the position of women in advanced capitalist societies today. In Britain since the 1970s the cut in the budget of the welfare state and reduction of state services has meant not only that women have to shoulder more of the burden of the reproduction of labour power (patients sent home from hospitals earlier, extension of nursery schools halted, school meals reduced) but their employment within these services has become threatened. In South Africa there is a different but analogous structural crisis in which black women are trapped. They are most vulnerable to unemployment, and have to shoulder most of the burden of the reproduction of labour power — in the homelands, in their own homes and in the homes of the dominant classes as domestic servants. The phrase ‘disposable nannies’ attempts to encapsulate both their specific vulnerability and the most important aspect of their role.

Bibliographic Note

A fuller account of the position of black domestic labour in South Africa and of how the research for this paper was carried out can be found in Jacklyn Cock, Maids and Madams (Ravan Press, 1980).


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**CONFERENCE**

**Transition to Socialism**

The *Review* is organising a two day conference on this theme on May 9-10, 1982 at the Department of Politics, University of Leeds. Offers of papers for discussion and requests for further details should be addressed to: R.C. Bush, Dept. of Politics, University, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK.
Briefings

LIBYA AND CHAD

Libya’s intervention in Chad’s civil war last year, which reached its climax in mid-December 1980 with Libyan tanks in the capital, N’Jamena, seems, at least, to have created a temporary respite in the 15 year long struggle. The transitional government under President Goukouni Oueddei, the GUNT, which was set up by the Lagos Accord in August 1979, now formally extends its authority throughout the country and resistance is confined to the Abeché region, along the border with Sudan. The factions that make up the GUNT — now that Hissan Habre’s FAN forces have been defeated — have accepted an uneasy co-operation in the interests of peace, although they have considerable misgivings over the implications of Libya’s intervention and four of the minor ones recently defected to Habre because of the continued Libyan presence in Chad.

However, N’Jamena is destroyed, the Aozou strip along the Chad-Libyan border is still occupied by Libya, demilitarisation of the capital is still not complete, nor is there a peace-keeping force available to replace Libyan troops. It has proved impossible for free elections to take place by April 1981 — within the 18-month period stipulated in the Lagos Accord. The three major factions in the GUNT — President Goukouni’s Oueddei’s FAP, the successor to the original national liberation movement FROLINAT; Colonel Kamougue’s FAT, the rump of Chad’s old national army which now represents black southern interests and has its own internal problems; and Ahmat Acyl’s pro-Libyan FAC, feared by some as Colonel Qaddafi’s Trojan Horse within the GUNT — have differing ambitions that may still result in renewed warfare. Beyond that, there is still Hissan Habre who escaped in December to Egypt and whose forces have regrouped along Chad’s Sudanese border where they wage an active guerrilla campaign against the GUNT and its Libyan backer.

Nor are surrounding countries prepared to accept Libya disposing of Chad’s future. Quite apart from Colonel Qaddafi’s ill-conceived proposals for unity, Libya’s permanent absorption of the Aozou strip which she first occupied in 1973 sets a precedent which would directly threaten fundamental assumptions by the Organisation of African Unity over the inviolability of colonial borders. There are also fears, partly genuine and partly contrived, amongst Sahelian states over Libya’s ‘imperialist’ ambitions in the Sahara and the Sahel. In addition, President Sadat clearly suspected the Libyan leader of trying to outflank him in Sudan, as part of the longstanding
ideological dispute between the two countries. West African states have
suddenly realised that France's traditional neo-colonialist and patriarchal
role was no more than an empty sham, and have had to develop new policies
to replace the old French role. In short, Chad is, then, a paradigm for the
sorts of conflicts that may increasingly occur in Africa. The one hopeful
feature is the willingness of France's new socialist government under Presi-
dent Mitterrand to support the GUNT as Chad's legitimate government and
to offer it aid.

Background to the Conflict
Chad, the fifth largest state in Africa, two and a half times the size of
France, stretches from the arid southern Sahara to the tropical rain forests
of central Africa. Its population, estimated in 1974 at four and a half
million, is one of the poorest and most ethnically diverse in Africa. Chad's
peoples speak up to 100 different languages and dialects and divide into
three main ethnic groups — southern, mainly Sara, sedentarists (34 per cent
of the total), Sahel sedentarists and transhumants (27 per cent) and Sahara
nomads, dominated by the Tebu (18 per cent). Various other groups make
up the remaining 21 per cent of the population. Fifty per cent of the popula-
tion are Muslim and they are located mainly north of a line running from
Abeché to N’Jamena. Of the remainder, mostly concentrated in the densely
populated south-west, seven per cent are Christian and the rest are animist.
The most widely spoke languages are Arabic and French.

As a result of Chad's colonial past, her economy is dominated by cotton
growing and livestock rearing. Between 1961 and 1974, for example, cotton
produced in the Sara south for export to France provided the major element
in export earnings. Its importance within that total fell during the period,
from 80 per cent to 67 per cent of total export earnings. Livestock exports,
mainly to surrounding countries, have been between 12 per cent and 20 per
cent of total export earnings during the same period, reaching 26 per cent in
1970. Since 1974, figures are either unavailable or unreliable because of the
civil war. The trade balance, however, has always been in deficit, for im-
ports outweigh exports by 40 per cent to 60 per cent in value. Yet, for the
vast majority of the population, life is a matter of subsistence and barter,
with all opportunities for development destroyed by the Sahel drought or
the continual warfare. Only in the cotton-rich south and in the east, where
livestock rearing is concentrated — both regions having also escaped the
worst effects of the war and the drought — has foreign (French) investment
aided local development. Yet this has also been to the detriment of domestic
need, since it was only aimed at the export market.

Chad's economic potential, however, is another matter. The Tibesti massif,
in the extreme north-west, contains considerable quantities of uranium and,
since explorations in the mid-1960s, there has been evidence that there may
be oil, gas and other minerals. There are already modest oil wells in the
north-west, around Lake Chad in Kanem and in the extreme south-west, in
Mayo-Kebbi, and CONOCO expects new finds of oil and gas in the near
future. Lake Chad itself has great and underdeveloped potential for fishing,
cereal agriculture in the Lake Chad basin is an important source of food,
and other areas in central Chad could also be developed for agricultural
purposes.
The Colonial Past
The colonial past has also been the root cause of Chad’s civil war. Before the 20th Century, Chad had never existed as a recognisable political unit. It was divided into three regions — the Sahara desert which was controlled by Muslim Tebu and ‘Arab’ nomadic tribes who ranged through the Libyan Fezzan as well as the Tibesti and Ennedi massifs, as well as maintaining strong links with the Libyan-based Sanusi order, itself heavily involved in trans-Saharan trade; the central Muslim sultanates of Kanem-Bornu, Baguirmi and Ouaddai; and in the uncentralised, anarchic south, dominated by the Sara in south-west Logone, who were subjected to continual slave raiding from the sultanates further north.

French involvement in this complex situation resulted from her desire to link her West African and North African colonies, as well as to curtail potential interference and depredations in West Africa by the still-independent Sahel sultanates. France began to send small armed columns into Chad in the 1890s and it took until 1913 to finally crush resistance in the Bornu-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET) region. Slaving was only officially ended in 1926.

The new French administration divided Chad into Tchad utile and Tchad inutile. Useful Chad consisted of the southern tropical regions with their black populations where large-scale cotton cultivation was introduced to generate exports and fiscal revenue. In the old sultanates, traditional government under French tutelage was continued, but little of economic or imperial value was expected from the region. In the Muslim north — Tchad inutile — military administration was introduced, both to prevent unrest by minimising interference in local life and to isolate the irascible Tebu. This was to continue until 1965 — five years after Chad had been granted formal independence within the French Union.

No real attempt to improve or alter conditions in the north was ever made, while in the south development did occur, albeit on an extremely limited scale. By 1940, for instance, there were only 18 teachers all told throughout the country and by 1958 only three secondary schools had been opened. In the north there was no educational provision — apart from the traditional Muslim system. The one attempt to start a modern Islamic school in Abeché was successfully blocked by the colonial authorities because of their fears that it would become a centre for nationalist propaganda, as had already occurred in the Middle East and North Africa.

Nonetheless, reforms within the French colonial empire in the late 1940s and early 1950s did enable political activity to begin, particularly in the south, where conditions had favoured the growth of European-style political entities. Not only did such political activity benefit from the introduction of the Loi Cadre in 1956, but also from French attitudes towards Chad as a result of its support for the Free French during World War II. Under Governor Eboué, Chad was the first major colony to rally to General De Gaulle. As a result, the Gaullist party in France has always tried to maintain close contacts with independent Chad. Gabriel Lisette, a Panamanian who had entered the French colonial administration, exploited the Loi Cadre to found the Parti progressiste Tchadien (PTT) in Logone as a local branch of the regional RDA (Rassemblement démocratique africain). This
new political party was essentially formed from among the educated Sara who now formed the dominant social stratum in Chad — in contrast to the precolonial control by the Muslim sultanates. It was to form the government when Chad became independent in 1960.

**Independence and Civil War**

By the time that Independence was granted, Lisette had been outmanoeuvred by his deputy, Francois Tombalbaye, and forced into exile in France. Tombalbaye, a Protestant Sara teacher, became president and introduced a Sara-dominated administration throughout Chad (except in the extreme northern BET which was still under French military administration), thus formalising the reversal of the precolonial dominance of the sultanates. Muslim politicians — mainly elitists who could not organise an effective and coherent political movement in the face of the Sara-dominated PPT — were arrested and 23 of them died in prison. By 1962, Chad was a one-party state and the National Assembly had been dissolved by Tombalbaye instituted personal authoritarian rule.

The administration was overhauled to ensure that its members were loyal to Tombalbaye and his henchmen — hardly a basis for effective administration in a country where central control was traditionally weak. A further result was that the growth of corruption was uncontrollable and appalling maladministration was evident everywhere, except in the French-administered BET region. Not surprisingly, in October 1965, Moubi transhumants in Mangalme rebelled. Hundreds were killed in the repression that followed, but the rebellion still spread westwards, until only the cities were under effective government control. Tombalbaye eventually had to call for French military aid in 1968.

In the north, once the French military administrators had departed in 1965, their Sara replacements soon managed to outrage Tebu feelings. Amongst other incidents, the local administrator in Zouar, the Tebu capital, publicly humiliated the Tebu leader, the Derde, and his family after a soldier was killed in a brawl in a dancehall in September 1965. This incident, combined with the general maladministration, set off a further rebellion in Tibesti, as the Derde fled to Libya and his sons, including Goukouni Oueddei, joined the newly formed National Liberation Movement — FROLINAT.

The next 15 years were to see the growth of a civil war with the FROLINAT-dominated struggle increasingly dictated by ethnic considerations which replayed the old precolonial antagonisms, whatever the aspirations of rebel leaders may have been. Despite military intervention by France, from 1968 to 1972 and again after the 1975 coup, which was led by the Army Chief-of-Staff Felix Malloum and in which Tombalbaye was killed, the Sara-dominated post-Independence administration was unable to establish any legitimate claim to authority.

In the same way, despite FROLINAT’s genuine desire to be a truly national liberation movement, the logic of events and the constant problems of leadership meant that local commanders, with their regional tribal backers, increasingly dominated FROLINAT strategy. Personality conflicts emphasised these tendencies towards local autonomy, particularly in 1968, when Dr Abba Siddiz, although based in Libya, became formal head of
FROLINAT, and after 1976, when Goukouni Oueddei and Hissan Habre, the two most important local FROLINAT leaders, split over questions relating to appropriate policies after Libyan aid, the Libyan occupation of Aozou, the Claustre affair and the rapprochement with the government of Felix Malloum in N’Jamena. It was this split that created the conditions which were inevitably to lead to the nine-month-long struggle over Chad’s capital, N’Jamena, during 1980.

**FROLINAT**

FROLINAT was founded in 1966, as the successor movement to the neo-Marxist *Union nationale Tchadienne* by a northerner, Ibrahim Abatcha, who had previously tried to organise a guerrilla movement with Muslim fundamentalists in the *Mouvement national de liberation du Tchad*. Eventually he turned back to his own supporters, the so-called ‘Koreans’ because of training and support supplied by North Korea, because his fundamentalist allies were incapable of effective action. Before he was killed in action in 1968, Abatcha had created a movement that was designed to destroy Tombalbaye’s increasingly racist and brutal regime, create a progressive, popular democratic state and remove traditional rivalries and divisions within the national entity created through the colonial experience. Abatcha himself was a Marxist who had studied in Egypt, Sudan and Ghana and was thus well aware of the current of ideas and ideology that ran throughout Africa and the Middle East. He was, significantly, an outspoken opponent of the single-party system, seeing it as the major cause of Tombalbaye’s incompetent and corrupt system of government.

After his death in combat, problems of leadership developed. FROLINAT’s new leader, Dr Siddiq, was isolated in his headquarters in Tripoli from the actual fighting units a thousand miles to the south and effective control devolved on the two Tebu leaders. The first was Goukouni Oueddei, the youngest of the Derde’s three sons who had joined FROLINAT; and, after 1972, he was joined by Hissan Habre, an Anakaza Tebu who had trained as a lawyer in France and professed then to be a Maoist. Habre had initially been part of the Tombalbaye administration, until persuaded to join FROLINAT where he soon came to have a powerful position, commanding FROLINAT’s 2nd Liberation Army in Tibesti. Over the years, several other minor factions appeared within FROLINAT, either as a result of isolated outbreaks of rebellion, where local leaders opted into FROLINAT, or because of further fissions within the original movement itself.

By this time, French military aid had forced FROLINAT back into the BET region and onto almost exclusively Tebu tribal support. Although FROLINAT gradually improved its position over the succeeding years, it remained bottled up in the north of the country where it acted as a running sore in the N’Jamena government’s attempts at establishing nationwide control. One vital element in this strategy was the close co-operation between Oueddei and Habre, in which Goukouni Oueddei willingly submitted himself to Habre’s undoubted gifts for guerrilla leadership. However, in 1976, the famous split between them occurred and Habre broke away from the movement, leaving Oueddei as undisputed field commander for FROLINAT. The specific cause of the split was the Claustre affair. In 1974,
Habre's troops captured several Europeans in Bardai, including Christophe Staewan, a German doctor, and Francoise Claustre, a French anthropologist. Although the German government readily ransomed Staewan, the French authorities, given their support of the Tombalbaye regime, were most unwilling to do the same. Eventually a $2.4 million dollar ransom was paid in late 1975 — after Habre had summarily executed another Frenchman, Pierre Galopin, ostensibly for 'treason'. Nonetheless, Habre still refused to release Francoise Claustre, despite majority FROLINAT opinion, led by Goukouni Oueddei that this should be done. Francoise Claustre was eventually freed in Tripoli in January 1977. In fact the split reflected deeper disagreements, particularly the nature of FROLINAT's response to Felix Malloum's offer of negotiations, after the 1975 coup in N'Jamena. Habre refused to accept the majority decision that negotiations should take place — although they eventually proved to be abortive.

Habre, who is considered by many to be a charismatic opportunist and little more, reappeared in 1978 when, as part of Malloum's last-ditch attempts to restore his government's credibility, Habre was invited to join the Malloum government — apparently with French approval and support, despite the earlier Claustre affair and Habre's earlier refusal to consider negotiations with Malloum! Within a year, however, Oueddei's branch of FROLINAT swept down on N'Jamena and occupied it, after Habre had unsuccessfully attempted his own coup d'état against Felix Malloum.

Recent Events in the South
After FROLINAT's triumphal assault on N'Jamena, as Habre's FAN force began a massacre of the capital's Sara population in February 1979 as part of it's own attempt at a coup d'état, the Malloum government collapsed. The remnants of Chad's defeated national army retreated southwards as two decades of Sara dominance of Chad came to an end.

Leadership of these demoralised forces was taken over by Malloum's ex-foreign minister, Lt. Colonel Wadal Abdelkader Kamougue, who had earlier also been in charge of Chad's national gendarmerie. Having rallied the scattered units, he retired to the Logone/Mayo-Kebbi/Tandjil/Moyen Chari region — the Sara heartland. Here he organised the old national army into the FAT forces and, after anti-Muslim massacres had taken place in Moundou and Sarh — as a result of Habre's activities in N'Jamena — he set up a 'permanent committee' in Moundou to administer the region.

A column sent by FROLINAT from N'Jamena to take control of the south in mid-1979 was inmillihated and it became evident that the movement's political support there was virtually nil. Ever since then Colonel Kamougue has been able to rule the south — with its potential wealth from cotton and oil, and its large population — effectively as his own fief. Although the Kamougue administration is corrupt and authoritarian concerned more with lining its own pockets than with effective administration, and, in consequence, increasingly unpopular, it was backed by most of the FAT forces and most foreign governments preferred to maintain consulates in Moundou rather than move back to the insecurity of N'Jamena. Until the Presidential elections last March, France under President Giscard d'Estaing was specifically seen as a potential backer of an autonomous Sara state
within a federal Chad. Neighbouring countries, such as the Central African Republic, Cameroon (both subject to intense French diplomatic pressure, with large French military detachments located at Bangui) and even Nigeria had evidently not dismissed this possibility as the final option, if all else failed. However, recent developments, both within the Sara south and as a result of the new socialist government in France, have made this possibility increasingly unlikely.

The Lagos Accord
By May 1979 the impending breakup of Chad had so disturbed surrounding states that, led by Nigeria, they forced the 11 warring factions to the conference table. The Lagos Accord, drawn up in August 1979, provided for a ceasefire, demilitarisation of N'Jamena, the creation of an integrated national army, the provision of a neutral peacekeeping force and the formation of a transitional government of national unity (the GUNT). This body, headed by Goukouni Oueddei, with Habre as Minister of Defence and Kamougue as Vice-President, was to involve leaders of all the factions and was to last for 18 months, when free elections were to be held. It also included Dr Siddiq as Minister of Education and Ahmat Acyl, leader of the pro-Libyan wing of FROLINAT, as Foreign Minister. By November 1979, the GUNT was in nominal control of Chad.

Unfortunately, the participant African states were unable to agree on the financial arrangements for a peacekeeping force and only 300 Congolese soldiers were actually sent. In addition Hissan Habre refused to abide by the conditions laid down for the operation of the force and the Congolese contingent that did arrive was therefore unable to operate effectively. As a result, it proved impossible for the GUNT to carry out its pledge of enforcing the removal of a 2,000-man French force which had been sent in to ostensibly protect French civilians during the last days of the Malloum administration, particularly as French technicians were providing essential services in N'Jamena. It was also unable to achieve the demilitarisation of the capital because of the lack of an effective peacekeeping force and, in fact, the French detachment in N'Jamena began more and more to take on this role.

The Civil War in March 1980
Despite attempts at joint action between Habre's FAN and Oueddei's FAP forces, tensions between these two major FROLINAT factions were high. Incidents between them in N'Jamena during March 1980 rapidly escalated into a full-scale war for control of the capital and northern Chad. Oueddei, with support of the majority of the GUNT, decided that no further compromise with Habre was possible, both because of his personal intrusiveness and because he was believed to have French and Egyptian support and thus could not be guaranteed to ensure the sovereign independence of Chad.

The small Congolese force was withdrawn, as it was clearly incapable of separating the two sides, and the French contingent stayed on the sidelines, ostensibly looking after French civilian interests — although the 150 Frenchmen remaining in Chad had already moved down to Moundou — and providing medical services.
Habre's FAN forces, with their rear bases in Abeché and Biltine, relied on supplies from Egypt and the Sudan, and increasingly acted as the anti-Libyan faction within Chad. By May they had taken Faya-Largeau, the communications key to the vast BET region, squeezing Oueddei's FAP into the north-west around Tibesti and Zouar. Kamougue and the FAT, despite much verbal support for President Oueddei, prudently kept out of the fighting, basing a small detachment on the outskirts of N'Jamena ostensibly to look after Sara interests.

African states and the Organisation of African Unity, despite frequent ceasefire negotiations, were reluctant to openly provide material aid to the GUNT, in case they were accused of favouring one side in the civil war. France was accused of having covertly encouraged Habre and of using Kamougue's southern Sara redoubt as a secure base, should Habre be defeated. In May 1980, however, France's remaining troops were removed after widespread protests at her involvement in Chad's internal affairs.

By this time, FAP had been forced into the northern suburbs of N'Jamena and Goukouni Oueddei turned in desperation to Libya for aid. The 15 June 1980 Agreement between the GUNT and Libya enabled Libya to send military aid — at first only weapons but, after October, Libyan troops played an increasingly important role. Once an airstrip had been built at Dougia, 60 kilometres north of N'Jamena (the capital's airfield was under constant mortar attack) and Libyan tank transporters had successfully negotiated the desert from advance bases at Sebha in southern Libya, Libya was able to tip the military balance in favour of the GUNT's forces.

The Libyan Dimension
Libya's involvement in the affairs of Chad is not new. Quite apart from the precolonial links between the Sanusi order (the source of Libya's post-Independence monarchy) and Chad's Tebu nomads, Libya has always claimed that her southern border was incorrectly delimited. She bases her claim on the unratified 1935 Laval-Mussulini treaty which aimed at an overall settlement of colonial border disputes between France and Italy in Africa, but which was never put into effect. It is important to realise that this demand predates Colonel Qaddafi's 1 September 1969 Revolution and has been a constant element in Libyan foreign policy ever since Independence in 1951. Indeed, it is only one of 20 border revisions that successive Libyan governments have sought.

Rebellion in northern Chad after 1965 necessarily concerned Libya, given the ethnic and cultural links between populations on each side of the border. The exile of the Tebu Derde in Libya until his return in 1975 only strengthened these connections. As FROLINAT came to dominate the northern rebellion after 1968, with Dr Siddiq's decision to set up his headquarters in Tripoli as an added inducement, Libya's involvement became even more significant. However, apart from considerable moral support, little material aid was offered to FROLINAT for a long time, partly because the Idrissid regime was too complacent to exploit its advantages and partly because there was little confidence in FROLINAT's military capabilities, given France's support for the Tombalbaye regime in Chad.

By 1971, Libyan-Chad relations were very poor, because of the new Libyan
leader’s more open support for FROLINAT, but by 1972 relations had dramatically improved, after Niger had mediated between the two countries. Libya agreed to drop its support for FROLINAT, while Chad would recognise Libya’s border demands over the Aozou strip, and would support Libya’s anti-Zionist campaign. Libya was also to provide development credits and President Tombalbaye is said to have received a personal 100 million CFA franc sweetener to encourage his acceptance of Libya’s presence in Aozou.

In 1973, Libya occupied the Aozou strip with troops and SAM missiles and stopped all material aid to FROLINAT, although the movement was allowed to maintain its offices in Tripoli and Benghazi. FROLINAT refused to accept Libya’s occupation of Aozou, but could do little since the movement still depended on Libyan toleration for its survival. Colonel Qaddafi was, in any case, quite prepared to keep the movement in reserve as a potential threat to the Tombalbaye regime.

Relations with the Tombalbaye government degenerated again in 1974 and 1975, so FROLINAT was increasingly encouraged into more open attacks on government installations and personnel. For the Tebu leaders, Queddei and Habre, this new encouragement had its own dangers, since they had personally been on very bad terms with Quaddafi’s government previously. For Goukouni Queddei the situation was very ambiguous because, although he strongly opposed the Libyan occupation of the Aozou strip, he still recognised the paramount need for Libyan supplies and material aid. For Habre, the choice was quite simple — he would not tolerate a Libyan presence in Aozou in any form or at any time. In the end political considerations prevailed, particularly after FROLINAT’s taking of European hostages in 1974 and the consequent massive ransom payment by France. In consequence, both Oueddei and Habre began to openly demand Libyan withdrawal from Aozou.

The consequent deterioration in relations between Libya and the two major FROLINAT leaders in the field indirectly caused the 1976 split in the ranks of FROLINAT. By then, Oueddei, unlike Habre, had come to realise that the Libyan occupation of Aozou had to be tolerated, at least temporarily, for the sake of Libyan supplies, particularly as the Malloum government in N’Jama was very unstable and pressure had to be maintained on it. The split was provoked by Habre who refused to accept Libyan mediation over the release of Francoise Claustres, or the need, either for Libyan aid or for rapprochement with the Malloum government for the sake of national unity. He did not carry the majority of FROLINAT with him, mainly because he could offer no alternative source of supplies and had misjudged the desire of many FROLINAT members to try the idea of working with the Malloum government. In the event these desires were frustrated but by then the split had occurred.

Yet, despite Oueddei’s apparent willingness to work now with Colonel Qaddafi, whatever the situation in Aozou, Libya still maintained her options open. On at least two occasions in 1978 and 1979, a Libyan-backed force, quite separate from the major FROLINAT forces, attempted to penetrate territory controlled by Habre’s FAN forces — to be pushed back with heavy losses. Libyan attitudes towards the Malloum government also oscillated.
depending on whether the latter was willing to negotiate with FROLINAT or not and what attitude was adopted towards Libya’s presence in Aozou. Eventually, Libyan manoeuvrings were cut short by the fall of the Malloum government in February 1979 and the introduction of the Lagos Accord the following August.

The Libyan Intervention in June 1980
President Oueddei’s request to Libya for aid against Habre gave Colonel Qaddafi the opportunity he needed to ensure Libya’s permanent presence in Chad. The 15 June agreement between the two leaders provided for military supplies and for close collaboration between both countries once peace had been achieved. However, it does not seem to have proposed actual political union, nor the implantation in Chad of Libya’s idiosyncratic political system of Popular and Revolutionary Committees. It did not formally sanction Libya’s permanent annexation of the Aozou strip, which would, in any case, have been quite unacceptable to every faction in the GUNT and would have provided Habre with valuable propaganda.

It took more than six months for Libyan military aid to make itself fully felt, because of the immense logistical difficulties involved. However, Libyan arms were available from August and Habre’s positions in N’Jamina were bombed from October onwards. The first aim of Libya’s armed forces was to clear Habre’s forces from the Faya-Largeau region in northern Chad and, only once this was done, did they move in force on the capital itself.

Libyan Units in Chad
It is very difficult to determine the size of the forces actually committed by Libya in Chad. The maximum numbers involved at the end of 1980 appear to have been as large as 6,000 men, although French sources, usually the best-informed, suggested in February that there were as few as 2,500 there. Since that time the numbers present have oscillated from 8,000 to 15,000, although staged withdrawals had reduced this figure to 6,000 by July.

The make-up of these forces has, perhaps, stimulated greater interest than the numbers involved because they are said to be part of the new Islamic Legion — special units formed from foreign recruits in Libya’s armed forces, mainly from Sahel states, the Middle East and North Africa, and even as far away as Pakistan. This led the Pakistani government to enquire in September about the whereabouts of 3,500 Pakistanis who had been recruited by Libya for military service.

It is true that Libya has advertised extensively throughout the Middle East and even in Europe for recruits. Dissident African groups have, in any case, long been trained in Libya, presumably for action against their own governments. The attack on Gafsa in southern Tunisia in February last year was, perhaps, the most tangible example of this policy, although accusations of Libyan involvement have (usually incorrectly) been made over every violent upheaval in West Africa recently, from last December’s riots in Kano to the unsuccessful coup d’état in The Gambia in July. However, it is not clear that these activities result from a new policy-decision of Libya’s leader, Colonel Qaddafi, involving military units dedicated to subversion and foreign intervention outside the operations of Libya’s regular army, or her Islamic
militia forces. Nor does it seem reasonable to describe such units, if they do indeed exist, as some kind of Muslim counterpart to the mercenaries that have played such an unsavoury part in the Third World in the past.

Colonel Qaddafi's Libya has always been a fervent proponent of Arab Unity and, more recently, has openly espoused national liberation movements in the Muslim world and elsewhere as part of its commitment to Islam. Thus, such recruiting is not surprising in itself. All Arabic-speaking Muslims may join Libya's armed forces, whether or not they were actually born in the country, for Libya sees itself as the political embodiment of the ideal of Arab unity. Such recruits are also automatically granted Libyan citizenship.

A further reason for large numbers of foreign recruits in Libya's armed forces is the history of her past adventures in foreign affairs. In 1979 Libya lost 200 killed in Uganda and 400 soldiers were taken prisoner by Tanzanian forces. There were also rumours of mutinies amongst Libyan forces that had been sent to Uganda. The Egyptian-Libyan border war in 1977 had also demonstrated the military incompetence and unreliability of the army. Since August 1975 it has been the source of several unsuccessful coups against Qaddafi, and its officer corps has been frequently purged. As a result, morale is low and disaffection is widespread. In this context, a new reliable non-Libyan-born component within the army would be an obvious advantage. In fact, these units were intermixed with Libyan regular army units during the Chad operations. It is clear also that these troops were far more effectively trained than in the past.

Libya's armed forces in Chad have been commanded by trusted Qaddafi aides — Abdelhafid Massaoud, who is related to Qaddafi by marriage and normally commands the Fezzan military region, and Hassan Ishkal, the Cyrenaican military commander. In May, Colonel Ishkal was recalled after being involved in a struggle for power between pro-Libyan and pro-Oueddeist elements in the GUNT armed forces. Colonel Massaoud has now been replaced by Colonel Redwan Saleh as overall Libyan commander.

Libyan advisers have also been training Chadian soldiers to take over the fighting, particularly in the east around Abeché. Here the emphasis has been on the FAC units of Ahmat Acyl, rather than on President Oueddei's FAP forces, an emphasis which corresponds with Qaddafi's known preference for Ahmat Acyl as against Goukouni Oueddei. Acyl, the GUNT's Foreign Minister, is known to be strongly pro-Libyan. His forces now number 1,500 men and are organised into battalions with Libyan advisers within the command structure down to company level. In February these troops began to operate against remnants of Habre's FAN forces in south-eastern Chad. They have since borne the brunt of the fighting in Habre's increasingly successful guerrilla campaign there.

**Libya's Aims in Chad**

Libya's aims in intervening in Chad are both short and long term. They are essentially opportunistic, rather than part of a long-term plan to subvert and control the Sahel. The major consideration remains, as it always has been, Libya's permanent control of the Aozou strip. In fact, in a speech to students at Tripoli University last May, when it became evident that Libya
would intervene in Chad, Colonel Qaddafi emphasised that Libya's only interest was in reclaiming territory that was rightfully hers and in correcting colonial injustice. It was also quite clear that the intervention is genuinely popular with most Libyans, whatever their feelings about the Qaddafi regime.

Yet this is not just a political matter. Libya faces major problems over energy, for her oil reserves may be exhausted within 10 years, unless significant new discoveries are made. In addition, she is about to start a nuclear energy programme and Tibesti uranium will be vital — whether or not she also decides to attempt to manufacture nuclear weapons as well.

Beyond these objectives, there is another element. This is to resolve Libya's long-standing conflict with Sadat, who was seen by Qaddafi as the betrayer of Arab Unity and the Palestinian cause. Sadat was also a major threat to Qaddafi's regime in Libya and the Colonel was always anxious to pre-empt the Egyptian threat. Although the western Egyptian frontier is heavily defended, the southern frontier with Sudan is not, and Colonel Qaddafi believed that Egypt was ripe for revolt against her president, if only the catalyst could be found. Here the Libyan army came in, for a surprise attack into Egypt might have triggered a revolt. In the event, this proved unnecessary in displacing Sadat. But control of Chad remains important, because Egypt's southern border is then only 250 kilometres away. There is also the added attraction that pressure can be brought on Sudan, considered by many to be Egypt's 'soft underbelly'.

Other Libyan aims have been generated by her unexpectedly easy success in Chad. Libyan agents have certainly been very active in promoting subversion throughout the Sahel for several years and these activities have recently intensified. However, in nearly every case, there are adequate local reasons to explain these activities rather than the grandiose Saharan federation that Libya is supposed to dream of. In Niger, for example, there is a long-standing border dispute over Toumou oasis, as well as uncompleted negotiations dating from 1974. In any case, Libya would dearly like access to Niger's vast uranium deposits. Mauritania has been the unfortunate and incidental victim of the Western Sahara struggle. This has also affected Mali, because of her poor relations with her Tuareg nomad populations. In any case, Libya is bound to support Muslim groups in the religiously heterogeneous Sahel.

North African states have had similar experiences and even Libya's major ally there, Algeria — with whom she also has a border dispute — now increasingly differs from Libya over her Sahara policies, particularly over Chad. For Libya, there is also the general desire for the Sahel to act as a recruiting ground and as a sympathetic hinterland, given her increasing isolation in the Middle East and her conviction that the real battle for her survival will have to be fought with Egypt.

**Recent Events**

Since March, the situation in Chad has been affected by changes on the international scene. The arrival of the new socialist administration in France was expected to signal a change in the attitude of other states to the situation in central Africa and this has proved to be the case. At the same time,
attitudes at the OAU and events in the neighbouring Central African Republic and Cameroon have affected internal developments. Finally, the new American administration in Washington has lost little time in assimilating events in Chad into its comprehensive picture of the global communist menace to the Free World, a view that accords little autonomy to Chadians themselves.

President Mitterrand, together with his Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson and Minister for Co-operation Jean-Pierre Cot, have moved quickly to re-establish French influence in francophone Africa, to the great relief of nations such as the Ivory Coast and particularly Nigeria. Despite earlier demands for total Libyan withdrawal, by August the French government had realised that this was unrealistic, and after a technical mission visited N’Jama, it was decided to offer the GUNT political and material aid. During President Goukouni Oueddei’s September visit to Paris, France renounced any interference in Chad’s internal affairs, thus definitively burying the Giscard concept of a federal Chad, and offered up to a billion francs worth of aid.

This offer was certainly speeded by the knowledge that President Oueddei had finally rejected all possibilities of unity between Chad and Libya during his visit to Tripoli for celebrations of the 1969 September Revolution — to Colonel Qaddafi’s intense disgust. In fact, Libya has been forced to tone down her activities in Chad, particularly since a GUNT protest in May over open support by Libyan forces in eastern Chad to the pro-Libyan FAC of Ahmat Acyl, during clashes between it and pro-Oueddei elements of the FAP. In addition, Colonel Qaddafi was anxious to avoid condemnation at the Nairobi OAU summit in June, where Sudan, amongst other states, threatened to launch a full-scale attack on the Libyan presence in Chad. This was prevented, apparently in response to Libyan acceptance of the principle of withdrawal and after her renewal of diplomatic relations with Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. No doubt Libyan enthusiasm for expensive military adventures in Chad has also been curbed by the collapse of her oil revenues this year and be overt American hostility, as evidenced in the Gulf of Sirte incidents in August. In any case, Libya is not anxious to incur heavy additional expense in Chad. Despite promises in March of aid to pay the civil service and help in reconstruction, only one month’s-worth of salaries were actually paid and the only reconstruction Libya has financed is of her own embassy and culture centre in N’Jama, as well as the Libyan-Chadian Investment Bank!

At the same time Hissan Habre’s FAN forces have continued a fierce guerrilla campaign in Biltine prefecture, in Eastern Chad, where border towns such as Adre Guenina, Guedera and Irban constantly change hands. He receives support from Egypt and Sudan which enjoy American approval for their aid to any anti-Libyan resistance in Chad. Most of the fighting has been borne by Chadian troops of the FAC, although Libyan troops were also involved in earlier stages and the Libyan air force is still active there. A Libyan fighter was shot down in late September by Sudanese and FAN troops. Support for Habre’s anti-Libyan stand has also grown elsewhere in Chad, particularly in N’Jama, where anti-Libyan strikes and leaflets have appeared. His success persuaded four minor factions to leave the GUNT
and join him at the beginning of September. The GUNT now has lost the support of the MPN, MPLT, FAO and Frolinat Fondamental, although they are too small to materially affect the transitional government’s strength.

However, one area where there is no likelihood of any support being offered to Habre is in the Sara south. Memories of the February 1979 massacres are still fresh and the GUNT has taken care to make sure that its supporters do not repeat Habre’s mistake. In any case Colonel Kamougue has lost considerable support, because of the inability of the Permanent Committee to administer its area effectively or to control unruly elements within the FAT forces. He is now opposed by Mambaye Lossinian, the Minister of Rural Development, who has adopted an openly pro-Libyan and anti-French position from his base in Moundou, as well as by officers from the old National Army of Chad. They object to his inability to control the FAT or capitalise on divisions within the GUNT and to his earlier service in the Gendarmerie — considered inferior to the Army. They now look to General Djogo who has settled down near to Chad’s border with the Central African Republic. Colonel Kamougue’s position has further weakened of late, for there have been several mutinies in Moundou, Doha and Sarh amongst FAT units over arrears in pay. The Colonel was himself held under house arrest for a short period.

All in all, the situation for the GUNT today seems considerably brighter than it did at the beginning of the year, despite the growth of pro-Libyan sentiment in the south and the continuing war along Chad’s eastern borders with Sudan. It now has a firm alternative to the Libyan embrace in the offers of aid and co-operation from France, offers which Nigeria supports; Libya, although still maintaining a strong military presence, is no longer able to dictate political choices to Chad, partly because of the OAU and partly because of her new need for African and Middle East support against America; reconstruction now seems possible, and even the 150,000 refugees at Koussai in the Cameroon are returning slowly home. Although Egypt and Sudan support Hissan Habre in the East, his ability to influence events inside the rest of Chad will diminish as the GUNT’s authority is further established. The critical consideration, though, is aid. The 2.2 million dollars of UN/FAO aid in July provides a stop-gap but must be seen against external debts of 150 million dollars and an estimated 160 million dollars needed for the reconstruction of N’Jамena alone. Cotton, the sole reliable export earner, did poorly last year, with production dropping by 50 per cent, and in any case is under Sara control. Against this background the new warmth in the GUNT’s relationship with France becomes vitally important for Chad’s future.

The Future for Chad

Even if union between Libya and Chad is now abandoned, there still remains a major issue — Libya’s continued occupation of the Aozou strip. It is clear that Kamougue’s Sara-dominated FAT will never accept Libyan occupation of Aozou, nor unity between the two countries. Similarly, Habre, who still has Egyptian support and troops in the field, will never accept the Libyan presence. FROLINAT itself, under Goukouni Oueddei, has also refused to accept the Libyan occupation of Aozou and, even if indebted to
Libya for her recent help, can never accept permanent Libyan suzerainty over any part of Chad's national territory. Indeed, its members have already warned that if they must choose between tolerating Libya's territorial demands or rejecting Goukouni Oueddei — with the implied dangers of war — it is the latter they will choose.

The only unequivocal source of support for Libya is Ahmat Acyl and his FAC movement. There have already been suggestions that Qaddafi is grooming Acyl to replace Oueddei, should the latter be obdurate over the Aozou question. If Colonel Qaddafi decides to stay on in Chad and to insist on his territorial and political demands, then he must face renewed civil war in which Libya itself will be inextricably involved. The costs would be so massive that not even Libya could consider them with equanimity.

In any case, it is clear that all the surrounding West African states, except for Benin, are strongly opposed to Libya's presence in Chad. Most of them can do little more than protest, but Nigeria is determined not to tolerate Libya's extension south of the Sahara. She can count on Algeria for support and, in the wider world, looks towards the socialist France of Francois Mitterrand. The presidential elections are over and France is rebuilding her shattered African policy as a major priority in foreign affairs. She has already given military aid to Niger, Senegal and the Central African Republic.

Yet, Colonel Qaddafi by his aid to Chad has demonstrated the bankruptcy of the sorts of policy followed by Giscardian France, and is considered by many to have given Africa a degree of freedom of action that it did not possess before. If he does withdraw, he will be able to play an important role in Central and West African affairs in the future. Any future government in Chad is bound to be beholden to him, as its policies will show. He would then have definitively broken out from his political isolation in the Middle East, reinforcing his moves towards Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Iraq last June, and would also have reasserted the importance of Islam in the Sahel.

As far as the future government of Chad is concerned, FROLINAT is the only realistic source for its leaders. It is, after all, the dominant element in the GUNT and would be bound to do well in any election. It has a political programme which is democratic, nationalist and approved by surrounding states. The Sara south would now accept its leadership, for its members have been careful not to offend southern sensibilities — unlike Hissan Habre — and it provides the only hope that Chad can move towards genuine national unity, independence and effective development.

* * *

FACTIONS IN THE GUNT

The following factions and leaders made up the GUNT in 1979. During the civil war which started in March 1980, only four of these factions actually moved their forces up to N’Jamena while the remainder stayed in their local areas. The factions directly involved in the civil war were the FAP, FAT, FAN and the Frolinat Popular 1st Army which allied with FAP.
a. Affiliated to FROLINAT:
Frolinat Vulcan 1st Army — Abdoulaye Adam Dana.
Frolinat Popular 1st Army — Nahamat Abba Said.
Revolutionary Democratic Council 1st Army (Common Action Front — FAC) — Ahmat Acyl.*
Frolinat original — Dr Abba Siddiq.
Western Armed Forces (FAO) — Moussa Medela.
Frolinat Fondamental (Basic Frolinat) — Hadjaro Senussi.
Popular Armed Forces (FAP) — Goukouni Oueddei.**
Northern Armed Forces (FAN) — Hissan Habre.

b. Associated with FROLINAT:
National Democratic Union (MPN) — Dr Fatcho Balam.
Popular Liberation Movement of Chad (MPLT) — Abubaker Abdal Rahman.

c. Southern Groups:
Armed Forces of Chad (FAT) — Wadal Kamougue.

In September 1981, however, four of these movements — the FAO, MPN, MPLT and Frolinat Fondamental — split off to join Hissan Habre’s FAN which had been expelled from N’Jamena at the end of the civil war in December 1980 and had retreated to Eastern Chad.

* strongly pro-Libyan.
** contained pro-Libyan elements.

POLITICAL PROGRAMME OF FROLINAT
issued after the Special Conference at Faya (Chad) on 16 March 1978

The FAYA special conference of FROLINAT first amended* and then adopted the following eight-point political programme:

1. To fight with all available means to overthrow the neo-colonialist and dictatorial regime that France imposed on our people on 11 August 1960, having already created and supported a clique of docile puppets in power, which was to carry out new policies designed to perpetuate the domination, suppression and total exploitation of our people under a new form — a form which is the most subtle, dangerous and barbaric but which is nonetheless not the last — neo-colonialism. Thus, so as to achieve once again the total national independence of our country, we shall:

2. a. defend the territorial integrity and unity of the Chadian nation with all available means;
   b. reject the presence of all military bases or foreign armies on our national soil, whomsoever they may be;
   c. fight mercilessly against any secessionist tendencies;

* This programme is closely modelled on the Eight Point Programme drawn up at the Nyala (Sudan) meeting of FROLINAT on 22 June 1966 (translators note).
3. create a democratic, popular and progressive government, where:
   a. democratic power guarantees the basic liberties of the individual, liberties of opinion, association, expression, religion and trade union organisation;
   b. popular power involves the fundamental respect for the will of the Chadian people freely expressed, with no constraint of any kind, in all aspects; and
   c. progressive power involves the destruction of neo-colonialist institutions — administrative, political, social, economic and cultural — so that a modern, socially advanced state can be built up;
4. apply policies appropriate to the rural sector, by achieving radical agrarian reform, based on the principle of ‘land to those who work it’, by distributing free land to poor peasants, organising them into cooperatives and aiding and supporting them in every way, including political, economic, social and cultural aspects, and by increasing and stabilising the prices and supply of agricultural products;
5. improve living conditions for workers, by:
   a. providing work for the unemployed;
   b. improving conditions of work;
   c. defending purchasing power;
   d. providing effective aid in all spheres (economic, social and cultural);
6. encourage and protect petty traders and merchants from foreign large-scale competition, suppress the economic monopoly exercised by imperialist countries, particularly France and other members of the EEC, nationalise key sectors of the national economy, create an independent national economy, and apply reasonable and equitable fiscal policies;
7. build up progressive democratic culture and education with a national character, adopt Arabic and French as official languages, and fight effectively against illiteracy, so as to completely eradicate it; and
8. establish diplomatic relations with all countries, except Rhodesia, Israel and South Africa, on the basis of the ten principles enunciated by the Bandoeng Conference and the five principles of peaceful co-existence, operate a foreign policy based on national independence, support national liberation movements and actively defend world peace.

* * *

THE LAGOS ACCORD FOR NATIONAL RECONCILIATION IN CHAD

We, the undersigned, leaders of different parties in Chad, meeting at Lagos (Nigeria) between 13 and 18 August 1979 to consult with the official representatives of the following countries:

Cameroon, Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Congo, Liberia, Benin, Central African Empire, and the representative of the Organisation for African Unity (the said countries acting as participants and observers) which have accepted the Kano Accord;

IN VIEW OF the tragic events that have affected the national unity and sovereignty of Chad during the past 13 years;
DESIRE to create peace and security, ensure social justice, harmony and confidence at all levels of Chad’s national life, and;

RESOLVE to preserve the national unity and territorial integrity of Chad and have therefore solemnly decided as follows:

Ceasefire
a. To proclaim and maintain an immediate ceasefire throughout the national territory, and to undertake to strictly respect it, neighbouring countries guaranteeing on their honour not to interfere in the internal affairs of Chad and to respect its national integrity;
b. To ensure that the national radio service should be effectively used to inform all of Chad’s population of the ceasefire;
c. To proceed to the demilitarisation of the town of N’Jamina, all armed forces retiring to a minimum distance of 100 km from N’Jamina to this effect and to undertake the recovery of all secret caches of arms so that all magazines and armouries should come under the control of the Neutral Forces;
d. Which shall ensure the safety of all important Chadian public figures and that of the civil population of N’Jamina and the cities of Abeché, Faya, Moundou and Sarh;
e. And shall control all specialist branches of the armed forces, such as the Airforce and Airforce groundcrews, until the GUNT is formed, so that the responsibility for use and control of other public services shall be the sovereign prerogative of the Transitional Government of National Unity (GUNT);
f. And shall be constituted from military units from one or more countries that do not have a common border with Chad.

To ensure freedom of movement to the civilian population throughout the territory of Chad, the duties of the Neutral Forces coming to an end once an integrated armed force has been established;

a. To establish an independent control commission directed by the secretary-general of the OAU or his representative, and placed under the moral authority of the president of the GUNT and formed from — two representatives of each of the following participant and observer countries: Cameroon, Libya, Liberia, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Congo, Benin, Central African Empire; and one representative of each of the Chadian parties which are signatories of the present Accord — the commission having its headquarters in N’Jamina;
b. To co-operate fully with the members of the control commission so as to ensure their free movement throughout the territory of Chad in pursuance of their duties;
c. The commission being given the following mandate:
   To oversee ceasefire conditions as stipulated in this Accord;
   To ensure that the ceasefire be effectively maintained;
   To ensure that all the provisions in this Accord referring to the political programme be applied;
   To oversee the neutrality of the national radio service during the period from the introduction of the ceasefire to the formation of the GUNT;
   To ensure that none of the signatories to this Accord should use private
transmitters and that the national radio service should be effectively used to promote peace, unity and national reconciliation.

**General Amnesty**

a. To liberate all prisoners of war and political prisoners within 15 days of the formation of the GUNT;
b. The GUNT issuing without delay an amnesty decree for all political exiles so that they may return to their country.

**Formation of the GUNT**

a. To form a Transitional Government of National Unity (GUNT), composed of all the factions that are signatories of this Accord, the GUNT to last for 18 months.
b. The GUNT being the unique authority of the State and charged with the administration of Chad during its existence;
c. The GUNT being charged with the application of the political programme which will enable the constitution of a government after free elections have taken place;
d. To undertake a general reshuffle of important positions of responsibility.

**Integrated Armed Forces**

To dissolve all armed units as at present constituted and to establish an integrated National Army.

**Presence of French Forces**

All Chadian parties have unanimously recognised that the continued presence of French troops constitutes an obstacle in the search for national reconciliation and hinders a peaceful solution of the Chad problem.

The Chadian parties have therefore agreed that the GUNT, once formed, must undertake the evacuation of French troops.

**Entry into Force of the Accord**

This accord should come into force once it is signed. A copy of the Accord shall be lodged with the Secretariat-General of the Organisation of African Unity.

E.G.H. Joffe

**‘DEMOCRACY’ IN UPPER VOLTA**

On 25 November, 1980, elements within the Voltaic Armed Forces overthrew the civilian government of President Lamizana and put an end to Upper Volta’s Third Republic, and its third attempt at parliamentary democracy since Independence from France 20 years before. The National Assembly was dissolved, the Constitution suspended and all political parties were banned.

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Upper Volta people were generally relieved that the traumatic events of strike-torn October and November were over, and that the discredited politicians who had dominated politics for over 30 years, men such as Gerard Kango Ouedraogo and Joseph Conombo, had finally been swept aside.

International reaction to the coup was, however, somewhat different: 'Africa's special democracy has been replaced by yet another military government', or 'Democracy does not work in Africa'. Almost without exception opinions were unfavourable. International press agencies did not reflect reaction to the coup within Upper Volta and there was no attempt to analyse the background to the events of October and November which finally led to the coup. Nor was there assessment of the achievements of Upper Volta's 'democracy', special or otherwise.

The history of Upper Volta from the first years of colonisation some 80 years ago to the present day has not been one demonstrating the value of increasing democracy but of poor and courageous peoples — Mossi, Fulani, Dioula and many more — who have been shamelessly exploited by colonial and then neo-colonial masters. Whole peoples found themselves increasingly enslaved by the alliance between their traditional semi-feudal leadership and the French military administration, which used Upper Volta to produce cotton and as a pool of labour. Peasant farmers, in addition to their feudal obligations, found themselves compelled to pay taxes, to grow cash crops at the expense of food, to join the forced-labour gangs the colonial administration used until 1947 to build the French Empire in West Africa, and even to enlist in the French Army and fight foreign wars.

These were bitter years for peoples that cherished their individual and collective freedoms, and they have not been easily forgotten. All in all, the supposedly 'civilising' experience of colonisation was disastrous for Upper Volta. Evolving social, economic and political structures were crushed and exploited. On the eve of Independence Voltaics found themselves poorer than before, economically dependent and dominated by repressive government.

In the decade before Independence, France prepared the way for an eventual handover by grooming local politicians, who for the most part were chosen from the different regions and ethnic groups of the country. This 'regionalising' of politics led to the destructive balkanisation of the post-Independence political arena, with competing personalities pursuing ethnic and personal interests at the expense of national ones. These men originated in the small band of elite civil servants that accepted and were accepted by the colonial administration. In no way were they representative of the people, and in spite of a certain nationalist streak they had no intention of changing the repressive and exploitative system they were inheriting.

In the 20 years of Independence that followed the political arena remained basically unchanged, with power staying in the hands of the same rural and urban elites — traditional chiefs, traders and businessmen, regionalist politicians and the upper echelons of the Army. They were in many ways 20 wasted years, with the economy growing at a snail's pace and much of northern Upper Volta becoming markedly poorer.
These were the years of ‘independence’ when Voltaic’s enjoyed from time to time their supposed ‘special democracy’ — parliament, elected representatives, free trade unions, independent press etc. They were also years during which liberal capitalism flourished, enabling foreign companies and urban elites to grow very rich, while the rural masses remained desperately poor.

The wealth gap between town and country widened inexorably during this time to reach the staggering ratio of at least 10:1 in the mid-seventies, with most current expenditure and investment going into the large urban centres. Post-drought international aid, meant for the ‘poorest of the poor’, has done little more than fuel the urban economies.

Perhaps the greatest irony of the post-drought years was the election by the rural masses in 1978 of deputies to the National Assembly, who celebrated the return to ‘constitutional democracy’ by granting themselves yearly stipends of over 150 times the average annual per capita income in Upper Volta. How could the peasantry have been so duped as to hope that electing such people would bring any real change to their lives?

For the last 20-30 years politics has been dominated in Upper Volta essentially by personalities, such as Ouedraogo, Conombo, Yameogo, Ki-Zerbo and Lamizana. Their political parties, the MDV, RDA, PRA, MLN etc., have been devoid of any serious political platforms and they have consequently attracted to their ranks elitist, opportunist and generally undemocratic elements. Needless to say, they have proved themselves over two decades incapable of affecting any meaningful change. Yet these have been the politicians who have managed to convince international opinion that they had created a ‘unique democracy’ in Upper Volta. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The relative democracy that has characterised Upper Volta at certain times since Independence is simply the result of pressure exerted on government by public opinion, and in particular by the labour movement. It was the trade unions who in 1966 brought down the authoritarian and unpopular Yameogo regime, only to see the military take over. In 1975 they prevented Lamizana from setting up a one-party system, which would have meant the end of even relative democracy, and obliged him to return to pluralism. Over the years they have constantly spoke out on matters of social, economic and political importance and as such have proved themselves to be the only ‘voice of the people’. The politicians, the political parties, the army, the press, the churches have all failed to represent the people.

The struggle between the labour movement and the authorities came to a head in 1980, and particularly during the two months teachers’ strike in October and November. The year had begun with a Government attempt to severely restrict trade union powers, but the draft law was shelved under pressure from the country’s largest trade union Confederation, the CSV — Confédération Syndicale Voltaique. As the teachers’ strike in the autumn wore on the Government’s position hardened and its undemocratic nature became acutely apparent. President Lamizana stated arrogantly: ‘We have accepted democracy and freedom of expression in Upper Volta; but it should not lead the people to disorder’.
His way of preventing this ‘disorder’ was to impose stricter repression. Striking teachers were intimidated and beaten; trade union leaders were threatened; on several occasions the headquarters of the labour movement, the Bourse du Travail, was occupied by riot police to prevent meetings; and more ominously the right-wing majority party, the RDA, began secretly arming its party hacks throughout the country. The secretary general of the CSV, Soumane Toure, spoke out strongly against the attitude of the authorities and challenged President Lamizana’s interpretation of events: ‘Social conflicts do not threaten democracy. What does pose a real danger to our democratic freedoms are the intrigues of those in power’.

Popular support for the teachers in the conflict and for their trade unions — the SNEAHV and SUVESS — which by now were backed by all four national trade union confederations, came when a public demonstration, the first of its kind ever, was organised by the teachers unions for 13 November to protest against the Government’s intransigence. President Lamizana banned the demonstration the day before, saying that there would be violence. In spite of this tactic and despite the massive deployment of the armed forces large demonstrations took place in the popular quarters of Ouagadougou. Violence did occur when the CRS riot police attacked peaceful marchers, but the latter stubbornly regrouped and the demonstrations continued for three days. Here was perhaps the clearest of indications that there exists in Upper Volta a very real tradition of and potential for popular democracy.

After the demonstrations the Government’s position remained unchanged and the teachers decided to return provisionally to work, unaware that certain members of the armed forces had already decided that change was necessary. On the day that schools reopened a group of army colonels seized power. It was a coup from the ‘centre’ of Upper Volta politics, it had the blessing of the Catholic Church and it flew in the face of traditional influences — Islam and the Mossi clan system.

In his first major speech, on 10 December, the new president, Colonel Saye Zerbo, spoke of the future for democracy in Upper Volta:

Our country has just gone through a period of social upheaval: an economic and social crisis, and a crisis of democracy, brought about by the carelessness of a worn-out power. Now is the time to build real democracy.

He went on to urge all Voltaics to forget the past and rally round the new leadership in order to attain the ideal of ‘work through justice for social progress’.

In their attempt to build their ‘real democracy’ Upper Volta’s new rulers would do well to heed the words of the CSV leader, who said a few months before Lamizana’s fall:

Real democracy will not happen here so long as a minority continues to exploit the majority, so long as we do not have social and economic democracy.

The idea of social and economic democracy takes on a very crucial meaning when one considers the 90 per cent of people in Upper Volta who make up the impoverished peasantry. The latter care very little whether there are one or 10 political parties in Ouagadougou, so long as there is social and economic justice. This justice begins with such basic needs as health care,
In a society which is made up for the most part of subsistence farmers and which has no wealth outside its agricultural base it is imperative to assure absolute self-sufficiency in food production. This Upper Volta did not do in the years preceding the drought of the early 70s, and it has not done so since. Official policy towards food production is typical of most policies and programmes that post-Independence governments have directed at the rural masses.

Such has been the lack of inventiveness, expertise, motivation and human and financial investment that has characterised rural development (with the exception of course of cotton and vegetable production for export) that one has to ask in whose interests were Upper Volta's politicians really working. Large areas of land remain under cotton (over 80,000 hectares during much of the 70s) the profits from which go to France and to the Government. Freeing much of this land for cereal production would help to give a grain surplus, especially if it were accompanied by other measures, such as raising the buying price for cereals.

Rural development, like the other major government programmes of health and education, has been for the most part a failure. The decentralised Regional Development Organisations (ORDs) are remarkable in the way they have alienated the peasantry they were supposedly intended to help.

Faced with a stagnant rural economy successive governments, supported by a host of international and private aid organisations, have adopted a variety of unco-ordinated and empirical methods to stimulate development activities amongst the peasantry. The latter has been the innocent and, not surprisingly, unenthusiastic recipient of whatever assistance filtered down from above. There are some notorious examples of such 'development' projects: rural works projects — roads, dams, bridges etc. — using the food for work system; credit programmes linked to the obligatory production of cash crops; nutrition and health education programmes backed up by free food distribution; and there have even been competitions with prizes for villages that excel in a particular activity. These methods, along with many others, only tend to promote apathy and dependency and do nothing to enable people to overcome their poverty.

In recent years more constructive approaches to rural development have occasionally been attempted, the most important example being that of encouraging the pre-co-operative village group. A substantial number of villages throughout the country have either a women's, men's or youth group engaged in some economic or social activity, and such groups theoretically provide a more efficient means of channelling 'aid' into the villages. This programme, however, is not proving very successful — less than 10 per cent of farmers are members of groups — and the reasons for this are not hard to see. The relationship between village groups and their 'partners' — the ORDs, government services, non-government organisations, traders, etc. — is in every way an unequal one, with the decision-making, funds, power lying in the hands of the latter. Moreover, in an exploitative social, economic and political system, where village chiefs, elders, traders and Government officials exercise enormous power over the majori-
ty of the population, there is really little chance of strong, dynamic and in-
dependent groups forming and flourishing.

After two decades of 'independence' and 'development' in Upper Volta
economic relationships have become more unequal, with the gap between
rich and poor growing ever wider. Development projects intended to
alleviate this poverty are not affecting this trend and in many cases are ac-
celerating it. To assume that in such conditions the peasantry will heed the
all-too familiar call for consultation and participation, issued by the new
Military Government, is crediting it with little commonsense. It must surely
be very clear that the Voltaic peasantry is greatly attached to its land, its
culture and that it would make every sacrifice to preserve the environment
and develop its agricultural economy. There is one condition, however.
That it be freed from its feudalistic bonds and its economic and political
dependency, and that it be fully in control of the development process.

It is obvious that substantial political and economic change is needed if Up-
ner Volta is going to avoid social and economic disaster, of which the great
drought was but a warning signal. The agricultural economy of the northern
regions of the country in particular is deteriorating at an alarming rate, with
emigration systematically robbing whole communities of their able-bodied
youth. Both pastoralists and farmers are finding it increasingly difficult to
 eke out a meagre living from an ever-worsening natural environment. Re-
cent studies indicate that the whole of northern Upper Volta will lie within
the semi-arid Sahelian belt within 15 years.

Is the present political system, whether military or civilian, capable of
meeting the challenge that the economic reality poses?

The military rulers who hold the key ministries in the post-coup Govern-
ment have so far given few precise details of the politics they intend to pur-
sue, but it is possible that Upper Volta will become a more efficiently and
competently run country, and as such will make an important break with
the past. But will this change be sufficient? The answer is certainly, no. Can
in fact any military government, by its very dictatorial nature, ever promote
democracy?

There are strong indications that the new military regime has little intention
of sharing power, let alone creating the 'real democracy' it speaks of. Dur-
ing a recent meeting with trade union leaders President Zerbo stated:

We insist on reaffirming, categorically, that the action which we alone decided to take on 25
November will not be diverted from its path by anyone.

These words were obviously directed at the labour movement, the very body
that has proved itself over the years to be the only organised democratic
force in the country. Any serious attempt at creating democracy must em-
brace from the outset the trade unions, together with all other nascent
popular and democratic movements throughout the country. More impor-
tantly, any meaningful democratic movement in Upper Volta must
necessarily be founded on strong village-level organisations that have the
economic and political power to liberate the peasantry from the structural
poverty that enslaves it.

What is the likelihood of a strong democratic movement, linking the trade
unions and peasant organisations, forming in Upper Volta?

The evolution of such a movement is by no means easy to forecast and there are numerous obstacles that will impede its growth. The peasantry consists almost exclusively of subsistence farmers and only a very small minority are in any way organised into groups. Equally significant the labour movement, despite its apparent coherence in times of struggle, is beset with a variety of contradictions. In addition, the peasantry and urban workers have no organisational ties (though traditional family links remain strong) and it is clear that their respective immediate interests do not coincide.

The labour movement draws its strength from the white-collar workers that make up the majority of the 50,000 or so salaried workers in Upper Volta. There are few factories and the public sector is by far the largest employer — civil servants, teachers, healthworkers, agricultural extension agents etc. The different trade unions are grouped into four Confederations — the CSV, OVSL, CNTV and USTV — which in turn have strong ties with various political tendencies. These groupings cannot be explained on simply professional or class lines, and important contributory factors include religious, ethnic, political and personal allegiances.

An examination of the numerous disputes between trade unions and Government during recent years reveals three main areas of contention: conditions of work, wages and trade union/political rights. Only rarely are matters of direct concern to the peasantry, such as the availability of cereals etc., brought to the Government's attention by the urban-based trade unions and then only in passing. This is not in fact surprising, given that there are no peasant trade unions or organisational ties between urban workers and farmers, and also because issues that concern the peasantry, such as improved prices for agricultural produce, often are seen to run contrary to the short-term interests of urban workers.

Despite these contradictions and seemingly conflicting interests it is noteworthy that the largest of the Confederations, the CSV, has been making a concerted effort since its creation in 1973 to break the traditional ties of the different trade unions with the reactionary political parties, churches, lobbies and personalities, and substantially raise the political awareness of the labour movement. The CSV led the struggle between the trade unions and Government during 1979 and 1980 and may be said to be largely responsible for the downfall of the Lamizana regime and the end of a political era. Its progressive stance against imperialism, on social justice, democratic freedom and national matters such as the radical reform of the education system have greatly influenced politics both within the labour movement and in the country generally. It is therefore perhaps only a matter of time before it campaigns directly on behalf of the peasantry on any number of urgent matters. Indeed there are signs that the CSV has already begun to establish links with nascent peasant groups and so lay the foundation for a national trade union movement.

The question of democracy, of social and economic justice, is vitally important for the people of Upper Volta and yet it has been glossed over or ignored by those in the west who have commented on events in Upper Volta before and since the November coup d'état. The simplistic and misleading
comments that followed the coup are typical of views that are generally held in Europe today. They are characterised by a blind self-satisfaction about the supposedly superior European democracies and corresponding paternalism towards political systems and movements in other parts of the world.

Third world leaders and countries are stereotyped for us into certain categories — one-party states, socialist regimes, military dictatorships, social democracies and the occasional tyranny. Little attempt is made to understand and explain the peoples of these countries and the dynamic forces at play. Where there is a semblance of democratic structures in a country then international approval is given to it, even though the reality may be very different. The international press is usually implicated in this carefully orchestrated propaganda campaign which helps to maintain the ‘climate of approval’. Political leaders in Europe and elsewhere, for whom economic considerations and geopolitics are sacrosanct, have no difficulty promoting the ‘democratic image’ won by a particular government, or alternatively of condemning another, which may be very democratic, simply because of political and economic differences. Failure to understand the new independence struggles taking place in the Third World against the neo-colonial order, the struggles for real democracy, indicates an inexcusable indifference on the part of the western media.

Bernard Taylor

Bibliographic Note


THE 1980 COUP IN GUINEA BISSAU

At a meeting held in January 1981 on a tiny island 400 miles from the mainland, a unique experiment on the African continent finally came to an end. Since winning independence from Portugal in 1974 after 11 years of guerrilla struggle, a single party, the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) had ruled over two separate and sovereign republics, mainland Guinea and the Cape Verdian islands. The Secretary-General of the party, Aristides Pereira, convened the meeting to discuss the implications of the coup d’état of 14 November 1980 in Guinea-Bissau which had led to the imprisonment of that country’s head of state, Luis Cabral, and the overthrow of all existing state institutions, to be replaced by a Revolutionary Council composed predominantly of military personnel. After several days debate the Cape Verdian conference took the decision to form a new party, the PAICV (African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde) and so the brief experiment of separate states with a single party came abruptly to an end. This was a serious set-back both for Pan-Africanism and for socialism on the continent.

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To understand these events we must return to the years of the anti-colonial war and an outstanding African leader and revolutionary theoretician,
Amilcar Cabral. It was he who formed the party and nurtured it through a successful independence struggle, achieving widespread participation by the predominantly peasant population, to the extent that elections were held in the areas free from Portuguese control as early as 1972 and almost 90,000 people cast their votes. Not only had the different ethnic groups of the mainland to be welded together in support of the party, but also the spatially separate and lighter-skinned population of the Cape Verdian islands. This was doubly difficult, not only because of the geography but even more because the Cape Verdians were used as the auxiliaries to colonial rule much as the Indians were used by the British in East Africa. A 99 per cent illiteracy rate on the mainland contrasted markedly with the relatively well-educated Cape Verdians. Racial differences were therefore exacerbated by educational ones. There was much potentially to divide the two peoples and naturally the colonial authorities did everything to encourage this. Nevertheless, the party managed to achieve the ‘Unity and Struggle’ of its watchwords sufficiently to win the war and this was a tribute to the leadership of Amilcar Cabral, but the strains ran deep. They were behind Cabral’s assassination in January 1973 and reappeared savagely with the November 1980 coup. In creating two separate and sovereign states after independence and by approaching the question of unity with caution, the party hoped to overcome these tensions and create the unity which makes economic, and every other kind of sense, for tiny countries such as these. The coup ended all such hopes, forcing the Cape Verdians to disassociate themselves from those involved and form a new party — whilst still claiming with some legitimacy to maintain the mantle of the old.

Two fairly distinct phases followed the actual takeover on 14 November, which cost three lives. The first, lasting only a couple of days, was the most revealing, showing the underlying motivations in their starkest form. Anti-Cape Verdian propaganda was widespread. Nine Vieira, the new President of the Revolutionary Council, made a radio broadcast saying the coup aimed to ‘chase off the colonialists that were still in Guinea-Bissau’, and there was much talk of ending their hegemony over the mainland. No reference was made to Amilcar Cabral or the PAIGC and Raphael Barbosa along with other war criminals was released from prison. Barbosa, former President of the party, had been imprisoned by the colonial authorities and switched sides in 1969. In a second phase these earlier positions were portrayed as being a mistake. The first post-coup edition of the country’s newspaper, No Pintcha, stated openly that ‘The Revolution of 14 November was not nor could it be racist and anti-Cape Verdian’. Its front page headline called for an end to injustice and corruption and a return to the line of (Amilcar) Cabral. Letting Barbosa make a radio broadcast was openly admitted to be an error. The earlier positions were rapidly reversed then, but significantly not before they had revealed some of the real motives behind the coup.

There was clearly much that was not going well in the country prior to the takeover and this probably accounted for the undoubted popular support that Nino appeared to command. Many of the problems however, portrayed by the coup-makers as being the responsibility of the leader, Luis Cabral, were in reality a function of the country’s structural economic weakness and dependency. Others were a function of the perennial problems of controlling a highly bureaucratised state apparatus and ensuring a
functioning social democracy. Rice shortages, the swallowing up of resources by the capital and neglect of the rural zones in the south and a wastage of resources on a few large scale development projects were only some of the economic difficulties experienced. There was essentially a two-way blockage. Goods from abroad were getting no further than Bissau hence the peasants had no incentive to market their agricultural products and in turn feed the capital. The strata occupying the state found themselves relying more and more on foreign aid and less and less on the internal peasant base. The bureaucracy in the city was growing fat and a certain ostentation in the lifestyle of officials was naturally unpopular. The previous leadership had made many mistakes but the new government will undoubtedly be faced with many of the same problems. The causes of the country's weak economy, kept afloat by foreign aid, are perhaps beyond the control of the political leaders: deteriorating terms of trade, an increasing oil import bill, only one year of good rains out of four, the world recession, the appalling legacies of the colonial inheritance, etc.

Paradoxically, the colonial war had produced an artificial boom for the economy of the capital city based on the large troop presence. After independence this no longer existed and resentment followed, compounded because here the influence of the party was at its weakest, hence opposition and sabotage to the party's socialist orientation had to be expected. Frequently attempts at setting up state distribution systems foundered on the hoarding and black marketeering of the experienced middle-men who thrived around the port and army bases. The city still contains many influences which may blow the new government from a socialist course, especially given the essentially nationalist and populist ideology it seems predominantly to express, rhetoric of fidelity to the line of Cabral notwithstanding.

In terms of external influences these seem to have had a limited impact. There are rumours of certain Portuguese economic interests being involved in the coup but nothing as yet has been substantiated. What is clear however is that if the other socialist lusophone African states boycott the new regime, Guinea Bissau may well be forced into the welcoming embrace of the Francophone block, still heavily dominated by Paris. Sekou Touré in neighbouring French Guinea certainly had foreknowledge of the coup and warmly welcomed it within hours of the takeover. He even made reference to a time before colonialism when the two countries were 'but a single entity'. Guinea's own ambitions in this respect, at least in the short term, are focused on potential off-shore oil in waters under territorial dispute with its neighbour. The declared foreign policy of the new regime is ostensibly the same as the old. The Soviet Union has extended recognition and the United States and EEC have stepped up their aid.

A further internal cause of the coup was discontent within the army over the provisions made for demobilisation, which included schemes for ex-soldiers to work on farms opening up the most remote regions of the country. Given supply problems in the rural areas they presumably were reluctant to face the inevitable shortages. The system of promotions introduced with the ranking of the army was another grievance, with the lesser educated Guinean fighters considering that those better educated but with less combat experience were being promoted over them. Internal discontent amongst the
military and Nin’s obvious power base as head of the army for many years were vital for the coup’s success.

Insufficient attention had also been given to developing the party. It had grown, it is true, to about 26,000 members but there had been no attempt as in Angola or Mozambique to improve the quality of the cadres and move towards the creation of a real Leninist style vanguard party. Political structures both within party and state had atrophied. A campaign launched in November 1979 to dynamise the party had clearly come too late and had been ineffective. There was a tendency on the part of the President Luis Cabral to rely on only a small and closed circle for consultation and power had certainly grown too personalised. On the other hand, it is necessary to recall the element of personal ambition which may have been involved. Ninó, the coup-maker, was formerly Prime Minister and under the new constitution the President took direct control of Foreign Affairs, the Army and Security positions previously subordinate to the Prime Minister. To what extent Ninó felt marginalised and was driven by his own desire for power is a matter of conjecture. The fact remains that he is now undisputed ruler of the Revolutionary Council and with the importance of the top party leadership close observers of the scene in Portugal have suggested that the party may decline even further and power grow even more personalised under Ninó.

Finally mention must be made of the mass graves which the new leaders revealed to the world’s press. The dead numbered somewhat under 500 and were in the main those closely associated either with the colonial security forces or the failed coup attempt of 1978. Excesses had clearly been committed by the security forces but one of the many ‘sins’ the Cape Verdian leadership finds hardest to forgive is the statement made by one of the coup leaders that PIDE (the Portuguese secret police) were not capable of such acts and that Aristides Pereira had knowledge of them.

The Cape Verdians reject many of the reasons given for the coup, such as the assertion that Ninó did not know of the killings, and he is condemned for not using the established political structures to regress grievances. Pedro Pires, the Cape Verdian Prime Minister put it quite simply, ‘We are against coup d’etats because they are not the way to resolve problems’ (Unidade e Luta, October/December 1980). Implicit in the Secretary-General’s address to the meeting which formed the new party is acknowledgement that some things had gone wrong — mainly at dispute are the reasons why and the methods taken to redress them. Certainly the Cape Verdian leadership has drawn the lessons for its own situation and in the final part of the address Pereira stressed the importance of ideology, vigilance and discipline in the new party. His New Year’s speech emphasised the need to keep democratic channels open, ‘If the force of all is fundamental for the consolidation of independence there has to be given to each citizen the possibility of expressing his opinion and enriching the collective thought with his suggestions’ (Voz Di Povo, 12 January 1981). In other words the party must keep in close contact with the population and strengthen the politics of participation developed during the war.

The formation of a new party can be seen therefore as symbolic of a new emphasis on the political structures whilst retaining fidelity to the principles
of the old PAIGC. Ironically in hindsight, the dangers of growing passivity within the party and other weaknesses such as irresponsibility, tolerance in the face of errors and negligence were warned of in a major theoretical document, *Vencer A Batalha Da Ideologia*, published just prior to the coup in June 1980. Paradoxically the prospects for the PAICV may be better in Cape Verde than they are for the PAIGC on the mainland, where the party’s roots were firmly grounded during the war. The party on the islands was restricted to a few dozen clandestine cells prior to independence, but the Cape Verdians who had fought in the PAIGC on the mainland returned to set up an enlarged and more dynamic party structure which by the beginning of 1981 had around 4,500 members.

The Guineans’ response to the formation of the new party was entirely negative. Both governments and both parties still claim to want eventual unity but the prospects at present have never looked bleaker. Retrospectively the Third Congress of the PAIGC held in 1977 noted prophetically that ‘history does not provide us with many examples of successful efforts to build unity, developed in this context of popular struggle’. The bold experiment of a single party and two sovereign republics in Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau ended with the coup and the formation of the new party — in so doing it sadly underlined the truth of this statement. Reports coming from Guinea Bissau by the middle of 1981 stress government and party inactivity, virtual bankruptcy, food shortages and a continuing strong black nationalist sentiment within the army. There remains the possibility of a future reversal of policy however, and there is no doubt that there will be many continuing internal struggles by those wishing to return to the political line of Amilcar Cabral.

**Barry Munslow**

**Bibliographic Note**

The author is grateful to Colm Foy of the Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Information Centre and to Basil Davidson for the invaluable help they gave in preparing this article. They are not of course responsible for the views expressed herein.

The new collection of Amilcar Cabral’s writings *Unity and Struggle* provides the party’s theoretical texts, B. Davidson *The Liberation of Guiné* describes the process of mass mobilisation in the liberation war and L. Rudebeck, *Guinea-Bissau. A Study of Political Mobilisation* has a useful chapter on the 1972 elections. Other sources used were *Expresso Internacional Portugal*, *Voz Di Povo* and *No Pintcha* (the newspapers of Cape Verde and Guinea respectively), *PAIGC III Congress Report of the Supreme Council of the Struggle*, B. Davidson, ‘Cape Verde Republic Liberation and Progress’ in *Peoples Power*, No.17, *Relatório Sobre A Situação Actual Na Guinea-Bissau*, CIDAC.
Reviews


Magubane has written a book that should be read by all Africanist scholars. People with radical, liberal, or conservative perspectives will all read it to their benefit. The book is theoretically well-grounded, and empirically well-researched, and radical scholars, who crave for analysis and need to have a good understanding of the South African situation and its genesis in order to confront it better, should find it necessary reading.

The liberal who stands for a better world but despises revolutionary change and therefore goes for ‘gradualism’ and reformism should also find the serious limitations of his/her belief in gradual and smooth social change revealed; the book is educative to that end. Even the incorrigible defenders of racism and social injustice (I am tempted to call these paleo-Aristotelians) should find their popular justifications sufficiently challenged, their conscience pricked and possibly a re-examination of long-held notions, on reading this book.

The book’s eleven chapters deal with themes on the class basis of social inequality in South Africa. This in itself is a major contribution to our knowledge of the South African situation, because studies of the race question in South Africa that place ‘socio-economic relationships at the heart of the problem and show how underdevelopment and racial inequalities developed together’ are rare if not altogether non-existent. The author’s perspective is socio-historical and materialist, and this helps him to order and analyze the key events in South Africa’s turbulent history beginning from the period of first contact with the European ‘pirates’.

Events in Southern Africa as a whole since 1974, such as the dismantling of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique; the victory of the MPLA over the FNLA and UNITA; the Soweto uprisings; the recent victory of the progressive forces in Zimbabwe; and the systematic escalation of the armed struggle and gains scored by the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia, have all woken the perpetrators of social injustice in the area up from their false consciousness that ‘nothing will change for a long time to come’. But this awakening is not matched by any scientific ap-
praisal of the changing events. The history-making events are received with shock and treated as ‘disturbances’ caused by ‘terrorists’, ‘anarchists’, ‘misguided’ or Communist (and therefore ‘evil’) elements who can be prevented from causing further ‘harm’ if only they could be dealt with more effectively. Hence, counter-insurgency is the solution sought, leaving aside the real causes of the problem. The dialectic escapes the white supremacist ‘authorities’ and their intellectual articulators.

The bankruptcy of bourgeois politics and scholarship is usually exhibited at its best when events have to be explained and/or anticipated, rather than just described or quantified. It was, for example, a clear illustration of the abysmal depth to which imperialist and bourgeois consciousness has sunk when the recent Zimbabwe elections, and indeed the constitutional talks that preceded it, were predicated on the view that ‘tribal’ and allied factors would not permit a Patriotic Front victory.

The contradictions in bourgeois society therefore go beyond the sub-structure where they are easily perceived in the form of economic crises; the whole super-structure and particularly ideology and knowledge, is in jeopardy for, in spite of the advanced technology and science attained, the analyses and explanations of social reality are either misleading or seem to have come to a dead-end. This is a crisis situation and it poses a challenge to social science. It is with this crisis and challenge, as with others originating from the sub-structure, which Marxism must come to terms.

It is in the light of the above that one can judge the value of Magubane’s path-breaking book. He states the problem in clear terms and correctly situates it within its proper theoretical and methodological matrix. There are two aspects to this and it is appropriate to quote the author in this regard. Firstly:

to understand the social inequality in South Africa, we must take into account the inequality between a small handful of advanced capitalist countries (considered thus from the point of view of capital accumulation and industrialization) and the so-called underdeveloped (colonial and semi-colonial) countries, where the majority of humanity lives. Not only are different economic functions assigned to different people within countries, but they are also assigned to the countries themselves within the world system.

The author therefore looks at the external as well as the internal. The role of imperialism and colonialism as well as the development of capitalism in South Africa are the pivots around which the problem of race and class is analyzed. As he states, racial inequality is conceptualized ‘as the aspect of imperialism and colonialism’ and since ‘the colonialism of the last five centuries (in South Africa) is closely associated with the birth and maturation of the capitalist socio-economic system’, the study of the ‘development of capitalism is thus the best way to study race inequality . . .’. Further, ‘the seemingly ‘autonomous’ existence of racism today does not lessen the fact that it was initiated by the needs of capitalist development or that these needs remain the dominant factor in racist societies’.

Secondly, the problem is situated in a historical context, and the key concept here is ‘historical specificity’ — the idea that social phenomena and laws can only be valid in the context of particular historical periods since they are generally specific to them. Therefore, ‘instead of employing timeless categories to house social phenomena of different epochs, we must
understand the dynamics of racism under specific conditions'; further, while 'a theory of racially based inequality must first grasp the general character of the epoch opened by the so-called voyages of discovery during the mercantile order' 'the concrete differences between one country and another within the same political epoch must . . . (also) be taken into account and explained' since 'each society so touched exhibits a particular blend of diverse "racial" groups, a particular mix of their activities, and a particular patterning of their socio-economic relationships'.

The purpose of the book is therefore simple and clear: 'to integrate sociological, economic, historical, and political approaches in an effort to comprehend the development of inequality and racism during South Africa's tragic and complex history'. This is a holistic approach that nevertheless avoids the pitfalls of theoretical eclectism.

What does the book contain? The first chapter deals with the theoretical and methodological issues mentioned above, and Chapters two and three take a synoptic look at South African societies before the European contact and the impact of the European settlers' conquest and cultural domination of the African peoples from the 17th century on. The development of capitalist agriculture, emergence of the so-called 'native reserves' and the migrant labour system are taken up in Chapter four. Chapter five deals with the discoveries of diamonds in 1864 and gold in 1884 and the impact of these, especially the latter, on South Africa's economy and society. The inhuman rape of South Africa's human and natural resources that begun with these discoveries is given lucid discussion with illustrative quotes from official and newspaper sources. Chapter six discusses urbanization. Titled "The Political Economy of the City in South Africa", this is a very refreshing and important chapter because the phenomenal demographic and spatial growth of cities currently taking place in the third world, which many scholars have analyzed as if it is an autonomous, neutral process unrelated to the dynamics of modes of production and standing above social classes and their struggles, is here given a total treatment. As the author states, '... the phenomenon of urbanization can not be understood without reference to the overall structure and functioning of the political economy (in this case, the capitalist mode of production) as it is articulated in the South Africa social formation'.

The historical and contemporary roots of urbanization are therefore examined, and the various phases it transcended as the forms of capitalist development varied are also as brilliantly discussed. There is also a discussion of the ignominious Pass System and its role as a mechanism for stabilizing African labour supply. A well-researched section on the relative quantitative deployment of the different 'racial' groups (Africans, Whites, Coloured, Indians) in the South African urban labour market completes the chapter.

There is another reason why this chapter on urbanization is important: it indirectly debunks the notion that urbanization is a necessary correlate of industrialization and development. The author amply demonstrates that 'it is the laws and tendencies of the capitalist political economy that determines the ecological forms (of the city) we see'. Since capitalist development, by its very logic and nature, never really benefits all across the board, it is only
to be expected that the patterns of urban development it gives birth to would only go to entrench the spatial uneven development of capitalist society and the exploitation (race and class) of the mass of its inhabitants.

The seventh chapter goes with the preceding one in theme. It deals with the development of urban-based industry, commerce and intensification of capitalist agriculture by the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois Afrikaners who have had to use all manner of nationalist and political means in the conflict with British imperial capital since the beginning of this century.

The ways in which the Afrikaner bourgeoisie, through the Nationalist Party, has manipulated white working class sentiments against black workers is discussed to show the kind of services to which racism is put in class society. This deliberate obfuscation of class and class struggle is in line with the purposes of the Nationalist Party, namely, advancing Afrikaner capital accumulation; protecting white workers' interests; and protecting the capitalist economy. The author touches the heart of the matter in these words: 'The Nationalist Party mediates class and nation...it exploits national aspirations to seduce working-class aspirations'.

Up until this point, the author has analyzed what we may call the 'internal situation'. Chapter eight then takes up the role of imperialism in this drama of racism and class exploitation. The history of imperialist exploitation in the area is recounted, Anglo-American imperialist rivalries and accommodations are also illustratively discussed, and the contemporary role of western industrial and finance capital in maintaining the racist status quo is subsequently dealt with. The final part of the chapter examines the political implications of capital investment, since 'the export of capital (always) raises the question of the political control of the country in which the capital is invested'. In the South African case, it is noted that 'western world's political strategy...since the collapse of Portuguese colonialism has been to diffuse the possibility of revolutionary change and to work out a negotiated, neo-colonial settlement'. The role of the US, Britain and EEC countries, which have big stakes in South Africa, in this scheme is therefore not overlooked.

Chapter nine which seems to be misplaced, covers apartheid dogmas and Afrikaner nationalism. It makes an interesting reading but one wonders whether parts of it (e.g. the section on Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid) are not simply elaborations of previous sections and chapters, and should therefore not have been developed when the issues they deal with were first raised.

The last two chapters consider the African reaction to the conditions of domination and exploitation. How has the African reacted to conquest and oppression? And what are the forms and content of the contemporary struggles for liberation? These are the kinds of questions covered here. It is shown that the African has not been a passive and willing sufferer and that 'resistance to white conquest is almost as old as the first colonial settlement'. The famous Zulu resistance wars against the invaders; the early forms of political struggles; the formation of the ANC and later the ICU and other forms of organized struggle are all documented in Chapter ten. The final chapter is devoted to the ANC in its new, contemporary phase and
other organizations, and how the national and class struggles have escalated since 1948.

The final chapters of the book are important for the simple reason that they demonstrate that the oppressed and exploited African majority have not been asleep, and that they are neither foolish nor primitive and immature about politics, as the advocates of so-called 'separate development' love to believe. They also debunk the view that things are getting better, or are better already, in South Africa (compared to the rest of the continent) for the African. The age-old black resistance, the recent Soweto uprising and 'unrests', as well as sabotage actions by underground groups are enough testimony that the South African situation is far from improving; on the contrary, it is being entrenched in numerous, subtle ways with every passing moment. People do not take to the streets and 'cause trouble' when all is well with their heads and stomachs!

This review should not leave the potential reader of the book with the impression that the book is faultless. The author himself shows an awareness of its limitations: 'It suffers from the shortcomings of work done with a sense of urgency and in not altogether favourable circumstances. It also suffers from a lack of first hand documentary research on my part'. Also, as we indicated before, the last four chapters would seem to need some rearrangement. And also there is no bibliography, only reference notes, which makes quick cross referencing difficult. But set against the book's richness and freshness, these shortcomings are minor.

_Akwasi Aidoo_


Amilcar Cabral is generally considered to be the leading Marxist theoretician on the African continent. He founded the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) in 1956 and led a successful struggle against Portuguese colonial rule until his assassination in January 1973. Here for the first time we have a major collection of his writings in a single volume which will surely be welcomed by all those interested in the emergent socialist states and Marxist parties of Africa. Cabral's genius, for such as it was, is that he transcended the all too common pattern of Third World revolutionaries mouthing the undigested polemic of Moscow or Peking in a form totally unsuited to their own reality. Cabral's Marxism was of a different and original kind, applying the method within the context of the African experience. This above all also makes for the originality of his work and undoubtedly contributed to the eventual success of the movement that he led.

This latter point becomes readily apparent in the second part of the work concerned with 'Revolutionary Practice', where we read some of the text addressed to the Portuguese troops. It was continually stressed that a colonial system not a race was being fought and soldiers were urged to desist from fighting. The politics that Cabral preached made an enormous contribution to the politicisation of the Portuguese army and as we now know
this was to significantly contribute to the nationalist victory. The April 1974 coup which installed the Armed Forces Movement in power in Lisbon led inexorably to decolonisation in the colonies. The political message addressed to the colonial troops was complemented by directives and political education to the guerrilla army, which helped ensure that the practice would reinforce the theory. Clemency to captured prisoners of war for example, had an enormous propaganda effect.

Basil Davidson and Mario de Andrade provide a brief introduction and biographical note to the volume. Part one of the text covers Cabral’s writings on revolutionary theory. These include the well-known and previously published essays on ‘National Culture’ and ‘The Weapon of Theory’, the lesser known ‘Party Principles and Political Practice’ and the previously unavailable (in English) early texts on the agrarian survey of Guinea. As with Mao in China, Cabral’s detailed study of the rural zones provided an empirical foundation for his later theorising, ironically this was done whilst in the employ of the colonial government. As an agronomist he travelled to every corner of this tiny West African country which, by the time the independence movement was formed, he knew intimately, as no one else.

His theoretical writings have had a significance for Marxists in Africa and beyond, out of all proportion to this postage stamp sized country with less than a million inhabitants. The only regret with this current compilation is that so much interesting material had to be left out. One thinks in particular of the essays contained in a small Portuguese language collection entitled Analise De Alguns Tipos De Resistência (Seara Nova, Lisbon, 1975). Perhaps a future collection might make available to the English reader these and other texts at present only in French or Portuguese.

Barry Munslow

Current Africana
Our normal bibliographic listing has had to be omitted from this Issue. C.A. will reappear in the next Issue of the Review.