

CLASS IN AFRICA : ANALYTICAL PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES

Robin Cohen

1. The Mythology of Classlessness

THE operational and conceptual ambiguities that the notion of class has acquired in industrialised countries may lead one to assume on a *priori* grounds that class concepts could only have a limited application to areas where social structures are undergoing rapid transformation and where competing affiliations (such as ethnic, caste or religious loyalties) are more manifest determinants of an individual's social role. In the African context it has been possible to argue on the one hand that class formation and crystallization have not, and may never occur; or, on the other hand that if class structures are emerging, that these are of peripheral importance in the determination of social conflict.

The first position usually starts with the assertion that traditional African societies were strongly egalitarian in character and had an absence, or a low level, of stratification. The concepts of "African humanism", "traditional collectivism", Sékou Touré's "communaucratique" and Nyerere's "ujamaa" all proclaim the absence of social classes. Nyerere indeed states that African languages did not have the vocabulary to embrace a class concept: "Indeed I doubt if the equivalent for the word 'class' exists in any indigenous African language; for language describes the ideas of those who speak it, and the idea of 'class' or 'caste' was non-existent in African society".¹

Though many of Nyerere's "African societies" were in fact gerontocracies, a degree of classlessness certainly existed in some traditional societies in the respects that there was little division of labour where economic activities were relatively unspecialised, and few conflicting social groups where acephalous communities were small enough to operate largely through consensus politics. Some African leaders, notably Senghor², have however attempted to generalise the description of such societies to signify the achievement of a continent-wide socialism.

Far from reflecting a contemporary and empirical reality, such attempts at looking backward towards an over-generalised and over-romanticised past, reflect more saliently the search for an acceptable

and respectable state ideology, usually organised around the notions of "African Socialism". The term "socialism" itself as Igor Kopytoff points out³, carried a positive connotation immediately after independence, when African ruling parties were anxious to stress their separation from their metropolitan and capitalist connections. Moreover, the evocation of a picture of African communalism provided an apparently traditional legitimation for the construction of a new social order, an order which was increasingly marked by an ever-growing parasitical bureaucracy ostensibly necessary in the interests of "development".

Where political and ideological considerations of this kind obtain it is perhaps to be expected that an element of distortion in the depiction of pre-colonial societies will intrude. Many traditional communities indeed exhibited clear-cut lines of social-statification, sometimes reinforced by ethnic and religious distinctions. Despite the general absence of the private ownership of land, one can quote examples of domestic and chattel slavery (such as that existing in several West African kingdoms); tribal aristocracies (such as the domination of the Tutsi over the Hutu); rankings of descent groups (as among the Swazi) theocracies (such as the domination of the Amhara in Ethiopia), or caste differences (as in Senghor's Senegal).⁴ Indeed Senghor's attempt to rationalise the presence of castes in his supposedly egalitarian society, is instructive. Like Nyerere, he argues that castes were not of indigenous origin, but rather were an "Arab-Berber importation". Such was the native genius of "Negro-Africans" that these foreign imports were adapted to produce a rational division of labour with the absence of conflict." Besides the earlier specific examples of traditional forms of stratification, dignitaries and state functionaries who attained their social ranks through non-universal criteria (through membership of a particular ethnic group, their position in a lineage or through the holding of ritual qualifications), were widespread over much of Africa?

Little work has been done on the extent to which traditional social structures have survived in, or adapted themselves to, the contemporary situation. This is partly because social anthropologists have only comparatively recently emancipated themselves from treating Africa as a societal museum, and partly also because such interconnections are not always discernable to the foreign observer's eye. This statement requires some qualification, though not all that much. C. S. Whittaker has argued the thesis that ruling groups with their authority firmly based in older systems of social control, have, in the case of Northern Nigeria, successfully responded to newer forms of political association introduced by colonial and post-colonial authorities, and emerged with their power not only unscathed, but enhanced.⁷ I. L. Markowitz, writing of Senegal, notes in passing that "the men who were at the top

of traditional society seem, by and large, to have come out not too badly in their modern relationships as well. Caste is still of the greatest significance in modern Senegal",⁸ Jacques Lombard has also briefly analysed the survival of a feudal-type structure in Dahomey.⁹

Clearly the degree of survival of traditional social relationships depended in large measure on the intensity and character of the foreign incursion, a theme that will be returned to later, but even allowing for the existence of a measure of class persistence and adaptation, the mythology of classlessness has been buttressed simply by the denial, usually implicit, that class division and class struggle have much relevance to the determination of political conflict in Africa. Africa is still in the popular consciousness, and elsewhere, comprises a collection of "tribes", historically "warring", culturally distinct and mutually irreconcilable. Thus, as Richard Sklar has pointed out journalists who write about violence in Africa are often content to use the simple monocausal explanation of "tribalism" without at the same time looking at "the prevailing conditions of poverty, insecurity and lack of opportunity for satisfying employment".¹⁰ Though the term is outlawed in academic circles, there nonetheless is an undercurrent behind the loose usage of such terms as "ethnicity" and "cleavage" which suggests that they are a respectable window-dressing for basically the same idea.

Of far greater intellectual weight, however, is the current revival of the concept of "cultural pluralism", developed originally by J. F. Furnivall in his work on *Netherlands India* (1939) and given more explicit formulation in his *Colonial Theory and Practice* (1948). Though at least one of the contemporary adherents to the notion of "cultural pluralism" has shifted his ground on this slightly, the term is most often used in marked contradistinction to the "pluralism" associated (e.g. through the works of Kornhauser and Shils), with an equilibrium model of American society, and instead stresses the endemic conflict present in a "plural society" where distinct groups remain permanently aloof from the "melting-pot".¹¹ In Furnivall's words ". . . they mix but they do not combine. Each group holds by its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways. As individuals they meet, but only in the market place, in buying and selling".¹² Colonial domination provided a thin skein which bound people together in an artificial political unit, while capitalism provided an arena of economic interaction which did not however reshape the allegiance and social identity of the diverse peoples making up colonial society.

The thesis is an attractive and malleable one, and "heuristic", to use a slightly dated catch-word, almost beyond belief. The contributors to a volume on *Pluralism in Africa* have now extended, refined, modified

and mangled the concept to cover everything from pre-colonial social structures to contemporary racial conflict in South Africa. Here apparently the situation is complicated by the presence of "strangers" or "foreigners" within a plural society and also by the process of "depluralisation". It should not be thought, however, that this process necessarily minimises the value of the concept of pluralism, for as Leo Kuper argues: ". . . as depluralisation proceeds and horizontal linkages multiply and circumstances seem to favour the homogenization of the society, the old cleavages may be reasserted with greater vigour".¹³ Though the concept of "pluralism" is frequently dragooned into service to cover almost every conceivable form of social interaction, the contemporary revisions of Furnivall's ideas have generated an extremely valuable discussion of the character and variety of ethnic stratification, the concept of "differential incorporation", being modified for our own purposes later in the paper.

Tendentally and essentially, however, "cultural pluralism" leads to either a mystification or obscuration of other forms of social conflict, for example class conflict, which may be linked to, but is also distinct from, ethnic conflict. The cultural determinism of the pluralists has also led to a distinct uncertainty in the spelling out of the precise conditions under which relationships of dominance and disability as between ethnic or racial groups are modified or overturned. To undertake this task a much wider analysis of the relations of production and consumption within a given social matrix must be undertaken. *These* relations, we suggest, may exist as coterminous with, as an adjunct of or in contradiction to the relations between cultural groups.

2. *Foreign induced forms of Stratification*

The "foreign"¹⁴ incursion in Africa both preceded and extends beyond the period of formal colonialism. Long before Victorian army officers planted flags in African soil, trade between Europeans and African political elites along the West coast had seriously altered power relationships in Africa itself. For some ruling groups the new sources of wealth that derived from the trade in slaves, gold and other commodities reinforced traditional authority. Other ruling classes exhibited a traditional aversion to trading, and this prejudice, together with the highly selective penetration of European traders along a thin ribbon of the West coast, allowed the development of a fairly discrete group of traders and middlemen who participated in the slave and firearms trade, and other forms of commerce. Brass, Bonny Calabar, and others became important centres of trade during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries resembling in some measure, if the analogy of one historian is to be believed,¹⁵ the autarchic city-states of the ancient world.

Besides these indigenous groups of **intermediaries**, **Western-**

acculturated repatriates (i.e. ex-West Indians, Yoruba Brazilians or Creoles from Sierra Leone) successfully interposed themselves as agents carrying on the trade between Europe and Africa. Some repatriates and their offspring were later to become closely involved with the nationalist movements on the west coast — Nigeria's Herbert Macaulay is a notable example — and intermarried freely with indigenous social groups. Others again, particularly transatlantic blacks, including the Americo-Liberians, bore only a superficial racial identity with the indigenees, and tended to hold themselves aloof from the mainstream of African life. They formed distinct communities with predominantly endogamous bonds and enjoyed an occupational specificity and differentiation in wealth and skills which gave to them a role more in common with the more obviously foreign elements like the Asians of East Africa or the Levantines of West Africa. They are also comparable in that, with the exception of the Americo Liberians, there has in general evolved a distinct disjunction between their political and economic power. The classical Marxist congruence between these two forms of power was to be disrupted by the distortions introduced during the decolonisation process, and this was to have important consequences for the formation and ranking of classes; giving to them a particularly political character. In the case of the Freetown Creoles, their displacement from a position of political pre-eminence was a post-1945 phenomenon; previously, as Arthur T. Porter has written, they "constituted an elite group in which were conserved the high-ruling positions in the economic, social and political orders".¹⁶ With the rise of majority politics after the war, most of the repatriate elements along the West coast had their power threatened to the point where they had to remove themselves from the area of political controversy or throw in their lot with the nationalist politicians. In the case of the Sierra Leone Creoles, this meant effecting a "strategic withdrawal" to other parts of the structural elite. Ex-patriate groups like the Lebanese had to act more covertly, and were often not adverse to employing bribes to maintain their favoured social position.

The introduction of the colonial administrations made explicit a form of stratification which rested on racial distinction, the possession of certain technical and administrative skills, and the appropriation of central political power. Aspirant indigenees could do little about the first form of differentiation, but the acquisition of "European" skills — especially Western education — was seen as the necessary where-withal to challenge the political hegemony of the colonial rulers.

Though important, education alone did not define the social role of this "new class" for the Creoles and other repatriates were abundantly endowed in this respect. Rather, their pre-eminence depended on their ability to perform the role of *internuncio* between the colonial power

and the increasingly enlarged electorate — a role which **the** Creoles, because of their cultural exclusiveness, were unfitted to assume. The term middle class has often been used to describe the members of this social group, and in the sense that their status rested on their intermediary position, the spatial metaphor is not inappropriate. The French, characteristically explicit, described the more pliant members of this social class as *interlocuteurs valables*. Martin L. Kilson has defended the use of such terminology in these terms :

“. . . in general, to speak of a middle class implies the existence of two other classes: a lower class and an upper class. In the West African context, the 'lower class' is the mass of African villagers and peasants . . . We also include in this category the emergent wage-labouring class, whose general social status is not appreciably better than that of the African peasants. By the 'upper or ruling class' we have in mind the small, but economically and politically dominant, group of European entrepreneurs, business administrators, senior colonial officials, district officers, and the array of lesser colonial servants — what, in short, Sir Ivor Jennings has termed the 'imported oligarchy'.”¹⁷

The African "middle class" was, however, by no means of a unified character; and it may be useful to distinguish three broad groups within it. The first, historically older, originated with the coastal merchants, businessmen and professionals, who already had considerable wealth and status before and during the establishment of the colonial administration. Conflicts of interest with the "imported oligarchy" over jobs and spheres of economic activity led important members of this group to the view that wealth alone was insufficient to ensure permanent economic power — and several participated in early nationalist organisations (the Macaulay and Moore families in Lagos are examples). The second group comprised a more aspirant stratum, educated and trained in Western skills (often as teachers and lawyers), but not of as established a status. Though some had acquired considerable wealth from their professional practices (Awolowo was one such), political life opened to them a new opportunity to both reinforce their wealth and buttress their status. Finally, a decidedly more opportunistic group existed who saw political power as a means of realising substantial capital accumulation for the first time. This last group was not a settled reservoir of second or third generation *riches*; rather its membership was highly socially mobile with recruitment coming from a wide range of social origins. Moreover, the contradistinction that Kilson adduces between the middle class and the "imported oligarchy" is, after the colonial administration departs, replaced by a certain congruence in social behaviour between the old and the new masters. Few leaderships tried to mitigate the huge income differentials that were inherited from the colonial days (some indeed contrived to widen

them) while the stress on the parade of social rank, prestige and power both mimicked and exceeded colonial prototypes.

Accompanying the rise of the "new middle class" was an increasing social differentiation in other areas that flowed from the processes of social change inaugurated under colonial rule. Urbanisation, industrialisation and the integration of the local economies into a world market all altered the character of traditional systems of stratification or created new social groupings that were outside the nominal systems of social control. In many rural areas peasant societies were transformed from producing largely for subsistence to market or export production; a process that allowed the development of considerable differences in wealth and status. At the terminal period of colonial rule palm oil, groundnuts, coffee, cocoa and other agricultural products brought in about two thirds of West Africa's export earnings, while those who established themselves as produce buyers (acting either as agents for expatriate trading companies, or as functionaries in co-operative movements) soon achieved the status of local dignitaries; many becoming "communal champions" in the legislatures or local councils set up by the departing colonial power. The commercialisation of agriculture also increased labour mobility producing for the most part a seasonal, part-time, spasmodic commitment to wage earning, rather than a landless rural proletariat.

In the urban areas, however, a category of regular wage-earners with no other source of livelihood gradually emerged to service the administration, the commercial houses and the embryonic industrial establishments. Despite their low social overheads, colonial governments were *étatiste* in character. Government's need for hired labour was varied and growing — it required a substantial servitor sector to maintain the *pax colonica*: soldiers, policemen and judicial functionaries manned the state apparatus, a legion of clerks worked in the lower echelons of the bureaucracy, while specialists were sought or trained to maintain the technical adjuncts of the colonial state like the railways, harbours and power plants.

3. *Analysing African Classes: Some Polemics*

To postulate some kind of meaningful corporate identity for the social groups that emerged as a result of the foreign incursion immediately raises some obvious theoretical issues. Is the researcher's taxonomy merely a classification into undifferentiated aggregates which can indicate nothing as to whether the designated groups act — or may act — in defence or pursuance of the imposed characterisation? Under what circumstances and in what measure are class attitudes hardened and class action undertaken? To what extent can the language of class analysis developed in other contexts either encompass

the variety of class identities present in Africa or provide a tool for **analysing** shifts in the productive relations between social classes?

To these questions we can propose no complete answer. In some small areas, however, one may point to some congruity of class development in Africa as compared to the industrialised West. In the managerial and administrative sector, the diffuse and complex class relationships that result from an ambiguous relationship to the means of production are seen too in the African context. The complex grading of occupations and skills in these areas has to a large extent been replicated in the small modern sectors of post-colonial states. Thus in the teaching, managerial and administrative apparati, many African countries exhibit overlapping class relationships that are more characteristic of a highly industrialised society. Even here too much emphasis on the hierarchical character of the inherited apparati, may obliterate the broad distinction in the bureaucracies between the "senior service" and junior employees; but it remains true that the occupational structures of most African countries reveal a specificity that is unrelated to the low level of economic development.

Each category with such apparati is of a different "grade", has specified duties, different pay-scales and a distinct status in the work situation. The existence of these hierarchies casts some doubt on the argument advanced by G. Arrighi and J. S. Saul¹⁸ that the African "wage-working class is polarised into two strata". By their analysis the lower stratum is only partly proletarianised and is close to the peasantry in that the bulk of their families' subsistence derives from outside the wage-economy, while the upper stratum (what they term a "labour aristocracy") is part of an elite or sub-elite whose break with the peasantry is more total. Certainly there are clusters at both ends of the spectrum that conform to Arrighi and Saul's groupings but their rigid polarisation perhaps allows too little for the intermediary groups.

Paralleling the development of articulated structures in the administrative, managerial and teaching apparati, is, however, a diffuse and unspecified division of labour and occupational role in many other areas of the social structure. Petty traders may drift between self-employment, the employment of others or the sale of their own labour power. The so-called "unemployed" element may have casual sources of income from the occasional task-paid job or the provision of a touting service. By contrast, domestic servants or apprentices, though nominally in the wage economy, may only receive infrequent cash payments. Regarded only in terms of numbers these *déclassé* groups are a significant element in the urban population; the services they provide put them firmly in the numbers of the economically active population. In classifying such groups, Marx provides little help, for he effectively ignores the claims to serious analysis of such groups by

consigning them to a nether region beyond the categories of social labour. When Marx wrote of the ". . . vagabonds, dismissed soldiers, runaway galley slaves, sharpers, jugglers, lazzaroni, pickpockets, sleight-of-hand performers, gamblers, procurers, keepers of disorderly houses, porters, literati, organ grinders, rag pickers, scissors grinders, tinkers, beggars — in short that whole undefined kicked about mass that the French call 'la Bohème' . . . this refuse, offal and wreck of all classes"¹⁰, he could hardly have envisaged a society where such elements pervade the social ethos of urban life.

Of the writers firmly in the Marxist school, Bukharin has provided some suggestive categories for classifying groups with opaque or highly mediated structural relationships with the means of production. He offers the terms "déclassé" (i.e. outside the divisions of social labour), "a mixed group" (i.e. belonging to more than one class), "a transition class" (i.e. a group emerging from previous modes of production now in decay) and an "intermediate class" (i.e. falling between other groupings without at the same time being remnants of the old order).¹¹ The problem here is not one of "fit", because with a little theoretical ingenuity all ambiguous groups could find their place in Bukharin's categories. It is rather of the magnitude and importance of the groups that would have to be included in such general categories, and the lack of internal distinctions, which might explain variations in their political behaviour.

Are, for example, the déclassé elements to be regarded as a reserve army of the proletariat threatening their job security in the adverse conditions of the labour market? This depiction would only be partly accurate as many in this group enjoy some identity of interest with the wage-earners to whom they may be connected by ethnic and lineage ties, and from whom they may derive some economic benefits. It is doubtful indeed whether there is a noticeable difference between the standards of living of the déclassé group as compared to the lower paid workers earning regular wages. Though little other systematic evidence exists, Guy Pfeffermann's data on Senegal shows that the major part of the proletariat's income is in fact given away to the periphery of spongers, hangers-on, job-seekers and the like who exact benefits by appealing to family or ethnic bonds.¹² If Pfeffermann's conclusions can be generalised, it makes little sense to talk of "wage earners" as being a pampered or "aristocratic" class (as writers with as varied a political complexion as Frantz Fanon and W. A. Lewis have claimed), unless we are to regard their privileges as those of a *noblesse oblige*. Douglas Rimmer, who uses this analogy, suggests further that in situations where the "privilege" of the wage-worker is contrasted unfavourably with the squalor of peasant life, the comparison is usually false in that even where rural money incomes can

be meaningfully gauged, difficulties arise because of wage earner's increased money commitments (rent, food, provision for relatives)."

The blood and situational ties of the proletariat to *déclassé* elements in the towns would also seem to question the view that in some sense the workers are exploiting the lower social strata. Indeed, in the African context the exploitative nature of class relationships is complex. If, for example, we accept the **Marxian** notion that the major facet of exploitation is the appropriation of labour power, the post-colonial states have the majority of their "oppressing classes" living outside their actual society. By this analysis local office-holders are, as it were, in the position of a holding company delegated by foreign interests to run the show on their behalf. Exploitation is then seen as being disguised and hidden — operating through remote control. Though naive and conspiratorial in its crudest forms, such an analysis does at least place the nature of the power of the ruling elites into the context of an international political system and economy. If neo-colonial theories are correct in underlining the circumscribed power of the local ruling elites, they also too easily lump together politicians who have a vastly different degree of maneuverability vis-a-vis foreign interests (which are themselves too often depicted as having a unilateral voice) and vastly different possibilities of asserting an autonomous interest.

Further, exploitative relationships have in Western theory often been considered as deriving from the nature of the propriety relationship — in Adam Smith's triad, the rent from land, the wages of labour and the profits from stock. In Africa, however, land rights are still predominantly held by villages and descent groups, the proletariat still retains some land rights and the bulk of profits are exported. Again whereas in Western political theory, the state is regarded as an agency for the control and maintenance of the proprietorial relationship²⁵, in African societies the post-colonial state was established to create and extend propriety rights, and only incidentally to defend already existing ones. This point can be reinforced by looking at two common features of the nationalist struggle. Firstly, the attraction that nationalist politics had for individuals who had no established social position or were threatened by the squeezes of the European oligopolies. Secondly, the hesitancy that those groups which already possessed propriety privileges — such as the Northern emirs in Nigeria, or the Creoles in Sierra Leone — expressed about their fortunes in the future order and their desire to retain the protective umbrella of the colonial administration. Karl Wittfogel's admonitions on the limitation of the propriety concept of class are particularly apposite in this context. According to this argument the propriety concept is only relevant to understanding "certain secondary aspects of power-based societies", but it

remains "altogether inadequate when it is used as the essential means of explaining" formations where strong independent private property does not prevail.²⁴ As in Wittfogel's Oriental Despotism, only small areas of African societies could be said to embrace a proprietorial relationship; while new relationships of this kind produced as a result of the possession of political and economic power have yet to mature.

To discern the structure of exploitation, one may suggest that firstly, a much greater concentration is needed on the particular relationship held to the means of distribution and exchange rather than to the means of production. Foreign-capitalised oil refineries, or cigarette, beer and plastic shoe factories hardly constitute a base for the development of a significant indigenous bourgeoisie; but the detailed study of a chain of distribution from large import-export houses, via local middleman to a host of small retail outlets would provide the beginning of an analysis of the structural effects of the neo-imperialist nexus.

Secondly, the role of the post-colonial state and its bureaucrats via such agencies as the Statutory Marketing Boards for various kinds of primary products, has hardly been investigated at all. International commodity prices may be controlled by London, Wall Street or the Bourse, but the difference between such prices and those offered to the farmers is often significant — and this provides one of the most important rake-offs for the political class. Thirdly, exploitative relationships in Africa often, perhaps predominantly, rest on the control of the means of production, distribution and exchange, rather than on ownership. To take but one example from the rural world. Many farmers are in a permanent condition of indebtedness to a patron or pledgee. Implements may be borrowed, seeds provided, help given with the harvest, cash loaned, lorries provided to help smuggle the products across the border or market the goods through the local or state mechanisms. In return for this help the pledged farmer usually guarantees a portion of his next year's produce, an agreed portion of his labour or even a continuing political fealty. This situation is superficially not very different from some forms of feudal or client relationships of a Latin American peasant, except for one crucial distinction: the land and its usufruct may remain unalienable, belonging ultimately only to the ancestors. What this example does illustrate, however, is that the potential for class development can exist even without private ownership, as long as the control mechanisms are sufficiently developed to approximate the sort of power that would in other contexts develop automatically from ownership.

¹ Far from there being any serious attention given to the structural consequences of such economic developments, the subtlety and complexity of social relationships has usually been downgraded by the

adoption of the simple expedient of contraposing the terms "elite" and "mass" to delineate salient social divisions. While the terminology is common to many writers, Peter Lloyd has used the distinction, while clearly recognising its limitations. As he points out² the term "elite" connotes a judgement on the extent to which the values of its members are socially desired and its claims as a positive reference group recognised. In this respect the evidence of popular feeling is mixed. On the one hand there exists what might be called "the Adam Clayton Powell syndrome" — i.e. a genuflection towards the rich, powerful or ostentatious borne out of social despair and which has its psychological explanation in the vicarious enjoyment that the unmobile derive from the achievements of the 'big men' who have made it. On the other hand "the masses" have been quick to join in the denunciations that have followed the removal of several incumbent leaderships, while the accumulated evidence of popular dissatisfaction (in the form of tax riots, general strikes and rebellions) can hardly be thought of as exhibiting acquiescence, let alone deference to the pretensions of the independence leadership.

Insofar, however, as imitability of the elite exists in some sections of the population the Weberian distinction between the forms of stratification resting on class identity and those resting on status might be thought relevant. On impressionistic evidence it would seem that status deprivation (seen in its African manifestations as say the refusal of some colonialists to accord black men equal human dignity, or, in a more contemporary context the consignment of some unfortunate aspirant to elite status to being in the category of 'bush') may indeed be as embittering a source of grievance as economic immiseration.

It is doubtful though whether such a general observation can be extended to a description of African societies as "status" rather than "class societies"; or that Weber's "status groups" (Stände are more literally status strata) can be uncritically used to segment African communities. Such an attempt has recently been made by Gavin Williams. After discussing several theoretical issues relating to class development, Williams, in his case study of Western Nigeria, trisects the population into the following status groups: "the bourgeoisie", "the urban masses" and the "rural masses". Williams allows that, "a common status identity and appreciation of common interests" is shown "less markedly" among the urban and rural masses, than among the bourgeoisie. Is this "less marked" consciousness *sufficient* to justify his aggregative labels? Williams himself seems uncertain as he finds it impossible to account for intra-group conflicts "by the very general analysis set out in this paper". On the other hand he considers that ". . . an adequate explanation of such conflicts would not . . . be incompatible with the analysis presented here".³

But, as has frequently been pointed out in the standard sociological literature, relationships between status groups are held to be those of competition and emulation, while those between classes are held to be conflictist. If we are to accept this difference as a basis for labelling, it becomes difficult to encompass the behaviour of African ruling groups *vis-à-vis* other social groups under the rubric of "competition".¹⁷ African leaders, like other rulers resting their power on an insecure economic base, attempt to control the life chances of others by preventing the distribution and reallocation of wealth. In this context it is important to distinguish not the tendency (which is general), but the methods employed to achieve these objectives — the last providing the major source of grievance. Here the full panoply of state power has been brought to bear — the soldiery used to suppress strikes and rebellions, the machinery of justice tampered with or circumvented, opponents banned, proscribed or imprisoned. Even where reallocation of wealth occurs, it almost invariably has some specific instrumental purpose — witness the buying of votes at election time when communal champions' consciences are suddenly struck by the lack of tarred roads, electric lights or health clinics in their home villages. Further, "status groups" are usually thought to imply a continuum of more or less clearly defined status positions. In situations of political fluidity or rapid economic changes, however, social assessments, together with their accompanying prestige evaluations, can be revised, modified or completely broken down. This is especially relevant in view of the opprobrium that is heaped on the heads of ousted politicians immediately after a coup *d'état* regardless of the apparent deference and respect that was accorded them while they held political office.

Despite the difficulties and ambiguities consequent on the utilisation of class concepts, it may be valid to consider that class and class consciousness have a partial manifestation that may be activated in certain conditions and in certain measure. The comparative infrequency of such manifestations and the problem of evaluating consciousness in a context where there are great cultural discrepancies in the translation of class terminologies, make the task of analysis all the more challenging. One has for example to discard almost in *toto* much contemporary stratification theory, not only because the predominant paradigms are North American in origin, but also because the gradualist or static assumptions that underlie many theories of stratification produce a mode of analysis which seems particularly unsuitable to areas where the fluidity of class relationships is the dominant motif. An evaluation of consciousness is equally fraught with difficulties. On the one hand there can be little doubt that "self-placement", attitudes and feelings towards class, can influence to some degree the nature of social relations by conditioning ideologies

and political programmes. As Stanislaw Ossowski has remarked, "An intellectual scheme that is rooted in the social consciousness may within certain limits withstand the test of reality".²⁰ On the other hand, the evaluation of class attitudes alone can be transformed into a *reductio ad absurdum* if all objective criteria for class placement are discarded. Large numbers of people are found to claim membership of classes to which by all reasonable standards they do not belong, while Oscar Glantz aptly remarks, such a limited approach can be regarded as a form of solipsism allowing an individual to recruit himself into a class by a process of psychological invention.²¹ If the assessment of consciousness provides difficulties, that of false consciousness is even more intractable, particularly if feelings of ethnic identity are in a blanket fashion assigned to this category. Though we do not by any means exclude the possibility and occasions when ethnicity is used as a deliberate contrivance to mask class conflict, in the analysis that follows, we do assign a certain independence to the ethnic factor.

4. Ethnicity, Social Class and Political Power

Power, class and ethnic relationships, are closely related in Africa; they can be treated separately only as an analytical distinction. The justification for initially so doing lies in the need to consider the relationships individually in order to identify the importance of each in the process of social differentiation and political change. In much of the literature on political development, national goals are thought to comprise the reduction or elimination of largely pre-existing cultural cleavages through modern associational forms, and the prevention of arresting of class differentiation through the progressive bridging of the elite-mass gap.²² Such a perspective can be mystifying, initially because it confuses aspirational and programmatic statements by African ruling groups (and the normative concerns of the academics themselves) with social reality, and secondly, because it separates what are thought to be equilibrating forces (the subsumption of cultural diversities) from forces making for change (popular participation). Here it is argued that both ethnic and class relationships affect, both mutually and singly, the possession, retention and distribution of power and that therefore both should be seen as aspects of stratification, in the sense that M. G. Smith defines stratification as "the principles that regulate the distribution of social advantage".²³ Further, both sets of relationship may frequently produce disequilibrating forces as the political actors attempt to influence the outcome of the struggle for "the distribution of social advantage". The very real congruence in the nature and effects of inter-class and inter-ethnic relationships, and as we shall see their interconnection, would seem to question the view that they are to be comprehended on two totally

discrete levels, usually described as "horizontal" and "vertical" social divisions. On the contrary we would argue that it is precisely this separation, seen in the work of the cultural pluralists and others, that leads to a marked perceptual distortion of societal stratification.

To turn to the variables affecting inter-ethnic stratification first. The vast differences in political influence which any one ethnic group (or more accurately its leaders) can bring to bear on the political process for the group's advantage, are apparent to any casual observer. But whatever picture of the balance of dominance and disability as between ethnic groups is envisaged, this, it should be stressed, can only have a temporary character, for any balance may be upset by the outcome of inter-group conflict. The reduced fortune of the Ibo of Nigeria is the most gruesome reminder of this. But political circumstances apart, there are some more permanent variables that may help determine the differential ranking between ethnic groups.

Firstly, the sheer size of the population (where this does not reach Malthusian proportions) and the extent of natural resources located in the living area may invoke marked disparities between groups, particularly where electoral or constitutional arrangements bring this factor into **prominence**.

Secondly, the acquisition of social skills within each group may be vastly different. Under this rubric may be included the degree of sophistication in the production of agricultural wealth (i.e. the existence of advanced methods of land **utilisation** or hydraulic engineering), and the extent of industrialisation and **commercialisation**. Of further importance is the adaptability or receptivity of the group concerned to alien forms of social control. It has, for example, been argued that those societies that had an acephalous structure and low degree of centralisation were more prone to adopt new social values and norms. Their movement **along** the Westernisation scale was easier as they did not have inhibitions of a traditional kind to deter them from accepting Western education — itself an important determinant of social mobility in the new colonial order.

Thirdly, a relationship of dominance and subservience may derive either from pre-colonial patterns of conquest (e.g. the Hutu and Tutsi or the Hausa and Fulani), or from an unequal division of labour where a particular ethnic group enjoys a monopoly of specialisation in a valued skill or trade.

Fourthly, differential patterns of recruitment in certain occupations often grew up in the colonial order. These had several manifestations some of which were derived from irrational colonial stereotypes which identified the "suitability" of certain groups **alone** for different types of labour. The Kru were thought good manual workers, the Tiv good soldiers, the Yoruba good clerks and so on. Other distinctions were

determined by the coincidental geographical proximity of various groups to the areas of European settlement and penetration. In its simplest variant, those on the coast stood a greater chance of changing their life circumstances and becoming integrated to a modern world than did those living in the hinterland.

Though the list of variables may differ slightly, it is considerations of this kind that determine the cultural pluralists' conception of "differential incorporation" i.e. the varying rates with which different segments enter the social, economic and political order. But within the political arena, it appears that the ranking system of ethnic groups has consequences for, and is simultaneously partly the consequence of, the distribution of political power. The struggle between ethnic groups can thus be pictured either as an attempt to maintain the competitive advantage of the highest ranking ethnic groups, or an attempt to displace the favoured groups by those of a lower rank. There are many instances in post-colonial Africa which demonstrate that possession of, or access to, political power can serve to overturn or cut across the other variables that determine ethnic group ranking.

But three reservations to our discussion must be borne in mind. One is that it may be some time before a reallocation of ethnic power at the political level takes effect in terms of the ratio of educated persons, the number of prized jobs, the extent of capital accumulation and other indices of increased ethnic status. Secondly, our description of inter-ethnic conflict has been over-simplified to the point where it appears that groups act collectively, as if with one voice. In practice this is far from the case. Customarily politicians enter into a transactional—almost mercenary—relationship with their followers under which leadership is confirmed in exchange for tangible favours; while between the leader and his followers there might be a whole range of brokers and fixers, i.e. essentially class actors, who interpret and cement the relationship while simultaneously taking their own cuts. It is also the case that consciousness of ethnic identity and its behavioural expression will vary considerably between different elements within each ethnic group. Thirdly, and finally, we must explicitly spell out the operations of the "external estate" in the creation of ethnic differentiation. The term "external estate" includes the following: the key foreign and commercial interests, the decolonising power, and other powers which have a strategic or economic interest in the country concerned. Thus far, our variables for the determination of ethnic group ranking have appeared fortuitous, almost accidental. This however is not always the case. Elements of the external estate may deliberately favour one particular group which it relies on to act in a pliant capacity. In the case of Northern Nigeria, for example, the British decolonisation imposed a constitutional settlement which favoured the Hausa-Fulani,

and helped them offset other disadvantages, like the low level of Western education. The North was accorded control of the post-colonial system through a constitutional formula that allowed population to determine the amount of seats in the new legislature (despite the fact that women in the North didn't have the vote). Other elements in the foreign estate may seek to identify more fruitful ethnic agents for the penetration of neo-imperialism. For example, in the case of the Ibo their "receptivity" to alien norms was often stressed, as was their cosmopolitan and petty bourgeois (or, in the behavioural parlance, "modernising") character.¹³

When the case of class differentiation is considered, the relationship of the social formation concerned to the external estate is of even greater importance in the arrangement of the internal social pyramid. This factor, taken together with the control or access to internal sources of political power help to define the nature and social character of the ruling classes (in particular), and prescribe limits to the more conventional indicators of class or status as well as to the inherited structure of traditional or sanctified authority.

According to this theoretical construct we enumerate five major "internal" variables which are thought to decisively influence the nature of the class structure and its internal relationships: (a) Possession of the means of legitimised violence and coercion (political rulers, armies); (b) Possession of inherited legitimacy (either, symbolically speaking, through the stool or the mace) and sufficiently political credit from the external estate; (c) Possession of the "manipulative skills of government" (these refer to skills in the Lasswellian sense), education, experience, and the more intangible "feel" for government; (d) Possession of the means of illegitimised violence (e.g. tax rioters, mutineers) or the capacity to disrupt the civic order (e.g. strikers); (e) Access to, or relationship with, groups that possess (a), (b), (c), or (d). (Claims of consanguinity, co-religion, co-ethnicity or clientage may here come to the fore.)

While these variables are considerably generalised, they do serve to stress the characteristic political nature of class differentiation. Unlike in the Western industrial societies wealth or status do not customarily precede power; rather power and status are isochronous, while wealth more often than not increases with power. The politicization of class relations is dependent both on the virtual absence of a proprietorial relationship and on the presence of a low resource base. The argument can be illustrated by taking the hyperbolic case of the late Dr. Duvalier's continued retention of power in Haiti. Here (as near as can be approximated in a real social formation) is demonstrated the hypothesis that pure power relationship follows on the politics of absolute scarcity.

African ruling groups have nowhere near reached this position, but they may be placed on a spectrum leading to the politics of absolute scarcity in that they attempt (with various degrees of intensity or success) to capture as much as can be got in the way of internal resources, without however having the capacity to capture everything. Partly as a cause, and partly as a consequence of their inability to milk the system completely, they find that their possession of the key variables (legitimised violence, manipulative skills, the support of the external estate, etc.) is uncertain and insufficient to secure their possession of permanent control. They may lose the support of the external estate and find themselves threatened or undermined from this source; or may not have the means to prevent the spread of manipulative skills. Indeed the loss of their monopoly in this area may be a trend impossible to arrest given that social mobilisation and education inevitably lead to the diversification of skills. Finally, the ruling groups, as the rash of *coups* has shown, have only a precarious hold on the means of legitimised violence; and even less capacity to suppress the means of illegitimised violence.

The major activity of the ruling groups is an attempt to use the benefits of political power in an attempt to redress the insecure position they find themselves in. This can be seen in more general terms as an "embourgeoisement" of the ruling elite. The mechanisms through which this is typically attempted **can** be briefly enumerated. The small commercial bourgeoisie (traders, transporters, and land speculators) together with professional elements (lawyers, doctors, etc.), is conscripted into, and fused with, the political and higher administrative elite. Mutual back-scratching exercises are inaugurated: banks are used to finance political parties (which can in this sense be considered limited companies); governmental contracts are appropriated or supplied to supporters where the claims of the external estate do not intrude. Wealth acquired from the holding of political office is used to acquire land, houses or small service industries. Public or semi-public corporations are set up some of which are rapidly transformed into little more than legalised syndicates of criminals.

The behaviour and activities of the ruling groups in office show their overt indebtedness to the political process as a means of developing class crystallisation and solidarity. For this reason we term them, with little originality, but perhaps less choice, *the political class*.¹⁰

The corrupt and self-seeking role of the political class was brutally exposed in the immediate post-independence years, such as when neo-imperialist powers themselves began to have serious doubts about the maintenance of an imperialist beachhead through this group. The pliant clients of the Nigerian political class, though not, say, their *Ivorian* counterparts, had turned into gangster capitalists. For the more

important components of the external estate the irrationality of the political class led to a fresh conceptualisation of how best to foster the neo-imperial order. Though some elements still cling to the notion of a "modernising military" (in the face of fairly general evidence that the military are no more successful in promoting "development" than their civilian counterparts), a more important strand in academic and foreign policy circles emphasises the building up of a managerial sector of the economy, freed to as great an extent as possible of the constraints of internal political factors.

Such an ideological conversion, has in origin more deep-seated roots in that the increasingly international division of labour and the development of a world-wide mass market, point, as the African Research Group notes¹¹, to the passing from an age of raw material exploitation to an age of "human resource development". In academic and theoretical terms the idea of human resource development reaches back into the very heart of behavioural science with its stress on the manipulability of human beings. In the context of a post-colonial state, the patterns of aid, investment, the drawing up of "national" plans by foreign agencies, as well as the whole panoply of more insidious influences — cultural exchanges, training schemes, the operations of USAID, can all be thought of as representing the shift from neo-colonialism, towards a more rational system of exploitation, namely that of neo-imperialism. The group that is produced and gains importance as a result of this transition is what we designate *the intendant class*, a term designed to illustrate the group's service function. It includes state functionaries, middle-level bureaucrats and supervisory personnel. Though partly organised by the trade unions, in for example, the various Civil Service Associations, this group has a peculiarly conservative character in that it includes people who are structurally linked to the *status quo* in a much more rigid sense than the working class proper in that their primary function is to service the state apparatus and the interests of the external estate. Though their structural link with the "social organisation of consumption"¹² does not exclude their acting occasionally in harness with other organised labour, their interests are ultimately linked to the viability of the state in its present form. Such disagreements as the intendant class has with the political class relate not merely to the unfair expropriation of wealth by the last group, but also to differences of attitude with regard to the adoption of legal-rational demands, efficiency, meritocracy and other standards of social behaviour derived from external models. The intendant class owes its social character to its training — in public administration, organisation theory, managerial techniques — acquired in Western educational institutions or local institutions heavily influenced by Western standards. Paradoxically

cally, the intendant class while holding to formal legal rational demands acts as a parasitical class, creaming off the resources of the state without having much in the way of increased national production to show in return. Though its parasitical character has to some extent been concealed by the partial acceptance of family and kinship obligations (it acts partly therefore as a network for the distribution of wealth), theoretically, as its corporate interests become clearer, its free-loading character will become more apparent.

Below the intendant class in social rank we identify a *working class*, defined not simply in terms of the statistician's occupational categories, but also in terms of a history of organisation, the recourse to class action in the form of strikes and the quest for a political identity in the form of independent political organisation, or alliance or conflict with the political class. To document and plot the formation of this class historically, and comparatively, is a task beyond our present objectives, but it can be noted in passing that independent class action by African workers was undertaken at the very earliest stages of the growth of a wage-earning and servitor sector.¹⁴ This is not to say that the worker's identity may not be mediated by the recognition of his traditional obligations, his ethnic allegiance or the system of political patronage. These, and other factors constantly inhibit class crystallisation, yet when time and occasion have demanded it, workers have demonstrated a solidarity that has cut across ethnic, regional or religious barriers. That workers have time and again demonstrated that they have the *capacity* for undertaking class action, is in itself a justification for the use of class analysis.

Thus far we have discussed only the political, intendant and working classes and mentioned only casually the beginnings of social differentiation in other sectors of African societies. Our treatment has been limited partly by reasons of space, and partly because we wished to point to the particular saliency of these classes: we would emphasize, however, that the use of class analysis is not restricted to the examination of these particular groups, but on the contrary may, in our view be fruitfully adopted wherever the researcher perceives a class-based act (see concluding section).

It was stressed earlier that ethnic stratification and class differentiation were not viewed as totally discrete processes; both are intimately related to each other and to the concentration and distribution of political power. The inter-connections between the two forms of stratification may be thought to comprise four variants. Firstly there exist situations where the ranking or position along both class and ethnic hierarchies is co-incident, i.e. where differential incorporation is neatly paralleled by divisions of skill or status.

Secondly, a situation of conflict between class and ethnic member-

ship, where ethnic identity predominates. Two particular strata may be identified as likely to have a conflict outcome of this nature; the lower echelons of the political class, where electoral systems obtained, found that they had constantly to take cognisance of their basis of electoral support, which was essentially ethnic in character; and the intendant classes, within which the institutional legal-rational demands, including meritocratic principles, were constantly in conflict with traditional systems of reciprocity. This led to large-scale corruption and nepotism in appointments and the distribution of favours and rewards in favour of kinsmen and relatives. (Rarely was the system judged immoral by the participants who merely saw themselves as returning favours to kinsmen who had supported them, often by scholarships, etc., in the past.)

Thirdly, a situation of conflict between class and ethnic membership where class identity predominates. This situation assumes a poly-ethnic stratum linked by economic or other ties which characteristically vitiate the attractiveness of ethnic sentiment. The strata in which this outcome is most likely to occur are the political and the working classes.

Finally, there are many situations where a conflict between class and ethnic membership is unresolved, or could go either way depending on political and social circumstance. This is probably the most common pattern of interaction, and one that is compatible with the national ideological, institutional, economic and occupational restraints on the expression of overt ethnic consciousness on the one hand, and on our view of the development of class consciousness as an incomplete and irregular process on the other. Thus to take the example of a worker, sometimes traditional obligations, external inter-ethnic conflict or the system of patronage may impel him to act against his class interest (whether perceived or not), sometimes his work situation, the primacy of his class identity or the realisation of his bargaining power may impel him to act in defence of his class interest. Such variegated responses can be replicated throughout the social structure—it would need detailed empirical work to assess the particular "mix" involved in any one situation.

We conclude, however, by reasserting our view that class and ethnicity must be considered together, as a bundle of intersecting and **interrelated** relationships the most "dynamic" (in the sense of introducing the greatest range of variation) of which are connected with the possession and distribution of political power. One caveat should be noted. Our discussion has tended to concentrate on the state as a forum for competition within which ethnic and class groupings are stratified with respect to their positions of dominance and disability. This has tended to disregard the nature of the class structure *within*

each ethnic group, and to pay only scant attention to inter-ethnic hostility within each class. The national focus that has been employed does not however mean that these localised relationships are considered unimportant.

5. *Towards a Minimalist Class Definition: Some Concluding Remarks*

In reading the literature on class in Africa, one cannot but be impressed by the number of categorical sentiments expressed on the basis of little or no empirical work.¹⁷ Classes are said to exist, or not to exist, almost as if their presence or absence vanished at the whim of the researcher. Of sounder intellectual design, it seems to us, is the notion and manifestations of class *formation*, and class *action*. It would seem to be an elusive, if not impossible quest to fix a point in time when classes suddenly acquire a rigid and sharp definition (i.e. in the sense of a photograph).

We have argued that class and class consciousness have a partial manifestation which may be activated in certain conditions and in certain measure. The research problem is to identify what these conditions are and what social forces act to induce class conflict. Contrary to received conventional wisdom the extent of social differentiation in Africa is considerable; it is present in some form or another in nearly all traditional societies, it was modified and assumed new forms as a result of the foreign incursion, it is seen clearly in the social and economic distinctions of the post-colonial state. An attempt has been made to sketch the features of the major contemporary classes, to describe their origins and their essential character. But the political, intendant and working classes are not the only social formations we consider viable or even ultimately the most important. They represent simply the most visible and permanent classes; though even then, not yet totally crystallised formations. In other sectors of the society, including the rural world, incipient or latent class development has already shown that class activity is by no means to be excluded from this area. Here and there, in the revolt in the Congo, in the activities of the liberation movement of Guinéé-Bissau, in the tax riots of Western Nigeria, the immense revolutionary potential of the peasantry has been revealed, as a foretoken of what yet may come. In order to evaluate in even the most simple sense a strike, a peasant riot or other expressions of class action, it is necessary to develop an analysis of class relevant to African conditions. In this respect we would make a plea for a minimalist definition of class; one that recognises the incomplete and embryonic character of class formation and development on the one hand, but that nonetheless attempts to derive a meaningful frame of reference for explaining a class-based act, on the other. We may thus recognise the relative infrequency and ephemeral-

ity of overt class action, but also be careful to acknowledge the existence of such acts and not underestimate their political significance. Besides, surface manifestations of ethnic conflict, have as we have tried to show, somewhat of a deceptive appearance, the very nature of ethnic interaction often being dependent on economic differentiation or linked intimately to struggles more obviously located in the material conditions of life.

Having said that, however, it must be conceded that the continuing expression and organisation of political life around ethnic categories have inhibited or mediated to a great extent the emergence of "pure" social formations. It is of little use lumping all the mediating factors together under the rubric of "false consciousness". Such a dogmatic Marxism would lead to a form of academic reification so removed from the perceived and expressed reality of the African political process, that it would approximate in rigidity a scheme which would have us sublimate all forms of social conflict to the slogan of cultural pluralism.

NOTES

1. J. Nyerere Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism, OUP 1968, p11.
2. Senghor considers that from a study of African **civilisation**, "We would learn that Negro-African society is collectivist or, more exactly, communal, because it is rather a communion of souls than an aggregate of individuals. We would learn that we had already achieved socialism before the coming of the European. We would conclude that our duty is to renew it by helping it to regain its spiritual dimensions". L. S. Senghor, *On African Socialism*, Praeger, 1964, p49.
3. I. Kopytoff, "Socialism and Traditional African Societies" in W. H. Friedland and C. G. Rosberg, *African Socialism*, Stanford University Press and OUP, 1964, p55.
4. On slavery in Benin see R. E. Bradbury, *The Benin Kingdom and the Edo-Speaking Peoples of Southwestern Nigeria*, London: International African Institute, 1957. On Tutsi-Hutu relations see J. J. Maquet, *The Premise of Inequality in Ruanda*, London: OUP, 1961. On Swazi society see H. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, London: OUP, 1957. In Ethiopia the Amhara theocracy rested its ascendancy also on extensive landholding. See D. N. Levine, "Class Consciousness and Class Solidarity in the New Ethiopian elites" in P. C. Lloyd (Ed.) *The New Elites of Tropical Africa*, pp 312-315.
5. I. L. Markovitz, *Leopold Sedar Senghor and the Politics of Negritude*, London: Heinemann, 1969, pp. 139,140.
6. The contributors to a volume on social stratification in Africa have described stratification in Ruanda and amongst the Zande, Agni, Herero and Bamileke. Academia Praha, *Social Stratification in Tribal Africa*, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Prague, 1968. With regard to governmental hierarchies, Peter Lloyd has argued that even considering African kingdoms alone his data suggests, "that there is a wider range in traditional African political systems than exists today among the industrialised nations . . ." P. C. Lloyd, "The Political Structure of African Kingdoms"

- in M. Banton (Ed.) *Political Systems and the Distribution of Power*, A. S. A. Monographs 2, London, Tavistock Publications, 1965, p 108.
7. C. S. Whittaker, *The Politics of Tradition*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.
 8. I. L. Markowitz, Leopold Sedar Senghor . . . p15. A more substantial contribution in this area by the same author is to be found in "Traditional Social Structure, the Islamic Brotherhoods, and Political Development in Senegal", *Journal of Modern African Studies* 8(1) April, 1970.
 9. J. Lombard, Structures de *Type* 'Feudal' in *Afrique Noire*, Paris and The Hague: Mouton.
 10. Richard L. Sklar, "Political Science and National Integration: A Radical Approach", *Journal of Modern African Studies* 5 (1), 1967.
 11. See Leo Kuper and M. G. Smith, *Pluralism in Africa*, London: University of California Press, 1971, Chapter 1, for a basic exposition. For an indication of disagreement with the dichotomous presentation of "consensus" and "conflictist" pluralisms see *ibid* p10 (footnote).
 12. Cited in Leo Kuper and M. G. Smith, *Pluralism in Africa*, pp10, 11.
 13. Leo Kuper and M. G. Smith, *Pluralism in Africa*, pp482, 3.
 14. Primarily "foreign" connotes "European". However, the term also includes "Asian" or "European-aoculturated". Thus it includes *Americo-Liberians*, Creoles, Yoruba Brazilians, etc.
 15. E. J. Alagoa, *The Small Brave City-State*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1964.
 16. Arthur T. Porter, *Creoledom*, OUP, 1963, p137.
 17. M. L. Kilson, "Nationalism and Social Classes in British West Africa", *Journal of Politics*, 20(2), May 1958, pp374, 5.
 18. G. Arrighi and J. S. Saul "Nationalism and Revolution in Sub-Saharan Africa" in R. Miliband and J. Saville (Eds.) *The Socialist Register*, London: Merlin Press, 1969, p158.
 19. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoléon*, Chicago: Charles Kerr and Co., 1919, p83.
 20. N. Bukharin, *Historical Materialism: A System of Sociology*, New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1965, pp282-285. It is perhaps worth pointing out too, that Marx abandoned the simple dichotomous picture of two classes even in his analysis of "the most classical" and "furthest advanced" of societies, England, where "intermediate and transitional stages obliterate the borderlines there as everywhere". *Capital*, Vol. III, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1962, p421 (My thanks to Ken Post for this reference).
 21. G. Pfeffermann, *Industrial Labour in Senegal*, Praeger, 1968, p170.
 22. Douglas Rimmer, *Wage Politics*, Occasional Paper, Faculty of Commerce and Social Science, University of Birmingham, 1970.
 23. In Adam Smith's words: "Till there be property there can be no government, the very end of which is to secure wealth and to defend the rich from the poor". Cited in K. A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism*, Yale University Press, 1963, p301 . . . Marx's view that the state is simply an executive of the bourgeoisie is well known, but similar sentiments can be found in less revolutionary thinkers. Hobbes for example argues: "Every man has indeed a Propriety that excludes the Right of every other subject: And he has it only from the Sovereign Power: without the protection whereof, every other man should have equal Right to the same." *Hobbes's Leviathan*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1909, pp250, 251.
 24. Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism* . . . p302.
 25. Peter Lloyd, *The New Elites* . . . pp61, 62.
 26. G. Williams, "The Social Stratification of a Neo-Colonial Economy:

- Western Nigeria", in C. Allen and R. W. Johnson (Eds.) *African Perspectives*, Cambridge, 1970.
27. Unless we are to accept the very wide ranging definition that Weber himself accords the word. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society: an Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, edited by G. Roth and C. Wittich, New York: Bedminster Press, 1968, Vol. I, p38.
 28. S. Ossowski, *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963, p38.
 29. O. Glantz, "Class Consciousness and Political Solidarity", *American Sociological Review*, 1955, p376.
 30. See e.g. James Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa*, University of California Press, 1964, pp8, 9. For a Marxist view which holds to much the same assumptions see R. Ledda, "Social Classes and Political Struggle", *International Socialist Journal* 4(2), August 1957, p570.
 31. M. G. Smith, "Pre-industrial Stratification Systems", in N. Smelser and S. Lipset (Eds.), *Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development*, Chicago, 1966, p142.
 32. S. Ottenberg, "Ibo Receptivity to Change", in W. R. Bascom and M. J. Herskovitz (Eds.), *Continuity and Change in African Cultures*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1959, pp130-143.
 33. One of the difficulties in terminology selection is to disregard the accretion of meaning that attaches to a particular term. For James O'Connell the political class comprises in Nigeria the first-on-the-scene nationalist leaders, professions and businessmen, communal champions and local opinion leaders. "The Political Class and Economic Growth", *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies* 8 (1), March, 1966. We exclude the last category, and include military elites and conjoint rule by bureaucratic and military elites, the "bureaumilocracy").
 34. Africa Research Group, *The Other Side of Nigeria's Civil War*, Cambridge, Mass., April 1970. cf. also the ARG's discussion of Nigeria's middle class, the group we later designate the intendant class.
 25. *Ibid.* p6.
 36. See Arnold Hughes and Robin Cohen *Towards the Emergence of a Nigerian Working Class: The Social Identity of the Lagos Labour Force 1897-1939*, Occasional Paper, Faculty of Commerce and Social Science, University of Birmingham, Series D, No. 7. November 1971. My thanks go to my co-author for allowing me to quote a couple of paragraphs from this source in the present essay.
 37. A statement which applies equally to this essay, though hopefully not to the author's thesis, *The Role of Organised Labour in the Nigerian Political Process*, Ph.D., University of Birmingham, July 1971.

