PEASANT CLASSES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA:
AN INTERPRETATION

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an interpretation of the controversial question of peasant class formation in sub-Saharan Africa. While the long dominance of the functional school of anthropology has resulted in a virtual monopoly of interpretation in studies of African social stratification in favour of tribalism and ethnicity, this thesis suggests, through an attempt to apply in overview the influential definitions of peasants advanced by Kroeber, Redfield and Wolf, that in the age of colonialism and neo-colonialism sub-Saharan African societies may be meaningfully analyzed in terms of the existence of a non-homogeneous peasant class generically similar to that found in pre-industrial Europe, Latin America and Asia.

Briefly summarized, the argument and interpretation presented here is, first, that Redfield's definition of peasants which stresses a societal distinction between a cultural "Great Tradition" and a peasant "Little Tradition" applies to sub-Saharan Africa insofar as colonialism and the subsequent post-colonial developments have created a new African bourgeoisie which is differentiated from the peasantry on the basis of such objective criteria as income, education, conspicuous consumption and the assimilation of "Western" cultural norms. Far from withering away with the
demise of colonialism in Africa, the process of decolonization and Africanization has greatly strengthened this new class, which may be best described as a state bourgeoisie, internally differentiated into political, military and bureaucratic class categories. Second, Wolf's definition of peasants, which emphasizes the criteria of sociopolitical oppression and economic exploitation resulting in the production of a fund of "rent" through the extraction of peasant labour-power by a group of dominant rulers, has also been found to apply to colonial and post-colonial Africa. Examined under the heading of three class fractions of this non-homogeneous class, a typology based in part on Barnett's model of three types of African peasantries, it is argued that the economic surpluses of African cultivators have indeed been extracted by a group of dominant national and international rulers in the form of peasant labour-power, often forcibly supplied at a price below the cost of its social and biological production. As this thesis attempts to show, the participation of the marginal-subsistence, labour-exporting and cash-cropping fractions of the African peasantry has been a key variable in the process of capital accumulation for all those exercising in Wolf's terms "asymmetrical power relations" over this class: colonial governments, metropolitan firms operating in Africa, white settler communities engaged in mining and capitalist
agriculture and, later, the post-colonial African state bourgeoisie.
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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the question of peasant class formation in sub-Saharan Africa. Specifically, the thesis will argue that social stratification in sub-Saharan Africa may be meaningfully analyzed in terms of the existence of a peasant class generically similar to that described in social science literature on Latin America, Asia and pre-industrial Europe.

At the outset it should be noted that the study of peasant classes is a recent development in the field of African social stratification. Long dominated by the functional school of anthropology, the academic "charter group" in African studies, most students of stratification in sub-Saharan Africa have tended to utilize the existing anthropological framework of tribalism or, more recently, ethnicity, rather than class. Indeed, it may be argued that this dominance of anthropology, with its primary emphasis on isolated tribal peoples, has resulted in a virtual monopoly of interpretation through the neglect of peasant classes as an alternate approach to African social stratification. Certainly, the case may be made that this disciplinary bias of anthropology has, until very recently, contributed to the underdevelopment of the study of peasant classes in developing societies.\(^1\) Another factor which in part explains the

\(^1\)As Geertz has pointed out, the emphasis in anthro-
neglect of African peasant classes, and one which has contributed to what Wallerstein has termed the "shaky history" of class analysis in contemporary Africa,\(^2\) has been the tendency for European and North American writers to mechanically examine African social stratification in terms of the same classes and groups which are thought to have provided the impetus for social change and modernization in Europe. In this process of academic ethnocentrism, the peasantry—considered in terms of the modern European experience to be a feudal or "traditional" vestige, burdened with conservatism—is largely ignored in favor of the embryonic "Westernized" or "modernizing" middle and working classes, which receive the bulk of analytical attention. Ironically, it has been the Marxist writers who have shown the greatest inclination to engage in this type of sterile exegesis by mechanically examining the African proletariat as a source of revolutionary politics, despite the fact that in sub-Saharan Africa the working class, defined as those employed in manufacturing industries, ranges from 0.2 per

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3 cent of the total active labour force in Nigeria to 1.1 per cent in Ghana. Needless to say, since Marx and Engels associated the peasantry with the "idiocy of rural life", the peasantry has not been an important area of concern in much orthodox Marxist writing on Africa.

Nevertheless, in recent years there has been a dramatic shift in social science interest in peasant classes in developing societies. To a very large extent this shift may be attributed to the important reappraisal of revolutionary Marxism since the Second World War, which in turn may be traced to the slow realization that revolution has not occurred, as Marx predicted, in the highly developed

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3This data is taken from Ann Seidman, Planning for Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (New York: Praeger, 1974), 68, Table 10. For an example of this type of analysis, see Romano Ledda, "Social Classes and Political Struggle," International Socialist Journal, no. 22 (August, 1967), 560-580.


5The main thrust of Marx's writing was that revolution would occur out of the contradictions in advanced capitalist society, and David Mitrany is quite correct in arguing that on the basis of published materials "...Communism has only come to power were by all Marxist tenets it might have been least expected that it could", Marx Against the Peasant: A Study in Social Dogmatism (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1951), 205. One cannot push this point too far, however, since there are indications that Marx, late in life, supported the Narodniks who believed that the Russian village community could provide the basis of a transition to socialism without prior disintegration through capitalist development. It is interesting here that this view was not accepted by the Russian Marxists, who were apparently aware of Marx's departure from his earlier writings. See E. J.
industrial societies. On the contrary, aside from the sporadic revolts in Europe during the early years of the century and the brief surge of radicalism during the 1960's, all major revolutions since the death of Marx have occurred in predominantly agricultural, peasant-based societies. At the same time, the continued development of capitalism in Western Europe and North America has resulted in the progressive decline of militant class consciousness with possible revolutionary implications, as the proletariat has been incorporated into capitalist democracy by increasing levels of affluence. While these developments in Europe and North America have undermined the proposition that the continued development of capitalist productive forces will


6 Specifically, the German and Italian factory councils of 1918-1919 and the student movements in France and West Germany of the 1960's.

7 It might be argued that the exception to this was the Yugoslav revolution. However, the Yugoslav revolution, much like the Cuban revolution, began with a base in the mountains and, according to Djilas, relied on the revolutionary role of the peasantry. See Milovan Djilas, Conversations With Stalin, trans. Michael B. Petrovich (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962), 30.

8 Most Marxist writers are still unwilling to acknowledge that the proletariat is not a revolutionary class in advanced capitalist society. Two notable exceptions are C. Wright Mills, The Marxists (New York: Dell Publishers, 1962), especially 128, 468-469, and Paul M. Sweezy, "The Proletariat in Today's World," Tricontinental 9 (1968), 23-33, who both argue essentially that the peasantry is the new revolutionary class in the twentieth century.
inevitably lead to proletarian revolution, the victory of Mao Tse-tung in China has more directly lead to the basic revision of the Marxist theory of revolution. While Mao continued to acknowledge the importance of the leading role of the proletariat as the revolutionary vanguard in his theoretical works on Marxism, it is important to note that as a practitioner of revolution Mao acted on the premise that in China the peasants must lead. Indeed, as early as 1927 Mao stated that not only would the Chinese revolution be based on the peasantry, but that the peasantry would alone dictate its course. Further, this reversal of orthodox Marxism in practice, strengthened by the success of the Algerian, Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions, has been helped along the road to becoming a new orthodoxy by a school of revolutionary writers who emphasis and even romanticize the role of the peasantry in the "non-white" world as the prime mover of global revolution. Two notable examples of this new literary genre are Jean-Paul Sartre.


10This is not to imply that the Maoist model was necessarily consciously followed as such. In Cuba, for example, Guevara claims that "The popular forces, without knowing these manuals of strategy and tactics on guerrilla war beforehand, written in China, carried on our guerrilla war in a similar manner". Ernesto Guevara, Che: Selected Works of Ernesto Guevara, eds. Rolando E. Bonachea and Nelson P. Valdes (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), 249.

and Frantz Fanon, who has stated that "... it is clear that in colonial countries the peasants alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain".\(^{12}\)

With the peasantry now proclaimed as the new revolutionary class in the so-called Third World, an issue of both applied and theoretical significance, the reexamination of African social stratification takes on considerable importance. This is particularly so in sub-Saharan Africa, which has not received the same intensive analysis of peasant classes,\(^{13}\) and where, consequently, the debate is very much still in the formative stage. To attempt to make a contribution to the reappraisal of African social stratification in favour of peasant classes, this thesis will devote some effort to an examination of some prevalent definitions of the peasantry developed from the study of other continents, and the way they may be said to apply to sub-Saharan Africa. Before beginning the discussion of peasant classes in sub-Saharan Africa, however, brief mention should be made of the limitations of the present undertaking. Due to the restrictions of space and time, to say nothing of the

\(^{12}\)Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, 61.

complexity and vastness of the subject, no attempt has been made to present a "definitive statement" on the existence of peasant classes in sub-Saharan Africa. Rather, this thesis presents an argument and interpretation which departs somewhat from established ways of studying African social stratification.
Social class, as Schumpeter has observed, "... is a creation of the researcher [and] owes its existence to his organizing touch"). While Schumpeter's observation may for some introduce an unwanted element of relativism to the study of class, his point is nevertheless cogent for the study of peasant classes in sub-Saharan Africa, and raises the necessity to undertake a preliminary examination of some contemporary definitions of the peasantry. For it may be contended that classical nineteenth century European social analysis provides few useful guidlelines for the study of an agricultural class such as the peasantry which may be applied to sub-Saharan Africa. Tönnies, for example, like many of his contemporaries, tended to view the peasantry through the conceptual prism of ideal-type analysis and saw essentially an idyllic rural aggregate which he defined largely by contrast with what he considered its antithesis, the gesellschaft or modern capitalist society. Although lacking Tönnies' sentimental attachment to the rural gemeinschaft, Marx's analysis of the peasantry tended to use

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a similar approach. For Marx, who was not concerned with the internal dynamics of pre-capitalist systems except in so far as they explain the preconditions of capitalism, the peasantry was also defined in terms of an implicit contrast with the criteria of class formation which he ascribed to the proletariat:

In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organization among them, they do not form a class.

If the Western ethnocentrism of classical European sociology provides few useful guidelines for a definition of the peasantry which may be applied to the case of sub-Saharan Africa, the modern social sciences have not done much better, aside from adding greatly to the sheer bulk of material written on peasants. As Shanin has commented, "in view of the large number of peasant studies already in existence, there is something amusing, if not grotesque, in the failure of scholars to reach general agreement even on the very existence of the topic under consideration, i.e. of peasantry as a valid concept representing a real social

16Hobsbawm, Introduction to *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, 43.

entity".\(^{18}\) At the very least, a survey of the literature would indicate, as Mintz has disparagingly noted, that there ". . . has been a persisting lack of consensus among scholars about the definition of the peasantry".\(^{19}\)

Given this lack of consensus, this thesis will only undertake to briefly survey some of the major anthropological attempts to define the peasantry which may be useful for an analysis of sub-Saharan Africa. In overview it may be said that the anthropological approach to the peasantry has been essentially the reverse of that used by classical European theorists like Tönnies and Marx. Whereas the latter tended to view the peasantry through the conceptual prism of the \textit{gesellschaft} or advanced capitalism, the anthropological approach views the peasantry through the prism of the isolated tribe. Thus one finds that Kroeber's definition of the peasantry, which has served as the point of departure for most subsequent inquires, states that while tribal culture belongs to a small, isolated, close-knit society,

Peasants are definitely rural--yet live in relation to market towns; they form a class segment of a larger population which usually contains also urban centers, sometimes metropolitan capitals. They constitute part-societies with part-cultures. They lack the isolation, the political autonomy, and the self-

\(^{18}\)Teodor Shanin, "Peasantry: Delineation of a Sociological Concept and a Field of Study," \textit{Archives Européennes de Sociologie} XII (1972), 290.

sufficiency of tribal populations; but their local units retain much of their old identity, integration, and attachment to the soils and cults. 20

Following Kroeber's lead, many students have utilized and elaborated on the approach to the peasantry as a part-society with a part-culture. Among the more important, Redfield has focused on this approach in terms of peasant culture, which he sees as being expressed in the division between a "Great Tradition" and a "Little Tradition", 21 which is essentially the distinction between the level of the "enlightened" elite and high priests of education and religion and the level of the illiterate rural cultivators. While the "Little Tradition" represents the peasantry, it cannot be studied, according to Redfield, without reference to the "Great Tradition", since the culture of the peasant is but a reflection of elite culture and is maintained only with continual interaction and communication between the two. 22 For Redfield, then, the essential problem for the study of the peasantry is the relationship between the elite and peasant, 23 and the chief criteria for a definition of the


peasantry is the symbiotic relationship between the two.

While Kroeber and Redfield stress the structural relationship between peasants and the larger society in their definitions, another approach has been to define the peasantry in terms of power relationships. Here Wittfogel, perhaps the main adherent of this view, defines class relations in terms of access to the privilege of power. As he expresses it, "The masters and beneficiaries of the state, the rulers, constitute a class different from, and superior to, the masses of the commoners—those who, although personally free, do not share the privileges of power". 24

Another student who has utilized power relationships as a key to peasant society is Foster, who contends that "... what is most peasant about peasants ... [is that] throughout history they have been oppressed and repressed". 25

Based on this characteristic of peasant powerlessness in the face of an oppressive and repressive relationship with the larger society of which they are a part, Foster has extrapolated a model of peasant society which he has called the "Image of Limited Good". While this model has been rightly criticized for being little more than a restatement of an


economic truism which applies to all human societies, Foster's "Image of Limited Good" assumes that in peasant society the total universe is viewed as one in which all of the desired things in life such as land, wealth, health, friendship and love, manliness and honour, respect and status, power and influence, security and safety, exist in finite quantity only and are always in short supply as far as the peasant is concerned. Further, according to Foster, not only do these and all other "good things" exist in finite quantities, but in addition there is no way directly within peasant power to increase the available quantities. As a result the peasantry is, according to Foster, essentially conservative, although it is a conservatism born of oppression and repression by the larger society. As Foster says:

The truncated political nature of peasant societies, with real power lying outside the community, seems effectively to discourage local assumption and exercise of power, except as an agent of these outside forces. By the very nature of the peasant society, seen as a structural part of a larger society, local development of leadership which might make possible cooperation is effectively prevented by the rulers of the political unit of which a particular peasant community is an element, who see such action as a potential threat to themselves.

While Redfield, Wittfogel, Foster and others have


28 Ibid., 311.
emphasized different aspects of the peasantry as a part-society with a part-culture, as a class segment of a larger society, the work of Eric Wolf represents at least a partial synthesis of the various approaches within a broader framework which is particularly useful here. For Wolf, the key criteria for a definition of the peasantry is both economic exploitation and sociopolitical oppression by the larger society. Peasants, as Wolf comments, "... are rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers that uses the surpluses both to underwrite its own standard of living and to distribute the remainder to groups in society that do not farm but must be fed for their specific goods and services in turn". In further elaboration of this point, Wolf notes:

This peasant ... [is] subject to asymmetrical power relations which make a permanent charge on his production. Such a charge, paid out as the result of some superior claim to his labor on the land, we call rent, regardless of whether that rent is paid in labor, in produce, or in money. Where someone exercises an effective superior power, or domain, over a cultivator, the cultivator must produce a fund of rent. It is this production of a fund of rent which critically distinguishes the peasant from the primitive cultivator.

It may be said that Wolf's definition, based on both economic and sociopolitical criteria, is an improvement on previous


\(^{30}\) Ibid., 9-10 (emphasis in original).
rather static definitions of Kroeber, Redfield and Foster in so far as it emphasizes that peasants are created by the interaction with the larger society. Moreover, for Wolf the larger society is not defined as narrowly as Redfield's "Great Tradition" which stresses the existence of old civilizations, but includes the relations of peasants with outside markets which are a part of the world economy. As he points out for Latin America, "historically, the open peasant community arose in response to the rising demand for cash crops which accompanied the development of capitalism in Europe".

With the above brief survey of some of the more influential definitions of the peasantry in mind, it is possible to attempt to determine the extent to which they apply to sub-Saharan Africa. At the outset it is well to acknowledge that a number of writers have argued that the term "peasant" applies to this part of Africa only in a marginal sense. To a large extent these arguments are


based on or are strongly influenced by the seminal article by Lloyd Fallers which has concluded that at best African cultivators could be called "proto-peasants" or "incipient peasants".\(^{34}\) While it may be objected that this article has been superceded by a later and more comprehensive work,\(^{35}\) which amends Fallers' argument presented here in that it enlarges the analysis to include some discussion of colonial and post-colonial Africa,\(^{36}\) it is nevertheless important to critique his earlier and admittedly less sophisticated work since this article has frequently been cited, partly by virtue of being included in a widely read collection of essays on peasant society, in support of the view that a peasantry does not fully exist in Africa, while the later essay has, in comparison, remained somewhat obscure. In any case, the main thrust of Fallers' early argument that a peasantry of the type familiar in Latin America, Europe and Asia does not exist in Africa is his interpretation of Kroeber and, more specifically, Redfield's formula of the peasantry as a part-society with a part-culture. Here Fallers contends that this notion of semi-autonomy of

\(^{34}\) Lloyd A. Fallers, "Are African Cultivators to be Called 'Peasants'?" in *Peasant Society*, ed. Potter et al., 35-41.


\(^{36}\) Ibid., especially 180, 202-204, 216-218.
constituent local communities, which is seen as the main characteristic differentiating peasants from tribesmen, may be separately analyzed in three categories: the economic, the political, and the cultural. Of the three categories, Fallers sees the cultural dimension—which is simply a restatement of Redfield's distinction between the "Great Tradition" and the "Little Tradition"—as presenting most difficulty for the argument that a recognizable peasantry exists in Africa. As Fallers puts it:

Now it would seem to be just the relative absence of this differentiation into high and folk cultures which principally distinguishes the African kingdoms from the societies which have commonly been called 'peasant'. There is, of course, a substantial degree of cultural differentiation in many African societies. Nevertheless, there remains an important difference between trans-Saharan pagan Africa in these respects and the differentiation which was possible in medieval Europe, China, India and Islam. The word 'peasants' denotes, among other things, a degree of rusticity in comparison with his betters which we do not feel justified in attributing the the African villagers.

The problem with Fallers' interpretation in this important article, however, is that it ignores the fact of European colonization and the impact it has had on sub-Saharan African society. For while it may be accurate to say that in most pre-colonial African kingdoms, which represented a degree of stratification untypical of many African tribal societies, there was little or no perception

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37 Fallers, "Are African Cultivators to be Called 'Peasants'?" 37.
38 Ibid., 39.
of superiority and inferiority between the indigenous rulers and the ruled, the penetration of the African continent by the colonial powers has established a cultural "Great Tradition" in the form of European education, religion and conspicuous consumption which has been adopted by the newly created African elite. That this "Great Tradition" was assimilated is now a matter of historical record, but the extent to which it was achieved is well documented by Kuper's study of South Africa where, it must be said, the policy of apartheid has if anything hindered the development of an African entrepreneurial or managerial class. As Kuper observes:

In African society, the social distinction between the educated and the uneducated, Western and tribal, Christian and heathen is deeply rooted. ... It is encouraged by the example of the dominant White society, as an African businessman sensed in the revealing comment that "a man who has seen other races can set Africans into classes too". And it is fostered by sections of the African intelligentsia. Nimrod Mkele, for example, speaks and writes of the African middle class. His own wedding was almost a clinical demonstration of appropriate behavior, adding, for full measure to the abundance of prestige items, a White church and a White bridesmaid.

39 It would seem that the question is almost impossible to verify one way or the other since these indigenous African kingdoms were for the most part destroyed through competition with the economically superior Europeans. See Richard W. Gray and David Birmingham, "Some Economic and Political Consequences of Trade in Central and Eastern Africa in the Pre-Colonial Period," in Pre-Colonial African Trade: Essays on Trade in Central and Eastern Africa Before 1900, eds. Gray and Birmingham (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), especially 23.

Given this adoption of the cultural "Great Tradition" of Western education, religion and the life-style of conspicuous consumption, the degree of rusticity during the colonial period may be measured by the degree to which Africans have acquired a fluency in the use of the cultural baggage of European "civilization". As Fanon points out in his study of the psychology of colonialism:

Every colonized people . . . finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. In the French colonial army, and particularly in the Senegalese regiments, the black officers serve first of all as interpreters. They are used to convey the master's orders to their fellows, and they too enjoy a certain position of honor. 41

This, of course, is something of a gross generalization as the different policies of the colonial powers did not create a uniform indigenous elite, either in terms of Westernization or size. The British policy of indirect rule in those colonies which, more often for reasons of climate than policy, lacked a large white settler community, was based on the manipulation of indigenous leaders and encouraged Western education as a branch of political economy42 for a select

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few needed to fill the petty clerical positions in the colonial administration. Since the British did not attempt to create "Black Englishmen" in their African colonies, but instead attempted to rule indirectly by disturbing the population as little as possible, while, it may be suggested, allowing the British firms to make maximum profits, the emerging African elite tended to combine Western education, religion and conspicuous consumption with indigenous African culture. A somewhat different type of elite emerged in the French colonies, where the policy of assimilation, while under the auspices of direct rule, deliberately created a Westernized African elite which was encouraged to directly adopt the metropolitan cultural norms and, if achieved, was given the right to become French citizens. In the Portuguese colonies a different situation prevailed. Although the population was divided into two categories of assimilado and indígena, wherein the former were supposedly given the same civic rights and status as metropolitan Portuguese and the latter were deprived of all rights and subject to the full discrimination of the law, in fact only two per cent of the population in Angola, less in Mozambique, and less than 0.3 per cent in Guiné were granted the status of assimilado. Finally, in the Belgian colonies, even the facade of Portuguese colonialism's assimilado policy was

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not practiced and the Congo was ruled directly from Brussels without even the philosophy of eventual self-government or political integration, and political activity was prohibited. Clearly, then, Fanon's comment regarding the question of rusticity in colonial society applies with particular force to the French colonies and the attempt to create "Black Frenchmen", but it could be said to apply to a lesser extent to the other African colonies as well.

In contemporary sub-Saharan Africa it would appear that the European "Great Tradition" has not withered away with the demise of colonialism. Like economic imperialism, cultural imperialism has taken a neo-colonial form. The centers of cultural inspiration for the newly created African bourgeoisie, as before, have remained largely in Europe and North America, and while some countries have attempted to initiate a post-colonial cultural renaissance stressing nègritude, the African personality and African socialism, the members of the urban elite appear to cling tenaciously to the values, attitudes and beliefs acquired in the metropolitan universities and the cultural norms of fashion and the like which flow from New York, Paris and London.  

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There is, of course, an ongoing controversy over Westernization among the urban bourgeoisie between those who see European influences as damaging to African culture and morals and those who feel the need to be "modern". Primarily this controversy centers on the "un-African" behavior of the urban, educated women and ignores the Western style of dress worn by African men. See Audrey Wipper, "African Women, Fashion, and Scapegoating," Canadian Journal of African Studies VI (1972), 329-349.
Indeed, it could be argued that independence in tropical Africa is a misnomer, and that what has in fact happened is that the former colonies have been transformed into neo-colonial satellites which have remained culturally, as well as economically, dependent on the advanced capitalist nations.

With the formal achievement of independence the political, bureaucratic and military apparatus of the state was transferred from the colonial powers to members of African societies who had most closely assimilated the lifestyle, values, attitudes and beliefs of the European "Great Tradition". In cultural terms it may be said that the transfer had the effect of either rapidly creating or greatly expanding an indigenous "Great Tradition". In class terms, the transfer may be said to have created an indigenous bourgeoisie, which inherited from colonialism positions of power and influence, as well as salaries at approximately the same level as that previously paid to expatriate officials. Since independence the newly created indigenous bourgeoisie, the national vehicle of a European cultural "Great Tradition", has emerged as a largely urban class distinguished on the basis of objective criteria, such as income and education, from the peasants, traders and small entrepreneurs of sub-Saharan African societies.

To say that decolonization in sub-Saharan Africa has resulted in the creation of an indigenous bourgeoisie is, however, to greatly oversimplify the nature of social stratification in post-colonial Africa. As we have previously noted, it is important to stress the impact of the various types of colonial administrations on the development of an indigenous African bourgeoisie, for the different policies of the colonial powers did not create a uniform, homogeneous class structure, either in regard to the bourgeoisie or the peasantry. More important, to view the development of a post-colonial bourgeoisie in terms of Redfield's dichotomous formula of a cultural "Great Tradition" and "Little Tradition", useful though it may be for arguing in general terms the existence of an indigenous ruling class and peasantry, tends to oversimplify and thus obscure the nature of this bourgeoisie on all but the cultural dimension, its relationship with the metropolitan bourgeoisie in the post-colonial state, and the important question of differentiation within the indigenous African bourgeoisie.

The first point to be made is that the indigenous African bourgeoisie is significantly different from that found in the advanced capitalist societies of Western Europe and North America. Unlike the latter, the indigenous African bourgeoisie is not characterized by either the ownership of or the control over the means of production in the
modern capitalist sector of the economy, such as finance, mining, industry or plantation agriculture. This is important, for the African bourgeoisie inherited from colonialism not the control over the means of capitalist production in Africa, which is the sense the term "bourgeoisie" is often taken to mean, but the control over the apparatus of the state. While the state in classical Marxist theory is described as an instrument for the domination of one class by another, in post-colonial societies of sub-Saharan Africa, where the control over the profitable capitalist enterprises has remained since decolonization in the hands of the metropolitan bourgeoisie, the state is one of the few instruments for the production of an economic surplus available to the indigenous African bourgeoisie to provide a sufficient revenue to maintain this class in the life-style of a national "Great Tradition". Viewed in this way, the term which most accurately describes this post-colonial indigenous African ruling class is "state bourgeoisie".

While this provides a general definition of the African post-colonial state bourgeoisie, an equally important question centers on its internal differentiation, for it cannot profitably be viewed as a homogeneous class. One approach for the differentiation of a class is that suggested by Marx in, for example, his analysis of the French bourgeoisie as internally differentiated into "fractions of
a class", by Lenin in his commentary on the English proletariat as being differentiated into an "upper stratum" (a privileged "working class aristocracy") and a "lower stratum" (the proletariat "proper"), and summarized by the contemporary theorist Poulantzas in his model for class differentiation into "social categories", "fractions of classes", and "social strata". Briefly, this terminology has been explicated by Poulantzas as follows: "social categories" are distinguished on the basis of what Poulantzas calls "their specific and over-determining relation to structures other than economic ones"; "fractions of classes", as compared to "social categories", are located at the level of economic relations to production (as, for example, in the commercial, industrial and financial fractions of the metropolitan bourgeoisie); and "strata" are defined as "the result of combinations of modes of production in a social formation" (as, for example, in the working class aristocracy).

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46 For example, Marx has written that "It was not the French bourgeoisie that ruled under Louis Philippe, but a fraction of it, bankers, stock kings, railway kings, owners of coal and ironworks and forests, a section of landed proprietors that rallied round them—the so-called finance aristocracy". See Karl Marx, *The Class Struggles in France (1848-1850)* (New York: International Publishers, 1969), 33-34.


49 Ibid.
Using Poulantzas' summary of the Marxist theory for the differentiation within classes, then, the post-colonial state bourgeoisie in Africa may be differentiated into "political", "military" and "bureaucratic" social categories on the basis of their relation to structures other than economic ones, namely the apparatus of the state. Further, as Poulantzas suggests, these social categories may become "social forces" reflecting different intra-class interests, which in the context of African and other post-colonial states is illustrated by the proclivity of the military, as one powerful social category within the state bourgeoisie, to overthrow by coup d'etat the political category.

While we have suggested a general outline for the definition of the African state bourgeoisie, suggested a model for its intra-class differentiation, and sketched its relation to the metropolitan bourgeoisie in the post-colonial state, another important question centers on the differences between this indigenous African class and its metropolitan counterpart in regard to class consciousness, or, in non-Marxist terms, intra-class identification. Due to the fact that it is only one or, at most, two generations old, the state bourgeoisie in sub-Saharan African societies is, to use Kilson's terminology, "asymmetrical" in nature. 50

50 Martin Kilson, "African Political Change and the Modernization Process," Journal of Modern African Studies 1 (December, 1963), 437-438. It may be objected that the use of Kilson's term represents a linguistic solution to a
This is to say that, due to the short period of time the African bourgeoisie has existed, those acquiring the characteristics of the class do so individually and very often retain a connection with their poor relatives and friends. This point is important, since some observers using the Parsonian functional approach to social stratification argue on this basis that classes do not exist in the post-colonial states of tropical Africa. For this writer, the question concerning the existence of conceptual problem. However, it is here contended that Kilson's "asymmetrical" African bourgeoisie, while it is unfortunately jargonish, does convey a legitimate sociological concept, and one which distinguishes between an older, more established class system wherein the consciousness of class is widely recognized, and a newer, less well established class system such as that found in post-colonial Africa where class barriers have not yet hardened to inhibit ongoing social interaction between members of different classes.


52 See, for example, P. C. Lloyd, Introduction to The New Elites of Tropical Africa, ed. Lloyd (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 55-62. Also see the updated and more sophisticated version of this argument by Martin Stansfield, "Frantz Fanon and the African Political Class," African Affairs 68 (January, 1969), especially 24, who argues essentially that there is only a "political class" in Africa defined in terms of functionalism; and R. H. Jackson, "Political Stratification in Tropical Africa," 381-400, who argues that tropical African societies are "one-class societies".
classes on this basis, given the great inequalities involved, amounts to little more than the age-old dispute in studies of social stratification over the concepts of a class of itself and a class for itself. Adherents of the functional school of analysis claim that a class may not be said to exist unless it perceives itself as such, while those favouring the Marxist tradition emphasize, the previous excerpt from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* notwithstanding, that classes may be said to exist in objective terms even though they have not achieved the subjective criteria of a class for itself in the form of class consciousness. It is here argued that the two approaches must be judged on the basis of their utility for the study of society and politics. Here one may advance two reasons why the Marxist approach to class is more useful for the study of politics and society than the competing functional approach. First, the functional approach to class tends to emphasize the integrative function of class stratification and thus provides few useful insights for students of societies characterized by conflict and social change, whereas the Marxist approach emphasizes class as

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53 This derives from the Parsonian theory of social stratification which is perceived, in psychological terms, as a motivation system, according to which class is somewhat synonymous with the concept of status. See S. M. Lipset, "Issues in Social Class Analysis," in Lipset, *Revolution and Counterrevolution: Change and Persistence in Social Structures* (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 139.

54 This may explain why functionalism has made its greatest showing in the study of isolated tribesmen.
a basis for conflict in society. Second, the functional approach in equating class with status is able to study class formation only in so far as the perception of class differences are widely recognized in society. For example, the functional approach would have great difficulty describing the class position of British working class Tories or affluent North American workers who do not identify with their objective class position. In comparison, the Marxist approach allows the study of class prior to the development of class consciousness. This is important for the study of societies, such as in sub-Saharan Africa, where the class system is of recent origin and where class consciousness is lacking or only partially developed, but where it may nevertheless be argued that a class structure already exists.

In any case, the "asymmetrical" nature of the African state bourgeoisie—which is largely the result of the fact that it did not fully emerge as a class until the post-colonial period—does appear to be, in certain respects, a temporary characteristic. As Barbara Lloyd has pointed out in her study of the Yoruba:

Despite apparent adult disregard of class differences, a study of the child-rearing methods employed by well-educated Yoruba mothers indicates the emergence in the next generation of a fairly homogeneous group more distinct from their countrymen than their own educated parents, who had themselves been recruited rather widely from the population. The home and family life, the schools and educational opportunities, as well as the attitudes and values which the elite parents offer his offspring to assure him a bright future, will most
probably produce adults quite different in experience, training and motivation from the majority of their contemporaries. 55

In other words, although the state bourgeoisie is not at present as class conscious as the more established classes of Europe and Asia, it is probable that it will develop in this direction in several generations. For the moment, however, it may be said to be sufficiently differentiated from the extremely poor, illiterate rural population to constitute both a cultural "Great Tradition" and a state bourgeoisie, although some may object to this usage in the context of sub-Saharan Africa since the class system is derived from the colonial legacy. Here, however, it must be remembered that in Latin America, for example, where few observers question the existence of either a bourgeoisie or a peasantry, the "Great Tradition" of Catholicism and latifundio was established in a similar way through Spanish and Portuguese colonialism, where the indigenous civilizations were destroyed and replaced with alien traditions. Also, patron-client relationships—which develop between two parties unequal in status, wealth and influence 56 and therefore point to the presence of a perceived gap between


the privileged elite and the powerless, poor rural population—are widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. While the presence of patron-client relationships does not, of course, "signal" peasant societies, they are important in so far as they point to a widespread perception of social and economic inequality, although not necessarily framed in terms of class, which may be seen as a necessary first step in the development of class consciousness.

While we have presented the argument that a cultural "Great Tradition" exists in sub-Saharan Africa in the form of the post-colonial state bourgeoisie, we have not yet examined the presence of a peasant culture and, in Redfield's terms, a "Little Tradition". In Africa the culture of the peasantry, like that described in other peasant societies in Latin America, Asia and Europe, exists as a folk version of the urban "Great Tradition". As Chodak describes it, the culture of the peasantry in Africa is derived from the way the new urban culture impinges on the tribal hinterland.

Africans in the rural areas are still parochial, but are becoming increasingly externally oriented, and market-oriented in particular. Urban centers expand their influence, constantly impinging on the hinterland by means of administration, the mass media, trade and education. What is more significant is that the hinterland becomes more open to that influence, welcomes it, and in turn the urban culture induces changes in the indigenous local cultures and provokes the generation of a new supra-tribal rural culture. It is

the culture of the new emerging peasantry. Market relations are the prime vehicle of the urban-rural exchanges. . . . The greater the role of the market becomes in African rural life, the more they themselves and their culture will become peasant-like. 58

This analysis which views the rural and migrant peasant population of sub-Saharan Africa as a class segment of a larger society, as a rural hinterland of a national urban culture which is itself a satellite of the advanced capitalist nations, makes much more sense as a conceptual framework in the age of colonialism and neo-colonialism than does tribalism. Indeed, as Mafeje has insightfully pointed out in a penetrating analysis which raises the question of the sociology of knowledge in regard to the framework of tribalism:

European colonialism, like any epoch, brought with it certain ways of reconstructing the African reality. It regarded African societies as particularly tribal. This approach produced certain blinkers or ideological predispositions which made it difficult for those associated with the system to view these societies in any other light. Hence certain modes of thought among European scholars on Africa and their African counterparts have persisted, despite the many important economic and political changes that have occurred in the continent over the last 75-100 years. Therefore, if tribalism is thought of as peculiarly Africa, then the ideology itself is particularly European in origin. 59

Further, Mafeje argues, it is not surprising that the African, who is a product of colonialism, speaks the same language of


tribalism in line with this ex-ruling class ideology stemming from colonial education.\textsuperscript{60} While some critics may argue that Mafeje's analysis suggesting a reason why Africans seldom speak of class "proves" that classes do not exist in sub-Saharan Africa on the basis of the functional approach of Parsons which equates class with status, this argument only holds up if one accepts the premises of the functional theory. For as the opening excerpt from Schumpeter points out, definitions of class cannot be framed in absolute terms, as all sensible studies of class are prone to stress, since they are in the end concepts which owe their existence to the researcher's organizing touch. Given that functionalism is by no means the only approach to class it may be said that the above "proof" that classes do not exist in Africa is less than convincing for those who do follow the immodest view advanced by Davis that functionalism is synonymous with sociological analysis.\textsuperscript{61}

In any case, on the basis of the preceding discussion and interpretation it may be argued that it is possible to

\textsuperscript{60}Ibid., 254. Sklar in this regard has written: "It is less frequently recognized that tribal movements may be created and instigated to action by the new men of power in furtherance of their own special interests which are, time and again, the constitutive interests of emerging social classes. Tribalism then becomes a mask for class privilege. To borrow a worn metaphor, there is often a non-traditional wolf under the tribal sheepskin." Richard L. Sklar, "Political Science and National Integration--A Radical Approach," \textit{Journal of Modern African Studies} 5 (1967), 6.

speak of a sub-Saharan African peasantry in terms of Redfield's "Great Tradition" and "Little Tradition", and that Fallers' widely read argument to the contrary lacks rigor in that it ignores the impact of colonialism on African societies. However, to examine the existence of an African peasantry solely on the basis of a cultural definition, or, for that matter, on the basis of a purely political definition like that suggested by Wittfogel, is not entirely adequate for a study of African class structure. First, a cultural definition explores only one aspect of the peasant milieu which is, since the penetration of the continent by colonialism, part of the world economy and hence part of the international division of labour. As Saul and Woods contend, this aspect of the analysis of African peasants is important:

"... despite the existence of some prefiguring of a peasant class in earlier periods, it is more fruitful to view both the creation of an African peasantry, as well as the creation of the present differentiation among African peasants, as being primarily the result of the interaction between an international capitalist economic system and traditional socio-economic systems, within the context of territorially defined colonial systems. 62"

Second, a purely cultural or political definition does not probe the dynamics of exploitation and oppression which is characteristic of peasants, and which in Africa, as elsewhere, compliments the participation in the world capitalist system.

as an underdeveloped national hinterland of the colonial and neo-colonial capitalist metropolis. Third, as we have already pointed out in regard to the post-colonial state bourgeoisie, a cultural approach to stratification in terms of a societal dichotomy of a "Great Tradition" and a "Little Tradition" tends to convey the impression that the class system is composed of two homogeneous classes. While we have tried to correct this impression in regard to the African state bourgeoisie, it must also be stressed that an important intra-class differentiation also exists within what may be generally termed "the African peasantry".

One definition which does contribute to focusing attention on these crucial areas is that advanced by Wolf. As previously noted, peasants are for Wolf rural cultivators who are subject to asymmetrical power relations which make a permanent charge on their production in the form of rent, which may be paid in labour, in produce, or in money. Thus peasants are distinguished from isolated tribal cultivators.

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on the basis of economic exploitation of peasant surplus production, which Wolf defines as follows:

... In primitive society, producers control the means of production, including their own labor, and exchange their own labor and its products for the culturally defined equivalent goods and services of others. In the course of cultural evolution, however, such simple systems have been superseded by others in which control of the means of production, including the disposition of human labor, passes from the hands of the primary producers into the hands of groups that do not carry on the productive process themselves, but assume instead special executive and administrative functions, backed by the use of force. The constitution of society in such a case is no longer based on the equivalent and direct exchanges of goods and services between one group and another; rather, goods and services are first furnished to a center and only later redirected. In primitive society, surpluses are exchanged directly among groups or members of groups; peasants, however, are rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers that uses the surpluses both to underwrite its own standard of living and to distribute the remainder to groups in society that do not farm but must be fed for their specific goods and services in turn. 64

Lacking the static nature of the structural-functional definitions, the Wolf definition of peasants emphasizes the nature of the genesis of peasantries. As Wolf notes in this regard, "it is especially important to recognize the effects of the industrial revolution and the growing world market on peasant segments the world over".65 As compared to the framework of tribalism, the approach is most useful for the study of social stratification in sub-Saharan Africa. For not only does it focus on the fact that the peasantry has

64 Wolf, Peasants, 3-4.
been for the most part created by colonial penetration, but unlike the cultural approach of Redfield it is cognizant of the nature of the economic exploitation of peasant surpluses, as defined above by Wolf, which has resulted from the incorporation of African societies into the capitalist economic system. As Leys summarizes:

The economic surplus produced by the vast mass of productive workers, the smaller farmers, is being extracted, partly by adverse terms of trade with the developed countries, partly by the high profits of expatriate firms, which are largely repatriated overseas, and partly by the import- and consumption-oriented expenditure of the skilled workers and salaried employees, instead of going into productive manufacturing investment and the development of a domestic market for local products. 66

To examine how the Wolf definition applies to sub-Saharan Africa it is necessary to briefly analyze how the surplus of rent is extracted from the rural cultivators by a dominant group of rulers. To have meaning, this analysis must not be artificially limited to the extraction of peasant surplus production by the African state bourgeoisie, but must also take into account the extraction of peasant economic surpluses by the colonial governments and the extratriate firms. To both make this analysis more manageable and to explore the intra-class differentiation of the peasant classes in Africa it is well to view the extraction of peasant economic surpluses in terms of Barnett's typology of three types of African peasantries: the marginal-

subsistence peasantry, the labour-exporting peasantry, and the cash-cropping peasantry. It should be noted that Barnett's pioneering effort to develop a typology of the African peasantry relies heavily on Wolf's criteria of economic exploitation and socio-political oppression, wherein the three types of peasantries are delineated in terms of the nature and degree of their participation in the economy of international capitalism. While Barnett does not attempt to systematically locate these three types of African peasantries within the Marxist concept of intra-class differentiation into either categories, fractions and strata, it may be said that the marginal-subsistence, labour-exporting and cash-cropping peasantries represent fractions of the African peasantry since, in Poulantzas' terms, they are located at the level of economic relations of production. Needless to say, as Mao has pointed out in the case of the Chinese peasantry, these different types of peasants live in different circumstances, have different interests and behave in different ways.

By definition, the marginal-subsistence fraction of the African peasantry is engaged in subsistence cultivation


68 See, for example, Mao, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," especially 30.
of annual crops plus production for exchange sufficient to pay taxes and make necessary purchases, is unfavourably located with regard to transportation facilities and urban market centers and relatively sparsely settled in territories with little or no European settlement and/or a very restricted wage-labour market.\textsuperscript{69} Although the marginal-subsistence fraction of the African peasantry is often seen by European and American observers as representing the "pure" type of African agricultural production which has remained little changed since time immemorial, the subsistence-oriented peasant fraction of the twentieth century may be seen in part as the creation of colonial penetration and domination of the African continent, if indeed it may be said to have existed as a "pure" type in Africa prior to colonialism. This is itself rather doubtful since, as Gray and Birmingham point out, during the pre-colonial period "... one can begin to discern a series of innovations which together constitute a mode of economic organization mid-way between subsistence and a fully-fledged market economy".\textsuperscript{70} Certainly, prior to colonialism, parts of Central and West Africa produced sufficient surpluses of such items as cloth, tanned leather goods, pottery, gold, ivory, iron, copper, cattle and slaves for exchange, some to

\textsuperscript{69}Barnett, \textit{Peasant Types}, 29

\textsuperscript{70}Gray and Birmingham, "Some Economic and Political Consequences of Trade," 18.
distant trading stations for trade with Arabia, Southern Europe and even India and China. However, unlike the peasant economy of pre-industrial Europe, in Africa the extraction of peasant economic surpluses was not accomplished through the possession of land held in private tenure in the form of feudal estates, but rather in the direct exploitation of labour-power itself. As Gray and Birmingham put it, "in Europe, but not in Africa, the key to power and wealth was mastery of the land. In Africa the real key to production and prosperity was men and women; land was rarely in short supply and therefore no especial value was attached to its ownership". Consequently, the rulers of some pre-colonial African kingdoms extracted from their subjects a form of "rent" by obtaining slaves through taxation, while holding land in communal tenure. While Gray and Birmingham's interpretation may be criticized as something of a sweeping generalization, given the vastness and diversity of the subject, the point is nevertheless important to the question concerning the existence of classes in pre-colonial African society and it appears to have been overlooked by some

71 Seidman, Planning for Development, 58.
72 Gray and Birmingham, "Some Economic and Political Consequences of Trade," 18.
73 Ibid.
74 While Gray and Birmingham contend that no especial value was placed on the individual ownership of land for the generation of wealth due to an abundance of supply, it is nevertheless true that land was considered a communal and sacred treasure.
writers who focus on the overtly egalitarian nature of communal tenure, while placing an overly rigid emphasis on the existence of private property in land as a criteria for the formation of classes in agrarian societies. This error would appear to be the result of an attempt to use as a model for the study of African social stratification the developmental experience of Europe. What is important for the study of class in any society is not the form of land tenure per se, but the form of surplus extraction.

In any case, while there appears to be some evidence to suggest that in some pre-colonial African kingdoms asymmetrical power relations were exercised over rural cultivators by a group of dominant rulers to produce a fund of "rent" as defined by Wolf, the imposition of colonial hegemony served initially to create a more uniformly poor, undifferentiated peasantry of the marginal-subsistence type through the destruction of existing pre-colonial entrepreneurial activity where this activity conflicted with the interests of the metropolitan economy. This, of course, is not to imply that colonial rule necessarily reduced Africans in every case to poverty and dependence, as is illustrated by the prosperity of the Ibos in the colonial period. Nevertheless, it may be argued that where existing pre-colonial

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entrepreneurial activity directly conflicted with the interests of the metropolitan economy it was often met with opposition from the colonial administration. This is well documented in West Africa where the locally produced textiles had long been manufactured in large quantities and of high quality. Under colonial rule, however, this dynamic local industry was not encouraged to expand since it produced little if any realizable revenue for the local British authorities through taxation, in addition to which its economic viability did not serve the interests of the metropolitan capitalists. As Johnson describes it, these Nigerian entrepreneurs were rewarded for their very economic viability by the colonial decision to crush the industry.

... Lugard [the Governor] ... faced with the demand from British manufacturers for new markets, and at the same time for a source of supply of cotton other than America (threatened with severe shortage as a result of crop pests), hit upon a policy which may be called "cotton imperialism". Crush the local weaving industry, and the raw cotton which would have been woven locally will be exported to England; moreover, hopefully, the redundant weavers would also turn their hands to growing cotton for export. English cottons would replace the local manufacture--to the benefit of everyone, except the Nigerians, who perversely continued to prefer the local product. 76

As it turned out, the British were not successful in eliminating the Nigerian textile industry, largely because the local consumers continued to prefer the better quality African product, and because the British, even with the

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competitive advantage of the power-loom and the high taxes imposed on the transport of domestic cotton, could not undersell the hand-woven product. Other parts of sub-Saharan Africa were not, however, as fortunate, either because they lacked the competitive advantage vis-a-vis the European traders and manufacturers, the support of the local consumers, were more vulnerable to colonial interference, or simply lacked the tenacity of the Nigerian entrepreneurs. An example of an area unable to withstand the pressures of European economic repression is Angola, where prior to Portuguese colonialism there were a number of quite highly developed African kingdoms based on a prosperous economic base, such as the Lozi and Kongo kingdoms. Needless to say, Portuguese colonialism has had a marked leveling effect, reducing Angolans to a more uniform level of poverty and underdevelopment.

Where colonial rule did not overtly attempt to destroy indigenous entrepreneurial activity to gain advantage for metropolitan manufacturing and trading interests, it often attempted to accomplish the same ends for the white

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77 According to Gray and Birmingham, at the time the Portuguese arrived the Kongo kingdom had a developed commercial system centered on a royal capital, with a well-established currency system and an established market. See Gray and Birmingham, "Some Economic and Political Consequences of Trade," 8-9. For a short account of the impact of Portuguese colonialism, see Basil Davidson, "The Oldest Alliance Faces a Crisis," in Angola: A Symposium. Views of a Revolt, comp. Institute of Race Relations (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 138-160.
settler community in areas where this population was and is significant. Here one might cite a number of examples, including the usurpation of the most fertile land in Kenya on the so-called White Highlands for European occupation, but perhaps the most graphic example of this development of underdevelopment of the African population to the status of a marginal-subsistence peasantry is the case of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. In both countries the fate of the African population was tied to the development of capitalism and the political economy of the settler community. In Rhodesia, for example, the lucrative task of supplying the export-producing regions (notably the mines, capitalist farms and company-owned plantations) with food and services fell largely to the African peasant producers until shortly after the First World War. Far from resisting change, a characteristic which some writers have attributed to the peasantry, the Rhodesian peasantry was prompt in investing


and innovating in response to market opportunities. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the peasant producers were so successful in adapting to the new opportunities which arose from the development of capitalism that in Rhodesia by the end of the nineteenth century they were, according to Phimister, enabled to recoup certain of their losses in a relatively short time. Also, in South Africa the prosperity of some peasant producers in the late nineteenth century was such that a class of African capitalist farmers was emerging which not only had tenants and wage-labourers on their lands—against whom they used the Cape's Masters and Servants Act to punish defaulters—but was able in some cases to buy back the land of which they had earlier been deprived through expropriation.

While the prosperity of peasant agricultural production served the interests of developing capitalism in Southern Africa it was allowed, if not encouraged, to flourish. However, once diamond and gold mining became a major force in the economy in the 1880's and 1890's respectively, which accelerated the predominance of directly


imperial capital over local capital, all this changed. As Phimister shows, a viable peasant economy did not facilitate the extraction of peasant surpluses in a form useful to capitalism, that is in the form of labour-power:

The establishment and expansion of the mining industry without an accompanying capitalist farming sector initially created favourable market opportunities for the emergence of an African peasantry in significant numbers. But because the general profitability of the first sector [mining and other production for export], particularly in terms of minimization of wage costs, depended largely on the size and exploitability of the labour pool in the third category [the marginal-subsistence peasantry], it was vital that capitalist agriculture should dominate the second sector [the supply of food and services to the export-producing sector].

Therefore, to insure the creation of a docile army of poor peasants who could be induced to work for extremely low wages, thus increasing the profitability of the mines, settler-owned capitalist farms and plantations, a series of changes were undertaken to rid the semi-capitalist agricultural sector of its African entrepreneurs.

One such change which was undertaken to limit the opportunities available to Africans was the establishment of what Arrighi has called semi-feudal relations. Here Africans were systematically deprived of their ancestral lands which were then distributed among the white settlers, who, magnanimously, allowed the peasants to remain on the

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86 Arrighi, "Labour Supplies," 196.
land as tenant farmers. In this way the white settlers were able to more directly extract peasant surpluses and market their tenants' produce. Naturally, once subject to asymmetrical power relations by the landowner, and dependent on his whims, these peasants became victims of unfavourable terms of trade, or what one writer has termed in the international context the imperialism of trade. In a somewhat typical scenario one finds that in Southern Rhodesia, for instance, when the local market value of grain was 20s. a bag, traders in the Charter area bought it at 10s., before reselling it in Salisbury and Hartley at 37s 6d. per bag, and some traders only offered the peasant producers trade goods in exchange, thus serving the further purpose in the colonial political economy of forcing peasants into wage employment in order to pay their taxes and make necessary cash purchases. As a consequence, peasants were in fact producing a surplus for the white settler economy, and not for themselves.

Although the establishment of semi-feudal relations through the expropriation of African land had a certain leveling effect among the African peasantry, the establishment of the Reserve system by the Native Lands Act of 1913


88 Phimister, "Peasant Production," 224, 225.
may be seen as the crucial factor in creating a marginal-subistence fraction of the peasantry in Southern Africa. As one might perhaps expect, the object of the Native Lands Act was to liquidate the competition to the settler dominated capitalist agriculture and to insure a steady flow of African wage-labourers to the mines from a subsistence Reserve economy, although the stated rationale in Parliament was that the Act would insure the territorial segregation of the races. At any rate, the Act stipulated that no African could purchase or occupy land outside the African Reserves, and that Whites could not acquire or occupy land in the Reserves. Like the policy which prevailed in Canada and the United States with the establishment of Indian Reservations, the African Reserves would seem to have been purposely located on the poorest agricultural land available, and in areas which were geographically disadvantaged in terms of access to railways and markets, and which was therefore of little use to Europeans. Even more important, the amount of land available for African occupation shrank drastically. Although the situation was to a limited extent alleviated in 1936 when the Smuts and Hertzog Coalition passed the Native Trust and Land Act under which some land adjacent to or in the Reserves was added to the African allotment, the total

89 Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and cheap labour-power in South Africa: from segregation to apartheid," Economy and Society 1 (1972), 438.
amount of land available to the African population was pitifully small and subject to artificially created Malthusian population pressures. As a long-time leader and intellectual of the African National Congress puts it:

When all the released areas are bought and added to the scheduled areas, the total area set aside for African occupation in terms of the two Acts will constitute 13 per cent of South Africa's land surface. But only 5 of the 7½ million morgen have, in fact as yet been acquired, so that today some 11,000,000 Africans have rights to only 9 per cent of the land, while 3,000,000 Whites own and occupy the rest.

Furthermore, Africans in all but a very few areas cannot acquire individual title to their land. It is legally held by a Trust on behalf of the State, and the peasant occupiers are—in effect—tenants, holding their land under conditions imposed by the government. 90

As a result of the overcrowding and consequent overcropping on the Reserves, combined with the poor quality of much of the land to begin with, the South African peasant producers have been effectively prevented from participating in capitalist agriculture, except as wage-labourers. In fact, the pressures on the land are such that agricultural productivity, according to Mbeki, has declined on the Reserves to the point that they are today incapable of producing the minimum food requirements for the populations they support. 91 In short, the occupants of the Reserves are a marginal-subsistence fraction of the African peasantry—

91 Ibid., 69.
created and kept as such by colonialism, the requirements of the white settlers as expressed in the racist policies of their politicians (as in the Government of Prime Minister Malan and after), and by the requirements of metropolitan capitalism—with no alternative to selling their labour at prices even below the cost of its production.  

At the status of the occupants of the South African Reserves has been created by colonialism and the racist policies of the settler regime, so the marginal-subsistence peasant fraction in other parts of the continent south of the Sahara which lack a large white settler population may be seen as a recent creation, stemming from colonial domination. This is not to argue, of course, that subsistence agriculture per se is a newly developed mode of production in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the status of this fraction of the African peasantry as marginal and subsistence-oriented in the twentieth century, existing no longer as isolated tribesmen wherein control of the means of production, and consequently also the reproduction, of this special article". Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, 3 vols., ed. Frederick Engels (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 1: 171, 170. This formula, however, does not hold for the participation of the sub-Saharan African peasantry in the capitalist economy, since the creation of a marginal-subsistence fraction allows the price of labour to fall far below the cost of its production. This question will be explored in the discussion of the labour-exporting fraction of the African peasantry.
production no longer rests with the primary producers but is locally mediated by the African post-colonial state bourgeoisie and controlled by the metropolitan bourgeoisie, is the creation of uneven economic development, colonial and neo-colonial European domination, and the capitalist organization of sub-Saharan African economies. In areas of Africa now commonly referred to as "independent", where state power of a white settler minority government did not systematically deprive African cultivators of their communally-held land, the structural underdevelopment of the marginal-subsistence fraction of the African peasantry arose out of a combination of capitalist market forces and the natural limitations imposed on production by geographical and ecological factors. As Barnett puts it:

92 The term "structural underdevelopment" is taken from Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, 9, who has written: "Economic development and underdevelopment are the opposite faces of the same coin. Both are the necessary result and contemporary manifestation of internal contradictions in the world capitalist system. Economic development and underdevelopment are not just relative and quantitative, in that one represents more economic development than the other; economic development and underdevelopment are relational and qualitative, in that each is structurally different from, yet caused by its relation with, the other. Yet development and underdevelopment are the same in that they are the product of a single but dialectically different economic structures or systems, or of supposed differences in stages of economic growth achieved within the same system. One and the same historical process of the expansion and development of capitalism throughout the world has simultaneously generated—and continues to generate—both economic development and structural underdevelopment".
this type [the marginal-subsistence peasantry] is characterized by its relatively marginal involvement in the modern processes of commercialization. Often occupying lands of only moderate soil fertility outside the perennial crop zone or located in areas remote from rail or road transport and urban centers, these peasant communities are largely engaged in subsistence cultivation combined with a component of cash economy sufficient at best to take care of their tax burdens and purchase the minimal necessary trade and/or consumption items. 94

Given the propensity of rural peasant cultivators in Africa to respond to market opportunities, it may be said that they unlike the romantic "back to the land" faddists of North America, are engaging in subsistence cultivation due to the lack of other viable alternatives.

One should not assume, however, that because the marginal-subsistence fraction of the sub-Saharan African peasantry is least involved in the cash economy that it is either a homogeneous entity, or free from the extraction of an economic surplus by the metropolitan and post-colonial state bourgeoisie. On the contrary, in reference to the first point one analyst has delineated three stages within what is here termed the marginal-subsistence fraction of the African peasantry: stage one, subsistence farming, in which each household produces all the food it consumes; stage two, direct agricultural consumption, in which most people produce their own food, and also supply it to the non-agricultural population as barter; stage three, indirect

94 Barnett, Peasant Types, 29.
agricultural consumption, in which the whole non-agricultural population and at least a part of the agricultural population satisfy their needs through a market in which goods are sold, mainly from districts with agricultural surpluses. As Morgan notes, all three of these stages are represented in the peasant economies of tropical Africa:

Stage one is uncommon and confined mainly to the remoter areas of very low population density in Central Africa. Stage two is the most common, if marketing is substituted for barter. The buying and selling of all manner of goods, including agricultural produce, has been long established in tropical Africa. Admittedly in many areas, particularly in the Congo Basin, Zambia and Tanzania, the existence of only a few small scattered nuclei of population, with densities greater than 50 persons per square mile, seriously limited such exchanges, or even reduced it to the level of barter. . . . Stage three is less common, and is developed mainly in those areas most affected by the industrial and mining development associated with European investment, particularly in Rhodesia and northern and central Zambia, and in the hinterlands of the great ports. In a large part of West Africa, however, stage three had been reached before European-made goods had a major effect on the economy. 96

Although the marginal-subsistence fraction of the African peasantry is least involved in the modern processes of commercialization, one should not infer that it is isolated from the exploitative relations of surplus extraction in the money economy. For while it is for the most part


96 Ibid., 246.
quite true that the introduction of the money economy did not irretrievably disrupt African subsistence production or lead to a breakdown of tribal life, it is equally true that it has incorporated the formerly isolated tribesmen into the world economy. In addition, although Geiger and Armstrong may be correct in contending that in many African countries the cash economy does not involve more than 10 per cent of the population on a full-time, continuous basis, few sub-Saharan Africans have been able to remain completely aloof from the cash economy and totally able to devote themselves to "pure", non-monetary subsistence cultivation. This was primarily due to the colonial desire to make local government and the administration of law and order, the "Whiteman's Burden", pay for itself without draining the imperial coffers. In any case, Africans were forced to enter

97 See William Watson, Tribal Cohesion in a Money Economy: A Study of the Mambwe People of Northern Rhodesia (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), especially 222, 225.


100 As Saul and Woods, "African Peasantries," put it: "... the ubiquitous reach of colonialism has ensured that no significant numbers of primitive agriculturalists who previously comprised the vast majority of the population have remained outside the framework of a wider economic system".
the cash economy and to generate an economic surplus through the imposition of taxes, notably hut (which taxed dwellings) and poll (which taxed adult males) taxes. These taxes served the twofold purpose of driving Africans either to seek wage employment or to produce marketable agricultural products. However, as may be seen from the administration of these taxes, the colonial governments put a rather heavier emphasis on the former rather than the latter factor. This may be seen in the case of Northern Rhodesia, or what is now known as Zambia, where the poll tax after 1905 had to be paid in cash, rather than in kind. In Kenya, where the requirements of the colonial economy was somewhat different—in that Kenya had a large white settler population which required public works and African peasant participation in the production of food crops as well as labour for the settler-owned plantations, while Northern Rhodesia's Copperbelt region had a more pressing need for African miners—the Native Hut and Poll Tax Ordinance allowed somewhat more flexibility. As Wolf describes it:

It prescribed alternatives to cash payment: either payment in kind, or labor on public works, at the rate of one month's labor for each 3 rupees due. Needless to say, the value of payment in kind exceeded the cash tax due, while one month's labor for a private employer returned more than 3 rupees. Refusal to pay taxes in any form was punishable by confiscation of an African's hut, or other property,

and/or imprisonment. 102

Since independence many of these African taxes which evolved during the colonial period have remained in effect, either as a poll tax or in modified form as income tax, thus allowing the post-colonial state bourgeoisie through the government to extract from the masses of the peasantry a fund of "rent", as defined by Wolf, with which to underwrite their standard of living. In part this continued reliance on the extraction of peasant economic surpluses in some sub-Saharan African countries through taxes derived from the colonial legacy has been made necessary both by the impossibility of collecting land tax due to traditional systems of land tenure,103 and by the difficulty of collecting company taxes on the profitable foreign firms.104 Thus one finds that in many post-colonial African countries, which have extremely low average annual incomes, a disproportionate percentage of the total direct tax revenue is collected from poll and income taxes, as table 1 on the following page shows. This data must, of course, be rather


104 As Kaldor has pointed out, the large foreign firms have been able to avoid taxation by pricing policies designed to shift profits outside the African country by overpricing imports and underpricing exports. See Ibid., 174-175.
carefully interpreted since taxation data from 1961-1962 is obviously dated and does not take into account changes such as Nyerere's 1967 nationalization of banks, insurance companies, mills and other large food industries and the big

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DIRECT TAX REVENUE GAINED FROM VARIOUS FORMS OF DIRECT TAXES, 1961-1962

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Company Taxes</th>
<th>Special Forms</th>
<th>Personal Income Tax</th>
<th>Personal Poll Tax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhodesia</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanganyika</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zanzibar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


import-export companies, which would clearly increase the percentage of tax revenue gained from company sources. In addition, another caveat on the available taxation data which must be considered is that the countries represented in table 1 do not necessarily have the same tax base, nor does table 1 illustrate the continued importance of indirect taxation, as shown in table 2 on the following page, which, while very often more significant overall for the collection of government revenue, is like direct taxation "... widely
regarded as constituting levies on the incomes of the producers of the products". Nevertheless, while mindful

TABLE 2

RELATIVE RELIANCE OF DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND EXPORT TAXES IN SELECTED TROPICAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES, 1961-1962

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Direct Taxes</th>
<th>Indirect Taxes</th>
<th>Export Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhodesia</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanganyika</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Negl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zanzibar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Due, Taxation and Economic Development in Tropical Africa, 26, table 2.2.

of the above caveats on the available tax data, it may be seen that this dimension of the extraction of economic surpluses from the marginal-subsistence fraction of the African peasantry has continued in post-colonial Africa.

This dimension of the extraction of peasant economic surpluses through taxation is, of course, only one aspect of the superior claim made on peasant labour on the land. Equally important has been the extraction of economic

surpluses by the metropolitan bourgeoisie through the multinational firms. For convenience, the examination of this second area of economic surplus extraction is best undertaken through a discussion of the labour-exporting and cash-cropping fractions of the African peasantry. It should be emphasized, however, that this division is somewhat arbitrary and artificial, and does not imply that the forms of surplus extraction discussed under the labour-exporting and cash-cropping fractions of the African peasantry do not apply to a lesser extent to the marginal-subsistence fraction. As the preceding discussion shows, the marginal-subsistence peasant fraction does engage in some migrant labour and cash-cropping. By the same token, the latter two fractions of the African peasantry also pay taxes which contribute to the support of the African state bourgeoisie. Indeed, like Barnett's typology itself, there is a considerable overlap between the three fractions of the African peasantry and it is difficult without a detailed examination of specific cases, which is beyond the scope of this paper as a conceptual analysis surveying sub-Saharan Africa, to firmly distinguish between the various types. However, the main concern here is to probe in general terms the nature of economic surplus extraction by the dominant classes in an attempt to determine if Wolf's definition of peasants may be said to apply to sub-Saharan Africa. This being the case, the examination of the various forms of surplus extraction
under the three fractions of the African peasantry is something of an abstraction, and should not be taken to represent mutually exclusive types of surplus extraction specific only to the peasant fractions under which they are discussed.

In any case, as defined by Barnett, the labor-exporting peasant fraction is found most frequently in the highland and savannah regions of East Africa, engaged in subsistence cultivation, usually combined with animal husbandry and large-scale migrant wage employment, generally located unfavorably with respect to transportation facilities and market centers and settled densely in restricted areas in territories with significant European rural settlement and/or extractive industries. In addition, although Barnett stresses the close proximity to the large European settlements in East and Southern Africa, it is important to add that the structural underdevelopment of the hinterland in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa produces a significant labor migration to the coastal areas of Cameroon, the Firestone Plantation and Bomi Hills iron mines in Liberia, to the cash-cropping areas and capitalist farms in Ghana and the Ivory Coast, to the Dakar region in Senegal, to north-central Nigeria, and to other developed areas in West Africa.

To give some idea of the importance

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106 Barnett, Peasant Types, 22.

of this phenomena in West Africa, Berg has estimated that about a million people are involved in migrant labour in the area, of whom about half go to Ghana and the Ivory Coast. These make up a very substantial portion of the labour force in the money economy of these two countries, including almost all those in paid agricultural employment and possibly half of those in non-agricultural employment. In addition to West, East and South Africa, other parts of the sub-Saharan hinterland which are far removed from the major centers of wage employment may develop a labour-exporting peasant fraction where the need for a cash income is not matched by the ability to grow and market cash-crops. A case in point is the Tonga of Malawi in Central Africa, who export their labour at a rate of between 60 to 75 per cent of the adult male population as far away as a 1,000 miles to the main employment centers in Zambia and Rhodesia, and between 1,500 to 2,000 miles to those in South Africa.

Since we have discussed some of the major forces which have driven the previously isolated tribal cultivators into the cash economy, it is not necessary to repeat that


discussion here. Suffice to say that while some Africans may have entered the capitalist economy simply out of a desire to support a higher standard of living than the traditional economy could provide, the colonial policies were designed to induce African cultivators to provide their labour-power, either through compulsory labour practices, such as the outright conscription and vagrancy laws in the Portuguese territories, the indigenat system of French Africa, or through the imposition of cash taxes and the creation of artificial land shortages in areas with large European populations. In the post-colonial period a key factor inducing peasant cultivators to enter the labour market, in addition to the need to pay taxes, has been the increase of basic subsistence requirements which has accompanied the participation in the international capitalist economy as more and more manufactured goods and other items which can only be purchased with cash come to be regarded as necessary.

However, what is important for any discussion of the labour-exporting peasant fraction is the way the extraction of economic surpluses in the form of labour-power has been a key variable in capital accumulation south of the Sahara.¹¹

¹¹This method of capital accumulation through the extraction of peasant economic surpluses has not, of course, been confined to sub-Saharan Africa, or even capitalist development. In the Soviet Union the Stalinist collectivization of agriculture was a method of extracting peasant surpluses in the interests of rapid capital accumulation. See
For it is quite true, as Heisler notes, that "labour mobility, as much as mineral wealth, was a prerequisite for the establishment of capitalism and the creation of wealth in Central Africa". Furthermore, since much of this labour was and is employed in the extractive industries, which are almost entirely owned and operated by foreign firms, the extraction of peasant surpluses in the form of cheap labour-power and increased profitability has largely been repatriated in the industrial countries of Western Europe and North America. It may be argued, then, that while some post-colonial African countries have undoubtably reaped some benefits from their attempts to attract foreign investment capital, the extraction of peasant economic surpluses in the form of cheap labour-power, as much as the exploitation of mineral wealth, has served to underwrite the development of the advanced capitalist nations, while contributing little toward the development of the host countries.


Heisler, Urbanization and the Government of Migration, x.


To understand the dynamics of the extraction of peasant economic surpluses in the form of cheap labour-power in colonial and post-colonial Africa it is first necessary to note that "the majority of persons numbered with the African working class belong at the same time to tribal communities, and by virtue of this membership retain their right to the land, of which they make use if needed, and keep their tribal and kinship loyalty". Furthermore, for the vast majority of Africans, particularly in the colonial and early post-colonial era, labour migration meant adult male migration and the women and children were left in the rural villages engaged in subsistence cultivation. This is an extremely important feature of wage employment in sub-Saharan Africa and the magnitude of peasant involvement in the labour market is so great that, while some Marxist writers often attempt to make the case of the proletarianization of the African peasantry, it makes much more sense and is much more realistic, as Leys argues, to speak rather of the peasantization of wage


115 This is generally the case, although as Hance points out, some tribes specifically train girls to engage in prostitution in the urban areas. Two examples are the Kotokoli and the Bassari of northern Togo. Many of these women are married in their native country and seek to become attached to a rich client in Accra, bear children and one day disappear to return to Togo with their children and savings. See Hance, Population, Migration, and Urbanization, 189-190.

employment\textsuperscript{117} and the fact that in much of Africa the peasantry and wage earners belong to the same class.\textsuperscript{118}

It should not be assumed, however, that because the labour-exporting peasant fraction in sub-Saharan Africa maintains its kinship and communal ties with the rural villages, wherein the migrant's interests and claim to land are preserved during his long absence, that this peasant fraction is somehow subject to less exploitation of their labour-power than fully-fledged proletarians. In fact, it is probably more accurate to say that the opposite is true. The reason for this heightened level of exploitation of labour-power is primarily due to the creation of an underdeveloped peasant hinterland which is often unable to support even a marginal-subsistence economy. As previously mentioned, this allows the price of peasant labour to fall even below the cost of its social and biological production, which is the minimum price at which Marx felt labour could be sold. When applied to a totally urbanized working class this formula may well hold true. But in the case of the labour-exporting peasant fraction the cost of the production of a new generation of workers is born almost entirely by the underdeveloped rural hinterland, since the urban wages are most often based on the subsistence requirements of

\textsuperscript{117}Leys, "Politics in Kenya," 316.

single men without family commitments. As Van Velsen insightfully comments:

The rural economy thus relieves the industrial economy from the responsibility and expense of rearing its own future labour force. Urban social services are inadequate and could not at present take over the tasks which are now performed in the rural areas. Although many Tonga manage to send money home and although this cash is important as an addition to the income generated in Tongaland, it is insignificant in relation to the services performed by the rural area. 119

In addition, another extremely important feature of the relationship between the peasant hinterland and the developed capitalist enclaves in sub-Saharan Africa is the way the subsistence sector allows the foreign firms and local entrepreneurs and governments the opportunity to avoid the specter of unemployment and its attendant costs in the capitalist sector of the economy, since the unemployed migrant peasants simply return to the village to resume subsistence cultivation. As Meillassoux puts it:

[Since] . . . the capitalist system does not provide adequately for old-age pensions, sick leave and unemployment compensations, they [the peasants] have to rely on another comprehensive socio-economic organization to fulfill these vital needs . . . it follows that the . . . preservation of the relations with the village and the familial community is an absolute requirement for wage earners, and so is the maintenance of the traditional mode of production as the only one capable of ensuring survival. 120


120Claude Meillassoux, "From Reproduction to Production," Economy and Society 1 (1972), 103.
In this way it may be said that the extraction of peasant surpluses in the form of labour-power, provided at below cost, directly underwrites the development of the advanced capitalist nations, while reducing the rural hinterland in areas of large labour migration to little more than production centers for future peasant workers. Given that the opportunities for rapid capital accumulation are becoming increasingly scarce in the developed nations of Western Europe and North America, it is not to be wondered why the multi-national corporations have found it profitable to establish branch-plants in sub-Saharan Africa (often at the request of the post-colonial state bourgeoisie in the "independent" countries), particularly in Rhodesia and South Africa where the policy of apartheid and the dominance of the white settler governments insure a stable atmosphere of corporate well-being.  

It should, of course, be added that in black Africa since independence an element of "positive liberty" has

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122 "Positive liberty" is here used in the sense developed by Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in Berlin, Four Essays on Liberty (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), and implies a progression from the classical liberal theory of the state which stressed non-interference
accompanied the transition from colonialism to neo-colonialism. Here the main change has been the rise in the price of labour and the shift from an almost total reliance on migrant peasant labour to the tacit acceptance of the urbanization of African wage-earners. This change has resulted in the development of what Arrighi and Saul have termed an African "labour aristocracy" which they claim has become stabilized in the wage economy and increasingly detached from the mass of the peasantry and elevated to the status of sub-elites by virtue of high wages on a year-round continuous basis. While Leys has persuasively criticized this bracketing of all skilled and salaried workers as a "labour aristocracy" on the basis that it tends to be a determinist model which assumes a priori the future proletarianization of the labour-exporting peasant fraction, there does seem to be some evidence to support Arrighi and Saul's contention that the urbanization of peasant labourers and the preservation of individual liberty, to the modern notion of liberalism which allows state interference in the affairs of men for the "common" or "collective" good of the many.

Giovanni Arrighi and John S. Saul, "Nationalism and Revolution in Sub-Saharan Africa," in Arrighi and Saul, Essays on the Political Economy of Africa, 69. Arrighi and Saul are not alone in seeing the urban workers as members of the elite. Fanon in The Wretched of the Earth, 108-109, described the African working class as a "bourgeois fraction" due to their pampered and privileged position in the colonial economies.

does tend to lead to the erosion of ties with the rural hinterland in line with what one might expect in a process of proletarianization. In Zambia, as Heisler found, the transition from Labour Camps to towns in the Copperbelt region was marked by a decline in remittances made to rural areas for purposes of future social security. As he notes, "cash flows from miners and urban areas in general to the peasant areas in 1931 were around 20 per cent of earnings; they were 18 per cent at Broken Hill in 1941; and 7 per cent from the urban areas to peasant areas in 1964".\(^{125}\) On the other hand, another study which specifically set out to test the hypothesis of a "labour aristocracy" in Nigeria has shown that while differentials in gross income certainly exist between those employed in small-scale industry and the peasant producers, the differences between the two groups in terms of their standard of living is not so great, particularly when adjustments are made for the shorter work period of the peasant producers. As Hinchliffe observes:

\begin{quote}
Differentials of between 5 and 40 per cent were found after appropriate adjustments had been made; moreover, if all figures are taken at their face value, the standard-of-living appears to be higher in the farming sector, at least when hours of work are taken into consideration, than in the small-scale sector [of industry]. Certainly these urban workers are very unlikely to be much better off than their farming 'brothers'.\(^{126}\)
\end{quote}

\(^{125}\)Heisler, Urbanization, 114.

While it may be argued that Hinchcliffe's study is not representative of sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, it would seem that Arrighi and Saul's notion of a "labour aristocracy" may anticipate future developments in this direction. Nevertheless, even given the scarcity of good income and demographic statistics for tropical Africa, it would still seem possible to point to the overall trend towards higher wages and greater urbanization in independent Africa in the post-colonial period, particularly now that nationalist politicians have some obligation, however limited, to live-up to the expectations of their constituents. For neo-colonial Africa the irony is, however, that even with the institution of some small amount of "positive liberty" which the continent might be able to afford in the form of higher wages and better conditions for the migrant and permanent labourers in the urban areas, without some sort of sweeping nationalization of foreign investment, the surpluses of the continent will continue to be extracted and appropriated for the development of the international capitalist nations through the repatriation of profits abroad.

The cash-cropping peasant fraction, as Barnett points out, is found most frequently in the moist equatorial zone of well distributed rainfall, engaged extensively in the commercial cultivation of perennials such as cocoa, coffee, and oil palms, or annuals such as cotton and ground-nuts, favourably located with respect to transportation and/or
market facilities and settled relatively densely in territories with little or no rural European settlement or industry. This last factor has been important for the development of a cash-cropping peasant fraction in sub-Saharan Africa, for as we have seen in the case of Rhodesia and South Africa, the white settler populations have not shown much tolerance toward the evolution of a prosperous African peasantry in the money economy where it did not serve the narrow interests of the settler community and the extractive industries. This being the case, the best examples of the cash-cropping peasant fraction is found in West Africa, where the humid tropical climate does not encourage European settlement and where, for this reason, in Ghana and Nigeria the British policy, unlike that in the "settled" territories of Kenya, Tanzania and Rhodesia, permitted the growth of a cash-cropping peasant fraction.

In these East African territories, the British colonial policy favoured the European population, who were given large parcels of alienated land for plantation use, while the Africans, in Kenya at least, were prohibited from planting export-crops like coffee. This colonial policy to inhibit the formation of a cash-cropping peasant fraction appears to have been very effective in Kenya, where Africans

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127 Barnett, Peasant Types, 15.
produced only 8,100 tons of coffee in 1962, compared to the 19,300 tons produced by the non-African population, even though the ban on production was lifted in 1937, and this pattern applies across the board to all major cash-crops up to 1962, with the possible exception of maize, although post-colonial Kenya has seen the reversal of this trend with the emergence of a significant small-holding cash-cropping peasant fraction. The only colonial East African country which developed a significant cash-cropping peasant fraction was Uganda, where although the initial policy was to emulate that of Kenya, Tanzania and Rhodesia, the plantation system proved economically unviable and was not pursued. To give a brief overview, in the territories of the other colonial powers the use of plantations was also quite widespread, with the result that the emergence of a cash-cropping peasant fraction was inhibited. In the French Ivory Coast and the German, then British and French Cameroons the main export crops were grown on plantations. In the Ivory Coast, however, export crops were also grown by peasant producers, after being initially compelled to plant specific acreages of cocoa and other crops. The


Portuguese also adopted a system of forced planting of export crops and plantations worked by African migrant labour was a common feature in the Belgian Congo and Portuguese Africa. Indeed, as Udo points out, "... France, Belgium, and Portugal considered the plantation system as an essential part of their drive to increase the revenue of their African dependencies and, very often, the local populations were forced to cultivate export crops". As one might expect, the presence of plantation agriculture did not bestow any competitive advantage on the African peasant producers and the atmosphere of forced labour was not particularly conducive for encouraging Africans to compete with the colonial agro-business of the plantations.

If the cash-cropping peasant fraction in sub-Saharan Africa has developed only in areas where the Europeans did not find it profitable or comfortable to settle in large numbers, or in post-colonial countries such as Kenya where governmental policies did not favour Europeans to the detriment of African cultivators, it did not develop simply from a philanthropic desire on the part of the colonial officials in areas like West Africa to provide Africans with a source of income. Like the failure of the policy of "cotton imperialism" in West Africa, the development of

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cash-cropping may be seen as the result of the failure of the Europeans to successfully compete with the peasant cultivators. This is shown in the case of Ghana, one of the classic areas of a cash-cropping peasant fraction, where the United Africa Company tried unsuccessfully for 15 years to produce cocoa on a competitive basis with Ghanaian cocoa producers, and "only the morality of the ledger sheet had brought the British to the conclusion that they would be wiser to avoid competing with the Native cultivators".132

However, while the British in West Africa did not establish European plantations in competition with the cash-cropping peasants when it became clear that such competition was unviable, and afterwards even made the seeds and technology available to West African peasant producers, the colonial authorities had somewhat ambivalent feelings toward the development of export-oriented cash-cropping, especially with regard to the massive importance of cocoa to the colonial economy. As Kay notes, this ambivalence resulted from the three major economic and political problems for the colonial government which the profitability of the peasant cash-cropping of cocoa raised:

Firstly, to the extent that cocoa was important and profits from its production accrued to Ghanaians, British capital captured a diminished share of the total profits that arose from the trade of the colony. Thus the coincidence of colonial progress and the prosperity of British enterprise was far from complete.

Secondly, Ghanaian capital competed with British capital for resources, such as labour and the provision of transport facilities by the state, and prevented its expansion in sectors of the economy where it might otherwise have settled. . . . Thirdly, the capitalist organization of cocoa production acted as a dissolvent on the 'traditional' structures of Ghanaian society, through which the British would have liked to exercise their power: indirect rule. The progress of the cocoa industry therefore threatened to erode the very roots of the colonial state. 133

To counteract these adverse side-effects of the dynamic cash-cropping cocoa industry, the British began what Kay has called a sustained attack on the industry through the Department of Agriculture in 1910, 134 although the colonial authorities did not manage to control the industry until 1948 with the establishment of the Cocoa Marketing Board. It may be seen, then, that this most important cash-crop has survived, like the textile industry in Nigeria, despite colonial interference. Had the cash-cropping peasants in West Africa been less resourceful, or more subject to colonial power, the cocoa industry would not, in all likelihood, have survived.

As a general description, it may be said that the cash-cropping peasant fraction in sub-Saharan Africa has not developed to the point that food has to be imported, as is often the case in Malaya, Indonesia and Peru. 135 In Uganda,

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133Kay, "The political economy of colonialism," 12.
134Ibid., 13.
135George S. Tolley and George D. Gwyer, "International Trade in Agricultural Products in Relation to Economic Develop-
for instance, "most farmers insist on devoting a large part of their holdings to food crops even if they could get a higher income from growing cash crops only and buy food with the proceeds". Likewise, in Nigeria, where a careful study was undertaken to explore the impact of cash-cropping on domestic food supplies, it was found that in the Western State 70 per cent of all peasant producers planted both food and non-food crops, and over 88 per cent of all peasants grew four or more different types of crops every year. The exception to this might be the cocoa farmers in Ghana, who have been described by Hill as "rural capitalists", and who apparently build Italinate mansions in their home areas and travel considerable distances to their crops in the forest. There is some question whether the label "rural capitalists" is entirely appropriate, however, since while some cocoa farmers often enter the market to hire labourers,


not all become wealthy and some engage in subsistence agriculture as well as in the cultivation of export crops.\textsuperscript{140} As far as land tenure is concerned, most cash-cropping peasants work land which is communally or collectively held, although individuals are normally entitled to the products of the soil, the results of their own exertion, and there is no collective claim to these.\textsuperscript{141} In areas of West Africa where the cash-crop consists largely of perennial tree crops, such as cocoa, there has, however, been a movement toward individual tenure. In Uganda much of the most productive land was allotted to members of the traditional elite to ensure their support for the colonial regime and to give them an additional base of authority for administrative purposes,\textsuperscript{142} and the peasant producers on these estates have been reduced to the status of tenants or share-croppers.

Like the marginal-subsistence and labour-exporting fractions of the African peasantry, the dominant classes extract from the cash-cropping peasant fraction much of their surpluses in the form of what Wolf has termed "rent". Also, like the other two peasant fractions, this extraction of surpluses from cash-cropping is essentially the extraction of

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{140}Hill, \textit{The Migrant Cocoa-Farmers}, 188.
\textsuperscript{141}Okurume, \textit{Foreign Trade and the Subsistence Sector in Nigeria}, 13.
\textsuperscript{142}Henry W. West, \textit{Land Policy in Buganda} (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 47.
\end{footnotesize}
of labour-power, although in the form of an agricultural commodity. As Post cogently points out:

Just as surplus labour is an asymmetrical power relationship between individuals and between classes which permits one to expropriate the labour power of the other, so these 'surplus' agricultural products are not things in themselves but a similar relationship, in a non-industrial setting. The basic difference is that in one case the relationship is centred directly upon labour power, in the other it is mediated through commodities produced by labour power. But both relationships involve expropriation of labour power, whether directly or indirectly. 143

To examine how surplus labour is extracted from the cash-cropping fraction, then, one must turn to a brief examination of market relations in West Africa. Before doing so, however, it should be noted that in Uganda the form of surplus extraction follows more closely that familiar in feudal Europe and Latin America, where the landowners, according to West, have come "... to look upon their land as a source of unearned income which could be derived through a levy on the cultivators in actual occupation of much of it". 144

In West Africa, and in other areas of the cash-cropping peasant fraction, where there is a heavy reliance on export-oriented produce, market relations, particularly in the colonial period, were dominated by the giants of international agro-business, such as the United Africa Company. As one might perhaps expect, in the period of free enterprise

143 Post, "'Peasantization' and Rural Political Movements in Western Africa," 230.

144 West, Land Policy in Buganda, 29.
trading, prior to the establishment of statutory marketing, this dominance adversely effected the terms of trade for the peasant producers, since both the purchase price of his export crop and the selling price of imported consumer articles were in the end controlled by the giant expatriate firms. These firms quite naturally undertook to attempt to buy the export-crops at the lowest possible price, while selling the imported goods which they controlled at the highest possible price.

In addition to the giant, capital-intensive metropolitan firms, much of the actual trading with the cash-cropping peasants was done by a large number of small middlemen, who bought and transported the export crop in the rural hinterland. As Bauer notes in his comprehensive study of West African trade, these middlemen "... were paid commissions by the merchant firms; moreover, they kept any differences between the prices they paid for produce and those they received from the firms".\textsuperscript{145} While Bauer argues that the worst abuses were probably mediated by the fierce competition between the numerous middlemen,\textsuperscript{146} there is little doubt that the marketing system, characterized by rapid fluctuations in the purchase price, encouraged


\textsuperscript{146}Ibid., 231-232.
much exploitation of the small and often isolated peasant producers. In addition to the traders and middlemen, a class of petty creditors also arose in West Africa who extracted an income from the production of the cash-cropping peasants by extending credit to the small producers to whom the large expatriate banks were unwilling to lend without some form of collateral, either in the form of money or a solid business reputation.\textsuperscript{147} As Barnett points out, the terms of trade again did not work to the peasant's advantage:

The peasant producer, often in need of cash for seed or other necessary items of production, and caught in a system of low and fluctuating prices for his product, finds himself in need of credit from money lenders or brokers and is often in a position of having mortgaged his crop long before it is ready to be harvested. If unable to repay the usually usurious loan, the peasant is forced to pledge or otherwise give up his land to the middleman, who often leaves the former owner on the land as his tenant. While some of these money lenders are African, in most cases this role is played by immigrant ethnic minorities, such as the Indians in East Africa or the Lebanese and Syrians in West Africa.\textsuperscript{148}

With the transition from colonialism to the neo-colonial economy, which in Ghana may be dated from the establishment of the Cocoa Marketing Board in 1947, many of


\textsuperscript{148}Barnett, \textit{Peasant Types}, 19.
the abuses of the marketing system and the open exploitation of the cash-cropping peasant fraction were subject to some governmental control. Like the move toward slightly higher wages and urbanization for labour-exporting peasants, the neo-colonial period here introduced a touch of "positive liberty" as the demands of the African nationalists reached the ears of metropolitan parliamentarians. In the case of Ghana, the establishment in 1947 was designed to eliminate the big expatriate firms from their dominant position in the cocoa industry by making the Board the sole buyer, grader, seller, and exporter of cocoa. In line with the ideology of the Labour government, one of the chief reasons for the establishment of the Board was to stabilize the price paid for cocoa, so that the peasant producers would be less prone to the wild fluctuations in the export price, which is often characteristic to such crops in the world economy. However, while the official rhetoric had a philanthropic ring, the actual practice of the Board was to perfect the extraction of the cash-cropping peasants' surpluses, since the stabilization in the producer's price was only achieved by artificially depressing this price in relation to the actual world export price. This is well shown in the data presented by Fitch and Oppenheimer, where the price paid to peasant producers as a percentage of the world export price ranged between 37.3 and 88.3 per
cent. Since the Marketing Board kept the profits made on the difference between the two prices, which over the fourteen year life of the Board amounted to millions of pounds, the result was analogous to the extraction of peasant surpluses in the Soviet Union under the Stalinist collectivization of agriculture. The difference was, of course, that while peasant surpluses in the Soviet Union went to finance industrialization, the peasant surpluses extracted by the Ghanaian Cocoa Marketing Board went, as Fitch and Oppenheimer point out, to support the failing British pound in the post-war period. Further, the terms


149 The setting-up of public marketing bodies was not limited to the British territories. In Senegal, for instance, the equivalent agency for the extraction of peasant surpluses was the Agricultural Marketing Bureau (OCA), which accumulated a reserve of 650,000 million francs between 1965-1966 and 1968-1969, which went into public funds to finance 26 per cent of public investment. See Amin, *Neo-Colonialism in West Africa*, 12-13.

150 Fitch and Oppenheimer, *Ghana*, 42-44. Although Fitch and Oppenheimer do not make the point, it should be added that the currency of the colonial powers was used to back African currencies through Currency Boards. In the case of British colonies in Africa, sterling Currency Boards operated with 100 per cent backing until 1954, when the level of backing dropped to 80 per cent. See Ursula K. Hicks, "Finance and the financial infrastructure," in *Taxation for African economic development*, ed. Taylor, 42. This being the case, the appropriation of profits from the Ghanaian Cocoa Marketing Board to support the failing British pound may be seen as also supporting the Ghanaian currency as well. This does not, however, alter the fact that the surpluses of the Ghanaian peasant cash-croppers were extracted by a class of dominant national and international rulers, even though the benefits may have filtered back to the peasants indirectly, in that the bankruptcy of the pound would certainly have greatly reduced the market for cocoa.
of trade for the cash-cropping peasants went from bad to worse with this piece of social democratic philanthropy.

As Bauer notes:

Throughout the period of statutory marketing the West African producers have had to sell their crops at prices far below open-market levels. But they have had to purchase the imported consumer goods on which they spend their incomes at open market prices, which were governed by general forces of supply and demand, and which were rising substantially almost without interruption throughout this period. As a result the terms of trade of the producers were depressed far below what they would have been without statutory marketing and well below those of their principal competitors. 151

III. CONCLUSION

By examining sub-Saharan African social stratification in broad overview in terms of the influential definitions of "peasants" advanced by Redfield and Wolf, the thrust of this thesis has been to argue that African societies may be meaningfully described in terms of the existence of a peasantry, differentiated into marginal-subsistence, labour-exporting, and cash-cropping fractions. Briefly summarized, the interpretation of peasant class formation presented here is as follows:

1. Redfield's cultural definition which sees peasant society as differentiated into a "Great Tradition" and a "Little Tradition" has been explored through a critique of Fallers' seminal article, "Are African Cultivators to be Called 'Peasants'?" In terms of the interpretation presented here, Fallers' thesis that a "Great Tradition" and a peasant "Little Tradition" does not exist in sub-Saharan Africa has been found wanting, in that it does not take into account the impact of colonialism on African social stratification, which has served to create in many cases a cultural "Great Tradition" in a privileged elite which is differentiated from the rural peasant cultivators, the "Little Tradition", on the basis of such objective criteria as income, education, conspicuous consumption and the assimilation of "Western" cultural norms. Further, this
European-inspired "Great Tradition" has not withered away with the demise of colonialism in Africa. On the contrary, decolonization served to "Africanize" the "Great Tradition" as the educated colonial elite moved into positions of power and influence vacated by the departing expatriate administrators. The result has been the emergence of a new post-colonial state bourgeoisie, while the previously isolated tribal cultivators have been transformed into a peasant cultural "Little Tradition". This is not to suggest, however, that the new bourgeoisie and peasantry in Africa viewed in terms of Redfield's cultural definition is an exact replica of similar classes in Latin America, Asia and pre-industrial Europe. Due to the fact that decolonization did little to alter the metropolitan control of the means of production, the class base of the new bourgeoisie rests on control of the apparatus of the state and the control of state capital, on the basis of which this new ruling class may be internally differentiated into political, military and bureaucratic categories. In addition, since the class system in sub-Saharan Africa has only fully developed in the post-colonial period, it differs from the more established class systems of the other continents in that the social boundaries between the state bourgeoisie and peasantry have not yet hardened to create a widely perceived sense of social distance between members of the two classes such as to hinder social mobility and strain
inter-class ties of family and friendship. Nevertheless, defined in terms of Redfield's influential definition, the post-colonial developments have been sufficient to allow the use of the term "peasants" to describe African cultivators. 2. The thesis has also examined the problem of peasant class formation in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of Wolf's definition of "peasants", which focuses on the characteristic socio-political oppression and economic exploitation of surplus in peasant society. For Wolf the key factor which critically distinguishes peasants from primitive tribal cultivators is the extraction of rural economic surpluses by a group of dominant rulers who exercise asymmetrical power relations over the peasantry. Analyzed in terms of Barnett's typology of African peasants, which we have suggested represents class fractions of the African peasantry, it has been argued that the economic surpluses of African cultivators have indeed been extracted in the form of labour-power by the national and international classes which exercise economic and political power over colonial and post-colonial societies. While there is some doubt whether the production of a fund of "rent" was a feature of pre-colonial African kingdoms, there can be little doubt that colonial penetration and domination of the continent introduced widespread extraction of the labour-power of previously isolated cultivators as the control of the means of production passed from the primary producers
as African societies became incorporated into the international capitalist economy. Indeed, the participation of the marginal-subsistence, cash-cropping and labour-exporting fractions of the African peasantry has been a key variable in the process of capital accumulation for those exercising domination over this non-homogeneous class—colonial governments, metropolitan firms operating in Africa, white settler communities engaged in mining and capitalist agriculture and, later, the African state bourgeoisie—since this peasant labour-power, whether in the form of forced labour, wage employment or the imperialism of trade, was most often supplied as cheap-labour, and in some cases at a price even below the cost of its production.

While it has been argued that African social stratification may be meaningfully analyzed in terms of the existence of a non-homogeneous peasant class, the political implications of this development are less clear. On the one hand it could be suggested that since peasant society is characterized by cultural inequality and subordination as well as economic exploitation the continued development of the African peasantry will result in the emergence of class consciousness and class conflict. For some this proposition may be attractive, both for those who follow Lipset in the belief that "... a stable democracy requires the manifestation of conflict or cleavage so that there will be struggle over ruling positions, challenges to parties in power, and
shifts of parties in office..."^152 and for those who see the emergence of class conflict as a prerequisite for a genuine social revolution in Africa.^153

However, it must be said that the emergence of class consciousness and class conflict in African peasant society is not a sure thing. Continued economic development does not necessarily result in the heightening of class consciousness, as the case of Japan and the persistence of "traditional" oyabun-kobun relationships despite an extremely high level of industrialization clearly demonstrates.\(^154\) Moreover, as Alavi has pointed out, the emergence of class consciousness in peasant society is greatly hampered by the tendency for primordial loyalties to mediate and dissipate the loyalties of class.\(^155\) In Africa the main primordial loyalties which

\(^{152}\)Seymour Martin Lipset, Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1963), 1.

\(^{153}\)A "genuine social revolution" is here distinguished from a change of government by a coup d'etat or Putsch. A useful definition of revolution has been suggested by Huntington: "A revolution is a rapid, fundamental and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and government activity and policies". See Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 264.


have hindered the development of class consciousness have been ethnicity\textsuperscript{156} and clientelism,\textsuperscript{157} both of which provide a direct link between members of the post-colonial state bourgeoisie and members of the various fractions of the peasantry. Even when peasant class consciousness has emerged as a political force, it tends to be narrow in scope and transient in nature,\textsuperscript{158} thus providing neither a stable and secure base for the development of democratic politics or the waging of protracted revolutionary struggle.\textsuperscript{159} This, 


\textsuperscript{157}For a general discussion of clientelism in Africa, see Sandbrook, "Patrons, Clients, and Factions," 104-119. Also see Leys, "Politics in Kenya," especially 333-334.

\textsuperscript{158}Marx, of course, observed the narrow scope of peasant class consciousness in the much quoted passage in The Eighteenth Brumaire, 123. For a more systematic discussion of the narrow and transient nature of peasant class consciousness, see E. J. Hobsbawm, "Peasants and Politics," Journal of Peasant Studies 1 (October, 1973), especially 7.

\textsuperscript{159}The continued importance of primordial loyalties, particularly ethnicity, and the often transient nature of peasant class consciousness has plagued peasant revolutionary movements in sub-Saharan Africa. Two notable examples are the "Mau Mau" peasant revolt in Kenya, which collapsed, according to Donald L. Barnett and Karari Njama, Mau Mau From Within: An Analysis of Kenya's Peasant Revolt (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966), 490-491, due to the emergence of ethnic conflict and factionalism among the guerrillas; and
however, raises a much larger question than this essay can attempt to answer, and could, providing the study of African peasants can progress beyond the discussion of the existence of peasant classes, be the subject of further work.

the peasant revolution in Angola, which is, according to Basil Davidson, "African Peasants and Revolution," 270, a peasant struggle of "an especially pure type", but which also appears to be in a state of collapse due to an intense conflict, partly on ethnic grounds, between the three main guerrilla movements now forming a Provisional Government during Portuguese decolonization.
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