

IMPERIALISM, THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND THE POLITICS OF "CLASS FORMATION" IN UGANDA.

(A critical review of M. Mamdani's: POLITICS AND CLASS FORMATION IN UGANDA.¹⁾

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1. INTRODUCTION

In our Critique of Issa Shivji's Class Struggles in Tanzania,² we indicated that Mamdani's treatment of classes and state was not different from the manner in which Shivji analysed them in Tanzania, and gave notice that we intended to deal with this aspect of the matter at a later date. Equally in our Reply³ to Mamdani and Harko, we felt unable to accept their criticism of Shivji's book on the ground that Mamdani's treatment of the Uganda situation was basically the same. In any case we felt also that the criticism was "inadequate and in our view came too late", and added: "For Mahmood to repudiate Issa therefore he must first repudiate himself". We still hold this view and now that Mamdani's book is out for all to see and judge, we feel it is timely to put our criticisms of his thesis on Uganda across, with the hope that lessons can be drawn from it in our theoretical search for reliable knowledge of our societies in order that changes may be brought about to further advance our people's democratic struggles against imperialism.

The debate that ensued over our Critique of Shivji has shown that these theoretical positions held by Issa Shivji and Mahmood Mamdani are well entrenched in them as could be seen from Hirji's wretched defence of Shivji's book; as well as Mamdani's article on the Makerere Students carnage published in Maji Maji No. 29.

In our 81-page⁴ rebuttal of Hirji it became clear that the two positions held by them and us were irreconcilable and had in fact become antagonistic, which was proof that our bringing the differences in the open was wholly justified since this helped demarcate the two lines. Although recourse was taken to vulgar language and efforts made to divert attention from the real issues in the debate by dragging in the question

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of "social imperialism", which had nothing to do with the issues at stake, on the whole the debate has been beneficial and has visibly enabled many people to face seriously the fundamental questions involved in the debate.

At a certain stage it was alleged that referring to Shivji's book, and to the same extent also to Mamdani's as "neo-Marxist/neo-Trotskyist, eclectic, unscientific, and petty-bourgeois", was belittling and indeed "abusive". These reactions are reminiscent of similar accusations made against Lenin and we refer here to Lenin's rejection of his opponents accusations when he said:

"Our opponents display remarkable short-sightedness in regarding the terms reactionary and petty-bourgeois as polemical abuse, when they have perfectly definite historico-philosophical meaning".⁵

Elsewhere he refers to the word "reactionary" in the same vein and points out that the term is employed in its historico-philosophical sense, describing only the error of the theoreticians who take modes for their theories "from obsolete forms of society". It does not apply at all to the personal qualities of the theoreticians, or to their programmes. "Everybody knows that neither Sismondi nor Proudhon were reactionaries in the ordinary sense of the term".⁶ We nowhere use the word "reactionary", but we concur with Lenin on this interpretation for the words "petty-bourgeois", "eclectic", etc, etc, which we used in reference to our friends' writings. The other terms like Neo-Marxist and Neo-Trotskyist refer to trends in the international working class movement. Indeed Mamdani's friends who see his thesis in very favourable light use the same description of his work. In the Spring '76 brochure issued by Monthly Review Press, the publishers of Mamdani's book, while announcing new titles, appended the following preview against his book:

"For description and assessment of Mamdani's important study, we offer excerpts from the report of specialist in African affairs who was asked to report on the manuscript before the decision was made to undertake publication:

"It is in my view very nearly a perfect piece of work, as a work of art as well as a work of scholarship. It is without question an uncommonly fine specimen of the neo-Marxist "underdevelopment" school - indeed, probably its best fruit to date in African studies.--- In fact, he provides a most imaginative and subtle analysis of the highly intricate politics of class, race, and tribe in modern Uganda, and is particul-

arly skillful in his exposition of the manifold class contradictions and conflicts of Uganda society, as for example between British, Asian, and African interests". (Emphasis added).

In the main we fully agree with the above assessment, although we note that in the edited version of this assessment which appears on the back-cover of the English and African edition of his book,⁷ the whole sentence about "neo-Marxism" is conveniently left out and the work is referred to as "a pioneering Marxist analysis"! And this after the debate started. Call it what you will, the fact remains that Mamdani's treatment of his subject matter is clearly neo-Marxist, of the "underdevelopment school" of Gundar Frank, clearly a "work of art" and his analysis of "class contradictions" on the basis of race, (British, Asian and African) and tribe as we shall see, highly "imaginative and subtle". We would add that the work is unscientific, eclectic and petty-bourgeois, and to Mamdani's analysis we now revert.

2. IMPERIALISM AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION.

In any analysis of an oppressed and dominated country under modern imperialism, the starting point must be a clear knowledge of the main movement - namely imperialism - which historically brought those countries under domination; and here Marx and Lenin are the light to go by. Their theoretical work enables us to grasp the tools of analysis in handling complex social phenomena. In emphasizing the need to start with Marx we defy those who decry "Marxist Orthodoxy" and prefer a neo-Marxist approach which superficially looks at social phenomena without grappling with the fundamental laws of the movement in a scientific manner. In emphasizing that social relations must be examined from production and not exchange Marx underscores the scientific method. The movement has to be seen as a historical process. The laws of capitalist production he propounds are based on this historical approach. Thus in analysing politics and classes in Uganda we must examine the process of production as determined historically by first pointing to this fundamental movement.

(a) Imperialism: The key to all this is Marx's analysis of capitalism and its unfolding on world scale. He points out that as capitalism develops it concentrates into fewer hands. "One capitalist always kills many".⁸ Marx further emphasises that this process of "one capitalist killing many"

is assisted by the credit system, so that increasingly the owners of productive capital while becoming fewer have at their disposal vast sums of money capital owned by other strata and classes in a society, the latter becoming mere earners of interest and upon this arrangement arises the "entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world-market, and with (it), the international character of the capitalist regime".⁹

"Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolise all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitations; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself".¹⁰

This process can only be understood when viewed in its totality on world scale. Lenin's work on imperialism further enriches this analysis of Marx. His contribution lies in his pointing out that the tendency towards concentration and centralisation in the era of monopolies had led to a "coalescence and merger" of production monopolies with the banks creating a financial oligarchy on the basis of export of finance capital, which then divided the whole world among themselves:

"Concentration has reached the point at which it is possible to make an approximate estimate of all sources of raw materials of a country and even, as we shall see, of several countries, or of the whole world".¹¹

This was so because "under capitalism the home market is inevitably bound up with the foreign market".¹²

(b) The National Question: In this world-wide exploitation capitalism creates contradictions between classes, nations and countries. The fundamental contradiction that runs throughout the whole world under the rule of finance capital is the one between labour and capital; between the bourgeoisie and the working class. But in the same world-wide operation, imperialism oppresses and dominates weaker nations and colonial countries and peoples including the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie of these countries. This contradiction is a principal contradiction in those countries still oppressed and constitutes the national question, and is resolved with the success and consummation of the new democratic revolution.

Therefore in studying and analysing any of the development in Uganda we have to grasp these two contradictions. Imperialism as that force which exploits and dominates Uganda has to be the strong point of any correct understanding of other contradictions within Uganda, and it is here that Mamdani's analysis gets into great difficulties.

Mamdani begins by pointing to the need to "understand the social formation"¹³ on the basis of "class relations". (p. 11):

"But if class relations are contradictory relations and the class struggle a political struggle, what explains the cohesion of a social formation, the fact that the class struggle does not tear it apart at the seams? To understand the relative stability of a social formation, we must direct our attention at the role and the nature of the state". (p. 11).

In our view while the state is an apparatus of a ruling class, the relative stability of an oppressed country will be determined ultimately by the relations of production, which themselves are class relations. Hence the need to understand the mechanisms of these relations and the role of state within a wider nexus of imperialism. But what is Mamdani's understanding of these relations of production in this wider nexus of imperialism? Adopting a Gunda Frank approach to the question, whom he quotes approvingly, he finds himself increasingly adopting on eclectic position. Referring to the period of colonialism as the "phase of underdevelopment", he states:

"In terms of the economy, underdevelopment is a process that subordinates production in the territorial economy to the accumulation needs of metropolitan capital". (p. 6).

This was accomplished, according to Mamdani, "not as much in how production is carried out as in what is produced: the production of single cash crops for export -- to the metropolitan market" (p. 6). While clearly both questions were important, it is no accident that Mamdani does not think the "how" was important. This is reflected in his use of the general term "metropolitan capital". In the case of Uganda its underdevelopment subordinated production to the accumulation needs of British capital" (p. 12) although later on we are told that "the emergence of cotton and coffee as the principal crops in Uganda signified the subservience of production in Uganda to the accumulation needs of the British economy" (p. 48). Later still we

are told that the "extracting of surplus-labour"... (was) for the "metropolitan economy" (p. 52), and that the state served the interests of the "metropolitan bourgeoisie" (p. 58). Here Mamdani utilises concepts such as "British capital", "metropolitan capital", "British economy", "metropolitan bourgeoisie" interchangeably.

The import of these concepts become clear when we realise that Mamdani is at pains to comprehend the dialectical mechanisms of imperialism, the rule of finance capital. Here we are told that it is underdevelopment not the export of finance capital which "subordinates production" in the territorial economy to the needs of metropolitan capital. He does not see that "metropolitan capital" and "metropolitan bourgeoisie" as concepts are too general for analysis of imperialism. This eclecticism becomes even clearer when he treats us to an analysis of what he calls the "crisis of accumulation":

"The Ugandan economy was an underdeveloped economy, integrated into the world capitalist market as a dependent economy. The crisis of underdevelopment manifested itself as the crisis of accumulation" (p. 264).

But what is the nature of this "crisis of accumulation?" Mamdani answers in relation to Uganda that it was balance of payments crisis, that is a crisis created by the adverse terms of trade. This explains, according to Mamdani, the dependence of the ruling class in the underdeveloped capitalism and its fragmentation to the extent that "it cannot establish effective control over the nationally generated surplus" (p. 288). Thus we understand from Mamdani here that the colony is exploited by the financial oligarchy not at the level of production but at the level of the market. It is not the exploitation of labour and the extraction of surplus-value from the worker and poor peasant in the colony, but the crisis of the balance of payments, brought about the weakness of the "ruling class of underdeveloped capitalism", which happens because of the "unequal exchange" between their products and those of the "metropolitan bourgeoisie". His concept of "unequal exchange" comes out clearly when he explains the causes of this crisis in Uganda for the period 1961-1966 and the "glaring shortcomings" thereof because of the belief that economic development should be based on expansion of export production and foreign capital transfers, he states":

"But reality did not conform. Instead of an inflow of capital, each year witnessed an increased outflow to the advanced capitalist economies, resulting in a balance-of-payments crisis. The monetary outflow took two forms: an indirect transfer of values through unequal exchange in international trade, and direct money transfers. While the production of coffee doubled and that of cotton increased by half between 1962 to 1969, the international prices for both declines and, these being the principal export commodities, the terms of trade for the economy as a whole worsened" (p. 264).

It is for this reason, he continues that the 1969 crisis "manifested itself at both the level of the economy and policy, as a result of factors national as well as international" (p. 265). Thus although Mamdani warns us against "dualism" within the Ugandan economy (p. 52), he adopts dualism when it comes to analysing the relations between Uganda and the metropole. This reflects the eclectic nature of the analysis throughout the work. The concept of "underdeveloped capitalism" and "metropolitan economy" is built in the analysis. Imperialism is not seen as an "integrated" system although we are told it is, when he states in the quotation that the Ugandan economy was "integrated into the world capitalist economy"! This is also confirmed by his concept of two modes of production -representing dual economies of the "communal form of production "which is internal and "the capitalist mode of production" which is external:

"Because communal production coexisted with the capitalist mode of production, labour power was paid drastically below its value: the communal form, even when producing for use, was subordinated to and subsidized the cost of production of the capitalist mode. Just as the petty production (sic!) supplied cheap raw materials to the capitalist mode internationally, the communal form provided cheap labour to the capitalist mode nationally" (p. 140).

(c) Dual Economy-Dual Analysis: This multiplication of modes shows that Mamdani does not see imperialism as integrated whole. It cannot be comprehended how labour-power can be paid "below its value" if it is not part of the capitalist mode. Clearly the law of value in that case would not apply and what we would have is plunder of the type Marx discusses in relation to merchant's capital of the feudal period, i.e. "unequal exchange of unequal values". This is really what Mamdani has in mind. Moreover it is extremely difficult to comprehend how the

"international capitalist mode" can be differentiated from the "national capitalist mode" (whatever this may mean). Furthermore he establishes a dualism between labour for "petty production" (!) for the world market, and cheap labour for the "capitalist mode nationally", when no such distinction exists in actual life. Thus whereas within Uganda Mamdani implores us not to look at the "traditional" economy in isolation of the "modern", because otherwise reality would not be understood, "unless their relation is grasped both in terms of historical development and contemporary functioning, and unless both are analysed in relation to the metropolitan economy", (pp. 52-53), here when it comes to the Uganda economy as a whole and the metropolitan economy a dualism is established! Why? On the basis of unequal exchange arising out of "unequal" wages. This however confirms Mamdani's thesis that it is "merchant capital" which dominates "the underdeveloped capitalism", and further under-scores Mamdani's assertion, in their joint comment on our Manuscript that: "The peasant doesn't sell his labour-power, he sells his product and his exploitation is the result of the undervaluation of his product. 'Unequal exchange' explains the exploitation of the petty commodity producer in the neo-colony ---" (p. 8). Here Mamdani clearly has no understanding that it is precisely when labour-power is paid for at its equivalent that the capitalist exploits labour. This does not mean to say that in certain cases and even country there may be more or less payment of labour-power below value within exchange of equivalents. But this fact cannot be the basis for analysing exploitation and domination under the era of finance capital. Indeed Mamdani gives us four "general" characteristics of underdeveloped capitalism there-by underlining its "historical specificity":

- (i) With colonialism, the penetration of metropolitan capital which subordinates the "structure of the underdeveloped economy" to its accumulation needs.
- (ii) Circulating (unproductive) capital (Mamdani here must have meant to refer to "capital of circulation") dominates production. This is the "primacy of commercial capital" based on import - export trade.
- (iii) Commercial capital possesses a monopoly base which is not the result of class struggle "between different sections

of capital" (sic.). It is not the result of competition but of political action, which secures by legislation (Note that!) a monopoly base for the "territorially-based" capital, which itself is an "expression of the monopoly base of metropolitan capital to which it is tied in a dependent relation" (sic!). The case in point is the Indian commercial bourgeoisie.

- (iv) The surplus that is retained internally takes "dominantly the form of merchant's profits". Agricultural surplus are "siphoned off into commerce", leading to pauperisation of the producer, which "dictates the very process of class formation in underdeveloped capitalism". (pp. 144/45).

Thus the dualism is complete. "Underdevelopment" is blamed on merchant commercial capital, although its "primacy" is seen also as the "primacy" of metropolitan capital to which it is "tied in a dependent relation". This "historical specificity of underdeveloped capitalism", manifested itself specifically in Uganda, according to Mamdani, with two consequences at the "level of class formation":

"One result of this process was that, of the class physically located within the colony, the one that emerged dominant by the time of World War II was the Indian bourgeoisie. Unlike the bourgeoisie in spite of the fact that its most important investments were in the processing industries, cotton ginning, and coffee curing. Processing, however, is not really an industry. It is an adjunct of commerce and its purpose in Uganda was to facilitate the export of the produce involved. The Indian bourgeoisie was thus an intermediate class; its interests were in harmony with, and subservient to, those of the metropolitan bourgeoisie, which dominated the entire colonial system and was the prime beneficiary of the export-import economy. As it expanded its operations it depended on British finance capital, principally the National Bank of India Ltd., as its chief source of credit. In this sense the Indian bourgeoisie was a dependent class" (p. 108).

Up to this stage it can be seen that Mamdani does not understand imperialism. He explains events about colonialism as if Marx and Lenin did not exist. Indeed he writes as if he is anticipating them!

He clearly had not read them, otherwise things which bother and confuse him would not arise. Sunk in "neo-Marxist" jargonery, he cannot comprehend the laws of motion of capitalism at its highest stage. Having no concept of finance capital he has dual vision about the "territorial economy" otherwise he would not be telling us about merchants and traders in the colony - a "commercial bourgeoisie" (!) dominating production at the level of the "territorial economy!" He greatly underestimates and excludes the position of huge trading firms in Uganda,¹⁴ like Unilever and its subsidiaries in Uganda, etc. He reduces the financial oligarchy into a meek creature allowing its colony to be dominated by "Indian bourgeoisie" - commercial at that!

While at one point Mamdani told us that in "underdeveloped capitalism" the dependence of the "ruling class" and its fragmentation make it impossible to "establish effective control over the nationally generated surplus" (p. 288), we are here now being made to believe that in the Ugandan colonial "territorial economy" a class, which is not even a "ruling class", established economic dominance there. Moreover this analysis suggests that the "Indian bourgeoisie" was "subservient" and "dependent" on the metropolitan bourgeoisie "for credit" on the basis of an exchange relationship for it is in "this sense that the Indian bourgeoisie was a dependent class". It is "Indian commercial capital" which exploits the peasant, since the "agricultural surplus" is "siphoned off into commerce". The "metropolitan bourgeoisie" becomes the overall beneficiary only of the import-export economy, in which they controlled the terms of exchange. This also explains why the crisis of accumulation manifests itself as a balance of payments crisis due to worsening terms of trade since the metropolitan bourgeoisie are beneficiaries at the level of trade, and not production. The fact that accumulation could never under imperialism take place in the colony in the interest of the colonial "national economy" in the first place is completely lost sight of by Mamdani! It follows too that there is no production relation between the financial oligarchy with the colonial worker and peasant. Therefore the Indian commercial bourgeoisie is the beneficiary at the production level of the cheap labour "nationally!" If this is not eclecticism - what is it?

(d) Genesis of the colonial economy in Uganda: Be that as it may, this inability to approach his material historically and dialectically compounds his problems when Mamdani begins to tackle the actual production relations in Uganda. This comes out clearly in chapter 3 of the book. Equipped with no concept of finance capital which alone can explain the production relations in the colony he presents to us a wholly petty-bourgeois analysis of the Ugandan situation, which he does when he explains these relations in racial terms: reflecting the approach outlined above.

"From the outset, the thrust of colonial policy was to keep Africans in the agricultural economy and out of the marketplace - thus keeping them away from activities (such as commerce) that would give them the skill, the vision, and the opportunity to organise the colonial masses while allocating the trading function, through administrative encouragement, to an alien community that could easily be segregated from the mass of the colonised and thus rendered politically safe. The petty-bourgeoisie in the colony had for political reasons to be an ethnically alien petty-bourgeoisie" (p. 70/71).

Here we are given the picture of a contrived almost conspiratorial colonial policy: keep natives down by the use of an "alien community". He quotes Lugard to substantiate him, but Lugard says something quite the opposite! Yet the same Mamdani a few pages before had told us something quite different. He had told us that of 39,771 indentured labourers from India, 17,278 (18.3%) stayed behind who "took to petty-trades". The rest either died or returned. In our view these indentured labourers (coolies) from a colonised and oppressed country who worked almost on slave terms, were brought to Uganda not for the purpose of blocking the progress of the native peoples, but for being exploited by British finance capital themselves. The reason was because no native labour was available for constructing the railway. Mamdani here provides a scientific explanation but then immediately forgets it. He states:

"When the late-nineteenth-century 'Scramble for Africa' began, Britain's primary and most populous colony was India. At the same time, the peoples Britain conquered in this period all had pre-capitalist economies: labour was not yet a commodity. Those who practised agriculture had access to land, while those who manufactured owned their own tools. Colonial administrators time and again recorded the unresponsiveness of the East African peasantry to wage incentives" (p. 67).

Mamdani then gives us a quotation from the colonial office report to the effect that every possible means were tried "to induce the natives to labour (i.e. on the railway) but without avail; even under the pressure of famine in 1898-99 nothing would persuade him to work continuously or systematically" (p. 67). Mamdani adds: "For this Britain turned to its most populous colony, India" (p. 67). Lugard is also quoted to say: "From the overcrowded provinces of India ---. We could draw labourers, both artisan and coolies, while they might also afford a recruiting ground for soldiers and police" (p. 68). Mamdani then concludes:

"Thus official slavery was replaced by its disguised form. In East Africa, the need for labour to build the Uganda Railway began the flow of Indian immigrants into the region" (p. 68).

As we have seen from Mamdani himself, it is 18.3% of these "disguised slaves" who remained behind to engage in "petty-trade". He also states:

"Along with the railway workers came soldiers, who were used to quell mutinies within the ranks of the Sudanese troops that had been employed for the initial colonization of East Africa. As the railway advanced, there gradually developed a demand for artisans, not only for the railway itself but also for the newly established mission and government stations. Clerks, carpenters, bricklayers, blacksmiths, and gardeners-they all came from India" (p. 69)

Indeed this contract recruitment continued until 1922. This historical background is important in enabling us to comprehend in a scientific manner British colonial exploitation in Uganda. Populist claptrap that Mamdani engages in does not help us. An underdeveloped "exchange economy" would have been created without this "alien minority". But this racial treatment of relations of production by Mamdani (as with Shivji) has its reason, for the entire analysis is built on racial and even tribal "class" categories.

"While state policy kept the African out of the market place, (sic!) the Asian was made the link in the export-import exchange economy. All necessary relations (?) between the exploiters and the exploited were mediated through this class. In return for its services, the Indian petit-bourgeoisie, without being members of the ruling class, became beneficiaries of the colony's inequalities"(pp. 71/72).

Thus we have a peculiar situation in which the "Indian commercial bourgeoisie" not being "members of the ruling class" are given the full benefits of a ruling class of "dominating" the colonial "national economy" through the colonial state. We shall have more to say on this in the next section but suffice to note here that Mamdani's notion of a "ruling class" is seen in racial terms. We are then treated to a long analysis of the "contradictions" between the colonial state and the Indian petty-bourgeoisie (the dukawallah) wherein we are made to believe that because the Indian petty-bourgeoisie were not members of the ruling class, they "could not expect long-term protection from the colonial state" when evidence adduced by him clearly shows the protection. Indeed how could traders in a colony do so without such protection in the long run. His only ground for sympathy for this down-trodden class was that they were required to purchase trading licences under the 1901 trading law, and the cotton marketing rules increasingly limited the area of their competition in favour of large operators!

Thus upto this point it can be seen that Mamdani's analysis as regards the production relation which was established by the export of finance capital in the colony is utterly lacking. This is because Mamdani treats the state at the level of politics and law - in the super-structure only. He does not see that in the era of monopoly the state intervenes in production and exchange to advance the interest of the financial oligarchy. Here in Uganda the colonial state, by appropriating part of the surplus-value produced in the colony as taxes, was able to erect a transportation and communication system; build structures to research in and protect seed, soil, forests and animals; advance agricultural production; supervise its collection and transportation to the imperialists country. All these were productive activities engaged in by the state on behalf of the oligarchy, and constituted the technical pre-conditions of production which no single monopoly could provide. It went further. It set up administrative structures - which assisted this process, set up hospitals to repair damaged labour, set up police stations, schools, and churches-all necessary social preconditions for production. To enable production and exchange it helped to establish banks and a credit system as well as provide a monetary policy for the colony consistent with the interests of the financial oligarchy. It nationalised all the lands and turned them into crown lands, save few tracts

given to the compradore Ingleza faction in Buganda and elsewhere. Here the peasant was then put to work, paid a price which was deducted by the state in form of taxes and reduced to a bare wage. Having no land in actuality, earning no rent from it, being given subsidized seed and hoe from taxes - a minute "capital" for his employment - where was the product that Mamdani calls "his " that he exchanged?! Mamdani takes the consciousness and illusion of the poor peasant to be a substitute for scientific analysis! He cannot see that the financial oligarchy through the agency of state capital, itself a portion of finance capital, established a production domination over the colony by linking itself in this way to the peasant and not through credit chains as such. Here the Indian featured not only as a trader but also as a dominated and exploited by the financial oligarchy also. Mamdani confirms this in the quote to we have referred when he pointed out that the Indians came not only as soldiers but as workers on the railway, and as the railway developed more workers were required from India in artisan, clerical, carpentry, bricklaying, blacksmith and gardening jobs, not only for the railways but also "for the newly established missions and government". Nowhere does Mamdani suggest that all these workers became traders. The fact is that many Asians continued as workers up to the 1972 expulsions.

(e) Contradiction between British and Indian capital!

Mamdani in his next treatment of the "Indian commercial bourgeoisie" gives us a profound picture of antagonisms. Although themselves also "not members of the ruling class" these bourgeoisie are protected and in the end by 1938 they had secured control of the whole-sale trade and ginning industry. We will leave the question of class for the next section and concentrate here with what Mamdani calls "contradiction between British and Indian capital". According to Mamdani this contradiction arose following the "entry of British capital" in the period 1906-1916 and that of "Indian Capital" with the arrival in Uganda of Narandas Rajaram & Co. Ltd., "a well-known Indian firm with vast capital resources and considerable experience in the cotton industry" (p. 87). It is here that Mamdani's understanding of imperialism becomes clearly deficient.

The period 1918-1928 a period of organisation of cotton ginning by the colonial state is examined by Mamdani in this eclectic manner. According to Mamdani, when handginning proved a technical set-back against the middlemen - who alone, on the basis of continued metropolitan demand, "guaranteed a free market and relatively high price to the grower", (p. 76) the colonial state as a result of the enactment of the Uganda Cotton Rules of 1913 both limited their area of operation and their numbers. The stage was set - for "monopolistic tendencies" to be consolidated. Thus the entry of "British Capital" increasingly became necessary. Although Mamdani has a tinge of "sympathy" for the middlemen and the peasant, yet he does bring out the compelling reasons for this development. This was because the need to keep costs down and the need to maintain a high quality cotton required the location of ginneries near to areas of cultivation. Thus by 1914 seven "metropolitan-based firms" - five British, one French and one German and another Uganda company "entered the field". At this point "Indian Capital" also made its entry at first through "contributions of many corroborators":

"By this time a new figure had appeared on the scene... Allidina Visram established the first Indian-owned ginnery in partnership with a number of less substantial merchants" (p. 86).

This opportunity for the Indian ginner came at the beginning of the war "and the consequent break in shipping between Uganda and Liverpool" (p. 86). As a result:

"A number of Indian traders came forward, bought the seed at low prices, and shipped it to Bombay and to Japan" (p. 86)

In Bombay the cotton found "immediate favour" as the industry there was shifting from the production of coarse cloth to fine counts, and thus in search of long staple fine cotton, which Uganda provided:

"The immediate result was two-fold: capital flowed into Uganda from Bombay textile interest and, in conjunction with a multitude of local cash subscribers various Indians who in the past had been employees of, or commissioned buyers for, European ginning firms in Uganda supported a second Indian ginnery" (p. 86/7).

But the British Cotton Growing Association (B.C.G.A.) formed by certain monopolies in Lancashire, "anxious to prevent the Uganda crop being diverted away from Lancashire", decided to buy the entire

crop from ginners, "thereby guaranteeing them a profitable and secure market" (p. 87). The entry of Narandas Rajaram & Co. Ltd., "at one stroke" ended the domination of British capital and thereby forged a "strong link between Uganda and Bombay market" (p. 88). Thus begins the great "contradiction between British and Indian Capital" which Mamdani describes at length (pp. 88-92):

"The contradiction between British and Indian capital was in substance between better-established capital that was striving to restrict entry into the market and new capital that was attempting to break into that same market. One was striving for monopoly, the other for free trade. In the decade after the war, this contradiction appeared as a racial conflict between the British and Indian ginners" (p. 88).

It is clear from the above quote that what Mamdani is analysing under this section is nothing but capitalist competition between different factions of British capital. Since he cannot comprehend a dialectical totality due to his dualistic outlook Mamdani finds a basis for establishing a contradiction between the same finance capital and on the basis of it a racial conflict. The result of this so-called racial conflict, and in spite of the fact that the era of "free trade" was long gone, and in spite of the further fact that the colonial state was a state of the "metropolitan bourgeoisie" - a "not neutral referee", and despite the fact that the "Indian commercial bourgeoisie" was not part of the "ruling class", Indian "big capital" coming from India, had by 1926 broken the monopoly of "British Capital", and by 1938 had established a clear hegemony over the "territorially based economy". And what was the secret of this victory: it was costs of ginning which "Indian capital" through exploitation of family and caste labour were able to maintain 100% lower than "British capital".

"The argument now focused on the question of the destination of Uganda cotton, and how important it was that it reached Lancashire" (p. 95).

We will ignore this "important question" for the time being for it should have been clear at the outset that it was irrelevant nor did it really arise in actual life. However for Mamdani it is important because it helps him get out of difficulties which he created for himself.

This difficulty is created by Mamdani when he erects, as we have noted, a "contradiction" out of the blue between "British" and what he calls "Indian capital", upon which he then builds a "racial

conflict". Had Mamdani had a concept of finance capital he would have known that what he calls "Indian capital" and "British capital" were one and the same thing. But with Mamdani's dualism, such a concept, would be a crude instrument not susceptible to an "artistic" analysis of the material. This enables him to establish a barrier between British Banks and Lancashire as well as Bombay and London - all bases of British finance capital at this point of time.

Mamdani however soon wakes up to this point. He remembers that the National Bank of India, despite its name was "British Bank whose operations were based on Indian trade". It is this same bank which gave "all-out support" to Narandas Rajaram whom, we were told by Mamdani, had "at one stroke" struck a blow to the domination of the industry by "British capital!"

At this point too Mamdani's question becomes important. "How important was it that this cotton reached Lancashire?" Mamdani answers this question himself:

"Since the shipping crisis during the World War I, Bombay had been an important destination for Uganda cotton, and from consuming less than 1% of Uganda's export in 1914-15, it became, by 1921 the market for over half" (p. 95)

This does not quite answer the question, but it is bringing us nearer. He continues:

"In addition, even (yes indeed!) cotton destined for Lancashire often went through Bombay" (p. 95).

But why was it necessary to ship to Bombay cotton destined for Lancashire? Mamdani answers the question himself:

"As the 1923 Governor's Inquiry into the cotton Industry discovered, it was more expeditious to ship via Bombay because of more regular steamship service over both sea routes. Further more, freight from Kilindini in Kenya to Liverpool cost shs. 96/= per ton dead weight, while from Bombay to Liverpool it only cost shs. 50/80; the difference of 45/20 provided considerable margin to pay the Kilindini-Bombay freight cost. Also, during the ten-day transit it was possible to effect a more satisfactory sale: if the Liverpool market were better then, the cotton could be sent onward, if not, it could be offloaded at Bombay. The figures quoted in the accompanying table therefore exaggerate the position of India as the ultimate destination of the cotton exported since they are based on the destination of cotton given at the time of loading on the Kenya docks" (95/6).

This solves Mamdani's riddle arrived at through circuitous route of Kilindini-Bombay, Bombay-Kilindini, and Kilindini-Liverpool (for Lancashire), the cotton route, which for the sake of analysis could have been avoided if he had a concept of finance capital.

If the Governor of Uganda did not know by 1923 that it was cheaper to produce with "Indian Capital" than with "British" as to warrant an enquiry, the British financial oligarchy knew this fact very well otherwise the National Bank of India would have never given "all-out support" to Narandas Rajaram. With a 100% reduction on ginning costs and an almost 25% reduction on shipping, Lancashire soon abandoned the B.C.G.A. in their effort to reorganise the ginning industry along "economic and British lines", for according to Mamdani "both Lancashire and London banking capital were opposed to the scheme" (98). After this "resolution" of this "contradiction" by Mamdani, we excuse him for his inherent but unnecessary dualism drawn between "Lancashire and London banking capital". We do this because he doesn't create another contradiction out of it, which we feared he would! But we are not yet over with them.

3. THE STATE, CLASS FORMATION AND "CLASS STRUGGLES".

(a) The State

In analysing relations of production and class relations that follow thereupon the role of the state is a crucial one. In his analysis Mamdani regards this indeed as the starting point. We have already quoted him as saying that since class relations are contradictory relations and the class struggle a political struggle, what explains the cohesion of a social formation and its stability is the state. But what then is the state? According to Mamdani:

"At the level of politics the state unites the ruling class(es) and divides the appropriated class (es). In fact, the ruling class is precisely the class that controls the state; the state is an expression of its unity. The political apparatus of the state provides institutions of the peaceful regulation of conflicts between sections of the ruling class (parliament, congress). The state institutionalizes politics, not just uniting the ruling class but seeking to contain the contradictions of class society and thereby maintain its unity.... At the same time, the appropriated class remains confined to the level of production. Since class unity and the expression of class interests can exist only at the level of politics, the appropriated remain divided, a class in-itself, but not yet for-itself" (p. 13).

This definition, even at "the level of politics" is misleading. It is also wrong. It is too general a definition of the state under discussion. It is too narrow and partial. It fails to bring out the most essential elements of the state as an instrument of class dictatorship and class oppression of the economically dominant class. It is not the state which unites the ruling class, nor "divides" the oppressed class, in order to exploit it, although its role is crucial. They achieve their unity at the level of production. The state and law merely reflect this unity in the state mechanism. The expression of class interests at the level of ideology (politics) merely reflects this unity in order, not divide, but to hold down and exploit the working class. Although ideology is utilised in this process of holding down the exploited class, this ideology is not the politics of the state but the ideological expression of the contradictions between classes at the level of production. Moreover if the political apparatus of the state (parliament) is only for the peaceful regulation of the conflicts of the ruling class, the working class representatives would have no good reason for being there in the first place. The working class elects its representatives to the bourgeois parliament in order to advance its struggle at the political and ideological level, and in order to protect its democratic interests as well as that of society. Increasingly we notice that the petty-bourgeois and working class occupy larger numbers of seats in Parliament as the financial oligarchy have recourse to other institution of the state to protect their monopoly privileges. This is noticeable particularly after the 1880s. Engels clearly defines the state as follows:

"The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without----. Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it's powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it became necessary to have a power seemingly standing above society that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of 'order'; and this power, arisen out of society but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state. Because the state arose from the need to hold class antagonism's

in check, but because it arose at the same time in the midst of the conflict of these classes it is as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the medium of the state becomes also the politically dominant class and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class".¹⁵

Engels continues that for this reason the state of antiquity was above all the state of the slave-owners for the purpose of "holding down the slaves", and the feudal state, a state of the nobility for "holding down the peasant serfs and bondsmen" and the modern representative state "an instrument of exploitation of wage labour by capital". Engels later points out that the universal suffrage is "the gauge of maturity of the working class". Engels finally draws attention to an exception to the general rule which we shall consider in a while.

From the above emerges a clear conception of the state. It is, as a rule, the most powerful economically dominant class, which "through the medium of the state", is also the politically dominant class, through which it acquires "new means of holding down" and exploiting the producing classes. The state is able to hold down the exploited classes because it wields coercive instruments of state power. It does not do so by "dividing" them to the level of production, for these classes had never been united under slavery nor under feudalism. Indeed it is precisely capitalism which created the material conditions for such unity, which the proletariat increasingly utilised to acquire maturity with universal suffrage, united under their own party, which seeks to overthrow the bourgeoisie. Moreover for the ruling class the state is merely "a new means", an additional weapon and mechanism for holding down the oppressed class. It is already held down when the exploiters have disposed the producers of their means of production and subsistence - by controlling the means of production, exchange and distribution. Without this power at the economic level, no political power is possible at the political level. It is for this reason that state power merely supplements economic power.

But Mamdani has his reasons for mystifying the role of the state in this way. He does this, because as we have seen his analysis is a political analysis, which establishes a dualism between economics and

politics, for he states in a rather unscientific manner, and using the authority in The Communist Manifesto, that:

"Class relations are contradictory relations. Secondly, class relations are relations of appropriation: central to a class relation is the appropriation by one social group of the labour (or the fruits of the labour) of another social group. Thus, class relations are relations of power. They are political relations" (p. 8).

Thus for Mamdani, as for Shivji, class relations are not production relations, but political relations of power. But the emphasis on the political is not accidental, for Mamdani analyses "classes" as they manifest themselves at the political level, for later as we have already indicated he repeats that since class relations are contradictory and class struggles are political struggles what explains the cohesion of a social formation is the state (p. 11). In a footnote to the above definition of the state he points out that the contradiction between classes can be explained in "class formation and struggle"(p. 13). Thus class relations being political relations implies that the ruling class can be determined at the level of politics as well. This latter point was brought out but in a rather crude way by Hirji who asserted that since Mao says that "under certain conditions, politics determine the base", it would be "economistic" to hold that a ruling class cannot arise politically. At least this is what we understood him to say. Mamdani's argument has been based on a more "subtle" statement of Engels which stipulates exception to the above general rule that the "economically dominant class" is also the politically dominant class. Engels stated as follows:

"By way of exception, however periods occur in which warring classes balance each other so nearly that the state power, as ostensible mediator, acquires, for the moment, a certain degree of independence of both. Such was the absolute monarchy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which held the balance between the nobility and the class of burghers; such was the Bonapartism of the First, and still more of the Second French Empire which played off the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The latest performance of this kind, in which ruler and ruled appear equally ridiculous is the new German Empire of the Bismark nation: here capitalists and workers are balanced against each other and equally cheated for the benefit of the impoverished Prussian cabbage junkers".¹⁶

Lenin, in State and Revolution adds that another example of the exception to the rule was the Kerensky government in republican Russia "since it began to persecute the revolutionary proletariat, at a moment when, owing to the leadership of the petty-bourgeois democrats, the Soviets have already become impossible, while the bourgeoisie are not yet strong enough simply to supersede them".¹⁷

Although Mamdani and Shivji have variously used this passage to justify their "class analysis" neither of them has ever argued, in the cases of Tanzania and Uganda, which "warring classes" arose in these two countries as to "balance each other", for a Bonapartist type of state to emerge. All we have heard from them are general reference to the "Bonapartist state". For them to show convincingly that the neo-colonial state is an exception to the general rule and seek the authority of Engels they must, like Lenin, demonstrate the specific historic period of such transition. Indeed Mamdani himself tells us that in the case of Uganda no such struggle took place:

"Although independence meant that control over the state apparatus would be exercised by a class located physically within the borders of the colonial territory, it was not simply a result of processes internal to the colony. There had been no open struggle between the colonial ruling class, the absentee metropolitan bourgeoisie, and what was to be the post colonial ruling class, the petty-bourgeoisie. In fact, in the decade preceding independence, the petty-bourgeoisie was carefully groomed for its historic mission - as Fanon termed it, 'that of the intermediary' - by the colonial state" (pp. 220/21).

So whence comes the Bonapartist state so much talked about? Although the passage cited above would seem to negate the anti-imperialist democratic struggles waged by the workers, peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie against colonialism which is not a fact, yet we quote it to disprove Mamdani himself on the issue in hand.

Since this Bonapartist myth is likely to continue to be thrown around, it is important to point out that Engel's views about the exceptional cases, even then are not what they are represented to be by the mystifiers. Engels nowhere suggested that because the two warring classes were balancing each other, another class arose through politics alone to become a ruling class. He only pointed out that in both the old absolute monarchy and the modern Bonapartist monarchy "the real government authority lies in a special caste of

army officers and state officials". But on whose behalf was this "governmental authority" exercised? In his Housing Question,¹⁸ on Germany, he asked, could one object that since in Germany the bourgeoisie do not rule as yet - where the state to a certain extent was a power hovering independently over society - could such a state not therefore represent the collective interest of society and not those of a single class? Could such a state, he further asked, not do much that the bourgeois state couldn't? Engels called this type of question "a language of reactionaries"; for although the military caste gave the state the semblance of independence in relation to society, yet this "pseudo-constitutionalism" in Prussia from 1848 to 1866 "only concealed and facilitated the slow decay of the absolute monarchy", and the rise of capital, "particularly in the period after 1866". Thus the "Bonapartist state" while "appearing" independent, it was in actual fact advancing the interest of the bourgeoisie against those of feudalists. In any case it did this by suppressing the proletariat. Such is the specific context, as Engels saw it, of Bonapartism. Marx similarly, in the Eighteenth Brumaire, while analysing the social base of Bonapartism to be in the peasantry, the middle classes and the lumpenproletariat, pointed out:

"As the executive authority which has made itself an independent power. Bonaparte feels it to be his mission to safeguard bourgeois order. But the strength of this bourgeois order lies in the middle class. He looks on himself, therefore, as the representative of the middle class and issues decrees in this sense".¹⁹

For Marx therefore there was no doubt about what Bonapartism stood for: "Industry and trade hence the business affairs of the middle class, are to prosper in hothouse fashion under the strong government".²⁰ Earlier Marx had observed of this "executive state":

"But it is precisely the maintenance of that extensive state machine in its numerous ramifications that the material interests of the French bourgeoisie are interwoven in the closest fashion".²¹

(b) Classes:

Having shown the fallacy of the myth of Bonapartism as propounded by the Mamdanis, let us now turn to the question of how Mamdani analyses his "class formation". We have seen in his passage last quoted that he interchangeably uses the word "class" and "social group".

This too is not unintended. It will become clear as we go on that Mamdani's "classes" are no more than "social groups" or strata within a class. Moreover we will see that these "classes" are also grouped according to race and tribe. To quote him:

"The formation of petty bourgeoisie was not as a consolidated class, either at the level of the economy or at the level of politics, but included three distinct social groups: the kulaks in the agricultural sector, the traders in the commercial sector, and the bureaucrats within the state apparatus. Economically, these social groups were unequally developed: both the traders and the bureaucrats were less developed than the kulaks. The traders were subordinate to the Indian commercial bourgeoisie and the bureaucrats to the members of the metropolitan civil service, who occupied the higher positions in the colonial state apparatus. Furthermore, the uneven development of the economy gave rise to the localization of the most advanced section of the petty-bourgeoisie, the kulaks, who were primarily situated in Buganda. Politically, these groups were also organised as separate sections and not as one class. The Baganda kulaks organised tribal associations and articulated a tribal ideology; their success in gaining control over the Lukiiko ensured the spread of the same ideology in the ranks of the remaining petty-bourgeoisie in Buganda, particularly traders. The ideology of tribalism was materialised in the power of the Buganda state at independence.

The politics of the non-Baganda petty-bourgeoisie had been set by the traders and allied intellectuals. Its composition, however, underwent a change at independence as the transfer of state power allowed for an expansion in the size and power of the bureaucracy. Furthermore, the political bureaucracy was in direct control of the state power, it was transformed into a governing bureaucracy" (pp. 228-29).

Mamdani continues that unlike what happened in Kenya and Tanzania, "independence did not bring forth one ruling petty-bourgeoisie; instead, there came to the fore two separate petty-bourgeoisie, the Buganda and the non-Buganda petit-bourgeoisie, the kulaks being the core of the former and the governing bureaucracy of the latter". (p. 229). The political expression of this was the "dual state!" With independence the traders and the kulaks coalesced into a government against the chiefs:

"Independence thus brought forward two contradictions among the propertied classes in Uganda: one within the petty-bourgeoisie coalition, and one between the petty-

bourgeoisie as a whole and the Asian commercial bourgeoisie. Of these, the principal contradiction - the one that informed the politics of the period under consideration - was the former" (p. 229).

These contradictions occupied "the political stage" until their resolution in coup d'etat of 1971: "Only then did the contradiction between the ruling petty-bourgeoisie and the Indian commercial bourgeoisie assume principal significance" (p. 229).

Thus begins and ends in summary form Mamdani's class formation and contradictions. We will for the time leave the issue of contradictions and deal with the issue of classes. Mamdani does not tell us anything new when he points out": "the formation of the petty-bourgeoisie was not as a consolidated class". Where in the world has a petty-bourgeoisie been a consolidated class? Has it not been the case in history that the petty-bourgeoisie is a class category of a conglomeration of various strata hedged - in between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This fact is not accidental for the material interests of this class are varied. Many are landowners and appropriators of surplus-value on land. Others are traders while others engage in petty-manufacturing. Many are intellectuals. Thus all have varied interests. Why should it be big news that it was not "consolidated" but rather "fragmented in Uganda"? The emergence of Buganda as a separate administrative unit is a historical circumstance whose reasons are well known. It is not the fragmented class formation that led to Buganda emerging as a unit within Uganda, as Mamdani would like us to believe. The class interest of the kulaks, traders etc. of whatever race, or tribe are the same. Yet this is the basis for Mamdani's racial analysis which spills over even into a tribal "class" differentiation. Even the petty-bourgeoisie are seen to have "antagonistic interests" to the chiefs although in actual fact these chiefs are at the same time landowners, traders and kulaks and have similar economic interest. The specific antagonism to the chief is not explained but is seen as a "class" contradiction.

Shivji in his Class Struggles in Tanzania unlike what Mamdani is suggesting, tells us that the "strong" kulak in Kilimanjaro and Bukoba, using "tribal ideology", opposed TANU and independence in somewhat similar circumstances as in Buganda. But Shivji does not build the type of petty theory about this situation, although he does

engage in his own. In any case both Shivji and Mamdani fail to comprehend this phenomenon. Moreover it is too formalistic to convince us that the so-called governing bureaucracy consisted of non-Buganda petty-bourgeoisie. This is factually incorrect. It should have been clear to anyone doctoring in politics to know that the "Alliance" between the KY and UPC meant that the "governing bureaucracy" came from the whole country. Unlike Shivji who even gives us the respective "incomes" of his classes, Mamdani nowhere concretely defines the limits of his "governing bureaucracy".

The racial bias in Mamdani's analysis is intense. Earlier we pointed out his almost conspiratorial explanation of the origin of the role of the Asian in the colonial economy and politics. He now builds a theory to back it up. He starts by pointing out in analysing the rise of the Uganda National Congress (UNC) that after the "contradiction" between the Buganda and the non-Buganda petty-bourgeoisie had been "resolved", that with "Indian traders came to the fore":

"The objective basis of this conflict was that it was not possible for the state to promote the consolidation of the African petty-bourgeoisie without at least partially liquidating the existing Indian petty-bourgeoisie" (p. 213).

Thus the passing of the Cooperative Societies Ordinance "to boost the organisational strength of African kulaks and traders", led to loud opposition from the Asian organisations and to "class struggle!"

"No matter which section of the African petty-bourgeoisie attempted to advance, it collided head-on with its Asian counterpart: the class struggle assumed the form of a racial conflict" (p. 213 Emphasis added).

Here Mamdani sees the position of the Asian and African "counterparts" as class contradiction resulting in "class struggle", in the form of "racial conflict!" The social base of this racial conflict is explained by Mamdani:

"There was one difference, however: while the consciousness of the African trader was both national and racial, that of the Indian trader was simply racial. The Asian petty-bourgeoisie had become an objectively alien class" (p. 213/14).

Mamdani here cannot explain the material basis of racialism. He blames it solely on the "social base" of the petty-bourgeoisie. He does not see that, although it has this social base, it is at the same time engendered and given vent to by imperialism. Racialism has been used

by exploiters to confuse the exploited and oppressed at the ideological level. Confused they cannot face the enemy resolutely. It has been utilised in every situation since the rise of capital under feudalism. With the crisis of modern imperialism, with the pressing national question in the colonies and neo-colonies, it has been utilised by the imperialists to disorganise the colonised. Because of the narrowness of the material interest of the petty-bourgeoisie, such racialism is exploited just like ethnicity and religion in advancing their narrow interests against each other and against the working people.

Since the petty-bourgeoisie cannot solve the national question, they resort to racialism in order to convince the exploited workers and poor peasantry that the real enemy is not imperialism but the "Asian exploiter". Thus in a purely competitive game to get a bigger share of the crumbs from imperialism they counterpose the interests of each other as "national interests" and exploit the national question to advance their petty interest in order to blur the principal contradiction between the people and imperialism. It seems to us that Mamdani gives vent to the same racialism, by reducing class analysis to petty-contradictions of the petty-bourgeoisie over small properties as "class contradictions" of any significance outside the national question. Be that as it may, the whole analysis of Mamdani does not correctly reflect the history of Uganda. The politics of the petty-bourgeoisie (and the workers and peasantry) were not "tribal ideology". A proper and scientific reading of this period shows that, although it originated in Buganda the content of the anti-colonial struggle was national in the context of the national question. No lesser authority than Lenin tells us that to conceive of a social revolution without revolts in the colonies, and "without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty-bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without a movement of the politically unconscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression is to repudiate revolution".²² Thus despite the language in which the politics was clothed and what classes articulated them, so long as they opposed imperialism, its politics was national. Mao Tse-tung refers to the same thing when he stated:

"(N)o matter whether they themselves are conscious of the point or understand it, so long as they oppose

imperialism, their revolution becomes part of the proletarian - socialist world revolution and they become their allies". 23

Thus this sectional, distorted, presentation of the Ugandan peoples anti-imperialist struggles cannot be accepted because they are merely a scholarly, petty-bourgeois mystification of the Uganda National Democratic Revolution.

Furthermore the racial element is also distorted. Not all the classes in the national movement saw this contradiction between African and Asian traders as a racial conflict. The politically conscious leadership of the Bataka Party as far back as 1949 saw the Asian trader as an "agent" of imperialism. This comes out clearly in a telegram sent by Mulumba, the U.K. representative of the Bataka Party in London, to the British Prime Minister, which we quote here in full:

"To: Governor Entebbe, Uganda. People of Uganda refuse one-sided Anglo-Ugandan Agreement concluded in 1900 with illiterate Africans; (2) Government sordid secrets already exposed by Bataka to British Resident Uganda elsewhere; (3) Uganda Protectorate Government stealing draining Africans economic resources Buganda, Bunyoro, Ankole, Toro, Busoga provinces through Agreements supported by petty kings (and) aristocratic quisling chiefs; (4) People demand democratic African Government but British Government oppose to continue stealing cheating Africans through Indian cotton buyers corruption rampant; (5) Colonial Secretary Governor plotted arrest Bataka heads clans together leading farmers, traders, former deportees other notable total 300 people; (6) Hence extension Governor's term office; (7) Governor has agreed with quisling chiefs commence arresting Bataka and others; (8) Colonial secretary Governor planned culminate former deportees causing trouble (9) People say plot originated colonial office; (10) Government fuss lies cannot imprison facts; (11) Requesting immediate Commission Inquiry among Bataka and people Uganda arranged by you Sir.
Addressed Premier. Ssemakula Mulumba"²⁴

This telegram goes to disprove part of the thesis of Mamdani. It can be seen in the telegram that the "petty kings" and "aristocratic quisling chiefs" come out more hated than the "Asian commercial petty bourgeoisie". This represents the true content of the Uganda peoples struggle against imperialism.

Moreover it was not the "Asians" alone who opposed African demands for participation in trade. Metropolitan owned small busin-

esses also did the the same, just as a section of African compradore "rural bourgeoisie" also did in relation to cooperative legislation. The legislative Council debate over the Cooperative Societies Bill clearly reveals all these competing interests. While the colonial state now saw value in permitting cooperative marketing of cotton and coffee, Simpson - speaking for these European capitalist interests opposed the Bill on the ground that "someone else's property" was being taken away, while Kulubya, one of these African compradore "rural bourgeoisie" insisted on government assisting African capitalists to set-up private ginneries alongside cooperatives. This should go to show the complex class interests involved in this matter which in essence went beyond, "tribe" or religion.

Furthermore the state as "executive committee of the whole bourgeoisie" which the Communist Manifesto emphasises is not grasped by Mamdani. His difficulty as we have already seen springs from his rather weak conception of state power. While he admits that the financial oligarchy (which he calls "the metropolitan bourgeoisie") was the ruling class albeit "an absentee" one, in the colony, he sees a "local ruling class" arising with the rise of the neo-colonial state:

"To understand the internal base of the state that emerged after independence, we abstract for the moment from imperialist oppression and examine the nature of its relations with various classes and strata within the neocolony. As it facilitated the expansion in the economic base of each of its three sections - the kulaks, the traders, and the civil servants - the state acted as the state of the whole petty bourgeoisie. At the same time, it decisively smashed attempts at any organisation of the workers independent of the petty bourgeoisie. In effect, this meant a continuation of postwar colonial policy" (p. 230).

If this was the "continuation of the postwar colonial state policy" then surely the state after independence could not have been transformed into that of the "whole petty bourgeoisie" which facilitated the expansion of their economic base. Surely it must have continued to be a state of the whole of the bourgeoisie, the financial oligarchy inclusive, and that state must have facilitated more the "expansion of the economic interests" of the latter, as the economically dominant strata within the bourgeoisie, than of the former. This would still be the case even if we allowed for Mamdani's "temporary" abstractions (in

itself impermissible) from real life of the actual reality of "imperialist oppression", for such abstraction would still not permit him to come to this conclusion about the class nature of the neo-colonial state. Such abstraction, permissible in natural science, is unacceptable in social sciences, for in social reality the part is itself affected by the whole. Marx uses this method in analysing the inner laws of the capitalist mode of production by subjecting concepts like commodity to a microscopic analysis. But even here Marx has in view the whole system of production based on capital and on the historical evolution of the system as a whole. Without this power of total capitalist accumulation under imperialism, the so-called "accumulation crisis" would never have arisen. Indeed Mamdani recognises this when he observes, as we have already noted, that this "local ruling class" was "carefully nurtured and groomed for its historic mission - that of the intermediary", and when later in conclusion he states:

"The neo colonial state was not created at independence. It was, in fact, inherited by the petty bourgeoisie from its colonial mentor, the metropolitan bourgeoisie"...(p. 312).

He continues that with independence:

"While the content of colonial appropriation persists... the national economy remains integrated with and subordinate to the metropolitan economy - the form of this relations changes: the underdeveloped economy is now supervised by an indigenous ruling class" (p. 313).

If we take the Marxist-Leninist notion of a ruling class, on the basis of Mamdani's articulation above, the ruling class continued to be "the metropolitan bourgeoisie" as the economically dominant class while the local bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie became its "super-visors", and Mamdani's effort to create a ruling class out of this petty bourgeoisie is merely "formal" political analysis just as the changes in relations were only in "form" and not in substance. Indeed is this not what Lenin meant when he observed:

"At present, imperialism and the domination of the banks have 'developed' into an exceptional art both these methods of upholding and giving effect to the omnipotence of wealth in democratic republics of all descriptions ----

Another reason why the omnipotence of 'wealth' is more certain in a democratic republic is that it does not depend on defects in the political machinery or on the faulty political shell of capitalism. A democratic republic is the

best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capital has gained possession of this very best shell ---- it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that no change of persons, institutions, or parties in the bourgeois - democratic republic can shake it".²⁵ (Emphasis added).

If the above is true of a bourgeois-democratic republic surely it is true of a neo-colony even in more equal measure. No change of faces can affect the rule of capital, the rule of the financial oligarchy. No "national economy" is possible, under the hegemony of finance capital.

(c) Contradiction and "class struggle":

This brings us to the question of class contradictions, and struggles. In our view in analysing any situation, it is important to indicate the fundamental contradiction and principal contradictions which ultimately determine the other contradictions. We have indicated that the fundamental contradiction throughout the capitalist world including the dominated and oppressed countries is the contradiction between capital and labour. We also indicated that as part of this contradiction in the imperialist era is the national question, which is the contradiction between imperialism and oppressed nations and countries. This contradiction is the principal contradiction in the oppressed countries and is ultimately determined by the fundamental contradiction. Thus in each country when analysing social forces it is important to spell out this principal contradiction and the manner it influences and determines the other and vice-versa. It is this that Mao Tse-tung refers to when he stated:

"Hence, if in any process there are a number of contradictions, one of them must be the principal contradiction playing the leading and decisive role, while the rest occupy a secondary and subordinate position. Therefore, in studying any complex process in which there are two or more contradictions, we must devote every effort to finding its principal contradiction. Once this principal contradiction is grasped, all problems can be readily solved ----. There are thousands of scholars and men of action who do not understand it, and the result is that, lost in a fog, they are unable to get to the heart of the problem and naturally cannot find a way to resolve its contradictions".²⁶

Of course the situation does not remain static and the principal contradiction may change. Furthermore there is a dialectical interrelationship between the principal and secondary contradictions and the

latter do influence the former. Whatever the case it has to be shown concretely how the change took place and how the secondary influences the principal contradiction.

We have already argued briefly that Mamdani takes secondary contradictions in Uganda to be the principal ones and completely ignores, nay excludes the fundamental and principal contradictions in his actual analysis of classes and class struggles. He consciously abstracts imperialism from the analysis which he regards as an external factor. The result is that he gets "lost in a fog" and is unable to comprehend what is otherwise a very complex situation. We noted that Mamdani saw the introduction of the Asian trader - an "alien race" - as a political buffer zone between "metropolitan capital" and the "Africans". These are his roots of the contradiction. Secondly although this Asian "class" dominated the "territorial economy" it could not become a "ruling class" because of its being alien. Nevertheless it "dominated" the economy and this constituted the real "contradiction" with the African petty bourgeoisie. This contradiction ran through the whole period after independence, becoming principal and shifting due to alliances:

"The subordination of the African to the Indian trader was objectively the subordination of internal to export trade, a process in which the colonial state played a critical part" (p. 143).

This "subordination" of the African trader whose pre-colonial internal trade was "marginalised", was consolidated by the colonial state. Demands for further controls of "itinerant traders" were "hypocritically" refused by the colonial state on the grounds that there was "no justification for racial discrimination in township and trading centres". As a result the 1933 Trading Ordinance did away with "the distinction between wholesale and retail shops" by imposing the same licence fee - thus giving "formally equal treatment of those substantially unequal" (p. 165). The result of this, for Mamdani was that, "the formation that emerged among the Africans in the commercial sector was that of traders, not businessmen" (p. 165). In other words, the African remained a "trader" - an individual "member of the petty bourgeoisie", while his Asian counterpart - and some African Landlords of which we are given one name who doesn't belong to the period

became businessmen - "located in the wholesale trade, whom Mamdani calls "commercial bourgeoisie" - a different "class" from "trader" (p. 166).

These "class formations" of the two races constituted the basis for the "racial consciousness" to which we have referred and constituted the material factor in the "class struggle" between them. The "class struggle" according to Mamdani, broadened with the 1949 disturbances, a fact by the way helped with "the auspices of the colonial state", which resolved the "contradiction" between the chiefs and kulaks. The resolution of this "contradiction" brought "to the fore the contradiction between the African and the Indian traders":

"As they consolidated their position, gained increased confidence, and prepared for further advances, they refused to accept the barrier of Indian trader" (p. 214).

Mamdani, blind to the national question in the era of the proletarian revolution, blinded by the racial element which he can't understand, is baffled by the fact that this movement spread to the whole country: "Whether Baganda or non-Baganda, kulak, "respectable" professional citizens or chief - every political organization fell into line" (p. 215).

Although Mamdani is at pains to see this as a "national grievance" against the Asians and the Asian as "the visible intermediary between metropolitan capital and the direct producers", this is still clouded by his narrow conception of this boycott - a boycott aimed at imperialist domination, although not so articulated all the time - into a national grievance against the Asian:

"Independence was near, and whether peasant, worker, or trader, all expected that independence - the assuming of state power by an indigenous social group - would solve the problem of Indian control over trade, and much more easily. The question for the moment was: Who was to control the state?" (p. 215/16).

This muddled analysis reveals Mamdani's real inclinations. If the Asian trader was merely the "visible link" of "metropolitan capital", why should all classes - workers included - objectively aim at "Indian control over trade?" Can the implications and the issues of the anti-colonial boycott be reduced to this racist analysis? How can such subjectivist analysis be explained? Is it not the case that Mamdani has

sunk to the position and thinking of a petty bourgeois, who sees this principal contradiction between the peoples of Uganda and imperialism as a "national grievance" against Asian traders. Must we use the subjective feelings of the petty bourgeois mass to unravel complicated social relations? Is it not our duty as Marxist-Leninists to approach this contradiction scientifically, explaining the essential objective elements and letting bare the major movement?

Since Mamdani builds his case on this "class contradiction" it is important to see whether in fact his contradiction objectively can be called a principal contradiction. We have seen that Mamdani has led us to believe although eclectically (on the one hand!) that the Asian was an intermediary and that "Indian commercial capital" controlled the "territorially based economy". This of course is nonsense and Mamdani knows it. Can Mamdani really convince the whole world that "Indian Commercial capital" controlled and dominated Uganda's "national economy" and not British finance capital? For an answer we don't have to go very far. The eclectic Mamdani himself helps us out with an answer. Thoroughly overwhelmed by eclecticism, he tells us (on the other hand!) that:

"Fortunately, we have an excellent description of the credit chain that provides the connecting links in the export-import economy, from the metropolitan bank to the African retailer in the village, in an unequal relation" (p. 168).

And what is this credit chain? Mamdani gives us a long quotation from John Stonehouse, the "English Fabian Socialist". This Fabian socialist is nevertheless able to give us an excellent description of how finance capital controlled the whole import-export trade, which although quoted by Mamdani at length yet Mamdani the "Ugandan (Asian?!) Marxist", finds it difficult to comprehend. We give the quotation in full for the reader:

"The Asian importer works on credit and it is incredible how much can be guaranteed on a single consignment of goods. The order given to a British firm is covered by the conforming house in London, giving credit of three to six months, during the actual time of the sea and rail journey. The goods are then sold to a wholesaler who never pays in cash, but signs a promissory note payable in three months.

The importer discounts the note at a bank and collects his money. The wholesaler sells to a series of sub-

wholesalers who pay him by promissory notes which are likewise discounted and the sub-wholesaler sell to retailers who also sign notes. Some retailers also sell to other retailers"(Quoted at p. 168).

Instead of drawing a correct conclusion from this Fabian's description, Mamdani the "Marxist" sinks back into racialism. He states:

"The 'other retailers' were primarily Africans who had neither an account nor a loan arrangement with a bank; they signed debit notes to the supplying Indian retailer, remaining in constant debt to him. In the long run this debt materially cemented the supplier-buyer relation between the two" (pp. 168/69).

The description by Stonehouse reveals to us that it is not the Asian who was the "supplier" as Mamdani seeks to mystify it, but the imperialist bourgeoisie - the monopolist suppliers (sellers) in the imperialist country. It also shows that it is the monopoly bourgeoisie's banks that provided the credit to the sellers along the line, until the price was realised from the buyer - not the "African trader", but the consumer. It conclusively proves that the imperialist bourgeoisie (financial oligarchy) - the real bourgeoisie, dominated and controlled production in Uganda. It did this because it owned all the means of production, exchange and distribution. Through the state - its instrumentality it controlled the land, the mines and all its resources, which it owned. It controlled and owned the transportation and communication systems. It financed from taxes the scientific research of crops, seedlings, soil fertility, fisheries and water resources, which it conserved. It provided the jembe and panga from its factories which the poor peasant nominally "owned", and through its banks collected the crops from the peasant to the ports enroute the imperialist countries. The "African trader" (petty-bourgeoisie), "Asian trader" (petty bourgeoisie) "Asian businessman" (petty bourgeoisie") - call them what you will: all facilitated the movement of these monopoly products. This explains the real property relations in Uganda, which Mamdani, sunk in his neo-Marxist eclecticism cannot unravel and hence cannot analyse.

How come then that Mamdani misleads us into believing that the contradiction between the African petty bourgeoisie and the "Asian Commercial bourgeoisie" became the principal contradiction after independence, "shifting" but remaining "unresolved" until the coup

d'etat, when clearly the evidence above shows the imperialist bourgeoisie as the principal enemy of the people of Uganda (inclusive of the Asians).

The answer lies partly in eclecticism as we have argued and partly in the lack of understanding of the operational mechanisms of imperialism. Indeed without such understanding, the question which must have been all the time in Mamdani's mind, but which he could not resolve is - what then happened to the "Indian commercial capital" it accumulated? It is the difficulty to resolve the location of this capital that makes him create a controlling bourgeoisie out of commerce. In order to answer this question we have to understand Marx and Lenin. Marx explains in Capital Vol. III the chapter on the role of credit in capitalist production - that the increased centralisation of credit and concentration of capital transforms the functioning capitalist into a mere manager, administrator of other peoples capital:

"and the owner of capital into a mere owner, a mere money capitalist (the receiver of interest) as a mere compensation for owning capital that now is entirely divorced from the function in the actual process of reproduction, just as this function in the person of the manager is divorced from ownership of capital".²⁷

Lenin adds that it is characteristic of capitalism in general that the ownership of capital is separated from the application of capital to production, and that the renter who lives entirely on income obtained from money capital is separated from the entrepreneur:

"Imperialism, or the domination of finance capital is that highest stage of capitalism in which this separation reaches vast proportions---.²⁸

This thesis of Marx and Lenin is fully borne out by the facts in Uganda. Virtually all the money capital deposited in the banks including profits of traders and businessmen were utilised not in Uganda but elsewhere in the British Empire. Statistics available for East Africa show that up to 88% of all local deposits went back to the U.K. for this purpose.²⁹ The money capital was of course utilised by the financial oligarchy for production elsewhere, since they did not want more productive activity in Uganda than that based on agriculture. The Asian capitalist required no money capital to carry out its functions as such. The credit system existed for this purpose as Mamdani himself told us.

But it is the ownership of this money capital in this period that makes Mamdani continue in his arduous task of contradiction-building. Even the operation of the ordinary laws of capitalist competition seem to evade him. Thus we are told that in the post-colonial period in its effort to resolve the contradiction between the Asians and the Africans, the state set up the African Business Promotion Ltd. (ABP) in 1964, to help guarantee, discount and provide hire-purchase facilities to African traders. Although arrested by the 1966 crisis, this contradiction was now intensified:

"The conclusion of the 1966-1967 crisis saw a marked shift in economic policy. With the political autonomy of the Buganda petty bourgeoisie destroyed, the state directed its attention at liquidating the economic base of the Indian commercial bourgeoisie. What had previously been token attempts at creating an African commercial bourgeoisie became the central focus of state economic policy..."(p. 260).

Those recruited on this new policy would be integrated with the individual members of the governing bureaucracy "nurtured in the state generated funds". The "method of resolving this contradiction" was to be law. Hence the creation of the National Trading Corporation (NTC) in place of the ABP, under which the Produce Marketing Board (PMB), was formed with the purpose of exercising state control over the internal marketing of all food items. It did this by allocating trade in essential commodities to African wholesalers - and creating a change in the "social composition" of the new class, which class was now to join "the core" of the "governocracy" to shorten the term (!!) - who undertook both buying and selling food products "in the national market - two functions hitherto carried out by two different sections of capital" and defining the separate economic base of each". This deprived the Asian of business:

"Lacking political power, the opposition of the Asian Commercial bourgeoisie had necessarily, to be economic. Using the power of their accumulated capital (Notel) and their existing monopoly control over the distributive sector of the economy, Asian wholesalers responded with economic sabotage" (p. 262).

But what was this "economic sabotage?" Mamdani explains:

"Their sabotage consisted of buying the supplies of the local (African) agent in bulks, storing them for as long as necessary to create a scarcity and ensure a monopoly position, and then selling the stock at a marked-up monopoly price" (p. 262/63).

This "sabotage" was possible because according to him the law did not provide against buying from the (African) wholesale agent!

Thus the "contradiction" which was to be resolved by law is not resolved, not because of "sabotage" as Mamdani makes us understand at first, but by the mere operation of the market mechanism - the economic laws of competition. Mamdani wakes up to this fact later. The African agent, he reminds us, "as much a capitalist as the Asian wholesaler" operated "by the rules of the market place". And this was to: "Maximize profits and minimize losses" (p. 263). Both bought and sold with profit. Both lost nothing. It is the selling peasant who was cheated and the consuming public who overpaid. It was also the worker and the poor peasant who were cheated by Mamdani in making them believe that this was a contradiction of "national" significance against the Asian. He was cheated in believing that the Asian trader "sabotaged" the policy, while the African trader doing exactly what the Asian trader did goes unblamed. If the law was intended to fight the Asian bourgeoisie in favour of the African trader, who was as a result to join the governocracy, what a wretched, wicked and naked African petty bourgeoisie that undermines his social position by corroborating with the Asian class enemy to destroy his own economic base!!

It is clear that with this manner of creating and handling contradictions, Mamdani cannot explain much. What appeared to be a contradiction between the African traders and their Asian counterparts is resolved by the laws of competition, which created the "contradiction". The "contradiction" which had been postponed due to the 1966 Buganda Crisis which intervened, is still put off by Mamdani, although it has become obvious that what is at stake is not anything in the nature of a principal contradiction except as seen by the petty interests and minds of the parties. The events of 1966 which Mamdani describes as having resolved the contradiction between the "Buganda and non-Buganda petty bourgeoisie" were followed by the 1969 crisis. Here too the contradiction with Asian "capital", which is said to have continued is still not resolved by the crisis. On the contrary it is stated that this is resolved through alliance between the governing bureaucracy and the Asian commercial bourgeoisie, thus postponing once more the same contradiction! The contradiction with "multinational capital" which

"also" contributed to the crisis as a balance of payments crisis, was "resolved" with the drawing of shs. 38.4 million from the IMF and the nationalisations of that year (pp. 265-68). Instead of facing the Asian commercial bourgeoisie, or the "econocracy", to use Kabwegyere's³⁰ term, the state instead decides to fight its own class base! The reason given by Mamdani that the African petty bourgeoisie were a political threat to the governocracy while the Asian was not is most unconvincing. The "crisis of accumulation" which we were told was the reason for the crisis, is made to wither-away as the destabilizing agent and the capability by the petty bourgeoisie to organise peasant discontent substituted!! With this the contradiction with "Asian capital" was postponed indefinitely.

Perhaps at this point of time it is best to look at the manner the "class formation" of the African petty bourgeoisie, with which we are involved, took shape in this changing face of Mamdani's chess-board.

(d) African "classes" and the coup d'etat:

We have already been informed by Mamdani, that the African petty bourgeoisie emerged at independence as a "fragmented" class. But we soon find that this well known historical fact about the petty bourgeoisie becomes the condition and basis for further "class formations" within this fragmented class in Uganda. Four "social forces" which in the second round of anti-colonialism, manifested themselves: "bureaucrats, cash crop farmers, traders and workers" are further "fragmented" into "social groups" and classes based on tribe and religion. Among the petty bourgeoisie we had the kulaks (rich peasants) "civil servants", and the traders. The kulaks arose in Buganda and to a lesser extent in Busoga and, according to Mamdani, led the 1945 and 1949 "rural violence", although the latter was followed with urban strikes. This petty bourgeoisie - the kulaks - were making their case clear that their violence was political:

"And as political events they represented the demands of a class, the African petty bourgeoisie (specifically, the Buganda kulaks). This class found that the very nature of the organisation of social production and appropriation set limits to its own growth, and that either room had to be made for it in the existing system of appropriation or the whole system was in danger (!). For this to happen, a fundamental

shift in the political relations between the colonial state and the African petty-bourgeoisie was necessary. The colonial state understood this" (p. 183).

This rather narrow and indeed incorrect characterisation of the class content of the 1945 and 1949 anti-imperialist struggles is sufficient to enable Mamdani to engage in petty theoretical abstractions. He continues that these events were followed in the 1950s with colonial policy to encourage kulakism in the form of "progressive farmer" policy, which resulted in encouragement of individualisation of land in areas where none existed and its consolidation in Buganda and thus directing it in proper channels organisationally with the cooperative movement. It is this class that took increasing role in the politics of Uganda on the basis of "tribal ideology" and was responsible for the reduction of Kabakship to "a mere symbol!" This class, according to Mamdani, was at the base of the 1966 Buganda crisis in its contradiction with the governocracy led by Obote. The traders who emerged after the war, took root in Buganda and the North and formed the social base of the "non-Buganda" petty bourgeoisie. It is this class which increasingly formed the political bureaucracy, and underwent "swift change" after independence with the growth in the "size and power of the bureaucracy", transforming itself into a "governing bureaucracy?!":

...the political bureaucracy was in direct control of the state power; (as a result) it was transformed into a governing bureaucracy ---. The result was a gradual shift in the core of the non-Buganda petty bourgeoisie from traders to governing bureaucracy (p. 229).

Such are the roots of the emergence of the Uganda "ruling class", a ruling class that arises out of the state apparatus and not in production. But Mamdani with his usual twist of the pen still assures us that this "trading class" had no "similar expansion" because of the "econocracy" which formed the basis of the continuing contradiction until expulsion in 1972. Having "transformed itself" from traders to political bureaucracy, then into a governocracy, it still could not expand!! But it was this "two petty bourgeoisie, the Buganda and the non-Buganda" (the kulaks and traders) that led to the establishment of dual state power: "The political expression of this fact was the emergence of two states - Buganda and Uganda - each with its separate defined powers" (p. 229).

Here Mamdani's confusion becomes confounded. His concept of class being "fragmented" as we saw, which he further fragments into tribal and religious "classes" makes him to equally fragment the state. If we go by Hirji's Universal Logical Law enacted by him on the 22nd August, 1976 AD which holds that a separate state implies a separate ruling class, to which Mamdani owes habitual obedience, then it follows that we had two ruling classes presiding over the two separate states. But we are reassured, as there can be no end to the twisting of the pen, that the separation was "only relative", because the Buganda petty bourgeoisie, "failed to secede at independence", but instead formed "a class coalition" against the chiefs who apparently had antagonistic interests with them both now as a class!!! Then whence arose the dual state? Bourgeois political science and law know of no two sovereignties within one state. Marxist theory knows of none either.

But the coalesced classes after independence despite contradictions interse had a "principal contradiction" with the "econocracy" which as we have seen was in competition. The "chiefs" with their antagonistic interests formed the D.P. while the coalesced classes formed the U.P.C. and the K.Y. parties. Thus the D.P. stood for the chiefs, the U.P.C. for traders and the K.Y. for the kulaks. Such is the simplistic view of Mamdani of the politics of "class formation", in this period.

But the coalition, according to Mamdani, turned into a contradiction with the 1966 Buganda crisis, which was resolved in favour of the governocracy, thus bringing to the fore again the contradiction with the "econocracy" as we have already noted. But this development had consequences for "class formation" again in the neo-colony. With the "Move to the Left" the governocracy further "transformed itself" into a "bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie". Having created an economic base for itself in the state funds through "intermediate control" of the economy after the Nakivubo Pronouncements, it detached itself from its hitherto economic base of kulaks and traders:

"With an economic base independent of the kulaks and the traders, the governing bureaucracy would be transformed into a bureaucratic petty-bourgeoisie - not bureaucratic bourgeoisie" (p. 272).

It failed in the attempt, because the 1971 coup d'etat interrupted the transformation. Indeed this failure to consolidate itself as a bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie is seen as the cause of the coup! After 1971 it would have consolidated itself into a bureaucratic petit-bourgeoisie instead of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which existed in Tanzania. This was because "it did not seek to undermine the economic base of the commercial bourgeoisie" (p. 272).

"The Pre-1970 governing bureaucracy was a section of the petty bourgeoisie. The post-1970 governing bureaucracy, on the other hand, sought to become the core of the petty bourgeoisie. Hence, the petty bourgeoisie, hitherto located primarily outside the state, was to be a bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie located within the state apparatus. While the economic base of pre-1970 petty-bourgeoisie would disintegrate, the post-1970 petty-bourgeoisie, located dominantly within the state apparatus, would be a new formation, with its own distinctive manner of appropriating surplus, its own ideology, and its own process of formation" (p. 272).

Thus the governocracy remained basically an "economic bureaucracy" after nationalization (which Mamdani underlines was still in progress!): "the core of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie in formation". This economic bureaucracy:

"supplanted the party as the most important source of patronage. But private enrichment through the public sector, unlike private accumulation through individual ownership, took the form of corruption, not profit. An 'unofficial' market burgeoned in the distribution of commodities by parastatals, while bribes rivalled salaries as important sources of income for individual bureaucrats" (p. 273).

Two legal measures - the cooperative societies Act 1970 and the Trade Licencing Act which tries to restrict the petty bourgeoisie heightened the "antagonism" between the petty bourgeoisie and the "bureaucratic state!" (whichever state is not bureaucratic?!!!).

This was the basis of the Coup, for with the increasing alliance between the governocracy and the "econocracy" their interests were threatened. Obote's announcement to accept 30,000 Asians as citizens spelt the downfall of the regime, because:

"Obote's announcement, in other words, was a declaration that the governing bureaucracy preferred an Asian to an African petty bourgeoisie. The latter was a political threat; the former was not. This was December, 1970. Before it had time to implement its declared intention, the bureaucratic state was toppled by a coup d'etat" (p. 281).

Thus we have the contrived conspiratorial colonial policy of an "alien community" as a "link" between metropolitan capital and the African because it was politically safe re-emerge! Mamdani, lost in the fog of abstractions about class contradiction, which he resolves as soon as he creates them, he wants us to believe that the factor that caused the coup was the alliance between the "econocracy" and the governocracy, which failed to consolidate, and the antagonism with the "African petty bourgeoisie". It is almost a perfect piece of articulated, imaginative, and subtle justification for Aminomics.

Thus the Army organised by the "African petty bourgeoisie", moved to overthrow the governocracy. But although we are relieved to learn that "the Army is not a social class" (p. 287), at the same time it is made into an independent class instrument of the petty bourgeoisie to overthrow the governocracy. Having done this the contradiction with the "econocracy" comes to the fore as the principal contradiction, after the factionalism in the army - which reflected "fragmentation of the ruling class" (p. 289) - had been "resolved". If we are led to understand that after this "resolution" of the fragmentation which had assumed "primary importance", the "ruling class" then reconsolidates as one, we are far away from it, for with Mamdani's never-ending-twisting pen, other contradictions are found to explain its fragmentation again: - the "personalisation of class rule by Amin" because:

"A consolidated commercial bourgeoisie would mean the substitution of class rule for individual rule" (p. 310)!

It follows that no class "rules" in Uganda today except Amin and with this we have a clear understanding of his conception of the concept RULE. But elsewhere we shall be re-assured that this too is not the case - for the ruling class is the "nascent commercial bourgeoisie".³¹

However Amin's Asian expulsion order once and for all resolved the contradiction with the Asian Commercial bourgeoisie". This gave the soldiers a chance to loot and plunder - "unprotected by the halo of bourgeois legality" - that Mamdani is "tempted" to see in this process "an historical similarity - the reoccurrence of what Marx described as the primitive accumulation of capital!" And with such a primitive understanding of history we are brought to a round-about thunderous surprise, when Amin and "his class" of the petty bourgeoisie, after this historic moment of plunder and loot - devoid of bourgeois legality - find that

bourgeois legality is their real barrier to what appeared victory over the this "alien class!!" To our surprise we are told that the property that was being plundered did not in fact belong to the Asian commercial bourgeoisie!! It belonged to the British Banks - to the financial oligarchy, which Mamdani, lost in the technicalities of bourgeois law which he also does not understand, "at the level of the economy", now recounts:

"In October 1972, when Asian businesses started closing down en masse, the main streets of Kampala were lined with signs saying 'Property of Barclays Bank D.C.O.' or 'Property of Standard Bank'. Financial connections usually hidden in small print in the text of a contract or an agreement were now advertised for all to see. The fact was that the Indian Commercial bourgeoisie was still a dependent class" (p. 307).

Thus Mamdani who had all along over 300 pages of the book been impressing upon us how "Asian Commercial Capital" controlled the "territorially based economy", now realises for the second time that they neither dominated nor owned anything, at least in Uganda - but that the financial oligarchy did so. If Mamdani - instead of trying to anticipate Marx and Lenin - had started with this obvious thesis he would have found that it was unnecessary to treat us to a long barrage of imaginary contradictions and class formations which had nothing to do with the politics "that informed" this period in its fundamental movement.

So we are made at last to realise that the "Asian Commercial bourgeoisie" was never in fact the principal contradiction in any scientific sense. Amin, according to Mamdani, now realised that he had a "second phase" to the "economic war", namely the "British big bourgeoisie" - a new contradiction which Mamdani declines to call a contradiction. Amin now "resolves" it by seizing the banks and plantations. Mamdani does not tell us whether Amin finds anything in the banks or whether he really resolves the contradiction in the real sense. We are however told that Amin instead "diversifies his dependence of the economy on one single metropolitan power (Britain)" (p. 308). Amin now brings new "international friends" the Soviet Union, France (Libya), Saudi Arabia, India and Pakistan. All these "new friends" (with the exception of one) are poor substitutes as imperialist masters! In any case Mamdani knows that this is also nonsense for he had earlier told us that:

"Independence checked the trend towards a close integration of the Ugandan economy with that of the United Kingdom. Uganda ties with international capitalism became diversified" (p. 258).

Such is the nature of Mamdani eclectic analysis. Neither his class analysis nor the analysis of the politics of this period are enlightening in any serious way. Having abandoned the scientific method for neo-Marxist eclecticism, he creates classes where they cannot possibly emerge: within the state. The state which is the collective machinery for the whole bourgeoisie is turned by Mamdani into an economic base for the emergence of petty bourgeoisie "ruling class". The fact that the state serves the entire bourgeois class and more so the financial oligarchy as the hegemonic bourgeois stratum is mystified by Mamdani's hair-brained petty politics of "class formation". The fact that is obvious to many, that kulaks are in the majority of cases also traders has no apparent significance to him. Without comprehending the basic productions relations in Uganda which continued to be dominated by the imperialists bourgeoisie, Mamdani miserably fails in his task.

4. CONCLUSION

The above critical review of Mamdani's book has revealed that it is utterly devoid of a clear understanding of modern imperialism. Mamdani also lacks an understanding of the national question and he therefore cannot comprehend the main contradiction in Uganda. His analysis of events on the basis of "class formations" is as petty as the mind of the petty-bourgeois whose outlook the book reflects. The principal contradiction is mystified and imperialism is given a dignified position of purchaser of products and not that of exploiter and oppressor, since such exploitation can only be explained, if Mamdani understands the significance of these property relations in a neo-colony by a clear understanding of imperialism and finance capital. His effort to attribute to the state the role of appropriation of "surplus" and not the ownership and control of the means of production by the ruling class in the neo-colony is evidence of this mystification, which provides him the opportunity to smuggle-in under the name of "Marxism" class "relations" solely at the level of the superstructure.

The ignoring of the principal contradiction in analysing the situation in Uganda has produced a disjointed and distorted picture which is not representative of the reality. An example will suffice, since to tackle Mamdani's tit-bits would require a book going through the whole period of colonialism in Uganda.

Mamdani explains the events of the 1966-71 period, to leave the other periods aside, purely on his "internal" class analysis. Of course "internal" here is of Mamdani's understanding of it, for according to him imperialism is "external". He only brings in the "external factor" to explain the "crisis of accumulation". Mamdani in the analysis of this period ignores the general interest of imperialism in the crisis of and the particular interest of individual monopolies in backing up individual factions of the petty-bourgeoisie in the crisis. The general interest of imperialism lay in consolidating the central power of the neo-colonial state. Lenin emphasizes that the "national-state" is "typical" and normal for capitalism. The rise of separate neo-colonial states, although not "national" in the strict sense, made it necessary for these states to assume the "mirror image" character of the typical nation-states of the bourgeoisie. This effort to create a strong central administration characterised the whole colonial period as well. The 1900 Agreements - The Dundas Reforms - The Wallis Cohen Reforms - The 1955 Namirembe Conference Reforms - the 1962 independence constitutional arrangement and The 1963 Constitutional Amendments after independence, were measures aimed at creating uniformity and the 1966 crisis was a manifestation of the same drive. The 1966 interim constitution and the 1967 Republican constitution cannot be explained in terms of the need for "governing bureaucracy" to consolidate itself against "its own class base" of the petty bourgeoisie, without looking at this general interest of the whole ruling class on world scale. We cannot underrate the secondary factors, indeed we must show how they interacted with the principal factors. This must be done concretely rather than assumed. Mamdani fails to grasp this fundamental fact in his analysis, and without it the so-called contradictions are no more than abstractions.

The particular interests of the monopoly groups manifested themselves at times in contradiction to the general interest, because

capitalism's general law is competition. This particular interest was a reflection of monopolistic competition of the monopolies under multilateral imperialism in the Open-Door neo-colony of Uganda. Even two monopoly groups within Britain backed different factions and precipitated the crisis. It is open secret that the Mutesa faction was backed by monopoly groups associated with the British Conservative Party. - Unilever was known to be one of them.

Support for him went as far as providing arms including a long range machine gun which cut down the Uganda Army three miles away as they drove to take the palace at Mengo in 1966. The Uganda Army had to resort to bombing the Palace before Mutesa could be smothered out never to return alive.

It is also well known fact that Obote's clique was backed by a monopoly associated with the Labour Party in Britain who supported his "Move to the Left" - to which Mamdani refers in a play of words characteristic of him, as not a move to the left; but "simply" a move "against the right". The only import for him behind this historical fact is a petty fascination with class-and-contradiction manufacturing! The "right" of Ibingira was backed by U.S. monopoly capital of certain monopolies in what came to be known in the political circles as "the dollar faction of the U.P.C." - manifested in sudden opulence of the petty-bourgeoisie of his clique at that time. These events were at the bottom of the crisis in Uganda, but which Mamdani ignores as having no major significance. Indeed without this treatment Mamdani's analysis remains suspended in the air.

The role of the "progressive wing" in the U.P.C. which lost at the Gulu Conference, and whose nine members were expelled - including the author of this paper - is magnified by Mamdani. This wing was not all that linked with the working class as Mamdani depicts it. The working class was not organised as a class. The fall of the left therefore did not signal the loss by UPC of the working class base, although it contributed to it. The main cause was the increasing exploitation of the working class by monopoly capital, which the neo-colonial state represented and which Mamdani reduces to balance-of-payments "crisis of accumulation". Both wings of the exploited classes-workers and poor peasants - were rapidly alienated as the neo-colonial regime increasi-

ngly failed to advance the national movement further and its infringement of basic democratic rights of the people - which manifested itself in "government by emergency" in Buganda (5 years) and throughout the country (13 months). It is not surprising therefore that Mamdani's analysis should treat the role of the worker and peasant in a narrow sense devoid of a clear understanding of the national question, to which he refers only once in a wrong context of "middle-men's services!" (p. 79), clearly showing that his understanding of this question is that of the petty-bourgeoisie!

We conclude therefore that Mamdani's book is neither "pioneering" nor "Marxist". It is petty-bourgeois. It articulates the position in Uganda as seen by the petty-bourgeois who regarded their petty interests as "national interest" and hence principal interest entitling them to claim that their contradictions interse were "principal contradictions". The principal contradiction behind the national question - which represents the proletarian interest - is reduced to a secondary role. We only recognise the work of Mukherjee - The Problem of Uganda,³² as the Marxist pioneering work, which in spite of its limitation, at least scientifically analysed the problem of Uganda at the time, a book that has been subjected to attack by the imperialists. Mamdani's petty-bourgeois analysis, written for a doctoral thesis and praised by the imperialist press as "pioneering Marxist analysis" is a work of art in as such as fluent prose is concerned, for that is an art. It should be read as such. Marxism-Leninism is not an art but a science and ideology of the working class. We can excuse Mamdani's lack of scientific treatment of the Ugandan situation on the basis that this was a Ph.D thesis written for a bourgeois University, but this is no excuse for his failure to synthesize the material for publication. We must run away from writing for writing's sake and understand that our task is to advance the proletarian cause in Uganda. No doubt many parts of Mamdani's analysis are correct, but read as a whole and judged on the basis Marxism/Leninism, his work is a big retrogression of the earlier work by a Marxist. Indeed it compares very well in many respects with Brett's eclectic analysis. If we take away the weakness in terminologies, the following petty bourgeois analysis of Kabwegyere also compares very well with Mamdani's approach to class analysis:

"The colonial structure consisted of three social strata. The top stratum was made up of the British colonial elite who formed a tiny minority. They had the monopoly of social power. The second stratum was composed of Asian immigrants who were largely invited by the British to run the colonial economy and to occupy clerical and artisan positions in the colonial administrative structure. They carried out trade and commerce which were crucial for the entrenchment and running of the colonial monetary economy. The Asians formed the 'econocracy' - a powerful economic group but a group whose economic power was not convertible into political power.--- The third stratum was composed of Africans, the overwhelming majority of the population in the protectorate. The Africans formed the third class, the dominated and exploited stratum within the colonial social stratum".³³

This is bourgeois sociology and Mamdani's analysis is not too far away from it.

Finally, the conclusions that flow from Mamdani's analysis are fateful. In our 81-Page reply to Hirji we dealt with this aspect of the question (pp. 75-80). Suffice to say that his characterising "the nascent commercial bourgeoisie" as the ruling class and his explanation that imperialism is "external" to Uganda which cannot become an immediate enemy until Uganda is "invaded" by imperialism proves conclusively Mamdani's theoretical weaknesses and class position and is as we concluded a "Manifesto to Adventurism". Nothing in Mamdani's book in spite of his efforts to brush it-up, makes us inclined to change this view.

Moreover Mamdani's analysis results in the anarchic conclusion that is sometimes drawn to the effect that to talk of fighting imperialism - which is "external" - is to deny the internal "class struggle". This conclusion inevitably arises out of both Shivji's and Mamdani's writings. They ignore the fact that imperialism is defended by a class, which the proletariat must defeat before it can even embark on other struggles. In the first democratic phase - the majority of classes can be mobilised to fight the imperialist oligarchy and its local compradorial elements. In the next phase the contradictions among "the people" can then be resolved. It is for this reason that Mamdani's conclusions also lead to the same adventurist and anarchical results which we all must reject.

Note by the Author: In our first mimeographed version of this article a number of mistakes in quotations were made. Some of the quotations

appeared as they were in the original manuscript which was used at first for part of our writing. Other quotations did not indicate interruptions in them due to typing error. The essence of the quotations nevertheless were retained. Despite this fact, excuse was made of these obvious mistakes in the quotations, to slur over the real substance of the key issues in the criticism. It was enough in the ranks of our opponents just to say: "But Nabudere has misquoted Mamdani", without the slightest effort to ascertain what the "misquotation" amounted to in substance! In this article these errors have been corrected and some parts of the original version have been added to in material. We hope this will not be another excuse for another attempt to slur over the issues by saying: "But the article has been changed!", for this would be the greatest fraud in scholarship. As Lenin said:

"To take advantage of the mistake of an opponent, even if it concerns Born's name, is more than natural. But to use a correction to a translation to slur over the substance of the question of the two tactics is to dodge the real issue".

This applies, although it does not concern an error over a name or over a translation, to the present situation with equal force.

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3. - ditto -: THE POLITICS AND POLITICAL ECONOMY
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4. - ditto -: A CARICATURE OF MARXISM-LENINISM,
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5. LENIN, V.I: The Heritage we Renounce, Collected
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6. - ditto - A characterisation of Economic Romanticism.
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7. NABUDERE, D.W: The Heinemann Edition. The Monthly Review
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the Monthly Review, itself being neo-Mar-
xist must regard this as a correct descri-
ption of the work.

8. MARX, K: Capital; Vol. 1, pp 714/5
9. Ibid
10. Ibid
11. LENIN, V.I: Imperialism. pp. 28, 65
12. Ibid
13. MAMDANI, M: Op. cit. p. Hence forth references to the book will be indicated in the body of the review. Unless otherwise indicated all underlinings are from the original.
14. Among these which dominated trade in cotton and coffee were: Uganda Company (cotton) and Baumann (coffee).
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16. Ibid
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22. LENIN, V.I: op. cit. pp. 295/6
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24. NABUDERE, D.W: Quoted in Imperialism and Revolution in Uganda, Mimeo, 1968.
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27. MARX, K: Capital, Vol. III p. 436/7
28. LENIN, V.I: Imperialism. op. cit p. 58
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30. KABWEGYERE, T.B: The Politics of State Formation, EALB, 1974
31. MAMDANI, M: Maji Maji No. 29
32. MUKHERJEE, R: Uganda: The Problem of Acculturation, Berlin: Akademie - Verlag, 1956.
33. KABWEGYERE, T.B: op cit. p. 107/8