

IMPERIALISM, STATE, CLASS AND RACE
(A CRITIQUE OF SHIVJI'S CLASS STRUGGLES IN TANZANIA)

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INTRODUCTION

Issa Shivji's Class Struggles in Tanzania¹ is the latest effort by him on the vital question of classes and class struggle in a particular imperialist dominated country. It is a culmination of his earlier writings - the Silent Class Struggle² and the Class Struggle Continues, (unpublished) which attempted essentially to deal with same issue. The present work is a re-writing of this last mentioned paper.

In our considered view Shivji's book fails to deal with the problem scientifically and therefore raises more questions than it purports to answer. He carries forward the same theoretical errors that occurred in his earlier writings, but which in our opinion were not brought out clearly enough by many of his critics with the possible exception of Professor Szentez, although this had also its problems. The other critics tended to compound the errors as for instance when Saul raises the question "Who is the immediate enemy?" Implying thereby that it is the "petty bourgeoisie", which is the immediate enemy and not imperialism. He draws his authority for this position from Debray who states that this petty bourgeoisie which at first has no economic power, "transforms the state not only into an instrument of political domination, but also into a source of economic power".³ He also quotes Gundar Frank.

This, as we have shown,⁴ is exactly the same way Frank⁵ puts the issue for Latin America and concludes: "the immediate enemy of national liberation in Latin America is the native bourgeoisie... and the local bourgeoisie in... the countryside".⁶ This, he declares, is necessarily so "notwithstanding the fact that strategically the principal enemy undoubtedly is imperialism".⁷ We showed that this type of analysis leads to adventurism and hence a wrong prescription of strategy and tactics against the imperialist enemy and is typically neo-Trotskyist.

To be sure, Shivji's attempt to analyse the Tanzanian colonial and neo-colonial social formation is deeply steeped in this neo-Marxist, neo-Trotskyist, theoretical framework. This fact is not surprising in view of the deformed way in which Marxism was first introduced at the Dar es Salaam Campus. Most of the first "left" academics who came to the Hill particularly after 1967 were the neo-Marxist type, neo-Marxism being a by-product of Trotskyism in Western Europe, USA and Latin America. This phenomenon was strengthened by the literature that was characteristic of the Dar es Salaam University Bookshop

in the period 1968-72. These were mainly Trotskyist books by people like Isaac Deutscher and Trotsky himself. Then we had the Monthly Review group of Paul A. Baran and Paul Sweezy, and lastly in the later period the Gundar Frank Latin American "underdevelopment" school. This latter group of literature was later popularised on this continent by the prolific neo-Marxist Samir Amin. The late-comer to this neo-Trotskyist piling literature was the British New Left Review. Marxist-Leninist classics were kept in the background and was not encouraged for these neo-Trotskyists regarded the classical works as "too difficult" and as not helpful in the present epoch.

In these intellectual circumstances, it is not surprising that Shivji's approach would be influenced in the way it was, and hence his analysis of classes and class struggle in Tanzania has lacked a clear and definitive concept of imperialism. His footnotes betray his leanings and the concepts on the present world order which show lack of a scientific understanding of imperialism. Analysis of a particular country in these circumstances is seen as an academic exercise and intellectual fascination.

IMPERIALISM

When capitalism comes to the scene of history, it does so as a world system. Marx points out that in its embryonic form, capitalism exists as merchant capital which mediates between two modes of production and brings them into contact by way of exchange. Here capital hardly touches the other mode except by mediating between the two in the exchange relations. The plunder of this period, based on "unequal exchange", constitutes in part the "primitive accumulation", a prerequisite to capitalist development proper. In its youth capitalism introduces itself in the formerly plundered world through initiating capitalist production and turning the peasantry into commodity producers, i.e., producers of products for exchange. This is industrial capital. In its old age capitalism begins to withhold capitalist development by subjecting the backward countries to capital exports for the aim of producing cheap raw materials and food products required for the profitable employment of capital at home. This is finance capital. Lenin's analysis shows that in the era of monopolies which are formed out of small competitive firms and banks, a monopolistic bourgeoisie - which he called the financial oligarchy - acquires control over basic industries and the credit system, and, on the basis of this control, exports finance capital for the exploitation of cheap labour and other resources in the backward countries.

This analysis of Marx and Lenin is important for the understanding of classes and social formations. It reveals to us that in its embryonic stage capitalism does not lead to the reproduction of its class because it does not succeed in fully freeing its opposite class, the direct producer from old bonds. In its international

mediation through trade, it preserves and leaves intact the classes of the backward areas. In its youthful and competitive stage, it encourages the reproduction of its class on the basis of survival of the fittest, and in its old age a monopolist stratum within it disposes of the others and increasingly turns it into a petty-bourgeoisie, and turns some of the petty-bourgeoisie into members of the proletariat while creating and reproducing a petty-bourgeoisie, proletariat and a commodity producing peasantry on a world scale. These developments in class formation are in line with the development in the productive forces, in that survival of the fittest is a stage of concentration of capital and monopoly being a stage of survivors par excellence dominating the other bourgeoisie strata on the basis of their mutual interest to exploit the working class and the peasantry in the world. But all this is possible because the bourgeoisie as a class are not only in the control of the means of production but are in control of the means and instruments of suppression of the opposing classes. These instruments of suppression are called the state. Hence, wherever capitalist production introduces itself, it necessarily creates a state machine to protect and advance the reproduction of capital. This applies to the colonial and neo-colonial territories and countries where colonial and neo-colonial states are created and perpetuated as a result of the internationalisation of bourgeois class rule.

In analysing classes and class struggles we have therefore first to grasp how capitalism and hence the capitalist class reproduce themselves and their antithesis the working class and how the product is appropriated under this system of production. These relations are production relations and have to be examined as such at all times. Here we have to draw a distinction between the total bourgeoisie and individual capitalists. The total bourgeoisie, to use Marx's words, this "totality of capital", is agreed on the "exploitation of the total working class". But this exploitation is possible only on the basis of competition. Thus the total interest of total capital can only prevail on the basis of one capitalist or monopoly competing against another. Thus what appears as a contradiction between the capitalist class (inclusive of the petty-bourgeoisie) is a non-antagonistic competition in which each individual capitalist or monopoly attempts to reap a portion of the total surplus-value produced by labour. This distinction will become apparent when we examine Shivji's analysis of classes and "class struggles" in Tanzania.

Having this background in view, let us now try to examine how Shivji goes about his analysis. Shivji starts with no such basic hypothesis of the movement of capital and this is his basic stumbling point throughout the book. Without a clear concept of imperialism, Shivji stumbles and falls over his material and hence proves incapable of synthesising a case. Marxist-Leninist

science requires that in analysing a social phenomenon, we must begin from the whole to the part, from the general to the concrete. The general postulates, the general laws of motion of society constitute the basic ideological position and hypothesis within which the particular, the concrete, can be understood. The general hypothesis from which we must examine the Tanzanian situation is the theory of imperialism worked out by Marx and Lenin and other Marxist-Leninist leaders. Shivji tries to spell out this hypothesis but falters.

Drawing on the Latin American thesis, Shivji tells us that "underdevelopment itself has to be analysed as an integral part of the world capitalist system".⁸ He continues:

It appears to me that these theoretical developments are fully applicable to the African countries. Though the degree of integration in the world on capitalist system may vary, none of them remains outside it. (p. 16)

This conclusion is justified probably because:

The capitalist mode of production in fact constitutes the dominant mode of production because as we pointed out in the above sections the Marxist notion of the dominant mode of production is inseparable from the idea (sic!) of the dominant class - ruling class holding state power. ... This is not to say that there are no other modes of production existing side by side. But they are in subordinate relation to the dominant mode. (p. 16)

Later this is reaffirmed:

The historically determined system of social production in Africa is the system of underdevelopment as an integral part of the world capitalist system. (p. 19)

Although the above neo-Marxist way of dealing with the question is unsatisfactory from our point of view, one might have nevertheless gone with it, if only Shivji maintained consistency. In a few pages later however, he begins to falter. Discussing the "Colonial (Economic) Structures", he states.

"By the time of independence Tanzanian economic structures had more or less come to be integrated in the world capitalist system". (p. 34)

This is in spite of the fact that earlier we are reminded of the dangers of the "dualist view". (p. 16) This weakened position reflected here is later turned into a new theoretical position of "partnership", between "state capital" and metropolitan capital in the post-Arusha period, in which the NDC, as a partner enters into partnerships with multinational corporations. This is because NDC's:

Main function appears to act as a catalyst fishing out and stimulating new projects in which foreign monopoly capital can combine with local state or private capital. (p. 166)

The purpose of these partnership arrangements with multinational corporations is to allow them "to serve the old ends of exploitation through new forms". (p. 167) This latter statement seems to suggest that Shivji realises the

weakness of the partnership thesis but apparently this is not the case - for we are told in relation to the period of post-Arusha Declaration that the "new class" of the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" became the controller of such capital. He states:

Political power and control over property had now come to rest in the new class. (p. 85) (Emphasis added)

This in spite of the fact that the 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' is said by Shivji to be a "dependent bourgeoisie - dependent on the international bourgeoisie" (p. 85) It is not analysed in which way it is dependent if indeed it is a partner. Earlier in "theoretical" section we are told that juridical ownership is not social ownership. (p. 6) And again in the appendix we are told that "nationalisation does not mean socialisation". (p. 165) All these statements do not seem to mean much to Shivji. Later he recognises that this "state capital" is "denationalised" and utilised by "metropolitan capital". (p. 169) He does not see that he contradicts himself, for when and at what point did this capital become "national"?

These positions of Shivji should prove to us that he has no concept of imperialism as analysed by Lenin. A concept of finance capital is lacking and this is his basic weakness. His eclectic "neo-Marxist" theories are not a sufficient basis on which to analyse a social formation. Although many of the statements Shivji makes on international capitalism and particularly on the multinational corporations are correct, they are not made in the context of theory but are merely assertions based on unsynthesized empiricist material. It is quite clear that Shivji found considerable difficulty in his work because of this lack of a scientific theory of imperialism to synthesize his material. This is confirmed by his wholesale parts of his Silent Class Struggle and his article on "Capitalism Unlimited" and tacking them at the back of his main work as appendices under the general title: "Underdevelopment and Relations with International Capitalism". (See pp. 147-178) Given this weak theoretical base on the "dominant mode" Shivji finds considerable difficulty in analysing classes and class struggles in Tanzania.

CLASS AND RACE

We have already shown that when capitalism enters its monopoly phase it does so with the rise of a financial oligarchy which dispossesses other bourgeoisie and thus turns them into a petty-bourgeoisie. Colonialism which arises with this phase implies exports of finance capital.

This capital produces a petty-bourgeoisie in the colonies. It could not reproduce a national bourgeoisie when in the imperialist country itself such a bourgeoisie is negated and destroyed, giving rise to a financial oligarchy.

In colonies which arose before this phase any national bourgeoisie which might have sprouted was routed by finance capital and was increasingly turned into a petty-bourgeoisie. This petty-bourgeoisie is stratified according to its role in the process of production and distribution. This to us must be the starting point in analysing classes in a particular country.

Shivji begins his "class analysis" from an abstraction. This is because for him:

Scientific historical analysis is neither to celebrate nor to criticise but to explain. Explanation implies nothing about an author's preference for this or that course of history. In any case this would be irrelevant; for history cannot be remade, it can only be interpreted and explained. (Preface)

Here Shivji introduces an idealist concept of history and his method follows this idealism obediently. Although we are later reminded that "a committed intellectual" (which we are not told) "explains and interprets the past to understand and demystify the present with a view to changing it", a dualism in method is introduced which pronounces itself at each stage. Thus, within this framework, Shivji trots us on an arduous route. How could this be otherwise when he holds that: "the concepts of class and class struggle are probably the most elusive in Marx's writings"? (p. 4) The fact that classes are real people in daily activity and struggle is mystified by Shivji when he states:

"The development of classes and class struggle can only be talked about tendentially, in terms of historical trends. In fact, classes hardly become fully class conscious except in situations of intense political struggle. Class consciousness does not fully dawn upon individuals until they are locked in political battles". (p. 8)

In this passage, Shivji's dualism is brought out. We are introduced to the idea that classes are not in struggle (in class sense) all the time because, he says earlier on: "while class struggle constitutes the motive force in history, it is not always clear and pure as class struggle and may take varied forms under different concrete conditions". (p. 8) Elsewhere he talks of "muted" class struggles, (p. 55) "throttling" of class struggles (p. 55-6) and "pure" class struggles. (p. 48) Inherent in this notion is the concept that although classes exist in reality, they are not always the only measure of all struggles. There are other situations that can explain relations between people and history is not a history of class struggles (although that is also true!). For this reason since not all struggles are pure class struggles ("par excellence") - for these come when classes are caught in "political battles" - we can analyse struggles on the basis of ethnicity and race. The whole theory of classes and class struggle becomes a big idea counterposed to its reality. This is the objective idealism of Kant, and becomes Shivji's point of departure. Here we have an illustration of Plato's great gimmick of transubstantiation,

in which reality is first transformed into an idea (the Ideal Form) and then the idea is transformed into reality via the interpretation of the idea.

With this petty-bourgeoisie apologia we are introduced to a static and unscientific analysis of classes and class struggle. History is brushed aside, so too the dialectical method. This is why the proletarian cultural revolution in China is examined completely out of historical context, betraying an opportunist attempt to appear revolutionary. Actually the whole analysis is eclectic and petty-bourgeoisie. This approach is reflected further in Shivji's egoistic like. "I don't agree", "in my opinion", "I think", "I suggested" etc., etc. (p. 19-21) thus betraying an individualistic and petty-bourgeoisie frame of thought which personifies and individualises things.

In chapter 5 entitled "classes in History", we are introduced to a historical treatment of the "colonial (economic) structures". This gives us no basis for the analysis of "classes in history". On the contrary we are treated to an ethnography in the tradition of bourgeois sociology. Taking Stavenhagen on Latin America as the inspiration, we are given a hotch-potch of "African-Asian relations" as class relations and struggles. The Asian is seen as a "link" between imperialism and the "African". The fact that the African trader, chief, Askari and clerk are different levels of "links" is done away with or at least mystified. But then the "Asian" in order to accord with this "African-Asian" relation is dubbed "exploiter" almost par excellence (to use Shivji's well known catch-word), and the African is the labourer, peasant, retail trader and consumer. To quote him:

"Actually, the relations of extreme exploitation of the African could be seen at all levels: as wage-labourer; as peasant-producer and as a consumer of simple goods... the Asian trader was always a price giver and the African a price taker. (p. 42)

Although these statements contain elements of truth, they are at the same time one-sided. In spite of the fact that the metropolitan bourgeoisie are held out as the "major beneficiary", the Asian here is depicted as the central exploiter with power to fix prices. The fact that prices are monopolistically fixed by the financial oligarchy and that the Asian is merely a seller who in turn receives a segment of the surplus-value is obscured. Imperialism too. The relations between Africans and Asians are seen in racial terms rather than in class (production relation) terms. We shall see that this also is true of the Asian-Asian relation. This is so although we are eclectically reminded by him that: "The essential relationship between the two communities, therefore, is to be found in the sphere of production relations rather than in the area of ethnicity or culture". (p. 44) This is not true at all when we also look at his analysis of class formations.

Shivji begins here with the metropolitan bourgeoisie whom he correctly calls "the ruling class" in colonial Tanzania, (the German financial oligarchy is forgotten), to which the "Asian commercial bourgeoisie" provided the necessary link for the domination of the economy as a whole (p. 45). But who are these "Asian commercial bourgeoisie?" The answer is given unswervingly: the whole Asian Community. This "commercial bourgeoisie" is categorised under four strata.

First, the upper stratum which consisted of the large estate and plantation owners, big wholesalers and produce merchants and a few "really 'successful professionals'" such as lawyers, doctors and accountants.

Second, another stratum which consisted of "prosperous business men," "well-to-do executives, etc. employed by foreign companies" (the comprador class).

Third, another stratum was composed of small retailers, "self-employed people" like tailors, shoemakers, "middle level public employees" and skilled craftsmen.

Fourth, manual workers, "mostly carpenters, masons, poor retailers in the countryside area and self-employed people like pot-makers, repairers and so on. (p. 45) Shivji then tells us:

It will be readily seen that the stratification is mainly based on income and therefore on the standard of living. This was a most important basis of stratification in the Asian Community. Secondly, the broad divisions are extremely vague and rough. This is because hardly any close study has been made of the intra-ethnic stratification system of the Asians. However, for our purposes, the broad sketch derived from observation is adequate. (p. 45-6)

Shivji then proceeds to give us a line of bourgeois sociological rationale for his categories. It will be seen that from the industrialist and plantation capitalist farmer to an urban Asian worker, the whole group are classified as commercial bourgeoisie. Furthermore it will be seen that Shivji himself admits that his categories are not based on "any close study... of the intra-ethnic (not class!) stratification system of the Asians", but rather on "observation", and income categories. We must conclude that the thesis is not Marxist-Leninist scientific method of analysing classes on his own admissions and accordingly must be dismissed as petty-bourgeoisie. Marxist-Leninist method treats classes on the basis of social production relations but not on the basis of ethnicity or racial differences. This is quite clear and the confusion that Shivji introduces on Tanzania must be rejected for what it is.

Shivji's analysis of the African petty-bourgeoisie introduces the erroneous concept of the colonial state, and hence the productive process under colonialism. The African petty-bourgeoisie according to Shivji, were "destined" to

become a "ruling petty-bourgeoisie, unlike its counter-part in Europe where the petty-bourgeoisie could hardly play a historical role". (p. 49) This is historically incorrect for it can be shown that the petty-bourgeoisie in Europe today are the main political force in the various countries. Quite apart from this erroneous historical position, Shivji introduces the distinction between the "yeoman" of Kenya and the "weak Kulak" of Tanzania. This becomes the foundation for his designation of Tanzania and Kenya as neo-colony and "neo-colony par excellence" respectively. Since the question of the colonial state and the neo-colonial one is joined in this manner, we shall deal with it in the next section.

To sum up on this issue, Shivji's analysis of "classes in history" has nothing in common with the Marxist-Leninist method. It introduces subjectivism and idealism. Indeed, within this chapter we are treated to diverse concepts which have nothing to do with the category of class in the Marxist sense. Thus we are told of "political conflict groups", 'partners', "sections", "factions", "wards", "social group" etc. (p. 48) The analysis is clouded with profound mysticism and folk-lore in that it is in many parts referred to as "analytical abstraction", "pure abstraction", "abstraction itself", etc. (p.44, 45) Indeed this pure theorising is so rampant that, in our view, this chapter does not qualify for the title given to it. A better title would have been: An Abstraction in Class Analysis. Even then it would fail to grapple with the problem of classes as historical categories of social (production) relations.

UHURU, ARUSHA, THE STATE AND THE "BUREAUCRATIC BOURGEOISIE"

In Part Three Shivji tries to make his basic thesis. The historical movement leading to independence is incomplete. This is because the Silent Class Struggle is supposed to have dealt with this aspect which is not the case. Thus we are introduced to the transitional period to political independence with the scantiest of historical movement. As pointed out, the analysis of the African petty-bourgeoisie introduces the line of thought on this period. We are informed by Shivji that this petty-bourgeoisie was "destined to become a ruling class". This is because his concept of state is also faulty.

Marx and Engels teach us that the state is an oppressive instrument of a class. It is always controlled by the "economically dominant class". Its purpose in bourgeois society which are beneficial to the total bourgeois class in spite of competition among them. The state is manned by people and these need not be the dominant class itself. The proletariat and peasants are frequently recruited into its machine. The petty-bourgeois, a portion of the bourgeois class, has since the 1880s become increasingly the main source of the executive force of the bourgeois state of which the financial oligarchy (monopolist bourgeoisie)

are the economically dominant class. In the words of Marx and Engels, as formulated in the Communist Manifesto:

The executive of the modern (i.e. bourgeois-D.W.N.) state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The colonial state is a product of colonialism. It arises specifically to advance the interest of the financial oligarchy and other portions of the bourgeoisie (including the petty-bourgeoisie). First to ensure that a colony is maintained as a sphere reserved for the capital of a particular monopoly group against other monopoly groups, which are allowed in this sphere on condition that they open up their own spheres to the conceding group. Secondly to suppress and oppress all opposition coming from the peoples of the colony in order to assure the monopolies cheap labour. Such suppression of uprisings as the Maji Maji rebellion testify to this role of the colonial state as an instrument of bourgeois class rule.

The opposition to the colonial rule and imperialism in the era of the proletarian revolution leads to the imperialist conceding political independence to the colonial people. It advances the struggle of the people for democratic rights and enables these to be achieved at a very limited level thus making possible for the democratic revolution to advance. But this political independence does not do away with the grip the financial oligarchy has over the country. This is all well known. But what does it mean concretely? In our view it means that the financial oligarchy now under multilateral imperialism still continues to exploit the workers and peasants of the neo-colony through continued exports of finance capital. This finance capital has magnetic power of tying all the capital resources generated internationally to its production needs. Shivji gives an illustration of this power in what he refers to as "de-nationalisation" of local capital, (p. 169) of his book. Thus the political achievements of the neo-colony are brought under the control of the financial oligarchy - a process that has never been disposed of. Under these circumstances can there be any doubt that the economically dominant class in the neo-colony is the financial oligarchy of the imperialist countries and that politics must reflect the base? The contradictions in the Third World over the last twenty years reflect this phenomenon and have clearly shown the limits of this phase of the national democratic revolution. Developments in China and Indo-China have demonstrated how these contradictions can be resolved.

It is with this background in view that we consider Shivji's analysis in Part Three unsatisfactory. First Shivji begins by suggesting that the traders were the "material base" for the transformation of Tanganyika African Association into a political organisation, with the teachers, providing the link between the urban-based petty-bourgeoisie and the "rural peasants". This

is partly true. But the Kulak in Bukoba and Kilimanjaro unlike these in Sukumaland, were opposed to the independence struggle. This was because the African trader's "dominant antagonism" was with the Asian, a commercial bourgeoisie. (p. 57) The African traders therefore supported the independence struggle because they could "only aspire to stand in the shoes of the Asian commercial bourgeoisie", which they could not do "without seizing state power":

Hence the contradiction with the colonial state became primary; it had to be solved before the contradiction between the petty-bourgeoisie and the commercial bourgeoisie could come to the fore. (p. 59)

All this is one-sided analysis and does not delve into the underlying contradictions of the people of Tanzania with imperialism. What of the European trading houses? Did these not constitute "a dominant contradiction" with the African trader, or was this because these did not "exploit" the African trader since the Asian was "the link"? What of the contradiction with monopolies? What sort of contradiction was this? All these and other questions are partially and one-sidedly dealt with.

The Kudak question is also partially if not erroneously treated. It is claimed that the strong Kulak in Bukoba and Kilimanjaro opposed TANU. This is because in these areas the organisation took the form of tribal unions. It is not shown why this was so. This is because Shivji does not treat the situation here historically. If he did he would have found that the pre-colonial class structure of these areas had a lot to do with this phenomenon. But then to do so would have taken Shivji "too far afield". (p. 60) Hence we have to be satisfied with an ahistorical analysis!

This weakness comes out clearly when Shivji tries to treat us to the reasons why the strong Kulak or "yeoman" farmer in Kenya and the "weak Kulak" in Tanzania gave rise to a "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" growing powerfully in Tanzania while in Kenya it did not. He states and we must quote him in extenso, since this is his real thesis:

In an underdeveloped African country with a weak petty-bourgeoisie, its ruling section which comes to possess the instruments of state on the morrow of independence, relatively commands enormous power and is therefore very strong. This was precisely the case in Tanzania. The situation becomes much clearer when contrasted with that in Kenya. In Kenya, there were important sections of the petty-bourgeoisie - yeoman farmers and traders, for example - besides the urban-based intelligentsia, which had already developed significant 'independent' roots in the colonial economy. Thus the petty-bourgeoisie as a class itself strong and different sections within it were more or less at par. This considerably reduced the power of the 'ruling clique' irrespective of its immediate possession of the state apparatus, and kept it 'tied' to its class base - the petty-bourgeoisie. The Kenyan situation comes closer to classical class rule in an advanced bourgeois country where, although there may be different contending groups or 'cliques', it is the bourgeoisie as a whole which continues to be the ruling or 'governing class'. Moreover, the group or 'clique' immediately in possession of the instruments of state

power, cannot in normal circumstances cut itself off from its class base.

The Tanzanian scene, on the other hand, comes closer to the 'Bonapartist' type of situation where contending classes have weakened themselves thus allowing the 'ruling clique' to cut itself off from its class base and appear to raise the state above the class struggle. Of course, it is not that the contending classes had weakened themselves in the independence struggle. But a somewhat similar situation resulted from the fact that the petty-bourgeoisie was weak and had not developed deep economic roots. This allowed the 'ruling group' a much freer hand. In other words the control of the state became the single decisive factor. For these and other reasons to be discussed later, it is proposed to identify the 'ruling group' as the 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie'. (pp. 63-64)

This overloaded thesis is a travesty of the facts. It groups together different historic situations and takes them to be similar or the same. Nothing is further from scientific method than to identify "classical class rule" (whatever that may mean) and "bonapartist 'type' of situation" (whatever that may also mean) to the neo-colonial **situation** in which the historical movement is dialectically quite different. Marxists do not discuss "types" of situations. That is left to Webersians. Marxists discuss real and concrete historical situations. Anyone familiar with the Kenya situation will know that if anything the African "yeoman" farmer and trader were the weakest in East Africa. This was because apart from his small plot in the "reserve" his other alternative was to become a squatter in the 'White Highlands'. It is because of this that the Mau Mau struggle was basically a popular struggle with all sections of the population except the few great chief families and a few loyalists. And it is because of this support to the colonialists that this "loyalist" section was rewarded with land during this period. Land consolidation did not take place until 1954 and after, so that no "yeoman farmer" arises in Kenya until the last eight years of colonialism. This is not the case with Tanzania and Uganda. Here because of the feudal-type of the pre-colonial social structure and because of the collaboration of the ruling classes with colonialism, a strong Kulak was allowed to develop. This Shivji acknowledges for Bukoba and Kilimanjaro. In Uganda-Buganda, and to some extent Busoga, Ankole, Toro, and Bunyoro, stood out in this regard as well as a few outlying areas.

The above evidence therefore must disprove Shivji's central thesis about the formation on the basis of this evidence of the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" in Tanzania as opposed to Kenya. If anything, on the basis of Shivji's thesis, this "class" should have arisen in Kenya and not vice-versa. Incidentally another "neo-Trotskyist" refers to Kenya as a "bonapartist type" of state.⁹ Indeed on the same thesis it could not have arisen in Uganda. Yet Shivji tells us that with the "movement to the left" in Uganda in 1969, there arose there "many parallels with Tanzania". (p. 123) And this it did in spite of the fact that this "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" itself was encouraging Kulakism in

Uganda at that very moment, a fact which by-the-way, goes to falsify Mamdani's thesis on class formation in Uganda, as regard this issue too. ¹⁰

If this was all, the point would have been left to lie. But then it constitutes the sole theoretical and historical justification for a thesis of "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" in Tanzania and the "class struggles" that are waged between it and the - "commercial bourgeoisie". For this reason it has to be examined further.

What is this "class" of the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie?" According to Shivji, before Arusha, "this would consist mainly of those at the top levels of the state apparatus - ministers, high civil servants, high military and police officers, "and such like". (p. 64) It had not acquired its "economic base", and after Arusha such base was acquired through nationalisations. (p. 76) They then formed part of the African "petty-bourgeoisie" which as a whole may be "grouped - in terms of their importance" - as follows:

- (a) income;
- (b) education;
- (c) standard of living and style of life (the urban milieu);
- (d) control of or potentially effective participation in decision-making bodies;
- (e) role occupied in the production process;
- (f) control of or proximity to state apparatuses". (p. 87)

It is to be noted that "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" are a class-within-a class and chart II (p. 88) reflects this class of the petty-bourgeoisie as a whole. The "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" constitutes in this chart the upper stratum which is said to comprise:

- (a) The Politico-administrative: political heads of department ministries and departments (central and local) and their top civil servants; heads and top functionaries in the judiciary, police and security, and the top leadership of the party.
- (b) The economic: heads and high functionaries of parastatals, public corporations and other quasi-economic, either state-run or state-supervised institutions (co-operatives, marketing boards, higher educational institutions included).
- (c) Military: top military officers (majors, colonels, captains, and lieutenants).

These constitute Shivji's "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" who "cut itself off from its class base" (p. 63) of the petty-bourgeoisie after Arusha Declaration and established itself as a "bourgeoisie" - within the petty-bourgeoisie! As can be seen these categories have nothing, with exception of category (e) in the first set of criteria, in common with Marx's concept of class. This, as we

have seen, Shivji allows himself to do because, according to him, the "concepts of class and class struggle are probably the most elusive in Marx's writings". (p. 4) This allows him, because of the dualism he brings in through this stratagem, to introduce in "impure" intra-class struggles between racial groups as "class struggles". And this is how the "class struggles" between this new class of the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" and the "commercial bourgeoisie" breaks out in earnest after independence and is intensified after Arusha. To quote Shivji:

The situation Tanzania found itself in after independence was precisely where power and property were separated. They simply could not remain separated for long. The incipient 'class struggle' between the petty-bourgeoisie and the commercial bourgeoisie could not be waged without state power. (p. 67)

This is written under a title "The class struggle unfolds" in which a collection of diverse incidents are collected to accord with his case. The "climax" of this "class struggle" results in a resounding victory for the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie", with the "disintegration" of the commercial bourgeoisie. (pp. 80-84) This disintegration is witnessed with "cultural exclusivism, tight-groupism, and racial prejudice among the Asians" because "their vital class interests had been destroyed". (p. 82) The old "patriotism, morality and loyalty - the objective law of class struggle" were no more!

This epitaph is as hollow as it is contrived. All the vices above of "cultural exclusivism" etc., cannot be said to have arisen after Arusha. Loyalty to the "class" cannot be said to have ended. But if we are made to think that the class is dead, Shivji soon reminds us the class is alive and ticking. Beginning with "NATEX", men" (p. 83) and following it up with the "top established merchants". (p. 84), he states that this class through "relations, acquaintances, and friends (has) woven (its) way into the state distribution organisations". (p. 84) He continues:

Thus, through bribery and corruption they continue getting supplies even when there are shortages and rationing. In this way these businessmen have made enormous amounts of money in the last four or five years. (p. 84)

This unfortunate situation arises because "unofficial and illegal means have taken over". (p.84)

Bourgeois standards of 'honesty', fair play etc. ('Honesty is the best policy!'), have been completely eroded. There has been a spectacular decline in respect of bourgeois law and bourgeois business ethics. (p. 84)

This apologia for imperialism in our judgement is uncalled for. Monopoly capitalism which comes with colonialism has no such claim for itself. How could "honesty" decline when according to Shivji himself the "Asian-African relation" before independence was characterised by one exploiting the other - one a price maker and the other the price taker. (p. 42) Corruption and

bribery of state officials in a practice engaged in by the financial oligarchy in all the imperialist centres. Surely Shivji must have heard of the Lockheed Scandals and the Shell/BP Italian political party briberies. Where in the world is the honesty of capitalism? It simply is a good idea entertained by Shivji in his naive analysis.

Be that as it may, Shivji concludes that the control of the state apparatus is:

One of the most important conditions for the continued existence and reproduction of the 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' especially in the initial stages when its grip over the economy has not been fully established. (p. 94)

This is coupled with the "class control of the neo-colonial territorial economy through the state", and the "continued reproduction of the system of underdevelopment within the world capitalist system". (p.94) In this system of reproduction the bureaucratic bourgeoisie "only does the consumption", (p. 95) out of its share of the "surplus", which according to Shivji takes the "form" of three categories: (a) surplus-value, (b) merchant profit "strict sensu", (c) surplus-labour. Because Shivji, like all the neo-Trotskyists drop Marx's concept of surplus-value, they cannot conceive that they are splitting hairs by creating other categories of "surplus". These only go to confuse the analysis of capitalist relations. Marx's concept of surplus-value which is the total surplus product of labour, would reveal that merchant profit "strict sensu", as Shivji calls it and surplus-labour are part and parcel of surplus-value. But this concept would not accord with his analysis of classes. So other forms of "surplus" must be created for the petty-bourgeoisie and commercial bourgeoisie apart from the surplus-value for the "metropolitan bourgeoisie".

Because of these major weaknesses in method and analysis Shivji's other wise generally correct observations on Ujamaa Vijijini (Part Four) and the workers strike actions (Part Five) which he calls "proletarian class struggles" are enveloped in narrowness of scope. The workers "proletarian struggles" are aimed at the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" in spite of the fact that Shivji reminds us that the state, "with all its vigour and under the guise of encouraging economic development, passes all sorts of legislation, anti-strike laws, ceiling on wages - which ultimately benefit the multinational corporation". (p. 171)

As we have shown Shivji ends in this eclectic position because he has no concept of class and state. And this is inevitable since he abandons Marxist-Leninist position. His incapability to conceptualise consistently the state as an institution which exists for the total interest of the total class is responsible for his putting out the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie", state officials,

and functionaries as a "ruling class". He goes further to attribute to this class use of state power for its own interest, when that interest does not contradict fundamentally the total interest of the class as a whole on world scale. Thus we are left in a foggy situation where we do not see the wood for the forest. The fact that in every bourgeois state, of which a neo-colonial state is one, part of surplus-value in form of taxes, profits and rents accrue to the state for its maintenance is seen by Shivji to be the condition for the "reproduction" of the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" as a class. This is erroneous and misleading. His lack of a clear concept of class also is responsible for a lot of juggling with petty situations which are magnified to accord with his petty theories. The fact that all Marx's writings are concerned with nothing but analysis of society, an analysis which is deep in class analysis, is obtrusively brushed aside as "elusive". As we have said this gives him a chance to smuggle in his own "classes" which are but racial and ethnic groups and his "class struggles" which are nothing but intra-class competitive struggles. The real class struggles of the proletariat and other exploited classes are mystified under this general idealist presentation.

CONCLUSION

We conclude therefore that Shivji's book is very bad. Since it claims to be a Marxist thesis, it puts Marxist-Leninist scholarship - if one may use that term - in an extremely bad light. Indeed it makes a beginner in Marxism extremely flabbergasted with the text. The text is abstracted from the real movement of history and concepts are therefore unclear and misleading. It also gives an incorrect position on Tanzania, which even Marxist-Leninists not knowledgeable about the Tanzanian situation would find difficult to understand. A scientific exposition about society requires a scientific method. The scientific method of Marx requires an analysis, based on historical materialism, of the movement of history as a whole. The particular movement can then be analysed within this context. Failure to do this leads us into a dualistic view of society, and introduces idealist misconceptions which can only lead us back into darkness and ignorance about our societies. Marx's materialistically based scientific method enables our countries - which bourgeois historians banished from history - to be looked at afresh in their pre-colonial setting. Reginald Coupland, the official imperialist historian writing on the "history" of East Africa came to the conclusion that before Livingstone:

The main body of Africans had stayed for untold centuries sunk in barbarism: Such it might almost seem had been Nature's decree. So they remained stagnant, neither going forward nor going back. The heart of Africa was scarcely beating.¹¹

Such a view of our peoples is contradicted by the very movement in our

societies before colonialism. A scientific study will reveal that a variety of social life existed - societies at various levels of social development - from classless to class societies re-enacting the social progress of man throughout the world. The myth that Africa was classless which Shivji correctly points out (p. 18) is a product of this colonialist ideology which holds out our societies as having been stagnant, neither going back nor forward, a view contradicted by history itself.

Bourgeois scholarship therefore cannot enable us to delve into our past and establish the real dynamic movement. Marxist materialist based conception of history is the only tool available to us. It is this reason that we take great exception to the way Shivji analyses the Tanzanian situation. By reintroducing the idealist world outlook we are pushed back into the lap of bourgeois obscurantism, via the despondent root of neo-Trotskyism, which we all must reject. Although Shivji may not personally think of himself as putting forward a neo-Trotskyist position, we have shown that his main source of inspiration and ideas in neo-Marxist (neo-Trotskyist) literature, a fact attested to by his references and footnotes. It is for this reason that his analysis adopts an eclectic approach which takes us away from a scientific approach. This is why we conclude that his contribution cannot be accepted as a Marxist-Leninist thesis on class struggle in Tanzania.

FOOTNOTES

1. Shivji, Issa G.: Class Struggles in Tanzania, Heinemann and T.P.H., 1976.
2. Shivji, Issa G.: The Silent Class Struggle, T.P.H., 1973.
3. Saul, J.: "Who is the Immediate Enemy?" In Cliffe and Saul: Socialism in Tanzania E.A.P.H., 1973, pp. 354-357.
4. Nabudere, D.W.: The Political Economy of Imperialism, Mimeo 1975 p. 502-3.
5. Frank, Gundar: "Who is the Immediate Enemy?" In Crockroft Frank and Johnson (Editors) Dependence and Underdevelopment, Penguin, 1972, pp. 429-30.
6. Frank, Gundar: Op. cit., p. 429-30.
7. Shivji, I.G.: Class Struggles in Tanzania, pp. 5/6. References to this book will henceforth be indicated in brackets in the text itself.
8. Marx and Engels: The Communist Manifesto, International Publishers, New York, 1948, p. 11.
9. Leys, C.: Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-colonialism, 1964-1971. Heinemann, 1975.
10. Mamdani, M.: "Politics and Class Formation in Uganda", Monthly Review, Heinemann, 1976. We intend to deal with this later in a critique of Mamdani.
11. Coupland, R.: The Exploitation of East Africa, 1938.