"CLASS FORMATION IN SOKOTO TOWN: THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE"

BY

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A Dissertation submitted to the Postgraduate School, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE,

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April, 1986.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to Abdulmumini's father, Late Hassan Rafindadi of Katsina, a man who denied his sons and daughters the privileges of a bourgeois society so as to make men and women out of them.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this tDissertation has been written by me and it is the personal product of my own research work. It has not been presented in any previous application for a higher degree. All quotations are indicated and the sources of information are acknowledged by means of references.

Abdu Mohammed

Date:_____

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled "Class Formation In Sokoto Town: The Contemporary Scene" by Abdu Mohammed meets the regulation governing the award of the degree of Master of Political Science of Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

Supervisor — Date: 9th May, 1986

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Dean, Postgraduate School — Date:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In any type of academic endeavour the contributions of other people could not but be acknowledged; in this regard I consider this work as indirectly the result of collective effort by different people. I wish therefore to thank Professor Kweku Folson, Department of Political science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, who guided my research proposal and offerred useful suggestions. Professor Bjorn Beckman deserves my greatest appreciation, and admiration. I am grateful to him for supervising this work. Beckman had to contend with my difficult writing, but inspite of all this and the tight schedule, he went through numerous drafts of my work, and his suggestions,corrections, and critique were quite useful in the long run. Thank you Beckman for creating the basis for the successful completion of this study.

I am equally grateful to Dr. Yusuf Bangura of the same department for the interest he showed in my work and for the advice he gave me whenever I consulted him. There are many others in Ahmadu Bello University who deserve to be acknowledged, they include Dr. Tony Edoh, Head of Department of

Political Science, my colleagues, Ahmed Rufai, Abubakar Abdulkarim, Cady Mbong, and Julie Sanda.

My appreciation goes to Dr Attahiru Mohammed Jega of Bayero University, Kano for the series of discussions we had on the various aspects of the Political economy of Sokoto. My wife Fatima Abubakar Sahabi deserves to be thanked for the courage and tolerance she showed during my studies. Thanks to my children, Ibrahim Mohammed, and little Abdulhamid Mohammed with brother Sani Abdullahi, you are all a source of moral inspiration. Accept my appreciation Aminu Mohammed Gide, Boyi Dikko, and your wife Halima Bello, you are indeed good friends.

The enumeration of those who should be acknowledged could go on endlessly, but those that should not be forgotten include, Umaru Dandare, Umaru Usaini, Ibrahim Mohammed Jega, Bala Sanda Jega, Ahmed Mora, and Mahmud Mohammed Jega. Others include, Bashir Ibrahim, Bala Sakaba and Alhaji Abubakar Na'amo Abdullahi. Finally thank you father, Abdullahi Kurma Kafinta B/Kebbi for the material and moral support you rendered to me during this endeavour.

ABSTRACT

The study of class formation in Sokoto town which is contained heroin is an attempt to demonstrate the relevance of marxist class analysis in a remote urban setting in Africa. Its point of departure is a critique of the critics of such a method of analysis. It is often claimed by those critics that the marxist method is irrelevant because it was developed on the basis of the advanced class relations of metropolitan capitalism.

In Africa, it is argued, classes do not exist or arc of little significance in comparison with other divisions such as based on ethnicity, regional and religious differences, age groups, urban-rural divisions etc. No attempt here is made to evaluate the relative significance of class divisions. Our main purpose has rather boon to explore how successive stages in the integration of sokoto into the world capitalist economy have served to transform local society on class lines also manifesting themselves at the level of class organi sat ions and the class nature of the states.

We also find that social differentiation in.

the pre-colonial period has influenced the process of colonial arid post-colonial class formation, especially at the level of the ruling c1ass , where f euda1 social re1ations continue to he important in propping up the power of the neo-colonial bourgeosie.

Our method has been to first survey the develmentt of the econouy from the origin of the city, emphasizing the rapid transfornation taking place since the late colonial period and the impact of the petroleum economy in particular. On the basis of such account of the structure of economic activity in the town we then proceed to identify the various class categories which can be 'deducted' from such a structure.

To illustrate how some o f the se c1ass categories also can be seen to hove concrete organisational form, we then went on to present some organisations in sokoto which have been established bo represent sections of workers, professionals, and business interests. We finally discussed the state itself end how it can be seen as a class organisation of the bourgeosie, in promoting the interests of that class, whether foreign or local,

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: PROBLEMS OF CLASS ANALYSIS

1.1 The Research Problem

The subject of class analysis is notorious for its confusion and inconclusiveness. There exists a variety of theoretical schools each with its favoured model. Class analysis is concerned with the important question of the allocation of wealth, power, authority and welfare in a complex society. According to Eskor Toyo, just as a family is the key to making sense of the matrix and functioning of a 'simple society', so is class, the key to making sense of a 'complex society'.[1]

Toyo argues that this form of society is what earlier sociologists or social scientists called 'civil society' as distinct from the kind of society which anthropologists called 'segmentary society'.[2] The contention of this author is that many more questions have been raised on the issue of class

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1. Eskor Toyo, 'On the identification and definition of class' Theory and Practice Journal, No. 2, 1977. pp. 91-92.

2. Ibid.

formation in African society than have been answered. Scholars still even argue on the issue of the existence or non-existence of classes in African society.

From one angle there exist the premise that the class question has been settled once and for all; but we argue that such a position is simply hegging the question. Such kind of premise was explicitly stated by Eskor Toyo, to the effect that the subject of 'class' analysis is not one that can be settled by empirical research. Be that as it may, this does not preclude the need to continously research on structures that are constantly developing in view of the fact that society is a dynamic entity in constant change and flux.

The gap between the theoretical application of the concept of class and class organisation, and the need to practically identify the categories by means of empirical research is the point of departure of this study. Our focus is narrowed down to the Nigerian context and in a particular urban setting. This we believe would provide us with the possibility on a practical basis for carrying out a study of class formation in a fairly 'small' society as a starting point of conducting a study of social classes within the context of Marxist theoretical

assumptions. We define our research problem as follows:

> "What is the class structure of Sokoto Town? How has that structure been formed and how are the classes organised?"

Our theoretical assumptions which are based on Toyo's class schema are four; - first we assume that property ownership determine the existence of classes, second, that participation in material and mental production give rise to class(es), third, participation in Transport and exchange services determine class(es) and fourth, that a class relevant behaviour, in other words a political organization formed by a class show the presence of a form of class conciousness.

1.2 An Outline of the Study

In Chapter One, which constitutes our introductory chapter, we identified the problem of our research as being our reaction to the long existing 'debate' on the existence or non-existence of classes in African society. There is the claim by 'non-Marxist scholars to the effect that classes are phenomena peculiar to the western capitalist society and that its application to the African context is not appropriate. Our research is based on the disagreement which we have with the notion that Africa

is a classless society, yet, the nature of such classes cannot be taken as given in view of constant changes in society. The identification of classes therefore becomes a matter of empirical validation.

Our focus in chapter one is to examine the contending explanation of 'class' as a concept in the perspective of bourgeois writers like Max Weber and Ralf Dahrendorf. We then examine the break through which was achieved by Karl Marx in his contribution to class analysis. An examination of the 'debate' as it relates to Africa is also attempted. Here we highlight the significance of the Marxist study of social classes in Africa. The Marxist theory of class provides the instrument with which this study was conducted. While examining the debates in Africa we focus on research conducted in the Nigerian setting.

Chapter two, provides a historical description of how the political economy of Sokoto developed. The pre-colonial era presented us with a picture of a mainly agrarian society with the basis for classes determined by the control of land and labour, although with a significant measure of commercial, manufacturing activity. The colonial situation changed the direction of movement of the society. In

this period Sokoto became fully integrated, and incorporated into the colonial economy that is actually part of the world capitalist economy.

The colonial economy of Sokoto was characterised by the modification of pattern of agriculture in favour of cash crop production; the destruction of local manufacturing structures, and the re-orientation of external trade towards the now dominant European mercantile trade through the colonial firms. Finally a description of the Sokoto economy within the context of the petroleum economy is presented including the effect of the crisis. The general pattern in this period was the dominant role of public sector spending for the direction of economic activity and class formation mostly based on grants from the Federal government. In this period Sokoto witnessed rapid expansion in the activities of government, e.g. in education including the building of schools and institutions of higher learning, a college of Education and the University of Sokoto. The expansion of the private sector was closely linked to this public sector boom. The commerical sector of the economy was quite significant. We also consider the role of the state in the regulation of economic activities.

In Chapter three, we attempt to 'deduct' what we perceive to be the class structure of Sokoto on the basis provided by this account of the economic development of the town. The class structure of Sokoto has at the top the bourgeosie constituted by owners and managers of major enterprises, industries, trading companies, transport building and construction firms. Others include large land and farm owners, top civil servants, senior army and police officials and the feudal aristocracy. The bourgeosie is followed by the public sector petit bourgeosie and middle classes. These constitute those in the middle level cadre in the state sector, including the army and the police, health services, schools, university lecturers, and professionals like lawyers, doctors, nurses, and journalists.

The commerical petit bourgeosie is constituted by small businessmen, traders, craftsmen, small manufacturers, contractors etc. The bulk of the working class are junior workers in the public sector, wage earners in state and private firms, in commerce, construction, and manufacturing, the lower ranks of the army and the police, watchmen, and domestic servants. At the fringe of this urban town we have small peasants and farm labourers. Finally the

residual category is constituted by the'lumpen proletariat' who consist of people like cart-pushers, water-carriers, touts, petty-traders, beggars and destitutes. The deduction of these classes is informed by our theoretical assumption which give primacy to the structure of the economy (mode of production) as the basis for the formation of social classes which relate in a differential manner to a segment of that structure, the relations of production.

Chapter four deals with some class organisations in Sokoto. This constitutes a significant component of our study. The marxist perspective posits that the economic relations of people which can be derived from an analysis of the structure of production constitute only one aspect of the development of classes. The classes normally express themselves by means of translating the economic relations into political ones. We therefore wish to observe how the classes deducted by us actually express themselves in class organisations. We identify a number of class organisations in Sokoto, some representing the working class, for example the Nigerian Union of Teachers, the Nigerian Medical and Health Workers Union, the Nigerian civil Service and

Technical Workers Union; all of which operate under the umbrella of the Nigerian labour congress.

At the other end of the spectrum, we find organisations like the chambers of commerce and the manufacturer's Association which represent the bourgeosie. Professional associations like the Nigerian society of Engineers, Nigerian Bar Association, and the Nigerian Institute of Bankers are also oriented towards the ruling class because of the objective position of their members in relation to the state. Other professional associations, like ASUU and NUJ are less closely tied to ruling class perspectives, partly allying themselves with working class organisations. The commercial petit bourgeosie has generated a number of class organisations, including market traders, crafts guilds and associations of small industralists.

Class politics and the state forms the theme of the discussion in Chapter five. We attempt to show how the state as an instrument of the dominant classes in society directs economic activity to favour those dominant groups. We also attempt to bring out the role of the state in the class formation process and how it influences the development of class organisations and their politics at both the local and

national levels. We relate our discussion to theoretical controversies concerning the state in Africa as discussed in Marxist scholarship.

In the final chapter we considered the main issues which assume centrality in the study of class formation in Sokoto, and how they relate to the general development of the Marxist theory of social classes. As part of the conclusion we emphasise that the political struggles of social classes constitute an important aspect of the study of classes. We argue that the role of the state in class formation and organisation should be examined in relation to the development of the economy as a whole. Finally we conclude that mobilization of the oppressed classes in Africa, for class struggle and the socialist revolution could only be possible through involvement with the political, and economic activities of the class organisations of the oppressed.

1.3 The Significance of Class Analysis

Why study class formation? We have choosen to do so because we believe that the concept of class is crucial for understanding societies, their developments and their politics. Marx argued in the 'communist Manifesto' that 'the history of all

hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle', the study of class seeks to bring together the various dimensions of social life - economic, political and ideological, the combination of which constitute a determinate mode of production and social formation.[3]

In this respect class plays within Marxist Theory a role similar to that which Mauss attributed to the'total social fact'. All the determinations that characterise a given social formation of a given period are concentrated in it. It is why the study of class formation represents the royal road to a marxist analysis of society and history.[4] We also feel that there is the need to get involved in the study of class formation so as to facilitate the comprehension of the social forces involve in the class struggle at any specific location or time.

1.4 What are Classes? A Review of Literature

We may trace the origin of the scientific concept of class with the help of a non-marxist scholar, Ralf Dahrendorf, who has made a critical appraisal of the marxian definition of class and surveyed its meaning and significance. Dahrendorf

3. Emmanuel Terray,'classes and class conciousness in Abrou kingdom of Gyman' in Maurice Bloch ed. Marxist Analyses And Social Anthropology, Malaby Press, London, 1975. p.68.
4. Ibid, pp. 86-87.

argued that the concept of class emerged with the industrial revolution. Before that time concepts of 'class' and 'rank' had been used interchangeably. The concept of rank, however was more important because the society was then feudal. The superficial observer according to Dahrendorf was therefore easily struck by the distinction of rank.[5]

In the emerging industrial society (which was what Marx was analysing) 'rank' and social position gave way to new distinctions. Old strata of society was replaced with new ones. Land owners and nobility by capitalists, labourers and small peasants by proletarians. The revolution eliminated the old features of the feudal stratification system. The two rapidly growing new strata, those of entrepreuenurs and workers both had no 'precedent' in the history of the society. The capitalists and labourers, according to Dahrendorf had no 'natural' nor traditional basis for their unity as a strata. In order to gain it, they had to stabilize and create their own traditions, and it is for this strata, differentiated by external material criteria, that the concept of 'class' was first used in modern social science.[6]

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5. Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class conflict In Industrial Society, Roufledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd, London, 1967, pp. 4-5.

6. Ibid.

According to Dahrendorf, several early German sociologists carried on a passionate debate about theories of class. The debate was formulated in the fashion: Are classes a real phenomenon or a 'theoretical' phenomenon? Are they realities or construction of science? The term 'class' Gerger says occurs on the one hand as a concept of a collectivity. In the first case men are classified on the basis of certain characteristics or sets of characteristics (Theoretical phenomenon). The concept of class as a collectivity has a different origin according to Dahrendorf, but class as a concept of a social entity which involves a specific goal and intension; in such a case it is the concept of a 'specific totality' - and thus a real phenomenon.[7]

The concept of class according to Dahreudorf's argument has two distinct aspects. On the one hand he dealt with classes as effective forces in social conflict. As such classes are obviously real phenomenon which are empirically identifiable social entities. On the other hand he derived classes from positions in associations coodinated by authority and defined them by the characteristics of participation in or exclusion from the exercise of

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7. Ibid, p. 50.

authority. In this sense classes are theoretical phenomenon, creatures of the scientist and not organised groupings.[8] As we shall see later this type of debate on the concept of class in western Europe has found its way into a similar debate conducted in Africa.

A leading non-Marxist, scholar Max Weber, defined 'class' as or 'all persons in the same class situation' and for him 'class situation' means the typical probability of (i) procuring goods (ii) gaining a position in life and (iii) finding inner satisfactions. This probability derives from the relative control over goods and skills and from their income producing uses within a given economic order.[9] Dahrendorf considered Webers definition of class as any group of persons in a common class situation as problematic in the sense that it has to be asked whether a common situation is sufficient to constitute a group in the strict sense of the term. If this is not the case, then it remains to be asked how an aggragate of people who are situated identically, without having any contact or coherence can become an effective force in social conflict and change.

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8. Ibid, p. 151.

9. Weber Max, Economy And Society: An interpretive Sociology. ed., by Gwenther Roth and Dans Wiltich, Bedminster Press, New York, 1968, p.302.

Dahrendorf seems to emphasise that at any point the mere 'gap' between the conditions of life', mere identity of interests and class situations is necessary, but not sufficient condition for the formation of classes. Thus in his critique of Weber Dahrendorf refered to Marx who argued according to him that in so far as there is only local contact among people in a common situation - in so far as the identity of their interests does not produce a community, national association, and political organisation they do not constitute a class.[10]

They are therefore unable to make their class interest heard. Thus Dahrendorf observed that the most important step in Marx's theory of class formation is the political struggle of such classes. Classes do not constitute themselves as such until they participate in political conflicts organised as groups. What exactly did Marx say about social classes? While writing The Communist Manifesto, he and Engels said in 1848 that:

> The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles; Freeman and slave, patrician, and plebian, Lord and Serf, Guildmaster and Journeyman; in a word oppressor and oppressed stood in a constant opposition to one another.[11] (emphasis added)

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10. Dahrendorf op. cit. p. 151.

11. Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, Penguin Books Ltd., England, 1969.

This opposition according to Marx is carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstruction of society at large or in the common ruin of all contending classes.[12]

In a sense the above statement presents Marx's most general reference to classes in history. In a more specific reference to contemporary society, Marx stated that "the modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of the feudal society has not done away with class antagonism. It has but established classes, new conditions of oppression new forms of struggle in the place of old ones" - our epoch the epoch of the bourgeosie says Marx possesses one distinctive feature, it has simplified the class antagonisms:

> Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other, bourgeosie, and proletariat.13 (emphasis added)

It has been argued that Marx has no formal definition for classes, and as Dahrendorf argued while citing E.J. Hobsbown; this is probably because

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12. Dahrendorf op. cit. p. 151.

13. Marx, op. cit.

Marx never wrote systematically about the subject. Issa Shivji in his work Class Struggle in Tanzania, argued that the concept of 'class' and 'class struggle' are probably the most 'elusive' in Marx's writings. He further argued that although there has been subsequent interpretations and re-interpretations of his writings i.e. Marx's, academic scholarship remains unsatisfied as to the definition of these terms.

In volume III of capital, Marx started the discussion of classes before the manuscript breaks off. In that section of the work Marx stated that "the owners of labour power, owners of capital and land owners, in other words wage labourers, capitalists, and land owners constitute the three big classes of modern society."[14] This categorisation of social groups according to ownership of the means of production needs some analysis. Shivji suggests that it could be concluded that the concept of class cannot be reduced simply to a question of ownership of the means of production, if ownership is considered in its narrower juridical sense. Ownership itself in Marxist understanding is a much wider concept. Class simply reduced to the question of ownership

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14. Issa Shivji, Class Struggle In Tanzania, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., London, 1976, pp.4-5.

or non-ownership of the means of production excludes its integral link with the concept of class struggle.

Thus, there cannot be an exploited class for instance without its opposite nor can motion of development be explained for example, but in terms of the contradiction between opposites. A class society according to Shivji is by definition; that which includes:

> Struggles of the opposites in whatever forms and however 'impure' this may be. Built in the concept of class is the inseparable idea of the political struggles of classes.15

The emphasis placed by Shivji on the political struggles of classes as a yardstick for investigating the existence of social classes is in agreement with Dahrendorf's understanding of Marx's position. It seems also theoretically correct of Shivji to conclude that social class as a category probably remain a theoretical concept and becomes actual and complete only in a political struggle. Furthermore it should be pointed out that political struggle is waged against the instrument of political power of one class over another.

Hence political relations are not merely an

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15. Ibid, p.7.

aspect of class relations, but the core of it. Thus according to Shivji the use of the term social relations covers this important political relation. In fact in a class analysis:

> political relations should be built into the class relations for the two are inseparable.16

In this study we intend to consider as our working definition of class that which was presented by Lenin:

> Classes are large groups of people which differ from each other by the place they occupy in a hierarchically definite system of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour and consequently by the dimension of the social wealth they obtain and their method of acquiring their share of it,17

There are three aspects of this definition of class which are worthy of note. Firstly, as pointed out by Terray, a class never exists on its own. What we encounter is always plularity of classes; this was also emphasised by Weber, Dahrendorf and Shivji. Therefore as in botony (a natural science) so in logic (a philosophical science) a class is always a sub-division within a larger set. A set in which only one class existed would in fact be a

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16. Shivji, Op. cit.

17. Cited by Toyo, Op. cit.

classless set. Similarly in this context, a social class is an integral part of a whole, an element internal to a system. One must therefore start from the whole or the system in order to understand the part or element.[18]

What then is this whole system? It is in Lenin's phrase 'a historically defined system of social production' i.e. a determinate mode of production. The second element worthy of note is that the different places which classes occupy within a given mode of production define them and distinguish them from one another. The third element of note is Lenin's statement to the effect that the position of a class within a mode of production should be understood as the relationship it has to the means of production. This relationship manifest at two levels, first at the level of productive forces, and at the level of relations of production. Depending on the circumstances, this relations could be translated as relations of property, at the legal level, and thus it becomes enshrined in law.[19]

In defining a class, one must therefore begin not only from the mode of production, but also from the

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18. David Macllellan, Karl Marx, Selected Writings, Oxford University Press, London, 1977, p.352.

19. Terray, Op. cit.

social formation of which it is a part. Not only the economic base, but also the political, and ideological superstructures, must be taken into account. Indeed, we can say that a class is a product of the combined action of all this. By confining oneself to the economic base alone, one will only grasp what Marx called 'classes in themselves' characterised by their function within the mode of production, their position at the end or other of a relation of exploitation. What we want to know, however are the conditions and circumstances in which 'a class in itself' becomes and remains 'a class for itself' - according to Terray 'classes in themselves' are transformed into historical subjects, and as such are subject to reflection and capable of initiative, by struggling and fighting against each other, but this transformation will vary with the mode of production.

An analyst can easily recognise the existence of relations of exploitation and consequently of classes - but it is also required of him to aim at giving an account of the specific forms of class organisations that involve themselves in political struggles on behalf of the social classes. We could thus conclude our exposition of the concept of class by noting that our investigation of social

classes in the Sokoto context seeks to take its point of departure in the Marxist political economy approach.

1.5 Do Classes exist in Africa? Review of a Controversy

Non-Marxist scholars interested in the issue of class in Africa usually attempt to deny the existence of this phenomenon by highlightening the 'weaknesses' of the marxist methodology. Ctwin Marenmin for example presented a case against the Marxist application of the concept of class in Africa when he stated that, the argument of what is essential and what superficial in African politics, and the study of it is neatly encapsulated in the question of which groups are to be taken as central to the social process, that is whether 'class' or 'interest group' best describes 'what really goes on' - which of these approaches is more correct?

What Marenmin claimed he got from the analysis and examples of Marxist study he examined was according to him "a patch work of ideas, frequently unelaborated, an abondonment of empiricism and inability to justify what certain items of experience are selected as concrete indicator of universality

and others not".[20] Marennin concludes that until an explicit method is developed, Marxist analysis can only preach to the converted. It must to be persuasive in communication, develop a more empiricist justification. It will take more than an act of theory according to him. Also, a mere assertion of being right without justifying, without having 'superficial' empirical support is for practical purposes counter-revolutionary says Marennin.[21]

In a reaction, Henry Ejembi replied to Otwin Marennin's 'Essence and Empiricism in African politics' by posing the question is it true that classes are derived from pure theorising? The answer is no! Classes in Marxist analysis are derived from concrete, that is empirical investigation of the facts of the case. Marx for example, derived his social classes from intensive research on empirical European reality. What for example could be more empirical a study than Engel's 'condition of the English working class? argued Ejembi.

Furthermore is it true that the existence of classes is presumed by Marxists, prior to empirical

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20. Otwin Marennin, 'Essence And Empiricism In African Politics' Paper delivered at African Studies Association convention, Los Angeles, Nov. 1979, pp.18-19.

21. Ibid, p. 20.

research to establish their existence? Again the answer is no! This is so because Mao, Cabral, Marx and Engels including Lenin all investigated social classes in particular contexts, and they did not come up with the same result, although they identified social classes in each specific case.[22]

Ejembi went on to argue that the case against bourgois scholarship is not merely that it is descriptive, and detailed, more serious is that deception in form of detailed 'empiricism' has class motive which bourgeois social science seeks to hide By failing to analyse material production as the basis of all human society bourgeois social science effectively covers up the dominant position of the bourgeosie in capitalist production, and the exploitative essence of the capitalist mode of production.

Continuing the debate, Ejembi argued further that Marxists insist on looking for classes in Africa. To reinforce the point he cited Sweezy (1942) who argued that it is not surprising that many, otherwise of genuine 'open minded' commentators like Marennin, and Dahrendorf end up by itemising the conclusions of Marx they accept and those they don't. This they do in an attempt to define Marxism

22. Henry Ijoh Ejembi, 'The scientific Methodology of Marxism and its misapplication in Africa', Department of Political Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1979, p.8.

as if it was simply a body of conclusions some of which may be accepted and others rejected. This Ejembi considered as most unscientific.[23]

Marxism is not simply this or that aspect but a whole world outlook with its own philosophical base in dialectical materialism, and its own method in historical materialism. Applying this methodology says Ejembi to a concrete situation may conceivably produce different conclusions from those reached by Marx, but then 'There is nothing unMarxist about that'. Marxism in Africa is therefore based on the fact that Africa too form a part of world capitalism, that Africa too, contains social classes whose interests in concrete material production and consumption, are antagonistically related. A denial that there are social classes in Africa tantamounts to a claim that Africa is still dominantly 'communistic' in its mode of production, or that capitalism has not subjected other existing modes of production in Africa to its interests or that capitalism does not create social classes.[24]

An authoritative journal on African

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23. Ibid, cited by Ejembi, p. 14.
24. Ibid, p. 16.

political economy argued that the analysis of class relations in Africa remains underdeveloped. For example governments, politicians, bureaucrats and some bourgeois academics have 'officially declared African society to be classless. Class analysis has been deemed by them in appropriate. More than that they claim it has been divisive. Therefore under the cover of offering an authentic African solution bourgeois theories and other reactionary ideologies like that of 'African socialism' were used to put the study of Marxist method beyond bounds. Conventional social science teaching for example supported this. Economists denied the political implications of what they do. Political scientists only identified conflicts and cleavages among political parties, factions and individuals, but kept them separate from any analysis of the class relations in Africa.[25]

Sociologists on their own part emasculated the concept of class by assimilating it to the study of stratification. Classes became classifying categories, separated from the relations of production, and exploitation which constituted them. In all these cases, it was declared that empirical

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25. Editorial, ROAPE, No. 3, p.1.

evidence and the resources of science had shown that if class was important elsewhere, it was not at least as yet important in Africa.[26] But then the Journal presented a case of negligence on the part of some Marxist scholars who too often in an attempt to corret these tendencies mechanically transposed to African societies schema of the class relations characteristic of western capitalism. These Marxists tended to proceed by assertion, from some historical precedent, rather than through the analysis of African societies and their relations to the rest of the world.[27]

The starting point of class analysis according to the Journal is that it must be related to a given mode of production and a historically determined social formation. This means that it is essential to consider social classes in a specific society or social formation at a distinct juncture in time. Marx took up the concept of class only after he had analysed the process of the production of capital and its circulation. The same capitalist relations of production were imposed on Europe and the rest of the world, by a long process of violent struggle. According to the Journal,

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26. Ibid, p.2.
27. Ibid,

capitalism has thus united the peoples of the world in subjecting them all to its own requirements.[28]

The nature of these requirements varied from one place to another. Capitalism developed in some cases by eliminating non-capitalist forms of production, in other cases by adapting them to the requirements of capitalism, and yet in others by developing new forms of production to serve its needs. The distinct feature of social classes of African societies as argued by scholars like Issa Shivji, LeBrun and Gerry are actually the consequence of the form of capitalism induced in these countries.[29]

Finally it is the contention of the Journal, that it is not only that class analysis is indispensable for understanding the present condition of the African continent, but that 'development' strategies themselves have an essential class content and that:

> For the perpetuation of underdevelopment the distinctive form of capitalism experienced by countries subjected to domination of foreign capital requires

28. Ibid, p.3.

29. Ibid,pp. 3-16.

> the presence of domestic classes whose interest: converge with those of foreign capital and will enforce their political dominance.[30]
> (emphasis added)

Similarly, C. W. Gutkind and Immanuel Wallastein,[31] argued in favour of the use of class analysis in Africa, when they argued that the concept of class addresses itself to the most fundamental aspects of contemporary human life, - the distribution of resources in society and the power relations which are implied by this distribution. Sweezy on his part argued that we can study the class structure through the abstract deductive method. Or we can practice the Marxian method of 'successive approximation' which consists in moving from:

> The more abstract to the more concrete in a step by step fashion, removing simplifying asumptions at successive stages of the investigation so that theory may take account of and explain an ever wider range of actual phenomena.[32]

1.6 Some Contributions to the Study of Class Formation in Nigeria

There are studies of Nigerian society which allow us to examine how other scholars see the

30. Ibid, p. 7.
31. Cited by Ejembi, Op. cit.
32. Ejembi, Op. cit., p. 13.

problem of class formation in Africa. Christopher E. F. Beer and Garvin Williams[33] argued that the primary basis of social stratification among the peasantry in Ibadan is not the process of economic differentiation among the farming community, but the terms on which they are incorporated into the wider political economy. Cocoa farmers and with them the entire rural community share common dependence on the cocoa price for their livelihood. Consequently they share the experience of exploitation by indigeneous and expatraite merchants, and above all, the marketing boards; of the lack of amenities in rural by comparison with urban areas. With the rural communities they found out that the most important source of differentiation lies in people's occupation for example (produce buying against farming) and in their relations to the urban sources of political and economic power.[34]

Peter Waterman, in his work 'Conservatism Among Nigerian Workers', argued that we used to look at class and class conciousness not as things that exist but as relationships that develop. If

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33. Garvin Williams, ed, Nigerian Economy And Society. Rex Collins Ltd, London, 1976, p. 138.

34. Ibid.

we see working class for example as something that is not yet fully develop anywhere, then we shall neither be surprised nor dismayed to find that in Nigeria (or elsewhere) its developing components and its leaders may still be attached to the values of the past, present and the future.[35] Waterman's reference to the 'dynamic' aspect of the development of social classes underscores the need for us to understand the historical context in which they develop.

The work of Paul Lubeck is of specific relevance to the present problematic of class formation. Lubeck's work carried out with a Marxist analytical bias noted that the pre-colonial stratification system in Kano is composed of two distinct strata, the Sarakuna and the Talakawa. During the colonial and nationalist period Lubeck observed that the Sarakuna dominated administrative and scholarship positions, both islamic and western while the colonial economic development processes produced a differentiation of Talakawa into more distinct social categories best described as objective classes defined by the distinctiveness of the role each perform in the social division of labour.[36]

35. Peter Waterman's 'Conservatism Among Nigerian Workers' in Garvin Williams, Op. cit.

36. P.M. Lubeck, Early Industrialization And Social Class Formation Among Factory Workers in Kano, North Western University, 1975, p.10.

What is of interest to Lubeck is the development of the Talakawa, and a wealthy merchant class which is now investing in manufacturing industry and correspondingly the development of an urban wage labourers referred to as lebrori i.e. manual wage labourers engaged in bureaucratic and enterpreneurial wage relationships. Thus Lubeck argued that unlike less stratified African societies, industrial workers of Kano emerge with an explicit inequality conciousness of being a member of the Talakawa which in turn was reinforced by the colonial and national occupational status of lebrori - all of which provide the ideological foundation for an industrial working class identity.[37]

Similarly Adrian Peace, in his work titled 'Social Change at Agege: Tribe, Status and Class in Nigerian Township', contended in the concluding part, that he had attempted to see Agege wage earners as members of an economic class with interests common to themselves but opposed to those of other classes. Peace stated that the very essence of class analysis as presented in his work, is the view that classes are to be seen as elements in a system of relationships based on a particular

37. The meaning of the term Sarakuna is 'ruling class' and that of Talakawa means poor or the oppressed classes.

mode of economic production.

Moreover he had assumed that the major tensions and conflicts leading to social change at Agege are those based on the differential relationships of economic classes to the means of production. An argument which we believe emphasize the importance of production relations as key elements of analysis, and pre-supposes that the mode of production would then be the basis for the class formation in that kind of society. Peace, further stated, that excessive concentration on social class in inter-personal relationships too easily directs attention away from the dynamics of social change grounded in economic class conflict, and that also the rules of interpersonal competition themselves changed in the course of the resolution of these broad based conflicts.[38]

A recent study in Sokoto state also makes brief reference to class formation. A.M. Jega is concerned with the crucial question of how we can account for Nigeria's capital intensive Irrigation projects in terms of how they transform the peasant

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Peace, Adrian J., Social Change at Agege: Tribe, Status, and Class In Nigerian Township, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sussex, 1973, pp.277-287.

and agrarian structure? In relation to class formation the researcher concur with the view that peasants are not an amorphous social category but rather a fractionalized class within the dominant capitalist mode of production. Again, Jega concede that it is difficult to clearly identify fractions of a class, particularly because the process of transformation is continuing, and that in so far as capitalist development proceeds through preexisting social relations the character of class formation is not precisely identifiable.[39]

Taken together, these five studies suggest that Marxist oriented class analysis in the African context in no way needs to imply the mechanical application of formulae and categories taken over from the study of western societies. On the contrary, each of the studies demonstrates how class analysis as a method takes its point of departure from historical specific social formations and their complex dynamics. They also illustrate that the identification of classes is not a goal in itself. The non-consolidation of classes and the complex

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39. Attahiru M. Jega, The State, Peasants and Rural Transformation In Nigeria, A Case Study of Bakolori Irrigation Project, Sokoto State, Ph.D. Thesis, North Western, Evanston 1985, pp. 54-55.

overlapping of class relations may equally be investigated.

The studies presented here each concentrate on a particular class category, either workers or peasants. In our case, the challenge is to explore the class structure of an urban social formation in its entirety including its roots in the agrarian economy as well as its incorporation in a wider regional, national, and world context.

1.7 Class Organization

Marx's contention in relation to class organization could be discerned from his argument that separate individuals form a class only in so far as they have to carry on a common battle against another class.[40] Shivji argues that one should examine the political relations of classes to obtain a comprehensive overview of the nature of class formation in a society. In doing so the question of the state as an apparatus of political power and class domination becomes important. Since the power of the ruling class is concentrated in the organisation of the state, the opposed class

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40. Cited by Shivji, Op. cit.

must aim directly against the mechanism of the state.

Consequently, Shivji maintained that every class struggle is a political struggle which in its objective aims at the abolition of the existing social order and the establishment of a new social system. In fact classes hardly become fully class concious except in situations of intense political struggle.[41] The contention of Shivji that political struggle, propaganda, and the concious organisation of the potential classes for class struggle are part of the very process of the development of classes we shall consider as valid.

Debating the issue of class conciousness relative to class organisation, Marx begins with the assumption that man is a social and producing being, and thus he views 'conciousness' which is a normative phenomena, as deriving from the individual's position in a social structure. For Marx the activity in which a person is engaged locks individuals into a position within a social hierarchy that largely determines their social conciousness. Thus Marx argued that one's experience at work, plays a significant part in determining

41. Ibid.

ones social and political views.[42]

According to Marx, an individual's role in the social division of labour not only determines the proportion of the combined social product, but also generates definite objective interests which are shared mutually by fellow workers possessing the same position within the social organisation of production. This constitutes the basis for an objective class stratum; which does not necessarily imply a common class conciousness.[43]

Marx, therefore argued that the recognition of mutual interests among workers of the same objective class necessarily involves a conflict of interests between buyers and sellers of labor, across a similar organisations of production. The degree to which workers as an objective class recognises both the nuetrality of their common experiences and common interests at the same time the antagonism and conflict of interest between buyers and sellers of labour constitute the degree of class conciousness present within that objective social class.[44]

Our contention deriving from the Marxist

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42. Cited by Lubeck, Op. cit.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid. p.5.

analytical perspective which see 'conciousness' as a non-material phenomena - is that the problematic of class conciousness which is an aspect of the study of social class formation must be linked to that of class organisation because it is logical to locate conciousness through the attempt by the classes to articulate their interests, and form structures which fight for those interests. We further contend that the attempt to locate conciousness in the context of physical reality would amount to a non scientific and metaphysical exercise, except that the closest one could associate conciousness with a concrete situation is through the action each class engage in at the political level. Therefore given the 'dialectics' of the objective and the subjective, it is quite scientific to attempt to locate 'subjective' conciousness of the various classes in the 'objective' conditions of their political activities - manifested in form of class struggle.

Also some non-Marxist scholars in their presentation of class consciousness show an understanding of the relationship between consciousness and some form of class organisation. For example Max Weber in a brief discussion of class consciousness observed that a class conscious group succeeds must easily

(a) against the immediate economic opponents; (There is an implication of class struggle here)

(b) if large number of persons are in the same class situation;

(c) if it is technically easy to organise them especially if they are concentrated at their work place; (an implication of class organisation) and

(d) if they are led towards readily understood goals which are imposed and interpreted by men outside their class (the intelligensia) or the leadership of a political party.[45]

P.C. Lloyd simply points out that "class conciousness implies the conciousness of the special interests of the class and activity directed towards preserving these interests".[46] We might ask how do classes move towards preserving these interests and how do they articulate such interests in the first place? The only logical answer would be through their class organisations. Lawrence Hazelriggs claims that a self conscious class is that group that has an insight into the nature of class structure in their society, have the ability to assess

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45. Weber, Op. cit.
46. Peace, Op. cit. pp. 277-287.

and locate their position within that structure:

> and also they possess collective interests that show that position which they occupy in society and they behave in accordance to these interests, (emphasis added) [47]

We shall comment on the above definition thus: collective interests could only be articulated and expressed effectively if such classes are organised. Also to behave according to these interests requires an organised mechanism which would consciously pursue these interests whether they are based on political or economic goals or both.

In a contribution to the debate on Marxism as a scientific methodology, Ejembi argued that, consciousness, whether it be true or false becomes vitally important mainly in the realm of political action, and the assessment of the potential for this action along class lines.[48] Consciousness argued Ejembi is not the determinant of class by definition and conceptualization, but rather we might add it manifests itself in the class action of the organised classes.

1.8 The State as Class Organisation

This study attempts to show how the state becomes

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47. Lawrence Hazelrigg's article in Armer M.A. and D. Grimshaw ed. Comparative Social Research, John Willey and Sons, New York, 1973.
48. Ejembi, op. cit. p.11.

in itself a class organisation. The main contention is that a part from other class functions which the state performs, it equally play the role of a class organisation at the political level operating on behalf of the dominant classes in society; in this case the bourgeosie. What are the theoretical foundations for assuming the state as a class organisation? Such a discussion could be pursued from the classical Marxist position, and in that direction Lenin used Engels argument about the nature of the state in society when he argued that, the state is not a power forced on society from without, but rather it is a product of society at a certain stage of development.[49] Engels further argued that the state emerged because the society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it had split into irriconciliable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel.

The insoluble contradictions referred to by Engels are the class contradictions. The state therefore is a permanent feature of all class societies. Lenin argued from this perspective and stated that the state is a product and manifestation of the irriconciability of class antagonisms.[50] Lenin

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49. V.I. Lenin, Selected Works vol II. Progress publishers Moscow, 1970, p. 290.

proceeded to argue that inspite of its supposed 'isolation' from society in a transcendent way, the state is also an instrument for the exploitation of the oppressed classes. He argued that because the state arose from the need to hold class antagonism 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... (emphasis added)[51]

This class 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. The political dominance of such a class shows that the state function as a political organisation of the oppressor classes.

Marx himself argued in a manner which implicitly attribute a form of class organisation to the state. He stated for example that the bourgeosie has since the establishment of modern industry and the world market;

> Conquered for itself in the modern representative of the state, excessive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affiars of the whole bourgeosie.52 (emphasise added)

51. Ibid, p. 294

52. Karl Marx and Frederich Engels, Selected Works, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1975, pp.36-37.

Similarly Samora Machel, in discussing the future of independent Mozambique declared:

> The state is not an external and immutable structure; the state is not the bureaucratic machinery of civil servants, nor some thing abstract, nor a mere technical apparatus. The state is always the organised form through which a class takes power in order to fulfil its interests.53 (my emphasis)

Both the quotations from Marx and Machel are self-explanatory, but we may add to them some contemporary scholars concerned with the role of the state in African society. For example Bjorn Beckman after presenting a rather extensive argument on various aspects of the nature of the state in Nigeria concluded that actually inspite of the debate about whether to see the state as an organ of domestic capital or international capital or both? 'The primary role of the state (in Nigeria) is to establish, maintain, protect and expand the conditions of capitalist accumulation in general, without which neither foreign nor Nigerian capitalists can prosper'.[54] We thus conclude that from such a position the state is most fundamentally an organ of the capitalist class irrespective of location, either domestic or foreign.

Finally, we observe in concensus with some

53. 'The state in Africa', ROAPE, Editorial, No.5, 1981, p.3.
54. Bjorn Beckman, 'Wose State?' State and Capitalist Development in Nigeria', ROAPE No.23,1982, p.45.

other Marxist scholars interested in the nature of the state - that it is a basic part of Swainson's case for example, that the emerging fraction of the Kenyan bourgeosie uses the state, its power and its resources to its own advantage, even to the point of getting it to curb foreign competitors.[55] It is thus logical for us to suppose that it is not only class organisations like trade unions, professional organs and associations that articulate and formulate class interests, and consciousness, but that the state itself is part of this whole process of class action, and that it operate in this fashion for the dominant class in the society.

To conclude, this chapter has attempted to present our research problem, and to give an outline of our study in Sokoto, the reasons why we study class formation, and its significance as an aspect of class analysis generally. We also attempted to review the literature which help us to expose what classes are, and also the review of what the nature of class formation is in African society. Finally we observe what we consider as class organisation in the light of how classes develop and generate their organisations, and then in the final case we argue in favour of considering the state as a form of class organisation.

55. Editorial, ROAPE, No. 8, 1977, p.3.

Chapter 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOKOTO

2.1 The Origins of Sokoto

Available evidence suggests that a pre-jihad settlement of the name 'Sokoto' lay near the site where the city of Sokoto developed as a capital and cultural centre of the political system which was created as a result of the Jihad of Usman Dan Fodio.[1]

In his work titled "Infaya al Mansur" Muhammad Bello, known as the 'founder' of the town wrote about camping at the area several times between 1805 and 1809. Within this time Sokoto was used as a staging and command post for military operations aimed against the Gobir dynasty based in Alkalawa.[2]

Leaving aside all the mythical attempts to explain the origin of Sokoto, a reliable starting point would be between 1805 when Muhammad Bello first camped there and the conquest of Alkalawa in 1808. The conquest and re-settlement of substantial numbers of people in Sokoto further gave it a new role, which was more important than its status of

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1. Saleh Abubakar, Birnin Shehu; The City of Sokoto: A Social and Economic History, C.1903, Ph.D. Thesis, A.B.U. Zaria, 1982, p.24.

2. Ibid, p.27.

a hamlet. In 1809 the then town walls were set up to facilitate the security of the settlement in the light of the changing political circumstances.

The administrative structure first introduced by Sheikh Uthman in 1812, which placed the eastern portion of the caliphate directly under Muhammad Bello accelerated the development of Sokoto as an important political and cultural centre. The period 1309 to 1815 marks a phase during which the original hamlet of Sokoto grew into a sizeable settlement with no less than twenty wards. These wards were at the core of the settlement, and around the mosque and residence of Muhammad Bello. A common feature was that they all developed as a result of the settlement of people in association with and around the residences of leading military and political figures working with Bello at that time.

Furthermore these quarters were fairly large and heteregeneous in composition since the people who settled there apart from the followership of the leading figures also included slaves and other marginal elements. Also around the aristocratic and title holding quarters were several wards which

developed as a result of the re-settlement of refugees from Alkalwa and its districts. By the time Shehu Usman moved permanently to Sokoto in 1815, many more wards had been established.[3]

Some of these were Bube (known as anguwan sharifai) which was founded by Adarawa migrants from Tawa (Niger Republic) under the leadership of one sharif-al-Najib. Their occupation was the making of korino and jibda (civet perfume). Takalamawa was founded originally by Zamfarawa settlers. Masunta by Adarawa settlers who came with the Shehu, Dandi by Adarawa fatake i.e. long distance traders and tailors who were previously in Gobir. Yar-sake by Kanuri migrants, and Pategi by Nufawa weavers, lastly kurmin Nufawa was formed at about 1809 by migrants from Nupeland.[4]

According to historical records more spectacular advances in the development of Sokoto were made in the period 1815-1837 largely in response to the movement of the Sheik from Sifawa to Sokoto. The new layout which resulted from such development consisted of such quarters as Alkamawa, Sabon

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3. Ibid, p. 32.
4. Ibid, p. 33.

Birni, Konni, Mainiyo, Kofar Atiku, Rijiyar Zaure, and Zoromawan Sabon Birni. The latter was occupied by close relations barori, officials and students of the Shehu. Consequently this new layout was called Sabon Birni, and its establishment signified the Shehu's movement. The subsequent immigration into Sokoto was influenced by this political development, and as a result many more quarters were established in the years immediately after 1815.

The greater proportion of the quarters that were formed from 1815 to late 1850 were settled by craftsmen or traders. The impetus for such settlement was the emergence of Sokoto's economic linkages with the world around it, especially since the Sheikhs settlement had confirmed the town as the political and cultural centre of the caliphate.

2.2 The Pre-colonial Rural Base

In similarity with the Katsina kingdom and as documented by Y.B. Usman,[5] Sokoto too has the cultivation of crops during the damana (raining season) as constituting the foundation of its economy. The major food crops were millet, rice, guinea-corn, maize, cassava, beans, groundnuts and other vegetables

5. Yusuf Bala Usman, The Transformation of Katsina, C. 1796-1903, Ph.D. Thesis, A.B.U., Zaria, 1974. p.120.

like okra, water leaf, and yakuwa (red sowel).[6] Rainfall in the area during the short wet season for four to five month is highly variable but on the whole it is adequate for cereal growth. The growing season comes to an end with the harvest in December, and it may extend into the harmattan season.

The variability in the amount and distribution of rain fall has made the prospects for adequate food supply for humans and animals rather unstable. Crop failures occur frequently as a result of delayed rains or drought. This is accompanied by famine, and pestilence and excerbated by the southward drift of population from the desert regions laying to the north.

The dichotomy of the seasons and the drainage system in Sokoto evokes a rythmic response from the pastoral population and their livestock. In the raining season the herds remain stable once they move out of the river valleys or up north. Such movements normally reach a maximum in the period July - September. This development comes with the wet season in the south of the Rima basin. But when upland pastores begin to deteriorate and

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6. Saleh Abubakar, Op. cit. p.5.

surface water to disappear around October, the herds are moved closer again to the fadama.[7]

Cattle rearing was the dominant pastoral activity, although it was closely integrated with the rearing of sheep, goats, and poultry. The activity involves the breeding of animals as well as the tendering of their health and movement of herds to areas of good pastures and water. Pastoralism was closely interdependent with the rest of the economy over the use of land. The pastoralists require the highly nutritious fodder of the constable and other forms of harawa; and also the farmers require manure.

In similarity with Katsina kingdom,[8] once again in Sokoto the basic unit of agricultural production was the patrilineal homestead, the gida. It was made up of the close kin of the maigida. (The head of the family), their slaves, servants and often attached strangers, the actual composition depends on the occupation and status of the maigida. Members of one of these homesteads work together on the farm known as gandu under the supervision of the maigida.

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7. Ibid.
8. Usman Op. cit. p. 123.

During the peak period of the farming activity the various family units of the locality might cooperate in the gayya (collective labour) and work together on the various farms. This was arranged between the various elders under the supervision of the Sarkin noma. Besides these production units of the peasant population from which the bulk of the agricultural produce came, there was the large farms of the Sarakuna and masu ariziki (the wealthy people).

The farms of the Sarakuna were cultivated by the slaves of the chief and the peasants, through a form of collective labour gayya. The wealthymen whether merchants, artisans or scholars also used slave labour on their own farms and some form of wage labour. The pastoralists were organised in patrilineal family units similar to the gidaje. Several of these families came together to form ruga. These often have some blood relationship and moved together on the seasonal trek in form of bands.[9] The most highly specialised pastoralists, who establish no homesteads, only temporary encampment obtained their food - cereal, ingredients, weaving apparel metal and wooden implements from farmers and artisans. The transactions were effected through the sale of their livestock and dairy production.

9. Saleh, Op. cit, p. 62.

2.3 The Pre-colonial Crafts Industries

In the area of manufacture, specialisation and organisation of production was based on the homestead, gidaje. Industrial establishments were household businesses. The inheritance laws of the area perpetuated the system of ownership in which the accumulation and distribution of wealth and means of livelihood occuredwithin the homestead. These laws and practices prescribed a system for the control and distribution of income and surplus within the family.[10]

There was a tendency for members of the household to specialize in a particular craft. The household was the basic framework of training in specialized skills. These skills in particular craft or trade were handed down from one generation to another. A part from the labour of 'legitimate' members of the household, slave labour was also used. The slave labour was mostly not paid for. Whereas the bulk of the non-family labour was of this form, there existed occasional labour which was paid for in kind or cash, Jinga. This form of wage labour is an important way in which many people supplemented

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10. Ibid,

their income. It was particularly important in craft and commerce.

The pattern of craft industries in Sokoto reflected the development of the economy. The main areas of this type of production were in smithing, tanning, wood-carving, pottery, weaving, and cloth-making.[11] The development of manufacture was intimately related to the character of the links which Sokoto was evolving with other areas. Apart from being the source of labour and skills which sustained the industries, these areas (Adar, Zamfara, Niger) also provided an outlet for the products of the city, and provided a stimulus for further growth of the industries.

Out of the major industries black-smithing was the most strategic because of its basic significance in the provision of durable tools and weapons for agriculture crafts and warfare. The smithing of iron was done in gayya form, where individuals from households were involved in the same gayya, gona, the resulting product was shared out on a mutually agreed basis.[12]

There also existed in Sokoto the 'yantama', a

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11. Ibid.
12. Ibid, pp. 71-73.

cadre of merchant traders in iron. They tended to be more prosperous than those engaged in smithing. Unlike iron which was produced locally in the Sokoto area, jar karfe used for silver smithing and farin karfe, were acquired through trade with Gonja, (The Goldcoast hinterland, now Ghana), Nupeland, the tin producing areas of north of the Niger, Benue confluence and from North Africa.[13]

In the districts near Sokoto not much cotton was grown but Zamfara produced large amounts of cotton which was traded throughout the Rima Basin. The textile industry consisted of four main areas or stages of production i.e. spinning, weaving, tailoring and dyeing. Spinning known as kadi was a female preserve and according to sources it was a woman occupation. It was a household industry, especially concentrated in the countryside and it afforded the women a source of small income for their use or to supplement the family income.

Weaving, like spinning was also a predominantly rural industry in the Sokoto area. However the bulk of the cloth woven in the country side were coarse cloth known as fari or farfarun sawaye. This was one of the principal items traded into the city by rural

13. Ibid.

people, being the main article of clothing for the population, rural and urban. The sawaye were a major item in the export trade. There was thus a large market for the sawaye, providing the textile industry with a secure base. They were also used as substitute or ancillary currency, especially in rural trade. Largely the production of sawaye provided the main basis of the dyeing industry which thrived in dyeing white thread and sawaye into other colours.[14]

The dyeing industry itself was according to historical evidence one of the most important industries in Sokoto town. There were not less than seven different locations, of dyeing pits all over the town. The importance of dyeing can be seen from the local people's preference for dyed cloths. They formed the principal export of Sokoto to the markets of Adar, Ahir, Zaberma, the Niger bend, and Gonja. The most popular dye used and the largest produced was the indigo dye called (baba).[15]

In relation to the leather works in Sokoto, Clapperton who resided in the town between 1824 and 1826 to 1827 wrote that the dyeing of tanned goat skins red and yellow was the principal manufacture

14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.

in the town. Also Berth writing some twenty-seven years later described the making of leather articles as the "most celebrated branch of manufacture in Sokoto"[16] - the number of Tanneries and the importance of leather production and leather articles in the economy tends to support these observations. There were tanneries (majemai) in no less than twelve quarters of the city, turning only products used in local manufacture and for export through the long distance trade (fatauchi).

Pottery in the pre-colonial period was also important to the 'domestic' economy and social life of every Sokoto household, since most utensils and containers for domestic and industrial use were made of clay and wood. Unlike pottery, wood carving was by necessity largely rural based and Sokoto's requirements in wooden objects were satisfied by the importation of the surplus produced by rural craftsmen. However even within the town the quarter of 'yarsake' had wood carving as its dominant occupation. In contrast to metal working, and textiles wood carving and pottery relied more on the local demand. The greater prosperity of the former can be seen in their role in commerce.

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16. Ibid.

2.4 Pre-colonial Commerce

During the pre-colonial period, Sokoto witnessed a rapid increase in population. Of the various peoples who had moved into the town in the nineteenth century, there were several who were professional traders. Many traders moved into Sokoto from areas with which the town had important commercial links. These people often settled in groups of concentration generally not far from the market or around one of the gates through which the trade with the south is conducted.[17]

The entire commercial system in Sokoto revolved around the activity of households specialising in commerce and related occupations on full-time as well as part-time basis. Some of them form groups of professionals who make their living through trade brokerage (dillanci). As in crafts households form quarters in different parts of the city, with the result that quarters wholly or predominantly inhabited by fatake dotted the city landscape.[18]

The central place of exchange in the town was the market place (kasuwa), where the bulk of the activities relating to trading took place. There

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17. Ibid, p. 123.
18. Ibid, p. 129.

were also several neighbourhood markets scattered here and there in the town especially near the gates. Some part of the trade took place directly between households in such neighbourhoods. This trade was mostly conducted in barter and carried out by women concerned with food items and beautifiants.[19]

The trade with the North was important judging from the number of financers (attajirai), and middlemen (dillalai) of Sokoto, who were mostly from Adar and others that claim northern origin, such as the (Azbinawa), people of Azben. They had a strong position in the trade with the south and southwest particularly in kolanuts and livestock.

In return for its salt, livestock, and grains, the north got from Sokoto textile goods, leather and leather goods, kolanuts, grains and slaves; the textile goods being the most important items both by volume and value. The historical evidence available shows that leather and leather goods, civet perfume, and textile products were being exported from Sokoto eastwards to Kano and Katsina. The most important item in Sokoto's trade with the rest of the caliphate from this early period was

19. Ibid, p. 140.

salt. There was also substantially a two way trade in textiles with Kano and through it with such areas as Adamawa, Muri and Bauchi.

Kano was the main collection and distribution centre for all trade going west and coming east from Sokoto. The trade from Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno and all the eastern emirates to Sokoto was channelled through Kano, whose merchants owned much of the capital, and organise the caravans involved in the trade.[20]

The city's commerce and industry moreover depends on strategic relations with its hinterland. Commerce played a dynamic role in these relations because the bulk of rural trade into Sokoto consisted of Agricultural products, wooden manufactures, metal (iron) goods and few industrial raw materials such as indigo. The neighbouring Zamfara provided grains, indigo and cotton; the area bordering Adar provided millet and livestock, while smoked fish came from the lower Rima valley. Rice was produced extensively in the river valleys and Marshland near Sokoto and on the lower Rima. The goods that were traded into Sokoto from the country side dealt substantially with necessities rather than with luxuries. Conse-

20. Ibid, p. 154.

quently rural trade into Sokoto had significance which was both economic and political.

The political economy of Sokoto in the pre-colonial era reflected interrelationships between agriculture, manufacture, and commerce. The sectors provided each other with the basis and resources for continued development. It was a self-generating and self-sustaining socio-economic system.

2.5 Colonialism: The Process of Peripheralisation

At the time of the conquests of Sokoto by the colonialists, the Sultan Attahiru faced with the superior force and weaponry of the imperial British did not know whether to fight or negotiate. Time was already running out for the Sultan, when the learned men of Sokoto assembled to consider what the Sultan's decision should be. Sokoto at this time was faced with a situation where no help was expected from the rest of the empire, part of which had already been conquered. The existing wall of the town was also crumbling and the Sultan's forces were concentrated in one place.[21]

The verdict of the scholars however was that

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21. H.A.S. Johnston, The Fulani Empire of Sokoto, Oxford University Press, London, 1967, pp. 249-250.

it would be unacceptable for the commander of the faithful, the sultan to submit voluntarily to a non Islamic power. Therefore he must fight and if necessary die. Sultan Attahiru accepted their judgement. The decisive battle which confirmed the conquest of Sokoto occurred in March, 1903, and Sokoto's army then was drawn in three divisons. The town however lost to the British. The conquest was a by product of the superiority of the colonial army in both armaments, experience, and strategy. Furthermore the caliphate was then experiencing a political and diplomatic disintegration.[22]

Consequent upon the colonial conquest and the integration of Sokoto into the colonial economy, a number of factors began to emerge which led to the marginilisation of the town. One factor was the decline in the long distance trade. The early economic relations between Sokoto and Europe through North Africa had followed an independent pattern. Manufactured goods from Sokoto were exported through the Trans-Saharah trade route to North Africa, and then Europe. The 'Morroco' leather was Sokoto's most important export to Europe. Cotton goods were

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22. J.F.A. Ajayi ed. History of West Africa Vol. II, Longman Group Ltd., London, 1974, p.431.

also exported. Also by the end of the nineteenth century a small scale export of raw materials had started, these were mostly cotton, groundnuts, and salt. With direct colonial control however all these activities began to decline and mostly the trade was now re-shaped to follow the direction of the European firms, and other colonial business organisations. The independent basis of those activities was then disrupted. The effect was most clearly reflected in the decline of the crafts industries. Local industrial activity especially iron smithing was drastically curtailed through direct Government intervention, although some other industries like cloth weaving survived substantially.

During the same period the growth in the export of cotton and groundnuts was intensified, and this resulted in the diversion of labourfrom food production to other new forms of colonial economic activity, for example road construction, and the building of railway lines. The migration of labour out of Sokoto to Gusau and Kaura Namoda areas was based on the disintegration of the slave labour economy. This disintegration was the result of the subordination of the domestic economy to the colonial economy. It was further facilitated by direct colonial policy of the 'negation' of slave trade

also the economic activities of the colonial firms. Firms like the Messrs Ambrosini, London and Kano company, Messrs A. Cavaris, and the Royal Niger Company encouraged the trade in hides and skins.

Colonial economic expansion in contrast to the domestic pre-colonial economic disintegration was clearly manifested. As early as 1902 the British Cotton Growing Association (B.C.G.A) was formed to encourage cotton growing in the area. In 1920 American cotton seeds were distributed in five southeast districts of Sokoto. The American cotton was expected to yield more lint than the indigenous one. Consequently the latter was uprooted and burnt on the advice of the local chiefs.[24]

Another factor which symbolises the marginilisation of Sokoto in the colonial era was the decline in the political status of the town. First, the conquest ensured that its position as the capital of the 'caliphate' was negated. Secondly, the colonial government relocated the centre of political power at Kaduna, where the regional Governor resides. The establishment of skeletal Administrative service in aid of the colonial regime made Kaduna a more attractive place for officials

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23. Peter Kazenga Tibenderana, Administration of Sokoto, Gwandu and Argungu Emirates, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1974. p.476.

and scholars. Similarly, Kano in this period arose as the centre of commercial and industrial activity in the region. These processes all the more isolated sokoto, since even in the pre-colonial times the town was less significant in the control of trading and industrial activities of that region. Kano was more central in that regard. Around Sokoto itself, Gusau and Kaura-Namoda had a more substantial influence and control or peasant cash crop production.

In commerce the colonial state substituted the internal and external trade within Sokoto for a market based on the importation of manufactured goods. The pre-colonial economy of the town was further subordinated by means of taxes, and the new currency introduced by the British. The taxes had to be paid in British currency and in the attempt to do so Mahmud Tukur argued that the people including members of the ruling class had to look for the means of getting such currency - which made them all the more dependent on the colonial economy. Furthermore the whole policy was an attempt or just an aspect

> ... of the British attempt to subvert whatever residual autonomy the indigeneous economy had retained...[24]
> (emphasis added)

Following this partial collapse of the native industry, commerce and political status of Sokoto, and subsequently the need to obtain British currecy to pay taxes the European firms in this area were able to pay low wages. The volume of trade also experienced a general decline, and many of the markets collapsed or shrank in size.[25]

The towns traders were transformed into agents for European companies and subjected to the dynamics of European commercial capital. Also a large part of the population became dependent on the British firms and other colonial organisations. The non-extention of the railway to Sokoto also had its significance. The decline and eventual extinction of the Trans-Saharan trade was largely the result of the presence of the railway in Gusau and Kaura Namoda in 1912. The Railway provided an access to the sea, and hence divorted the merchandise which otherwise would have been taken to the Arab world through the Trans-Saharan trade route. The non-extension of the railway also signified that Sokoto

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24. Mahmud Tukur, The Imposition of British Colonial Domination on the Sokoto Caliphate, 1897-1914, PH.D. Thesis, A.B.U. Zaria, 1979, p.484.

25. Ibid, p. 818.

was marginal in the cash crop production system and the export of raw materials. The town's limited produce could thus be transported by road to Gusau or Kaura Namoda for onward transportation by rail to the coast.

The people who benefited from the colonial trade in Sokoto were the merchants and their agents who acted as middlemen between the local producers, and outside traders. It has been argued that the economic benefits that resulted were accident and not out of a planned economic programme, and that:

> The British were mainly interested in the production of cotton and groundnuts which were needed for processing in British factories.26

The British colonial economic policy in Sokoto was however part of a greater design which attempted to establish control on the indigeneous economy of the whole (congvered caliphate.

The survival of Sokoto however as a provincial and political centre came about through the position it held in the colonial policy of indirect rule. The same could be said for the survival of the crafts industries. Such industries like metal

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26. Ibid, p. 479.

works, leather works, pottery and textiles continue to provide for the necessities which could not be provided for sufficiently through imported manufactures. Colonial merchandise trade also witnessed an expansion. The payment of high prices for peasant cash crop produce by the British commercial firms enabled the domestic middlemen in Sokoto to make greater profits. The local producers also developed a taste for imported products, thus they increasingly spent their income in the purchase of such goods. The rise in the demand for manufactured goods created the avenue for increased profit for European merchants and their firms.[27]

Mercantile firms in the region made substantial commercial profits, The indigeneous traders of Sokoto began to import and operate commercial vehicles for transportation. They also sold sewing machines and bicycles. The profits they make made them increasingly rich, and they gradually began to be 'distinguished' from the peasant population. The profit made by the colonial firms was repatriated to Britain through the West Africa currency Board. The premises of the colonial firms in Sokoto was earlier sited alongside one of the principal

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27. Lord Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa, Frank Cass and Co. Ltd. London. 1965. p. 478.

cattle routes outside the city. This early location was the focus of a new commercial area. Most of the firms that came to Sokoto in this period were trading in hides and skins. They were mostly British although some other European and Syrian firms were also present.[28]

The colonial government itself obtained its requirement whether they were material costing millions for construction or small articles, from the crown agents. They were pre-cluded from buying from local traders except when they want local produce.

The influx of non-local Nigerians into Sokoto was slower than in other urban centres like Kano and Kaduna. This was due to the slow development of Sokoto as a commercial town. The Sabon gari and Tudun Wada areas of the city did not become urban units which they did elsewhere in Nigeria. Such development only occurred recently.[29]

While Sokoto has had long connection with Yoruba traders through their nineteenth century trading links the latter came in considerable numbers only in the 1920s. At first they came

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28. Hamigh A.C. Main, Sokoto: Urban Morphology And Function. M.A. Thesis, University of Abardeen, 1974. p.17.

29. Ibid.

along with some Ibos, and settled in the areas adjacent to the market. The Ibos particularly were mostly associated with commerce.

The activities of the colonial administration facilitated the survival of Sokoto as a political centre. In the town the local government outer councils continued to flourish, and became quite valuable as political institutions. Also the native authority engaged in the construction of concrete market stalls slaughter slabs and well tops. The constructions were carried out by the rural development teams. The Sokoto mechanised rice scheme established in this period cultivates over 25,000 acres of land by means of tractors. Also electricity undertakings and urban water supply was established at this time.[30]

The cattle trade in Sokoto continued to thrive. Cattles were usually purchased for training as plough bullocks. There existed an extensive cattle market at Sokoto, and also a livestock marketing service was set up for Northern Nigeria. In addition to organising livestock mmarketing the service dealt with stock routes,

30. Ibid. p.18.

cattle markets, and the transport of the animals by railway. A large proportion of the cattle was slaughtered for domestic consumption. The Sokoto Native Authority also had a cattle ranch which was used for demonstrating grazing control, and to provide a scheme for utilizing forest reserve areas for the benefit of the livestock industry. The scheme also provided a pool of heifers for issue to mixed farmers. There existed a buying organisation which buys the immature male stock and young heifers.[31]

2.6 Political Re-emergence in the late Colonial and Early Post Colonial Period

Developments in Sokoto town during the late colonial period were affected primarily by a combination of two factors. On the one hand was the decolonisation process itself which resulted in increased government and commercial activity in the town, and on the other hand the strengthened financial basis for such developments through the increased extraction of surplus from peasant production through the marketing Board system.

In relation to the above development, Williams argued that the increase in the demand for export

31. Northern Region of Nigeria, Provincial Annual Reports 1932, Government Printer, Northern Nigeria Kaduna, pp. 113-114.

crops after the second world war encouraged the colonial firms to advance credit for the purchase of cash crops which again financed the expansion of imports. The expansion of export production and the increase in money supply in the form of these produce advances had the added advantage of increasing the opportunities in trading, craft production, and the production of food for the market.[32]

This development generated the establishment of the marketing Board system by the colonial state. Buying licenses were allocated to domestic businessmen interested in being middlemen between peasant farmers and the colonial firms. The middlemen themselves competed for such licenses, since the surplus product of the farmers was realized at the level of circulation. The trade in cash crops thus became quite significant.

Helleiner reports that exports of both groundnut and groundnut oil made substantial progress from the early 1950's based on expansion in production. Marketing Board purchases rose from 430,000 tons in 1952-53 to over 870,000 tons ten years later.[33]

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32. Garvin Williams, Nigeria: Economy And Society, Rex Collins London, 1976, p.17.

33. G.K. Helleiner, Peasant Agriculture, Government And Economic Growth in Nigeria, Richard D. Irvin Inc, Illinios, 1966, p.110.

Cotton production is the second most important peasant export crop in the area. Considerable quantities have also been directed into indigeneous textiles industries. In addition to lint, cotton seed, was also exported. Its value is also significant in the total evaluation of cotton's contribution to the economy. The value of cotton exports rose from very low levels in the mid 1940s to a record peak in 1949. By 1952 according to Hellicner this level had itself been increased nearly fivefold.[34]

Of particular significance was the relationship between the state, and the marketing Boards on the one hand, and the peasant farmers on the other. The marketing Boards controlled the domestic purchase and the sale on the world market of the agricultural produce of the peasants. They establish the prices to be paid to the peasant producers (as well as the middlemen who purchase from them) on the basis of non-market criteria. Thus a large amount of surplus was appropriated by the marketing Boards. For example the proportion going to the marketing Boards in 1963 accounted for 63% of the value of exports.[35]

The middlemen who stand in between the marketing

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34. Ibid, p. 127.

35. Ibid.

Boards and the producers also benefit substantially from the share in the surplus. Thus Williams argued that, the development of produce trade created opportunities for the intermediaries through whom the marketing Boards and the colonial firms bought goods from and sold goods to their customers.[36]

The building of rural feeder roads according to Williams created opportunities in transport for these middle entrepreneurs, mainly produce buyers best able to take advantage of such facilities. The trading operations of the marketing Boards in the Sokoto area and the country generally rather than to protect farmers from price and income fluctuations, they undermined the living standard of these people, through the appropriation of their surplus. It contributed substantially to the expanding revenue of the state.

Trade within the region remained at a high level and many businessmen were assisted in their trading activities by the state. The number of indigeneous licensed buying agents appointed by the marketing Boards increased steadily between the years 1953 - 1963.[37] The appointment of

36. Garvin Williams, State And Society In Nigeria, Afrografika Publishers, Ondo State, Nigeria, 1980, p.31.

37. Northern Region of Nigeria, Statement of Government Activities, 1955, Government Printer, Kaduna, 1955, p.6.

licensed buying agents and the assistance given to them was significant for bourgeois class formation.

In Sokoto, the activities of the marketing Boards, the expatriate and indigeneous licensed buying agents, and the state, created a highly dynamic movement in the economy. The licensed buying agents linked with the external market included the united Africa company, John Holt, G.B. Ollivant, London and Kano Trading Company, the British cotton growing Association, and Paterson Zochonis (P.Z.).[38]

In the same period, state activity in the provision of infrastructure brought about increased government spending which facilitated public sector employment, education, and social infrastructures. The state undertook the construction of roads, public buildings, and water supply for the urban town. Among the important buildings were the chamber for Sokoto Native Authority; others include an Abbattoir and the Teachers Training College. For the whole region state construction were quite significant, particularly of schools at different levels, Teachers Training Colleges, post offices

38. Nigerian Cotton Marketing Board, Second Annual Report, 1950-51. Tonbridge Printer Ltd. Kent London, 1951, p.5.

and hospitals.[39]

In an attempt to explain the above development, Williams pointed out that the expansion in social infrastructure like education was necessitated by the need for colonial administration for clerks, court interpreters and teachers; the development of education not only provided opportunities for salaried employment, but also enabled people to develop formal accounting skills and come into contact with expatriate administrators and company managers. It facilitated access to trade and enabled some people to act in local politics as intermediaries between the administration, the chiefs and the people.[40]

According to Williams, colonialism required African intermediaries in commerce and administration, whose education and income made them privileged in relation to the peasants, craftsmen, and petty traders, but who were denied the opportunity to develop their skills and resources further by excessive practices of the firm and the colonial state.

The expansion of education in the area tied in with the decolonization processes which required

39. Statement of Government Activities, 1956, Op. cit. p.9.
40. Williams, Op. cit, p.33.

that indigines be trained to take over some of the bureaucratic jobs associated with colonial state power. Thus the construction of primary schools became one of the central activities of the state. Much attention was also given to Islamic education. These developments facilitated the re-emergence of Sokoto into greater political importance.

Decolonisation encouraged the establishment of regional political functions which led to the enhancement of the political status of Sokoto as a regional centre. The need to get the support of the masses through religious manipulation and ethnic propaganda gave Sokoto another significance; the town being the home place of the Sarduana of Sokoto, the premier of Northern Nigeria; as well as a centre of Islamic learning and feudal reaction attracted the other feudal institutions interested in the maintainance of the status quo.

Therefore it was not surprising that development programmes were directed to Sokoto by the regional government. Thus a local Airport was constructed for Sokoto and made operational in 1963. The most significant of such developments in the early post colonial period was the establishment of the Northern Nigerian Development company,

which set up together with Terrostaal A.G. Assen of Germany, the cement company of Northern Nigeria Limited located in Sokoto.[41]

By the end of the early post colonial period, the economy had developed to such a stage that the internal commercial based activities had a strong foundation. The activities of the state had greatly expanded and industrial activities had begun. The surpluses of the marketing Boards were used to finance the latter. The Boards also lent money to the state.[42] It reflected the dynamic and highly profitable activities of the commercial businesses based on an export cash crop economy.

2.7 Sokoto In the Petroleum Economy

The surplus of the export economy had formed the basis of rapid public sector and commercial expansion in the late colonial and early post colonial period. As the world market conditions deteriorated the basis for continued expansion was undermined. Political competition for declining resources intensified, resulting in the collapse of the first republic and the military coup.

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41. Northern Nigerian Development Corporation, Eleventh Annual Report, 1955-66, NNDC, Kaduna, 1966, p.6.

42. Northern Nigeria Marketing Board, Ninth Annual Report, 1962-63, Government Printer, Kaduna, 1963, p.33.

The break of the old regions into separate systems in 1967 led to the establishment of a North Western State with Sokoto as its state capital. Particularly with the expansion of petroleum exports in the early 1970s Sokoto experienced a new dynamic fit of public sector led growth. In 1975, as more states were created its territory was restricted to the former Sokoto province.

Essentially, the basis of such a public sector led growth is located in the increased significance of oil to the Nigerian state; as a major contributor to government earnings; enabling expanded state spending. The 3rd National Development Programme of Nigeria for example was based on the preponderant contribution of the petroleum sector to its successful implementation, which called for active state participation in the activities of the oil industry.

Generally there is in the late sixties and early seventies a rapid expansion in government earnings from oil. This is exemplified by the years 1966-77 for example; when petroleum revenue began to show its effect; see the figures below:

NIGERIA OIL REVENUE 1966-77

PERIOD	RENTS	ROYALTIES	PROFIT TAX	CUSTOM DUTY + OTHERS	TOTAL
1966/67	10,897	23,266	5,723	5,088	44,975
1967/68	11,043	16,294	12,033	2,513	41,884
1968/69	12,761	16,761	5,571	5,571	40,582
1969/70	121,861	30,172	23,118	9,292	75,444
1970/71	14,157	148,246	111,716	20,022	219,070
1971/72	23,888	300,843	441,540	9,361	623,038
1972/73	36,349	296,613	1913,634	59,912	1582,959
1973/74	13,186	296,613	1262,253	10,907	1582,959
1974/75	5,786	907,653	3219,372	59,912	4184,101
1975/76	9,696	9151,884	2716,906	5,168	5202,576
1976/77	-	-	-	-	6300,000

Adapted from NNPC Progress Report, 1978, p.19.

The dramatic increase in federal oil revenue had an equally dramatic impact on public spending at the state level, both, through statutory allocation to state governments and through direct federal spending on local development projects. Much of such state and federal spending were either made directly in the state capitals or had indirect effects on economic activity and class formation. For instance, most of the businessmen executing government contracts

in areas far away from the state capital would still have their base in Sokoto town itself. Much of the profits from such contracts would also be spent in the city, on consumption, property and other investments, thus contributing to stimulate commercial activity and employment.

In the early years of this period, 1969-70 the state embarked on several projects which gave special push to the public sector. In 1970-71 for example, the first post civil war budget made the capital estimates of the state to tripple in size over the previous year. The argument which the state presented to justify such expansion was that state spending would provide the necessary infrastructure for private investment and thus pave way for necessary social and economic advancement.

State projections were that conditions for economic growth, increased employment and development of human labour resources need be established through the vital role of state expenditure within the public sector.[43]

By 1975 state spending had risen by about 40%

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43. North Western State Nigeria, Budget Speech 1972-73, Ministry of Information, Sokoto, 1972, p.2.

over that of 1973/74. In the same year, the state realized an increase of 300% in the consolidated revenue from the federal government.[44] Most of the allocation of the development sector over these periods had been expended on education, water supply, road construction, and construction of residential and office buildings. It meant a boom for the contractors and businessmen, local and foreign. How did these developments affect Sokoto town in particular?

We observed that in education which was given a priority in allmost all periods of state expenditure, Sokoto town recorded [45] an expansion of primary intake of both male and female pupils from 20,288 in 1969 to 80,569 in 1974/75.[46] Similarly enrollment of secondary schools located in the town was 836 students in 1969 as against 3,422 five years later.

The state also established in the town post secondary institutions like the Sokoto State College

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44. North Western State Nigeria, Bumper Budget 1975-76, Information Division, Sokoto, 1976, p.1.

45. North Western State Nigeria, Statistical Handbook, 1970, Gaskiya Corporation Zaria, 1970, pp. 113-118.

46. Northe Western State Nigeria, Education Statistics 1974/75, Gaskiya Corporation Zaria, 1975, pp 1-8.

of Arts and Science, the Federal College of Arts and Science Sokoto, and College of Education Sokoto. More significant development in the expansion of higher education came with the establishment of University of Sokoto in 1975.

As a result of the public sector boom, the economy of the town became more dynamic. Production of both food and cash crops in the urban fringes of Sokoto increased and the state facilitated the processes through expanded programmes of tractor hiring, package demonstration on private farms, intensified fertilizer distribution and seed multiplication. The assistance given by the state to the so called 'progressive farmers' intensified.

Within the urban setting proper definite steps were taken by the state to provide basic infrastructure required for the expansion of commercial and industrial activity. Some of these include urban road construction, water supply schemes, and street electrification. The infrastructural facilities provided by the state and federal governments interms of postal services, telephones and electric power supply were expanded.

Therefore Sokoto town witnessed an expansion in almost all areas of the public sector, including the improved and expanded Sokoto hospital equipped

with modern instruments and additional beds, and the pathological laboratory extended.

The state embarked on intensive recruitment of high level medical and administrative personnel both locally and from abroad. Some of these include surgeons, physicians and pathologists. To sustain such cadres most of whom live in Sokoto, including teachers and public servants, the state had to construct both senior and junior staff residential buildings in the town. Other constructions include a complex secretariat, and offices for the federal agencies like the army, police, customs, immigration, and central bank officials. At the moment nearly every federal government agency has a branch located in the town.

Furthermore, because of this public sector led growth Sokoto had witnessed an unprecedented expansion in its urban set-up and it is facing all the challenges of modernization comparable to areas like Kano and Kaduna. The state offered incentives in the form of favourable economic and social cli climate for private investors.

Foreign capital also played a role in the managerial and technical skills in the manufacturing sector of the town. The state has formed partner-

ships with foreign and local industrialists. Specific instances of such state involvement is manifested in the activities of the Nigerian Development Company limited (NNDC) which serves as a source of capital for agricultural and industrial enterprises, also through its subsidiary the Northern Nigerian Investment Limited, it initiates, investigates, and supports commercial and agricultural schemes and also industry. It also provides loans and equity finance for commercial concerns.[47]

Indigeneous businessmen were assisted by the state through the 'small scale industrial credit scheme'. They get loans to a maximum of ₦10,000[48] which is invested in large scale industrial establishments. State involvement in manufacture as we have argued was basically through financial assistance for initiation and financing of industries by way of loans or direct investment where private capital was not available. The aim was to supplement private enterprises and not to displace them. The State also offered cooperation with investors from outside the country.

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47. Sokoto State Nigeria, Industrial Potentialities, Information Division Sokoto, Obadaki Press, Kaduna, 1976, p.13.

48. Ibid.

Among industries located in the town are the cement company of Northern Nigeria which uses locally available linestone deposits. There exist the Sokoto Tannery (SOKOTAN) which process local leather. Others are Sokoto Furniture Factory and the Sokoto Softs drinks Factory; the manufacturers of 'Apple' and 'King cola' softs drinks. Some small scale industries such as dyeing, weaving, and Handicrafts have survived. New types of small scale manufacturing industries are gradually emerging and expanding e.g. Bakeries, Block making, and small scale furniture making.[49]

The most powerful commercial institutions in the town are subsidiaries of multi-nationals like the U.A.C., John Holt, P.Z. and U.T.C. Most of these located along Kantin Daji area of Sokoto. They constitute the major distribution commercial firms in the town. In addition to these, there exist local shops and Canteens owned by Nigerians who carried out merchandize trade in the main market, the areas of Kantin Daji, Ahmadu Bello Way and Emir Yahaya Road. The old market road constitute another area of concentration of

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49. Sokoto State Nigeria, Introducing Sokoto State, Government Printer, Sokoto, 1984. p.37.

commercial businesses engaged in distribution of bicycles, motor-cycles, flour, and rice.[50]

The Banking institutions which offer services to the industrial and commercial firms, as well as the public sector constitute another aspect of the commercial life of the town. Through their activities money capital is mobilized from the public for the use of industrialists and large scale commercial activities. Prominent amongst such banks are the First Bank of Nigeria Limited, International Bank for West Africa, Union Bank, Mortgage Bank of Nigeria, and Bank of the North. Others include the International Bank for Credit and Commerce, Savannah Bank, the Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperatives Bank, the Nigerian Development Bank, the Sokoto Cooperative Bank and the Central Bank of Nigeria which has a state headquarters in Sokoto.

2.8 Sokoto In The Crisis of the Petroleum Economy

Consequent upon the now much publicised though less understood world economic recession, Sokoto town manifest in various forms some of the contradictions associated with the fiscal and foreign

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50. Ibid.

exchange crisis in the Nigerian State. The experience in the fall in revenue at the state level, affect Sokoto in the sense that there occur a sharp reduction in state spending on the town. In this crisis the state experienced a decline in the locally generated revenue.

There was also the operations of a costly and wasteful presidential system of government between 1979 - 83. While the state could not effectively maintain the expanded public sector it embarked on a spending spree which gave the politicians of the period all sorts of loans ranging from car loans, housing loans, and small scale industrial loans.

Raufu Mustapha has argued that in the second republic, the pace of looting of public treasure increased with the upward adjustment of old contracts, the payment for contracts which were not carried out; the award of ficticious contracts etc. According to Mustapha, large amount of public funds found their way into private pockets through these inflated contracts costs, and the increasingly sophisticated kick back system, involving both the politicians and members of the bureaucracy.[51]

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51. Abdul Raufu Mustapha, Foreign Capital And Class Formation: A Kano Case Study, M.Sc. Thesis, A.B.U. 1983, p.89.

Development expenditure declined inspite of the constant revenue which the federal government grants to the state. Capital expenditure figures since 1980 justify this claim.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE OF SOKOTO STATE
1980 - 1984

YEAR		AMOUNT (₦)
1980	-	125,577,216
1981	-	155,628,840
1982	-	92,677, 77
1983	-	87,747,570
1984	-	53,957,000

Source: Ministry of Finance Sokoto, CAG/375/ Vol.I, 1985.

Even though the Federal grant to the State remained almost constant the state could not maintain the expanded public sector.

FEDERAL GRANT TO SOKOTO STATE 1980 - 1984

YEAR		AMOUNT (₦)
1980	-	137,367,471
1981	-	146,396,262
1982	-	224,298,366
1983	-	204,646,880
1984	-	224,026,422

Source: a) Register Statutory Revenue Allocation,
b) Report of Federal A/C Revenue Allocation Committee, Sokoto State Ministry of Finance 1985.

The manufacturing sector faced severe under production especially in those industries that are capital intensive. This was due to the lack of inputs of both capital goods and other raw materials which had to be imported. Therefore the factories had to cut down on production which in turn led to a cut down on labour employment.

Added to this was the problem of insufficiency of food produced in the Sokoto area for the expanded urban population. The drought problem further aggravated the situation which reached crisis proportions in 1983-84. The problem of trade slump and decline in imports meant that the commercial sector activity also declined. The non-availability of commodities and the inflation associated with such a situation was illustrated by the unprecedented increase in prices of products like washing powder, bathing soap, cooking oil, rice and corn-flour.

The prices of such items were so high especially in 1983, that most low income earners mostly workers (either in the public, industrial or commercial sector) could not afford them. Rice was so expensive that even the local variety was purchased at the same price as the imported one an increase of over 300% was recorded between 1980-1983 in

the price of this commodity alone.

In addition to this problem of price increases which created hardship and impoverishment in the local population, state failure to maintain the expanded public service led to massive retrenchment. There was also a similar exercise in the private sector as a consequence of under production. This affected mostly junior workers in both the public and private sectors. The retrenched junior staff were mostly messengers, cooks, labourers, clerks, drivers, gardners and student nurses. These groups actually constitute the bulk of the working people found in the public sector of the state and its parastatals. These all the more added to the problem of unemployment within the urban setting of Sokoto.

2.9 Conclusions

The political economy of Sokoto had over the last one hundred and seventy years of its development established conditions within which social classes emerged and gave shape to the social formation. We shall conclude by highlightening some of its concrete features which are important in understanding the contemporary class structure of the town.

One of such features was the activity of the colonial and post colonial state whose role in the economy generated increased public and commercial activity in the town; and also strengthened the basis for further development of these activities through increased extraction of surplus from peasant production. We observed that the surplus appropriated from the peasants are used to expand the revenue base of the state. The middle men who stand in between the marketing Boards and the producers also benefited from such surplus extraction.

Similarly, state involvement in facilitating the expansion of education was significant. It provided opportunities for salaried employment linked with local and expatriate administrators, and company managers. It facilitated access to trade and enable some groups to act in local politics as intermediaries between the state, and the people. Thus we argue that colonialism had established African intermediaries in commerce and administration whose education and wealth made them privileged in relation to the peasants, craftsmen, and petty traders.

Also the expanded state spending in the public sector based on petroleum revenue enabled the

emergence of a prodominantly public sector led economy, with a highly dynamic commercial sector, and generating further food and cash crop production in the fringes of the town which is used to feed the urban population. State and private capital activity in agricultural development projects, and the role of large scale private farmers called 'progressive farmers intensified'.

Within the urban setting, definite activity of the state to provide basic infrastructural requirement for industrial activity; facilitated the role of both local and foreign capital in manufacture and commerce. The town witnessed the slow expansion of both large scale and small industries. Capital intensive factories began to emerge, and those artisan manufactures that survived through the pre-colonial and colonial situation expanded.

Multi-nationals established subsidiaries in Sokoto, and their industrial as well as commercial operations were facilitated by the role of banking, which is also a significant commercial activity of the town. Other small scale activities in commerce in the form of local canteens, shops, and super-markets were steadily expanding, and most of them

concentrate in the merchandize trade.

Today, economic activity in Sokoto both within the public and private sector has declined as a result of the economic crisis. It has led to reduction in expenditure on maintaining the public sector. The private sector has responded to the crisis by reduction in production and consequent upon this a large majority of the producers were retrenched. The exercise mostly affected the junior cadres in the public and private sector. This retrenchment of wage labour in commerce and industrial production was particularly negative since it involved the underprivileged in the social formation.

We have attempted to demonstrate in this chapter how Sokoto's economy developed from its original pre-colonial rural base, where agriculture and artisan manufacture formed the basis for commerce and surplus extraction. Colonialism introduced the process of the peripheratisation of the town and the subordination of the economy to capitalism.

The contemporary social and economic structure of the town must therefore be understood in the context of capitalist development and the historically

determined processes of surplus extraction from the wage earning, and peasant population of the town. As a result of the effective integration of the town into the capitalist system, a complex social formation has developed, within which we shall now proceed to identify the formation of classes.

Chapter 3

CLASSES IN CONTEMPORARY SOKOTO

3.1 Introduction: A Civil Service and Commercial Town

Sokoto is a civil service town. Unlike some other major towns in Nigeria, Sokoto has no strong private sector base; the manufacturing sector is very small, and its commercial role in the peasant cash crop economy is not central. Although commerce is important it is primarily linked to public sector spending. The main sources of employment are the state bureaucracy, the federal government agencies including the army, police and various educational institutions, including the university.

The historical experience of Sokoto as the capital of the Sokoto caliphate in the past, and its re-emergence as a capital of a state since 1967 have accounted for the pre-dominance of the public service. It is within this context that we now proceed to identify social classes.

3.2 The Bourgeosie

The bourgeois class in Sokoto could be

structured according to levels of significance relative to the nature of economic activity they engaged in. At the top we have the owners and managers of major manufacturing enterprises like the makers of softs drinks, cement, matches, leather, and furniture.[1] The bourgeosie is also constituted by owners and managers of major trading companies like Tradev, Nadia, and Sotana enterprises, large transport owners, and also owners of large farms in the state but who reside in Sokoto town, including some top civil servants, senior judges, army and police officers, finally among the bourgeosie can be found some of the feudal aristocrats who owned landed properties and merchant Banks.[2]

These are remnants of the feduel ruling class found in the pre-colonial period and which was conserved in the colonial period as partners of the colonialists in the exploitation and oppression of the dominated classes. The feudal aristocracy thus owes its survival to state support, which is re-inforced through its integration with the emerging bourgeosie. The Emirate council, which consists of the Sultan as president, traditional title holders

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1. Sokoto State Nigeria, Introducing Sokoto State, Obadaki Press Ltd., Kaduna, pp. 19-30.

2. Sokoto State Nigeria, Trade and Industry Directory, Government Printer Sokoto, 1980. pp.15-18.

and the chairmen of the local government council, continues to represent the interests of this particular faction of the bourgeosie.

Through their alliences with top civil servants, and managers as well as the commercial petty bourgeosie, the traditional rulers are being protected. The state ensures that their prestige and dignity are upheld. The traditional institutions which entrench the power of the feudalists are well rooted in the history of Sokoto. In the pre-colonial and colonial situations, the institutions served as effective propaganda merchinery which articulated and propagate the ideology of the ruling classes of that time. Up-till today, the Sultan and his chiefs play an important role in ensuring the dominance of the state.[3]

The state[4] embarks on direct measures that would ensure and safeguard the position of the traditional rulers as 'fathers of the people'. Thus the feudal aristocracy in Sokoto enjoy a position of esteem within the context of the bourgeosie and as members of the ruling class to the extent that they are referred to in ruling class circles as 'local dignitaries and also as having a unique

3. Sokoto State Nigeria, A brief survey, Ministry of Local Government, Information Division, Sokoto, 1984, p.13.

4. Ibid, p. 18.

position as traditional heads of the community'[5] Thus the bourgeosie has allied itself with and is infact preserving the feudal institutions through which it can facilitate the material and ideological subjugation of the working class.

In the process of their expansion, the bourgeosie tries to subordinate every other class. Also each step in the development of the bourgeosie corresponds to a political advance in their favour. The bourgeosie also involves itself in the modernization of industry and commerce, and to some extent it attempts to mechanise agriculture. This orientation is in accordance with the need to reproduce and consolidate their material base and ensure its continuous expansion. For as we are told:

> The bourgeosie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instrumerts of production, and thereby relations of production and with them the whole relations of society.6

The bourgeosie whether 'domestic' or 'foreign' has the control of the instrument of production, as well as of political power in a bourgeois society. The case of Sokoto is not different.

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5. Sokoto State Government, Education: The Bedrock of Social Order, Kwara State Printing, and Publishing Co., Ilorin, 1976, p.6.

6. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p.36.

3.3 Public Sector Petit Bourgeosis and Middle Classes

In relation to the petit bourgeosie there exist no direct contradiction which defines it as a class in the sense of a 'dialectical' opposition with another class. Rather the petit bourgeosie is distinguished by the role it plays between the producers of wealth in society i.e. the working class and those who own or control the means of production i.e. the bourgeosie proper or the state as the representative of the bourgeosie. The public sector petit bourgeosie is distinguished by the fact that it is concentrated in the administrative and managerial services including professional activity. It is constituted by middle level cadres in the state sector, including the army, police and those in health services like the doctors and nurses, journalists, the teachers, including students in secondary schools, and post secondary institutions, and the university.

These groups have a solid foundation in both the state and federal agencies located in the town. The development of such a public sector petty bourgeosie can be traced back to the pre-colonial political glory of the caliphate. Although the town's significance declined in the colonial era,

Sokoto still remained the headquarters of the Sokoto province; and since the creation of states, the town had assumed greater political and administrative responsibility. All these conditions created the basis for the emergence of an extensive public service, and managerial structure in the town, which formed the basis of this section of the petty bourgeosie.

Our categorization of these groups as such could be justified in the light of the poverty of alternative concepts that could be used. The group we referred to is representatively similar to a group referred to by Marx in his uncompleted discussion of classes in England. Marx stated that:

> In England, modern society is indisputably most highly and classically developed in economic structure. Nevertheless... the stratification of classes does not appear in its pure form. Middle and intermediate strata even here obliterate lines of demarcation everywhere.[7] (emphasis added)

In another reference to the same group as the middle classes, Marx was involved in a critique of Ricardo.[8] He accused Ricardo of forgetting in his analysis of the social classes, and the labour process to

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7. David Mcllelan, Karl Marx Selected Writings, Oxford University Press, London, 1977. p.506.

8. Ibid.

emphasize the constant growing number of the middle classes. Those who stand between the workman on the one hand, and the capitalist and landlord on the other.

The middle classes argued Marx, maintained themselves to an increasing extent directly on revenue. They are therefore a burden weighing heavily on the working class, and they increase the social security of the bourgeosie.[9] Similarly Shivji in his contribution to the debate argued that the petty bourgeosie in classical Marxian literature refers to those strata which cannot be included either in the bourgeosie or the proletariat. They exist in the middle ranks and the 'interstices' of the developed capitalist society. In his argument Shivji included among the petit bourgeosie such groups as the:

> Small property owners, shopkeepers and small traders, lower ranks of the intelligensia and liberal profession etc. 10 (emphasis added)

3.4 The Commercial Petty Bourgeosie

The commercial petit bourgeosie in Sokoto is constituted by small businessmen, traders, crafts-

9. Ibid.

10. Issa Shvji, Class Struggle In Tanzania, Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd. London, 1976.p.21.

men small manufacturers, and contractors; owners of small rented property, transport business on a lower scale, construction equipment, and the Sokoto-based small commercial farmers. Some of the farmers are middle level public servants working in the state civil service, parastatals, and other state companies. The small scale industralists who also belong to this class are engaged mostly in Bricks and Block-making, furniture production, textiles, and other crafts industries like hair-dressing, photography, and tailoring.[11]

Also among members of this class we find owners of local canteens, and shops, also the individual men and women engage in agency activities by the means of certificates granted to them by Tradev company owned by the state. These certificates sanctions, and legalised their activities. Local purchase by the state are channelled through such agents. The businessmen equally apply for either agency or dealership work with manufacturing and service industry through another state organ, the Ministry of Trade and Industry.[12]

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11. Sokoto Agricultural Development Project, Objectives and General Features, 1982-1986, p.7.

12. Trade and Industry Directory, Op. cit. pp.15-18.

As in the case of the public sector petit bourgeosie, the commercial petit bourgeosie is not defined on the basis of an existing contradiction with other classes. Rather it has as its origins the intermediary role which it had consistently played since the pre-colonial times in Sokoto. We had observed that in the pre-colonial social formation of Sokoto, the commercial class was formed on the basis of the family. In that period the entire commercial classes were represented by merchants who engage in both local trade and external commerce through the Trans-saharan trade route. In the colonial situation they continued their intermediary role between the producers of commodities in the society and the buyers of such goods, in this case the colonial firms. The wealth generated through these activities was largely shared between the group and these colonial mercantile firms.[13]

The contemporary commercial petty bourgeosie of Sokoto, as well as the big traders had a strong historical link with the development of both the pre-colonial and colonial economic formations. The

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Saleh Abubakar, Birnin Shehu: The city of Sokoto, A Social And Economic History, Ph.D. Thesis A.B.U. 1982.

merchant class of the colonial society was a predecessor of the present commercial petty bourgeosie and the large scale owners of commercial firms indigeneous to Sokoto. Most importantly however we argue that the important basis of the formation of these class is provided as a consequence of Sokoto's large public service population. There exist a large urban market for food, and other consumer goods and services. The commercial petit bourgeosie thus emerged to meet such demand from the administrative personnel and lower ranks of the workers.

Our identification of the petty bourgeosie both the public sector and commercial sector types was informed by the logic of their role in the political economy and most specifically by the way they operate within essentially a capitalist context. Marx had observed that within the bourgeois social order:

> In countries where modern civilization has become fully developed a new class of petty bourgeoisie has been formed, fluctuating between proletariat and bourgeosie and ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of the bourgeois society.[14] (emphasis mine)

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14. Marx and Engels, Op. cit. p.55.

Marx further pointed out that the individual members of this class are being constantly drawn into the proletariat by the action of competition and as the bourgeois society developed they see the possibility of their complete disappearance as an independent section of modern society. In view of this, we have to admit that the petty bourgeosie in Sokoto is quite extensive in terms of scope. They constitute a class which in terms of size is surpassed only by the peasantry.

In relation to the fluctuating orientation of this class as postulated by Marx we observed that its manifestation relative to Sokoto's situation came about in the manner through which a section of this petty bourgeosie is pre-occupied with career activities. This section is strongly oriented to the bourgeosie, and is operating state structures on behalf of the same bourgeois class. Even more it seeks to maintain the status quo. Another section of the petit bourgeosie is however radical. This section especially the intelligensia is oriented towards critical appraisal of the existing social structure, and it seeks to radically transform the society - this section most often identify with the working class.

3.5 The Working Class

The industrial working class of Sokoto is marginal because of the size of the manufacturing sector proper. The wage earners are primarily found in the public sector. In addition to the top and middle cadres which can be identified with the bourgeosie and petit bourgeosie there is a much broder stratum of junior staff, messengers, drivers, gardners, mechanics, and guards who belong to the working class. Police and soldiers, and domestic servants. The commercial sector including the large number of small establishments employ wage labour on both temporary and permanent basis. There is a vast pool of casual labour which is drawn upon for loading, off-loading and the carting of goods. Commercial farmers in the vicinity of the city also recruit temporary farm labourers from this pool. The construction industry, however, is the largest employer of such temporary labour. The workers found in the small number of large manufacturing industries constitute the core of the proletariat in the classical maxian sense.

3.6 Urban Fringe, Small Peasants and Farm Labourers

The existence of the peasantry in an urban

setting like that of Sokoto can only be understood if we locate the urban economy as it is integrated into the surrounding rural economy. The peasant class is derived from the activity of those people who produce food and cash crops in the agricultural sector. Agriculture as part of Sokoto's urban economy is also evidenced by the state, and private capital involvement in agricultural production. As we have seen earlier there exist a substantial number of 'absentee' farmers in Sokoto, those who co-opt the peasantry into their farms, and in the process made them work as labourers who are paid on 'casual labour' basis. The exploitation of wage labour in agriculture by state and private land owners based in the city is increasing especially with the emergence of Sokoto Agricultural Development Authority, (SADP) and the Sokoto Rima Basin Development Authority (SRBDA).

The increasing role of both state and private capital investment in agriculture suggests the emergence of an urban based agrarian bourgeosie and an agrarian proletariat, which would be constituted by those farm labourers employed by either the state or individual agricultural businesses. This process is evidenced by the nature of state involvement - which create loans schemes presumably for

farmers although the urban-based farmers are particularly well placed in getting access to the loans.

A section of the peasantry are simultaneously integrated with the working class. Since the small peasant has a 'small material base' which is subordinated to processes of large scale industrial and agricultural production; - their efforts in production is ultimately oriented to serve a bourgeois socio-economic system which has as a prerogative for the bourgeosie the power to organise production on a large scale. The bourgeosie are stronger competitors and they are more specialised in the organisation of production than the small peasants.

Accordingly, there emerges in Sokoto among the peasantry and farm labourers a gradual process of 'proletarianisation' which occur in the context of capitalist transformation of agriculture in particular, and the capitalist orientation of the political economy in general. This processes are more specific in relation to the capitalist transformation of Sokoto's urban economy, and its linkages with agriculturally dominant urban fringes.

3.7 The Lumpen Proletariat

We use the term 'lumpen-proletariat' to designate certain stratum at the bottom of the urban society. This include cart-pushers, water carriers, loaders and off-loaders of vehicles, touts, petty-traders, beggars and destitutes. This residual class of 'lumpen-proletariat' is not actually a category which has no basis for its existence. A large majority of them (except the disabled and beggars) perform vital economic functions within the context and contradictions of capitalist development. For example, the cart-pushers revolve around the activity of the transport sector. The water carriers are connected with building and construction activities where their services are required enmass. They also provide domestic services independent of the identified job of water carrying. For example they are engaged for menial jobs of washing and cleaning in domestic house holds where permanent domestic servants cannot be employed.

Also the loaders and off-loaders of vehicles and touts are objectively linked to the transport and haulage activity either in the motor parks, market, or at large distribution and whole sale firms. The petty-traders could be identified with the lowest level of the trading activity which

is only an aspect of the general commercial activity. The commodities distributed whether locally produced or imported go through an extensive chain of distribution points from the large whole sale distribution firms to large scale distributors like the super markets, to small scale distributors like shops, and to retail traders on the streets down below to the petty-traders who carry the items for sale along with them.

The beggars and destitutes constitute the lowest of the low, and their misery is evident by the fact that they do not have any objective material base for survival except by charity. They are the most clear victims of an inhuman class society.

3.8 Classes in Sokoto: Concluding Observations

The deduction of classes in contemporary Sokoto was made on the basis of the nature of the political economy. The class structure as we have presented it constitutes an abstract formulation and the actual nature of the class structure is more complex than the initial deductions. The bourgeosie as we deducted it include many groups which would presumably be identified in a different

context as constituting a class as different to the bourgeosie. The inclusion of top civil servants, senior judges and senior army and police officers and also the feudal aristocracy - could be seen as problematic because from the classical perspective they do not own capital as the means of production, and thus they could not constitute a bourgeosie.

But within the capitalist context of the political economy, and given the fact that the same group of people play multiple roles in that system we could realistically identify the key role they play in the control of the means of production, and the organisation of production in order to arrive at their class. Most of the large land and farm owners operate their farms on an intensive capital basis. They also use extensively labour power which is paid for. Also many of them are actually civil servants, and senior police and army officers.

Similarly, the feudal aristocracy had a strong control on land in the area, and they equally have a strong influence on how land and other landed property is allocated. Some of them are actually owners of large manufacturing firms, and others owners of transport, building, and

construction companies, and yet others owned merchant banks, and have shares in commercial Banking.[11] The most basic orientation of both the senior civil servants and the feudal aristocracy is that they operate from a capitalist base, whether it is the operations of capital in manufacture commerce or agriculture.

The role of the state is another factor which pushes the bourgeosie forward. The state direct consciously its spending towards areas of interest of the bourgeosie. The small scale agricultural, and industrial loans given out by the state between 1972 to 1979[12] for example goes to those already established companies belonging to the bourgeosie. The less powerful or less established companies only got 'a small share of the total loan given out'. This suggests that the state is actively involve in the process of expanding the bourgeois class. Indirectly this same state action create the conditions which would further intensify the exploitation of the working class, and the peasantry.

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11. Trade and Industry Directory, Op. Cit.
12. Introducing Sokoto State, Op. cit.

Our distinction of the petit bourgeosie as a class on the one hand and its categorisation into the public sector and commercial petit bourgeosie on the other, are both informed and based on the intermediary role these classes play between the working class below and the bourgeosie at the top. They are further distinguished as a class in the sense that some of them like the commercial petit-bourgeosie actually have control of a (minimal type) on the means of production inform of small capital, and commercial finance. The public-sector petit bourgeosie, though it does not control any substantial means of production, - it exercises control and direct the operations of that portion of wealth in society under the state. They do this on behalf of the bourgeosie.

Another complexity associated with our 'abstraction' of social classes in Sokoto is connected with the overlapping aspect of the roles which social groups perform in the political economy. For example a member of the public sector petit bourgeosie could also be the owner of a small scale commercial business somewhere else or in Sokoto itself. Also members of the commercial petit bourgeosie would have some members of their families engaged in petty trading as a supplementary means of income that does

not make them members of the 'lumpen-proletariat'.

Similarly, students in secondary and post secondary schools whom we categorise under the public sector petty-bourgeosie do not control any direct means of production. But rather they participate or more appropriately they enjoy the benefits of the wealth which had been cornered by the state through the financing of their education which is undertaken by the state. Their share of the 'wealth' produced in society is certainly higher than that of the destitutes, and beggars, who do not seem to be even acknowledged in the distribution of such wealth. Objectively therefore students are better off than destitutes and they could not be called members of the working class or peasants since they are not engaged in material production. But they can be closely associated with the public sector petty bourgeosie.

Along the same line of argument we could say that the small traders, craftsmen, and small manufacturers could only be logically categorised under the commercial petty bourgeosie, since they do not own capital at the same large scale like the big farmers, manufacturers on a large scale, and big owners of rented property, trading companies, and construction firms - those who fall within the

category of the bourgeoisie proper. The Sokoto based small commercial farmers are certainly not the same as the large land and farm owners even though they could be said to be along the same continuum of class structure.

The same observation could be made in relation to the working class as regards the complexity of the nature of class contradictions which brought them into being. We have already observed that the 'proletariat' proper is only an aspect of the working class, and not separate from it. It could be observed that most of the labour of those working as wage earners in the state and private firms, those junior workers in commerce, construction and manufacturing, and also the watchmen, and transport workers - is certainly paid for; the domestic servants may not necessarily be paid. They may receive some form of remuneration in kind, and in some cases none at all.

In the case of the lumpen-proletariat we had argued that whereas some of them like the water-carriers, loaders and off-loaders of vehicles, and petty-traders may have an objective material basis for their survival - others like the beggars and destitutes are so 'marginal' to the society that they do not have any objective means of survival. On

the whole it should be argued that the nature of class contradictions within the capitalist mode of production in Sokoto does not appear to be clearly manifested in the 'abstraction' of social classes; but that when viewed along a continuum we can perceive that there exist a bourgeosie at the top of the class structure, then the middle classes of the public-sector and commercial petty bourgeosie, each of which has lower levels of gradings, to the working class, then the peasants and farm labourers at the urban fringes, and down to the lumpen-proletariat'.

The class structure therefore does not emerge simply by looking at society superficially but rather using an analytical perspective would allow us perceive how the society is structured along classlines. Our 'abstract' deductive methodology thus made it possible to establish a class structure within the Sokoto context. But this abstract form assume a specific dimension and greater clarity when a further exposition of the nature of class contradictions is made. The 'abstract' thus appear in the concrete which involve the categorisation of social classes in Sokoto along a continuum, and according to the levels of complexity.

Chapter 4

CLASS ORGANISATIONS

4.1 Introduction: The Level of Organisation of Different Classes

The problematic of class consciousness which our study had to resolve in relation to Sokoto town could logically be located in the manner through which classes articulate their interests, and form structures that fight for those interests. From the position of a Marxist analytical perspective 'consciousness' is a non-material phenomena and to locate such in the context of physical reality could be termed an unscientific and metaphysical exercise. The closest one can associate consciousness with a concrete situation is through the action each class engages in.

In the previous chapter we have seen how the various classes can be identified at the level of the economic structure of society. How do we establish the political dimension of a constituted class? Our answer is that it can be done by studying the class action as manifested in the institutions and organisations set-up to act on behalf of a class. These structures which facilitate class action should, in our view, be made

central to the understanding of class consciousness. An analysis of the structures would bring out the contradictions between classes which arise as classes realize that their survival depends on conscious action through organised structures.

At this juncture we shall start by pointing out that for the majority of those who constitute the peasantry, and the 'lumpen proletariat' there are no class organisation in Sokoto that represent them. The bourgeosie however is an organised class with structures that articulate and formulate its interests both at the economic and political levels. The working classes and the public service and commercial petit bourgeosie are also organised. On the whole the structures which we found relevant for the study consisted of trade unions, professional associations, and business organisations. We have identified twenty-one trade unions that operate within Sokoto, and the state at large. They can be subdivided into unions that show some tendency of opposition towards the state, and other organisations of the bourgeosie. There are those that are more inclined to the'welfare' of their members without manifesting a tendency towards conflict with other groups.

We have also identified professional bodies that are objectively linked with the industrial establishments within which they are set-up or the professional field they represent. Such professional associations have an orientation towards identification with the establishment or the bourgeois ruling class. Organisations of the commercial petit bourgeosie were very numerous and discussion of them would be given within the general context in relations to craft guilds and similar associations.

4.2 Organisations of the Working Class

The working class of Sokoto is primarily represented through organisations under the umbrella of the Nigerian labour congress, (NLC). The state branch of the NLC has its headquarters in Sokoto town; and it came into being as a result of a National directive issued out by the central labour congress with headquarters in Lagos. The state council of the NLC is thus of necessity an off-shoot of the National central body.[1]

The state congress is made up of twenty unions

1. Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Secretariat, Sultan Abubakar Road Sokoto, Interview, September, 1985.

representing various groups within the state. The trade unions aim at articulating, and projecting workers interests either individually when it concerned a worker or collectively when it concerns all workers. The trade unions concern themselves with protecting the rights, and priveleges of their members. Generally the NLC as the mother organ seeks to promote the common interest of labour. In trying to achieve workers objectives the congress supports the activities of the individual industrial unions. Since all these units are affiliated to the congress it becomes also the responsibility of the NLC to ensure that individual unions participate in the activities of the state NLC or national body. This is not always the case as the NLC is split between unions belonging to different camps.

The NLC finds itself in opposition to and it struggles with other forces in the society. This has to do firstly with the attitude of the state towards workers organisation. The state is accused by the NLC of not encouraging trade union activities. The NLC further accused the state of not conceding to workers demands. Furthermore, spokesmen of the Sokoto congress perceived other groups as the industrialists, middlemen, and other non-workers pressure groups as always attempting to influence

government policies and decisions in their own interest as opposed to the interest of the workers.

Currently, NLC opposition has much to do with the negative consequences of the recent drastic fall in the standard of living of workers in Sokoto. According to the NLC, the general social situation is not conducive to workers interests. The access to food, clothing, housing and transport has seriously deteriorated. The NLC has sought alternative ways to improve the quality of life for the worker, including the setting-up of cooperative ventures by workers which would reduce the dependence of working people on the state and the private sector of the economy.[2]

The NLC perceives that through cooperatives, workers could influence market prices of commodities, and reduce the exesses of commercial profiteering. However in all most all cases according to the NLC, the industrial and commercial classes oppose workers' initiative. The congress claims that the businessmen of Sokoto hoard commodities, and also form agencies that sell commodities that are very scarce in the black market. They create artificial scarcity so

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2. Nigerian Labour Congress, Alternative: Towards National Recovery. NLC, publication by Comrade Ali Chiroma and Aliyu Dangiwa, pp.11-12.

that they can get more profit out of the products they sell.

The businessmen ensure that the fixing of prices of commodities in the market is organised so that a uniform price is maintained. The workers who purchase the goods have no alternative but to pay the price. The NLC further claims that the bourgeosie and the commercial petit bourgeosie influences the state through organised pressure in form of 'fronts' that ensure the failure of whatever workers' initiative are taken to change the negative situation.

Our sources suggest that the main area of conflict was in the relationship between the NLC and the state. According to NLC, during the 'second Republic' between 1979 to 1984, the government attempted to decentralize the labour union so as to facilitate the exploitation of the workers. The state then assumed an insincere posture, and it closed-up all avenues for discussion. The military since taking over seem to have aggravate the situation. Their position in relation to workers aspirations has been to act at their own descretion without consultation with workers organisations.

According to the NLC the state is trying to split the ranks of the workers. It attempts to

do this by means of exploiting the ignorance of the rank and file of the workers. We do not have any firm evidence of such manipulations by the state, but as regards the divisions they manifest themselves objectively in the internal politics of the trade unions. For example at the NLC trinnial delegates conference in Sokoto, two powerful right wing factions fought it out.

Our sources indicated that, the construction workers union, the civil service technical union, Bank employees, non-academic staff union, and Radio and Theatre workers union contested for all the seven vacant posts as a group, and opposed to them were others constituted by the civil service union, local government employees, nurses, textile workers, teachers union and the union of typists. The faction led by the civil service union won all the vacant seats.[3]

A similar situation relative to internal political differences was presented in the case of the Academic staff union of Nigerian Universities, (ASUU). The Sokoto secretariat of the ASUU admits that the union is in a sense divided according to 'ideological' leanings of those in leadership. Thus there exist the tendency for taking positions

3. The Sokoto socialist league, The Oppressed Wake Up, Published at the University of Sokoto, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1985, p.28.

on issues even before they come up for discussion, and decisions are taken through the means of 'caucus' formation.[4]

The Nigerian civil service technical workers union provides us with another illustration of how the conflict between workers and employers is perceived by union leaders. The union was set up to provide a forum through which workers can fight for their rights in relation to employers. The union facilitates relationship between members and the employers in the sense that it negotiates on behalf of the workers in order to obtain maximum wage, promotions and suitable conditions of service. The union assumes that workers have to 'fight' before employers and the state make any concessions to them. Further the union perceives those who favour and support workers struggle as progressive elements in the society.[5]

In their struggle workers have to consider the peculiarities of the society they live in. Sokoto being an area that has a variety of cultural and religious norms, the labour unions conduct their

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4. Academic Staff Union of Universities, (ASUU), Secretariat, University of Sokoto, interview, Sept. 1985.

5. The Nigerian Civil Service Technical Workers Union, Ahmadu Bello Way, Sokoto. Secretariat, interview, September, 1985.

activities through a delegates conference which consider inputs from the local coodinating committees. The branch executive committee of the union perform the function of regulating the 'dynamics' of labour relations by means of enlightenment, and the standardization of priorities areas.[6]

On the whole the union contends that there exists an opposition against workers interests, deriving from the capitalist socio-economic set-up. The union claim that the socio-economic arrangement militates against the development of working class consciousness. Also the struggle by workers for change is normally faced by other opposing interests whose main concern is the maximazation of profit at all costs and particularly at the expense of the well being of the workers.[7]

In relation to the unsuitable conditions of society to workers, the union spokesman daimed that the dominant class interests prevent any change in favour of the working class. The dominant classes obstruct improvements in the conditions of the working class. Spokesmen of the Nigerian Medical and Health Workers Union share this view. The union

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6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.

contend that working class organisations exist as a condition for the survival of the workers and also the need to struggle in the face of opposition by other interests. The union claimed that there exist dominant interests of employers who seek to prosper on the back of the working class. The union added that central to its activities is the attempt to establish and maintain higher standard of workmanship to establish higher skill, and improve on professional practice.[8]

In this regard, the union has to contend with the poor condition of health services in both private, and the public sector of the economy. In similarity with a sister organisation, the Nigerian Association of Nurses and Mid-wives, the Health Workers Union has to struggle against a situation where conditions of service are backward, transport and health services inadequate. The union observed further that it struggles in a progressive manner to ensure that its members achieve a high standard of service in health institutions. At the moment, however, the conditions of public clinics in Sokoto made them operate as consulting units only. Medicine

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8. The Nigerian Medical And Health Workers Union, Secretariat Sultan Abubakar Road Sokoto, interview, September, 1985.

can only be obtained at private clinics or medicine stores. Most of those who go to public clinics can not afford to pay the prices of medicines prescribed for them.

According to our source, since the Health Workers Union sees itself as being representative of class interests its main areas of struggle has been to establish a better health service for the working class through the pressure which the union applies on both the public and private health institutions. In the attempt to do this, the union faces antagonism from the state, and other employers in the private sector. The employers consider the activities of the union as 'subversive'.

Another illustration of the nature of class conflicts in Sokoto can be established by looking at the Nigerian union of Teachers(NUT). In its struggles with the establishment the union has stood for the right of everybody to get education. The union argues that the 'elite' in the society uses the condition of ignorance among the people to perpetuate their dominance. The NUT perceives this discriminatory attitude of the elite as 'oppression in the mode of ignorance'. The hegemony of the oppressors, according to the union is maintained through the same process, and an attempt to

prevent changes is also entrenched. It is against this background that the NUT contend that education is not a privelege but a right, and therefore the union fight and seek in many ways for the democratization, and universalization of education.[9]

The NUT maintain that it has to operate in opposition to these dominant class interests which seek to establish ignorance so as to 'cheat' people of their rights. The NUT perceives the oppression and domination flourishes under conditions of ignornace, therefore it tries to prevent this by ensuring that teachers up date themselves in the process of knowledge and keep up to 'professionalism'. The union contends that in its attempt to safeguard the interest of members, establish an cooporate body and develop professional skills it has met with all kinds of opposition. This opposition takes the form of a bureaucratic and political conspiracy by the 'elites' whose main goal is to put constraint on the activities of the union.[10]

At a more specific level and in connection with the issue of operating 'private schools', the NUT clearly perceives private proprietors legally

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9. Seminar On Trade Union Education Organised by the Nigerian Union of Teachers, Sokoto Wing, September, 1985. Address by the President of the NUT.
10. Ibid.

known as 'voluntary agencies' as being either private individuals or local communities. As at the moment the local communities are not involved in the campaign for the repossession of schools, because their aim in striving to establish schools is to bring them to a high standard the government would take over. In relation to private individuals there exist a group of proprietors who seek to establish schools solely to exploit Nigerian's unquanchable quest for education. Thus, according to the NUT this group profit emensely from such operations within the shortest possible time. Such individuals want private schools reintroduced so that they can continue their erstwhile profitable business with government backing.[11]

According to our source, this is what has necessitated the NUT to fight against privatisation of education and the exploitation of peoples' ignorance by the ruling classes. The union also consider itself a professional organisation with responsibility to ensure good education, whether free or qualitative for all Nigerians.

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11. The Nigerian school master, Journal of the Nigerian Union of Teachers, No. 19, January 1980, p.7.

From the analysis of positions taken by the unions so far, we can see that they take a strong interest in other issues that concern members of the society, even if such issues are not central to their objectives as trade unions in a narrow sense. For example, the Radio, Television and Theatre Workers Union in Sokoto strongly object to a situation where according to our source, over 80% of those who handle the economy are representative of the bourgeosie, and there are no workers representatives amongs them.[12]

The union contends that the issue of retrenchment is not justifiable, and that the distribution of food is also unequal and discriminatory to workers. Further more the entire socio-economic set up (bourgeois society) has established structures that make the rich, richer and the poor all the more poor. The union particularly singles out the role of the commercial classes and 'middlemen' as anti-working class. It further claim that the distribution mechanism is biased in favour of privileged classes, and that the commercial and bourgeois classes swing the state in their favour.[13]

12. Radio, Television and Theatre Workers Union, Secretariat, NTA Studios Runjin Sambo Sokoto, interview, September, 1985.

13. Ibid.

In our survey we also came across other working class organisations which did not show any form of opposition or confrontation with other groups. They do not see any other group interest as being against their own and they emphasize in their activities the 'welfare' of their members. One of such organisations is the Road Transport Workers union. Although it was set up to protect the interest of the transport vehicle drivers against unjust action by either vehicle owners or the state - in actual fact the union equally protect commercial vehicle owners against any form of 'recklessness' by drivers. The union use to follow up the case of accidents which result into court cases, and they pay fines on behalf of their members. They however do not get involved in cases of jail sentence or criminal charges. Thus in their activities they do not come into confrontation with the government or owners of vehicles.

According to a spokesman of the union,[14] they reconcile at times the interest of owners of vehicles and those of the drivers. In other

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14. The National Union of Road Transport Workers, Secretariat, Ahmadu Bello Way, Sokoto, interview, September, 1985.

situations the union even calls to order some of its members whom it sees as dealing unjustly with vehicle owners. In this regard it takes the attitude of cooperation and compromise with owners rather than confrontation. The union therefore considered itself a part of the transport industry and what it does is to facilitate the operations of the transport business. Also in its relations with the state, it sees government as a structure which contain all shades of opinion and the state is not seen from a perspective of 'class bias'. Our observation is that the union accept the 'status quo' and it does not seek to change it.[15]

4.3 Professional Associations

There exist in Sokoto class organisations which are not trade unions as such, but protect the interests of the professionals within a particular field. Such professional associations see their role as that of facilitating the operations of their area of specialization in close cooperation with industry or the relevant section of the public

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15. National Union of Transport Workers, Rules and Regulations: Preamble, Ben Olu Cashman and Co. Mushin, Lagos, p.25.

sector. Among such associations in Sokoto is the Nigerian Bar Association, a professional body constituted by lawyers. The Nigerian Bar Association claims that it is involved in protecting the dignity of the legal profession, and also it helps to maintain a high standard of ethics in the profession.

The relationship of the association with government and other state institutions is cordial. According to our source, the association enjoys government support and encouragement. Donations to the Association from the government are normally received.[16] In situations that require criticism of the state, the Association claims that it does not hesitate to put its views across to the government, for example when people are detained without trial, and when government tries to interfare with the independence of the judiciary. On such occasions the Association takes a position of opposition, and seeks to ensure that justice is done.

The membership of the Association is exclusively for lawyers. In order to be allowed to practice, a

16. Nigerian Bar Association, Sokoto Branch, Secretariat, Law Reform Commission, Sokoto, interview, September, 1985.

lawyer has to be registered with the Bar. This ensures we believe the integration of the individual members with the aspirations and practice of the profession.

As a professional Association, the Nigerian Bar Association takes an intermediary position within the class structure of Sokoto. Its primary role is to protect the interest of the propertied classes and regulating divisions among them it may thus be seen as a petit bourgeois class organisation though leaning heavily towards the side of the bourgeosie. Certain members of the Nigerian Bar Association are more fully integrated with the bourgeosie than others, either as retainers for state and private companies or as the owners of companies in their own right. At that end, lawyers can be seen as an integral part of the ruling class.

Falling within the same category as the Nigerian Bar Association are other professional organisations, i.e. the Nigerian society of Engineers. Here nearly all members of the society are associated with the construction industry. The main function of members of the society is in planning, design, research and extension of

structures in the construction industry.[17] The society constitutes a class organisation that has close afinity with the industrial sector in which it operates. Its members do not see themselves as being in opposition with other class organisations. The main goal of the society is to promote unity among Engineers, and help towards the training of the younger generation of Engineers.

Being a registered member of the society is important because advancement in the industry depends very much on the professional qualification acknowledged by the society. No engineer can be promoted above the salary grade level 10 in the public sector if he is not a registered member of COREN. The society is also concerned with the code of conduct of its members. By organising its members into a society based on professional ethics, and by relating harmoniously with the owners of construction industry - the engineering society constitutes a class organisation that exist in a situation of co-existance (peaceful) rather than opposition, and conflict with the dominant bourgeois classes.

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17. The Nigerian society of Engineers, Interview, with protem chairman, Sokoto Branch, September, 1985.

As in the case of the Bar Association, the society of Engineers is a petit bourgeois organisation closely integrated with the operations of the ruling class. Its members may have leading managerial functions in the construction industry as well as representing the interest of the builders public or private, vis-a-vis the building contractors. Some of its members perform similar combined technical and managerial functions in the public service sector, including water works and electricity production and destribution. Some will be found in the small manufacturing sector of the town particularly in the cement works.

The Nigerian Institute of Architects also acts in close association with the industry. In Sokoto the chapter of the institute discuss architectural, and other matters of common interest. It promotes the objectives of the national body and acts as its local representatives. One of its activities is to ensure the integration of new graduates of architecture into the profession by arranging for their practical experience. The institute in this sense is part of the industry. The claim of the Institute is that Architecture students learn only theory while in school, therefore to avoid the

production of half baked students the Institute participates in their industrial attachment programmes.[18]

The Institute thus facilitates access to the industry by members before they have join the activity in full. Since the society is involved in the training programme it can mould students in the right shape as requested by the industry. In the industry itself, there exist interrelationships between the Architects, quantity surveyors, civil/ structural Engineers and Building Engineers. Each of these belong to their own Institutes or societies with a define ethic or code of conduct. The job of each group is categorised by his own society. The interests of those employed in the industry are gaurded by their respective Institutes or societies. The scope and nature of remuneration for professional services are outlined by these bodies. The professionals must be registered before they obtain any recognition.[19]

In the case of the architects, there is an automatic registration as a member of the Institute of Architects immediately after obtaining an M.Sc. degree. Full membership however requires that an

18. The Nigerian Institute of Architects, Sokoto chapter, Secretariat Housing Corporation, Aliyu Jodi Road, Sokoto, Interview, September, 1985.
19. Ibid.

architect has two years working experience under a senior and experienced architect. Such a student should also have passed the Institutes' qualifying examination. An architect can only be a senior partner in either the private or public sector after he has obtained full membership of the institute. Furthermore no architect can go beyond salary grade level 12 in the public service except if he is a registered member of the institute.[20]

There exists still a higher level of integration of architects with the industry. A full membership of the Nigerian Institute of Architects, qualifies one for full registration with the Architects registration council of Nigeria (ARCON). After such a registration a member obtain a 'stamp' and that gives him a right to practice independently. The private sector of the industry offers very lucrative conditions. There is thus an increasing movement of members out of the public into the private sector. At that level, it can easily be seen that the distinction between petit bourgeosie and bourgeosie becomes blurred as individual private architects set up their own companies with extensive business operations of their own.

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20. Ibid.

Let us finally examine, the Institute of Bankers, another professional association that is petit bourgeois in character but simultaneously closely linked to the operation of industry, commerce and other businesses - set up to enhance the work of bankers, make them efficient, and ensure that they respond to the requirements of the Banking profession.[21]

The Sokoto chapter of the Institute was formed in reaction to the national requirement of having branches in all parts of the country where Banking services are carried out. The headquarters in Lagos produces code of conduct guidelines for all the state branches and local chapters. The Institute seeks to enhance the performance of staff in Banking. It provides a forum for interaction, through seminars, conferences and lectures. The Institute also requires that interested members should endavour to pass the professional examination which is a condition for advancement in the industry. The Institute is supposed to create conditions favourable for the protection of professional ethics, and the protection of members interests.

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21. The Nigerian Institute of Bankers, Sokoto chapter, central Bank Gusau Road, Sokoto, Interview, September, 1985.

According to our sources, since the top ranking officers in the Banking Industry are also members of the Institute - there exist no confrontation with employers, only that the Institute makes suggestions for improving wages and conditions of service when ever necessary.[22] Through collective bargeining members of the Institute could influence the state and private owners of Banks to make concession to workers. The Banks management also encourages staff to join the Institute and register for the professional qualifying examination. A successful candidate of such examination is normally entitled to automatic advancement or promotion. Also the management do refund all expenses that members encure in the process of such exams. Furthermore, the top managerial posts in the Banking industry are reserved for those who have passed such professional courses like the Associate membership of the Institute of Bankers (AIB).[23]

Banks consider the Institute as a 'partner' and not a challenger. As of the moment, the Banks are in cooperation with the Institute in building a permanent secretariat complex. In conclussion therefore we can see that the Nigerian Institute of Bankers, like the organisation of the Architects,

22. Ibid
23. Ibid.

and the Engineers, are working in close cooperation with the industry and that they function as agencies for the development of the dominant class interests in the society i.e. the bourgeosie in the private or in the public sector.

4.4 Organisations of the Commercial Petit Bourgeosie

The contention of this study is that given the objective conditions within which most small businesses operate, and the fact that these are highly competitive, the level of class organization can be expected to be low. Market women, distributors and other traders may have little reason to organise in defence of common interests, except in cases where they want to break a monopoly. The competitive nature of the activity they engage in is the element which precludes the formation of such organisations. This notwithstanding, we find in this context of Sokoto, informal arrangements of the market traders organisations like the Butchers, those who sell clothing merchandize, sellers of food commodities, sellers of Electronic equipment, and the sellers of secondhand material. The actual goal of such temporary and informal organisations is to ensure that prices of items that they sell remain

uniform and that nobody will undermine the market for others by selling below the agreed price.

The market traders organisation constitute 'fronts' set up to fight for the interests of the commercial petit bourgeosie whenever they feel threatened by either the state or certain changes in the distributorship trade, or when they want to project an opinion which could only be strengthened when they organise. Another aspect of the class organisation of the commercial petit bourgeosie is constituted by craft guilds and the associations of small contractors. The craft guilds come in the form of groupings of businesses of the same pattern either in a specific area of the market or the specific location in the metropolis. In Sokoto we find crafts guilds formed by those who engage in leather shoe making, Dyeing of clothes material, pottery, and tanning of leather.

They organised to fight for specific interests like the reduction of licence fees by the state, or the taxes paid for conducting their businesses, and in some cases they pressurise the state to make concessions in either changing the location of their businesses where the environment is

unfavourable or expanding the area of land they occupy for their crafts.

In Sokoto, also the small contractors as opposed to those in the bourgeois class; organised in an informal and temporary basis to fight for collective interests at specific moments. Since there exist an individualistic, and competitive trends in the contract business, the contractors only form 'fronts' to fight for things like the payment of contract fees, and reduction in the prices of building materials or in other issues like the increase on the break down of contract costs, and mobilization fees. Even where these situations bring in an organised behaviour on the part of the small contractors, when their objectives had been reached they break up and go back to their competitive and individualistic pattern of business.

The commercial petit bourgeosie could however be organised on a permanent basis where such organisation seem necessary for the operations of their businesses. For example there exist an organisation called the Master Bakers Association which was formed first at the national level, and subsequently state branches are formed. The purpose of the Association according to our

sources is to ensure the unity of Bakers on which basis they could procure raw materials, and other equipment for the Baking Businesses. It is the contension of the Association that material could only be got when the Bakers are united.[24]

In the meantime, the association is engaged in its activities with the procurement of those items and material necessary for the production of bread from either the government or the multinational companies for distribution to their members. The association also provides the government with information in relation to those that are 'good' bakers, and furthermore our source claimed that the association advices the government and also its members on sanitation.

The association according to a spokesman, gets involve when problems of court cases or police arrests arose and they help the members involve in such cases to overcome their problems. In the association's relationship with the state our source claimed that, they pay trade fees to the government, they also pay license fee individually to each local government in which area they operate. The state on its own part help to get flour, and sugar at control prices, since the

24. Master Bakers Association, P.O, Box 157 Sokoto, Interview with Chairman, September, 1985.

price at the market is normally high and such state procured products are sold to the association which in turn distribute them to its members.

The existence of commercial petit bourgeosie organisations like the Master Bakers Association is only a manifestation of how the class organisations of the petit bourgeosie are still being formed. The prevalence of 'fronts' rather than 'formal' organisations is the most recurrent phenomena and thus we contend, that the level of organisation of the commercial petit bourgeosie is low relative to the bourgeosie on the one hand, and the working classes on the other. The explanation as we have stated before revolve around the fact that the competitive nature of the business is not conducive for strong class organisations.

4.5 Organisations of the Bourgeosie

As shall be develop further in the next chapter, we consider the state itself to be most important class organisation of the bourgeosie. The activities of the state as we discribed them in chapter two are strongly oriented to expanding, and consolidating the interest of the bourgeosie. The state projects the interests of the dominant

class as that of the majority. The interest of the majority implies the interest of the working and peasant classes. But in actual fact within a bourgeois political economy like that of Sokoto the state cannot operate outside the context of dominant class interest of the bourgeosie. Thus the bureaucracy, including the army and the police all serve the dominant class interest of the bourgeosie since they operate the state institutions on behalf of the bourgeosie.

However, we may also identify more specific class organisations as being representative of the bourgeosie. Such organisations include the Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturers Associations as well as certain senior Staff Associations. In our survey we only managed to contact the Chambers of Commerce and one Senior Staff Association, these two will be used to exemplify our exposition. But there is a wide variety of other organisations which could be included. The large scale commercial farmers, for instance, many of whom are based in Sokoto town have their Farmers Association which engages in the acquisition of loans, fertilizer and machinary from the state. The industrial bourgeosie also organises to ensure that the state

provide the infrastructure necessary for the expansion of industrial production.

There are also social clubs and other associations with a more informal class character but where members of the bourgeosie meet to discuss issues of common interests. Such organisations like the Sokoto Club and Rotary cannot directly be identified as class organisations of the bourgeosie because we find it rather complex to locate their role in material production. Some of them have a strong orientation to the facilitation of bourgeois aspirations, for example the membership of the Rotary Club suggests that primarily the top members of buainess, professional, and public institutions are admitted.

The Chambers of Commerce in Sokoto have been newly formed, unlike the chambers in Kano, being a commercial centre, and Kaduna, a government centre which were formed long ago; the Sokoto Chambers were formed during the defunct North-Western State to promote industry and Business. According to a spokesman of the chambers the organisation has since then functioned as an association of contractors rather than a strong

chambers of commerce.[25]

The chambers were re-organised in 1984, and they acquired an office building in the same year. The state embarked on this process because it felt that Sokoto is more backward than other states in industrial development. The source argued that the wealthy people in Sokoto prefer distribtive trade rather than industrial ventures. Therefore in an attempt to influence these people to set up industrial companies, and other big commercial ventures the state recognized the important role that the chambers could play.[26]

The chambers realized that for the last fifteen years, they have not been involved in promoting much industrial expansion in the state. They are therefore now embarking on a public enlighterment campaign, organising workshops where Bankers, industrialists, and foreign service officials give lectures and advice. There is according to our source, an attempt to minimize the gap in communication between the members of

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25. Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, Secretariat, Emir Yahaya Road, Sokoto, interview, September, 1985.

26. Ibid.

chambers and the government. Furthermore the source claimed that among the members there are also lawyers, bankers, chartered accountants and engineers who offer their advice free of charge on ways and means of expanding industrial activities.

The spokesman of the Chambers claimed that unlike others in the Federation, the Sokoto Branch may not be very vocal but their members were involved in many industrial projects in the state. On the issue of relationship with the state, the Chambers claimed that they identify with the current policy of privatisation, and that the state gives the Chambers maximum cooperation. The state assist them by ensuring that they are legally recognised. The state also ensures that there exist dialogue with the Chambers. Whenever necessary. It encourages people with commercial and industrial plans to first go to the Chambers before bringing them to the government.

The Chambers claimed that the recognition given to them by the state became much useful when they embark on collection of subscription fees. The contension of the Chambers is that they are not beginners but rather an association of established businesses. Individuals should first be

established before they are accepted as members. Both small and big companies have to pay ₦50 for registration as members. The payment of subscription however is based according to strength. Individuals pay ₦50, companies on partnership pay ₦150 and limited liability comapnies pay up to ₦500.[27]

The Chambers also participate in Trade fairs, and diseminate business information and other activities in support of their role as an organisation which project the interest of the bourgeosie as a class.

4.6 Transcending the Petit Bourgeois Context? The Case of the NUJ and ASUU

The role of class organisations in Sokoto cannot be isolated from their role in a wider national context. Most of the organisations mentioned are local divisions of the national bodies. It means that such organisations will tend to develop positions also on wider national issues which transcend both the local context and the immediate self-interest of the membership. This is particularly the case, we would argue,

27. Ibid.

with petit bourgeois organisations where the ambiguity of class positions allow for an identification either "upward" or "downward" in the system. We have argued above, that professional associations like those of the Engineers, Architects and Bankers tend to identify with the bourgeosie because of their members class incorporation into managerial and other leading functions at the level of state and private enterprise. To conclude, we shall look at two other associations, the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), which have tended to identify with wider interests of the working class.

The establishment of the Nigerian Union of Journalist, Sokoto State council, was based on a national professional requirements for the practice of Journalism. However, it has affiliated to the NLC, and has identified with the interest of the Radio, Television, and Theatre Workers Union, another NLC affiliated body. According to a spokesman of the union, its members perceive all interests that come against the working class and peasantry as interests that are against society and thus in its role as the protector of public 'truth', the union considers such interests as

opposed to its own.[28] The NUJ claims that through the activities of its members, the union provides a means through which the state get to know the feelings of the society. Yet, the state finds ways of avoiding responsibility to the people Its decisions therefore do not reflect workers' interests.[29]

In its attempt to enlighten the public and particularly the working class the union meets with opposition from the state bureaucracy which consider all information as 'secret' and do not release it to the journalists. Further the state instrument of coercion in the form of the police always find reasons to mess-up some journalists. Our understanding of the union is that on principle they are aligned to the workers and peasant aspirations, although bye and large individual journalists may have divided loyalties as a result the petty bourgeois basis of their practice. In many cases the opportunity offered by the state and the bourgeosie interms of of material gains motivate them to propagate the ideas and political positions of the bourgeosie.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities is

29. The Nigerian Union of Journalists, NUJ, Nigerian Television Authority, Sokoto, Interview with chairman, September, 1985.
29. Ibid.

another organisation of the petty bourgeosie which has had a strong inclination to working class aspirations. It is our contention that the ASUU both of the Sokoto University and at the national level has identified so strongly with working class struggles that it could be considered as a working class organisation inspite of its petty bourgeois base. The union was formed so as to get a single body that could tackle with a single 'voice' issues that affect members. It acts for members and negotiates with the employers on behalf of its members. According to our source, ASUU is also used as a forum for discussing matters of academic interests.[30]

The union has similar interests to those of the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT). It is affiliated to the NLC and is actively involved in whatever struggle the NLC is undertaking. According to ASUU, in its attempt to suppress academic freedom in the university, the state tries to control the direction of discussion through the Vice-Chancellor. This is related to all issues of particular interest to ASUU or of

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30. Academic Staff Union of Universities, (ASUU) Secretariat, University of Sokoto Chapter, Interview, September, 1985.

national interest. ASUU also opposes the state over the attempt to restructure the curriculum of Nigerian universities. It equally takes up issues of national importance, for example those related to the economy and retrenchment of workers. As I was carrying out my interviews in September 1985 the Academic Staff Union felt that at that material time a strike action should be embarked upon by the NLC so as to influence the state to make concessions and stop retrenchment.

According to our source, when the NLC became reluctant to embark on such a strike action ASUU felt it could take an independent initiative. Thus in its concern for workers welfare in connection with Housing, Health, Transport and provision of food - ASUU could rightly be identified with working class struggles in the country.

In connection with its internal activity within the university community, ASUU could be accused of entrenching petty bourgeois class interest. We observed for example as of the moment that the union is involve with the definition of who is and who is not 'an academic staff'. There exist in the university a division between the ASUU, the Non-Academic Staff Union and the

Senior Staff Association. According to a spokesman of ASUU, the main opposition to the Union comes from the state, acting through the university establishment. Of recent an attempt by the university administration was made to push selected and 'favoured' candidates who contested elections into ASUU executive council - mainly for the purpose of hi-jacking the union and diverting it away from its radical course. This is not surprising in view of the critical position taken by ASUU on various occasions.

For example, after the conference on the state of the Nigerian economy, held at university of Benin in April, 1984, the union had this to say in relation to labour; that the problem of labour in Nigeria are a consequence of the exploitative capitalist economy, and the repressive undemocratic character of governments. The union argued further that government labour policy in this country is a continuation of the colonial one which viewed the worker as an object of exploitation in order to increase profit. Unemployment, retrenchment, and payment of wages have worsened as a result. According to the ASUU communique, it is the workers who create the wealth that sustain the country,

and that a government that supports exploitation and oppresses the workers politically is an anti people government, therefore:-

> Conference calls on workers and oppressed classes in Nigeria to intensify their struggle to establish a government that will banish exploitation and guarantee political and democratic freedom.[31] (emphasis mine)

In conclusion, when examining class formation and the development of class organisations, we note that the ambiguity in the objective class positions of the petit bourgeosie allows for some organisations to take political positions on national issues which go beyond their immediate class interest in a narrow sense.

This chapter has attempted to explore the nature of different class organisations in Sokoto, we have described the organisations of the working classes inform of the NLC, and its affiliates. We have also attempted an exposition of professional associations which have an objective petty bourgeois basis. A brief description of the nature of market traders organisations and how they form informal class organisations of the commercial petit bourgeosie was equally attempted. Finally we

31. Academic Staff Union of Universities, (ASUU) How To Save Nigeria. Communique of ASUU conference, University of Benin, April 1984,p.11.

took a look at some organisations of the petty bourgeosie whose activities seem to go beyond what is determined by narrow class interests.

Chapter 5

THE STATE AS CLASS ORGANISATION

5.1 Introduction: The State in Sokoto

In this section we shall attempt an exposition of problems associated with the state which had been referred to briefly in the previous sections of this work. Previously we discussed the state in rather general terms but the state is a factor in the class formation process and also an organ of class organisation of the bourgeosie; in the sense that it constitutes the centre of power of the dominant classes. We need thus to address ourselves more to the discussion of key problems identified with it in this section. This will provide us with a basis for clarifying some essential aspects of how the state in Sokoto is formed and what role it plays in class formation, class organisation and politics.

We identified series of questions relating to the state in Sokoto; What are the elements within the context of Sokoto's political economy that show the state as constituting a factor in class formation? In what ways does the state actually play

a role in class politics and class struggle or class organisation of the bourgeosie. If it does how does it exercise control over the working class and the peasantry on behalf of the bourgeosie? What is the feudal factor in the state; how does class politics reflect the presence of this factor?

These questions need to be examined in the light of the theoretical contribution of both the classical Marxists and other scholars involved in the debate within Africa on the nature of the contemporary state.

5.2 Pre-colonial state

The emergence of the state in Sokoto is connected historically with the achievements of the jihad and the need to consolidate the political power of the caliphate. Sheikh Uthman, introduced an administrative structure in Sokoto as early as 1812 and as we had mentioned earlier Sokoto was then made the headquarters of the caliphate as a whole and it was given a political role which necessitated that administrative and cultural functions of the state should be integrated into the general class functions. The feudal ruling class thus made Sokoto the most powerful political

centre of the caliphate.

In this period we observed that the state also played an ideological role in propagating the Islamic religion through scholarship institutions. The development of the town into an urban setting was itself associated with leading Islamic, military and political figures who influenced the movement of people into the town on their ideological and political activities.

Clearly, the origins of the pre-colonial state in Sokoto was located within a feudal material base. The dominant class of that period constituted by an Islamic feudal aristocracy needed a means of legitimising its achievements after successfully wrestling political control away from the non-Islamic leadership. In this connection the new leadership requires a means of consolidating its newly acquired dominance. The pre-colonial state in Sokoto attempted to give authority to the gradually developing forms of acquiring property and political power and it ensures that the dominance of the ruling class is given general public recognition.

The state in this period legitimised the pre-colonial feudal forms of property acquisition and

organised production. The state further played the role of entrenching the emerging class divisions relative to feudal class interests as opposed to that of the peasantry. The pre-colonial state in this situation serves the purpose of being an effective medium through which the feudal ruling class of Sokoto hold down the peasantry and other oppressed classes. The state in this period ensured the political dominance of the feudalists.

5.3 The Colonial State

In the colonial situation, the state in Sokoto was adapted to meet new requirements of both class dominance and exploitation. Just like the feudal aristocracy struggled and captured state power from the non Islamic ruling class, they in the colonial situation lost some part of that state power to the British imperialists. Pre-colonial state institutions were integrated into the colonial state. In this period we noticed that colonial economic disintegration occured in one aspect through the direct intervention of the colonial state.

This process was demonstrated by the imposition of taxes through the pre-colonial state structure which more or less remained intact; also through the introduction of mercantile trade and direct

distortion of internal trade to serve colonial mercantile trade. Another aspect was the direct destruction of internal artisan crafts as well as distortion of food production in favour of cash crop production, either by direct state intervention or by enforcement through legislation.[1]

The introduction of British currency by the colonial state, and the re-oriented market economy based on export of raw materials and import of manufactured goods and other forms of state intervention had a direct result for the process of class formation. For instance it ensured that European colonial firms paid low wages to workers and by directing labour away from food production, the colonial state facilitated the availability of cheap labour.[2]

Similarly, road construction by the state was directed to areas where exportable raw materials could be found for exploitation by colonial firms. The colonial state further encouraged the expansion of colonial firms by directing state purchase (both high and low) to them. Material for constructions

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1. Concrete situations which support this argument are found in the works of J.F.A. Ajayi, History of West Africa Vol.II, Longmans group Ltd. 1974, p.431 and Peter Kazenga Tibenderana, Administration of Sokoto, Gwandu and Argungu Emirates, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1974. p.476.
2. Mahmud Modibbo Tukur, The imposition of British colonial domination on Sokoto caliphate, 1897-1914, Ph.D. Thesis, A.B.U. 1979, p.484.

for example were directly obtained from the colonial mercantile firms, and other purchases are made from the crown agents and the state precluded local traders from participating.[3]

The town's traders therefore became agents for European companies and they were all the more subjected to the dynamics of colonial merchant capital. The marketing Board system which is a major accumulator of the surplus produce of the peasants, and which constitutes the basis for the flourishing activities of the middlemen was also established in the colonial situation of Sokoto by the state. The allocation of buying licenses another major pre-occupation of the colonial state help to nurture the nascent bourgeosie which was gradually developing.[4]

Another role of the colonial state in its attempt to subordinate the internal economy to the colonial economy came through state propaganda by the feudal class in favour of newly introduced cash crops like cotton seeds from America as against the

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3. Lord Lugard, The Daul Mandate, Frank cass and Co. Ltd, London, 1965, p.478.

4. Gavin, Williams, Nigeria: Economy and Society, Rex Collins Ltd., London, 1976, p.17.

domestic variety. The feudal factor therefore was significant as it was used in support of colonial domination. The feudal state institution played a key role in facilitating activities of the colonial state. The colonial state however we noticed to be both internal and external to Sokoto. External in the sense that its core is located in the metropole and internal in that it operates through pre-existing struct[illegible]ary.

The activities of the colonial state made it possible for Sokoto to remain a powerful provincial headquarters and to continued to maintain some form of political significance. Two main trends emerge from this discussion of the colonial state in Sokoto. One is that we see a form of adaptation of the pre-existing state structure to the new colonial state. The second trend is the use of state power as a means of subordinating [illegible] and pre-colonial formation to the imperatives of colonial economy.

John Saul, has argued that in the case of East Africa, the colonial state did not encounter strong classes that had to be subordinated, and that;

> The overdeveloped nature of the state is not due to the need to subordinate such classes but due to the need to subordinate pre-capitalist social formations to the imperatives of colonial capitalism.5 (emphases added)

The state in the colonial situation of Sokoto we argue fulfilled the function of entrenching inperialist interests through the feudal structures which had the added advantage of strengthening the domestic ruling class. This is also reflected in the nature of the contemporary state as it cannot be isolated from its historical connection with the state of the colonial situation.

5.4 The State in the Contemporary Scene

The state in the contemporary scene is strongly affected by the process of bourgeois class formation which began in the colonial period but accellerated in the post-colonial era. The state has played a central role in this process. It has been actively involved in the process of allocating material resources of the society in specific forms, and in directions that favour the development of an infrastructural base for the capitalist system.

Specific forms of such activity include building of secondary, post secondary institutions and the university to facilitate the reproduction of labour. The disbursement of industrial and agricultural loans to the bourgeosie, the setting up of state agricultural schemes on a capitalist basis, to provide a vallying point for both state and private capital involvement and control of

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5. John Saul, 'The State in Post Colonial Socities- Tanzania' Socialist Register, London, 1974.

agricultural production.

We noticed that Sokoto town had its own share of state spending in education and health. The state has modernized Sokoto general hospital and has embarked on recruitment of medical personnel as well as construction of residential quarters for them. These constitutes aspects of reproduction and maintainance of labour. Similarly, the state had constructed rural feeder roads linking Sokoto town with the surrounding areas which provided opportunities for businesses of transportation and haulage, it also facilitated the penetration of the peasant economy by commercial capital.[6]

The state contributed effectively to bourgeois class formation through its involvement in manufacture; in the Sokoto case it does this by encouragement which it gave to both local and foreign capital through infrastructural facilities set-up in the town. For example, the provision of communications systems like postal and telephone sercices, supply of electric power, and urban water supply. Others include the construction of a modern market

6. Sokoto State Nigeria, Introducing Sokoto State, Government Printer, Sokoto, 1984.

and garage for the town. The state also conducts research, and other forms of social investigations on behalf of the bourgeosie. In some cases the state forms partnership with domestic and foreign capital in establishing large industrial and commercial enterprises.[7]

The state is involved in the control and regulation of other social activities in line with the interest of the bourgeosie. For example it ensured that the wage and salaried structure of the public sector does not disrupt the conditions of labour in the private sector through unnecessary increases in wages. The state regulates contractual agreements of various business groups, and also ensures protection for private property by means of state enforcement through the law, the courts, or the police.

There is a strong link between the state and the Sokoto chambers of commerce; an organisation which claimed that the state is in fact strongly in favour of privatisation within the economy. The state has ensured social recognition for the chambers and encourages independent businessmen to deal with it only through that organisation.[8]

7. Sokoto State Nigeria, Industrial Potentialities, Obadaki Press Kaduna, 1976, p.13.
8. Chambers of commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, Sokoto, interview, September, 1985.

Another bourgeois organisation Master Bakers Association also claimed that the state provide suitable conditions in which the members of the association could obtain the materials necessary for production. Also the state according to the association ensures the supply of other inputs from the multi-national companies and state owned supply company to the association.[9]

The active role of the state in the processes of re-adjusting production to meet with present economic crises in the capitalist system is another significant aspect of how it attempts to entrench bourgeois production and organised class accumulation. This type of role takes specific form when the state gets involved directly in retrenching workers in the public sector, the majority of who are those in the lower ranks of the public service structure, and constituting a segment of the working class in Sokoto. This action of the state legitimises a similar one taken by the bourgeosie in the private sector.

In our attempt to understand this obvious class bias of the state in favour of the bourgeosie we find Marx's and Engel's arguments in relation to the class nature of the state useful. Engel's stated for example that 'the modern representative

9. Master Bakers Association, Sokoto, Interview, chairman, September, 1985.

state is an instrument of exploitation of wage labour by capital'. Karl Marx on his part argued that, the state 'through the emancipation of private property from the community has become a separate entity, alongside and outside the society;

> But it is nothing more than the form of organisation which the bourgeosie are compelled to adopt, both for internal and external purposes, for the mutual guarantee of their property and interests. [10] (emphasis added)

The contemporary state represents the bourgeosie, just like in the past it represented the colonialists, and feudalists. However in relation to the ongoing debate on the class character of the state in African societies, we percieve the state in Sokoto as actively engaged in bourgeois class formation.

The role of the state in a peripheral capitalist context like that of Sokoto has its basis in the global movent of capitalism which is facilitated by what James Petras calls the imparial state activity. This activity implies the processes of imperialist domination, and it manifested itself in stages which Petras classified as first, 'initial entree, second, the expansion (which is associated with colonial and neo-colonial structures) and third, survival.' Petras argued that at each

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10. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1976, p.90.

point, the imperial state plays a decisive role in creating conditions for capital expansion and accumulation.

In the initial period, according to Petras, the imperial state is heavily involved in a number of activities;

> including state building, creating the formal merchinary of government to secure the ground work for effective exploitation; the creation of an imperially sound army... and creating the economic infrastructure through loans and aid.11

What might be called the imperial state explanatory model as represented by Petra's, Bjorn Beckman has termed the neo-colonial model of the state.[12]

Beckman's argument which is based on the study of the Nigerian state starts from a basic premise which posits that the Nigerian state is involved in promoting capitalist development. And that this process has its roots in the past-colonial peasant production, and the contemporary aspect of this process has its main resource base in oil. According to Beckman, the state plays a key role in dispensing

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11. James Petras, Critical Perspectives on Imperialism and Social Class in the Third World, monthly review Press, New York, 1978, p.49.

Bjorn Beckman, 'Whose State? State and capitalist Development in Nigeria' ROAPE, No. 23, 1982, pp. 37-51.

oil wealth, and the way it is spent generates economic activity and incomes (not for all though) in all sectors of the economy;

> It feeds into and transform pre-existing social relations. It promotes capitalist accumulation and capitalist clas formation.[13]
> (emphasis added)

Beckman criticises the neo-colonial model of the state. He argues that it denies domestic class forces their own dynamics and give false air of inevitability to the political outcome of class struggle. In relation to the Nigerian state and on a more specific ground, Beckman argues that the problem with the neo-colonial explanatory model of the state is that being very general, the model could fail to motivate useful work and concrete studies which may not allow us to see the specific economic and political forms of imperialist domination.[14]

He contended that if every aspect of the state is reduced to being determined by the needs of imperialism, very little may actually be explained unless if such conclusions are arrived at through an analysis of the way in which imperialism is

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13. Ibid.

articulated at all levels of the social formation. But then Beckman concedes to the users of the neo-colonial explanation model that inspite of his critique their conclusions may not necessarily be false, and that it is actually logical to assert that the Nigerian state in particular (and by implication states of peripheral capitalism) is a product of imperialism and that it continue to serve the interest of international capital.[15]

The role of the state in the Sokoto context does not contradict such a postulation, and the historical experience which we described earlier in the nature of colonial and post colonial state intervention in Sokoto to facilitate bourgeois class formation only substantiate the argument which see imperialist implications in the development of the state in a peripheral capitalist formation.

Beckman's critique involves other models of the state in peripheral capitalist societies and contains an attempt at a synthesis of positions, which we shall discuss subsequently. Suffice it to mention here that his critique does not constitute a negation of the neo colonial model of the state, rather it is an attempt to project the problems associated with that model.

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15. Ibid.

Another aspect of the class character of the state in Sokoto is connected with the role of the public sector petit bourgeoisie in the service of the state, and how this class objectively manipulate the bureaucratic structure of the state to serve the bourgeosie. We had observed that the intermediary role performed by this class between the bourgeosie on the one hand, and the working class and peasantry on the other is primarily because of its location objectively in the state structure of the bureaucracy. We also argued that the concious spending of public funds to strengthen the bourgeosie by the state bureaucracy which in Sokoto is dominated by the petty bourgeosie is a direct consequence of the overall domination of the state by the bourgeosie itself.

The Radio Television Theatre Workers union in Sokoto accordingly claimed that the state is making the rich all the more richer through its economic policies (formulated on its behalf by the bureaucrats), and the unequal distribution of social infrastructure. It further claimed that over 80% of those who control the economy are from the bourgeosie, and that they are encouraged all the more by the state bureaucracy.[16]

16. Radio and Television Theatre Workers Union, Sokoto, interview with chairman, September, 1985.

The union insisted that through lack of effective regulation by the state in the activities of large estate owners, the rent being paid by workers in Sokoto is steadily increasing. According to a spokesman the state facilitated the interests of owners of large and small scale commercial and industrial establishments by taking part in the recent retrenchment of workers.[17]

The Nigerian union of Teachers, Sokoto branch, similarly accused the state of maintaining the hegemony of the bourgeosie by perpetuating the conditions of ignorance among the large majority of the working class, and the peasantry. The union argued that changes could have been possible in the society in favour of the working class if these groups become educated; and that to prevent such a change the bourgeosie encouraged the state to privatise education - which made it difficult for the underprivileged in the society to pay for it.[18]

The union particularly accused the state of facilitating 'the hegemony of the bourgeosie' through what a spokesman calls 'continued bureaucratic conspiracy, entrenchment of constraints and political

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17. Ibid.

18. Nigerian Union of Teachers, Sokoto Branch, interview, September, 1985.

manipulation'.[19] Similarly the Nigerian Union of Journalists maintained that bourgeois class dominance is maintained by the state bureaucracy, through police harrassment and distortion of court procedure against the underprivileged in society; those who could not afford to pay the fees for private legal services.[20]

5.5 The Post Colonial State Debate

Hamza Alavi, in an article on the state in post colonial society which focused on Pakistan and Bangladesh argued that the original base of the state apparatus inherited by a post colonial society lay in the metropole and that its task was to subordinate all indigeneous classes in the colony, and hence it was 'over developed' in relation to the ex-colonial society.[21]

According to Alavi, the state directly appropriates a large part of the economic surplus and deploys it in bureaucratically directed 'development' activity. The 'centrality' of the post colonial state which evidently follows from Alavi's propositions inplies the centrality of the

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19. Ibid.

20. Nigerian Union of Journalists, Sokoto, Interview, with chairman, September, 1985.

21. Hamza Alavi, 'The State in Post colonial Societies', New Left Review, No. 74, July/August, 1972.

state bureaucracy. Alavi further suggested that this bureaucracy which he called an 'oligarchy', was relatively independent of control by any social class.

Saul, in his own contribution to the debate posed the issue whether the state bureaucracy is a class of a new type or class in the making, appropriating and controlling productive resources, whether by using state power to acquire private capital or directly in its capacity as the collective managers of the so called public sector.[22] Colin Leys in an attempt to re-evaluate the various positions in relation to the 'overdeveloped' state conception argued that the state bureaucracy should actually be seen as a 'fluid' category, which is largely petty bourgeois in origin, but by virtue of its role at the junction between the local economy and foreign capital, it is exposed to contradictory influences in the form of working class and peasant interests confronting the foreign and domestic capital in the model of the operation of the state.[23]

On this view, Leys maintained that they are a potential new class but not a class whose character can be known in advance, but only from the emerging

22. John Saul, 'The state in post colonial societies - Tanzania', Socialist Register, London, 1974.

23. Colin Leys, 'The 'Overdeveloped' post Colonial State: A re-evaluation ROAPE, No.5,1981, pp. 39-48.

results of the way they grapple with the contradictions in their conduct of affairs. In relation to the Sokoto situation we have observed that the state bureaucracy actually constitutes a class which we termed public sector petty bourgeoisie, and in the Tanzanian case, Shivji identified a similar group as constituting the bureaucratic bourgeosie. We also agree with Leys that the important point is not that this concept of an 'overdeveloped' state is empty in that the issue of the state bureaucracy being a class or not is not significant - but that the whole approach to the question of significance of any state which starts from its structure or scope, whether inherited from an earlier situation or not is a mistake.[24]

According to Leys in order to understand the significance of any state, we must start out from class struggle, not the state, thus Leys, claimed that the idea of the 'overdeveloped' state functions in both Alavi's and Saul's presentations as a reason for reversing the proper order of procedure. He thus projects Poulantzas position as quite valuable and we find that this position of Poulantzas best describes what we have observed in relation to the public sector petit bourgeosie of Sokoto; and its

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24. Cited by Leys Ibid.

use of the state bureaucracy to favour the operations and interests of the bourgeosie.

Accordingly, Paulantzas argued that, the first question must always be which class is dominant in a given social formation, since this dominance must be enforced by the state. Our argument has been that in the Sokoto situation the bourgeosie constitutes the dominant class and that the state functions in favour of its class aspirations. The class character of the state is given by the relationship between the state bureaucracy and the dominant classes in society.

We also agree with the observation by Paulantzas that whether the class interests of the state bureaucracy (in this case public sector petit bourgeosie) are the same as those of the dominant class or in conflict with them; this would not be the determining factor in establishing or up-setting the dominance of the bourgeosie. This is because in the final analysis, the class character of the state is determined by those who control the state itself as a result of their materially superior base and political dominance relative to other social classes.

However we shall concede that even though the congruence of interests between the petit bourgeosie and the bourgeosie may not be the basis of dominance of the latter, but it certainly facilitates and re-inforces such a dominance. Once again the propositions of Beckman in relation to the state as an organ of the domestic bourgeosie with particular reference to Nigeria is relevant in understanding why the public sector petit bourgeosie operates the state institutions in Sokoto in the interest of the bourgeosie, and how the bourgeosie itself uses the state for the purposes of expanding its material base.

5.6 Whose State? A Synthesis

Beckman's argument is that in the contemporary scene, particularly as a result of the acestion of bourgeois nationalists to state power, the resources of the state were increasingly used to promote their interests as an aspiring bourgeosie. He argued that the methods used varied, and they involved intense sectional competition.[26]

Thus according to Beckman, the activities of the state development corporations were greatly expanded in this period and they resulted in a

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26. Beckman, Op. cit.

wide range of enterprises, either sponsored or owned by the state. But then he maintained further that this domestic bourgeosie model of the state also has some problems. Beckman stated for example, that if we argue that foreign capital continues to dominate directly or irdirectly in the major sectors of the economy as is argued by the users of the neo-colonial model of explanation how can we then explain that the domestic bourgeosie seems to be using the state successfully to stren-strengthen its relative position vis-a-vis foreign capital.[27]

The answer of the neo-colonial model would be that it is foreign capital which dominates as before and that it is just the form of domination which changes. Also that the domestic bourgeosie whether state or private is used by foreign capital for its own purposes. The 'national character' of this class and its state institutions is also necessary in order to maintain an illusion under the cover of which foreign capital continue to undertake its exploitation. Beckman then posed the question of who depends on whom, foreign and domestic capital? And how can we solve this riddle in a manner consistent with the two sets

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27. Ibid.

of evidence both of which had some aspect of truth and how can we make sense of their relationship theoretically?

At the risk of repetition we argue that Beckman's attempt at synthesis of these positions provide a theoretical basis for investigating further the issue of the class character of the state. This is so in the sense that Beckman's synthesis poses yet another issue of how do we describe the state? He contended that while the Nigerian state serves as an organ both for the penetration of international capital and for the emancipation of the domestic bourgeosie, it cannot be reduced to either. Nor is it possible, argued Beckman, to comprehend the significance of either of the two aspects without examining such class functions of the state; for which according to him the distinction between foreign and domestic is not relevant; thus he maintained that:

> The primary role of the (Nigerian) state is to establish, maintain, protect and expand the conditions of capitalist accumulation in general without which neither foreign nor (Nigerian) capitalists can prosper.28

This position of Beckman's is further elaborated upon when he argued that this state is actually international in the domination of production for the world market, in its integration into production,

28. Ibid.

class formation and class alliences. But then it takes a subordinate position in the wider system. Beckman argues that state capital and state intervention (a case of which we noticed in the Sokoto context) perform strategic functions in organising production, class formation, and class alliences, and that the essence of its form of domination is monopolistic. The state power is used to generate conditions for monopoly profits including the suppression of anti-monopoly social and political forces.

5.7 The Feudal Factor

In connection to what Beckman referred to as class alliences in the formation of the bourgeois state, we had observed that the feudal factor which constituted an essential element of the colonial state in Sokoto persists even today. Although the feudal element had its origin since the pre-colonial era. Today there exist in Sokoto an allience of the remnant of the feudal class with the bourgeosie in the control of the state in Sokoto. The feudal aristocracy continue to survive through the direct intervention of the state.

Through their allience with the bourgeosie, the feudal aristocracy has been in a position to use the so called traditional institutions in ideological propaganda especially against the peasantry. The feudal structures are protected by the contemporary bourgeois state; and it further ensures that the so called 'dignity' of the aristocracy is upheld. Consequently, the traditional institutions only serve to further entrench the power of the feudalists, and the bourgeosie as partners in the exploitation of the working class and the peasantry.

The explanation we could present for such a development is linked to the fact that the feudal aristocracy is operating within the context of capitalist development, where as we have argued before most of them constituted owners of large scale capital which they used either in agricultural production or for manufacture and commerce. They are thus part of the bourgeosie. Also we should note that where capitalist relations of production were imposed through a process of violent struggle with the existing ruling class like in the case of Sokoto - the state could not be said to be 'purely' a capitalist state.

The challenge is to see how the nature of the

requirements of capitalism developed either by establishing non-capitalist forms of production or in other cases by adapting them and the state structure to the requirements of capitalism. In Sokoto capitalism adapted the feudal state to facilitate colonial exploitation and in the contemporary scene to ensure imperialist domination. Thus the survival of 'traditional' structures and the manifestation of a class allience (in present realities) between the feudalists and other dominant classes does not fall outside the context of the interrelationship between the capitalist mode of production and some other pre-existing mode.

5.8 Class Politics, Class Struggle and the State

The concrete application of the concept of class politics in the context of the Sokoto situation could be treated within the larger context of the development of the capitalist economy. Class politics we contend is historically determined, and it is located in the role of each class within the political economy of an area. Thus within the context of the present socio-economic set-up of Sokoto, we observe that the bourgeosie seems to develop just as industry and commerce developed and in doing so they further

expand their material base and subordinate(both politically and economically) other social classes.

In this type of class action the bourgeosie of Sokoto resembles that of the metropole which Marx focused on.[29] Based on the need to continuously expand itself the bourgeosie as we have mentioned earlier organises structures like that of the chambers of commerce, and they take over the control of the state in order to realize their class aspirations. In accordance to this need for re-producing and consolidating its material base, the bourgeosie in Sokoto persistently attempts to modernize the industrial sector and also mechanize agricultural production. The action of the bourgeosie in this process is logical because as we are told:

> The bourgeosie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instrument, of production and with them the whole relations of society.[30]

The bourgeosie of Sokoto is currently involved in political action through the state which favours industrial expansion and intensive capital involvement in agriculture. To ensure that the bourgeosie gets involved in this activity, the state got involved; thus there exist now state

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29. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works, Progress publishers Moscow, 1975, p.36.
30. Ibid, p.38.

capital involvement in nearly all the major sectors of the capitalist economy e.g. manufacture, large scale agricultural production, commercial enterprises like large scale distribution firms and hotel industry.

Our argument in relation to the political dominance of the bourgeosie and how the Sokoto case unfolds is that although the Sokoto bourgeosie is a product of peripheral capitalism, they had already developed a political influence and control in relation to the state, to the extent that our bourgeosie has successfully taken control of state power in the alliance which they form with both the feudal and commercial factions of the ruling class.

As a consequence of the activities of the bourgeosie based on its class political action of self regeneration and self perpetuation - a logical reaction comes from the working class. What the bourgeosie does is simply reproduce itself in whatever class action it takes, at the same time it generates an anti thesis to that action, which comes in the form of the working class. According to Marx, the the action of the bourgeosie usually calls into existence,

> The men who are to wield the
> political weapons of the bourgeosie
> and this are the modern working class
> the proletarians31

The reaction of the working class however is no less informed by the capitalist context within which 'they live and have their being' and within the same context the workers get organized and form their own class organisations as opposed to those of the bourgeosie.

Inspite of this ability of the workers to organise for class political action, the capitalist system within which they operate continuously ensure that they remained subordinated to the bourgeosie . In the words of Marx[32] 'Not only are they the slaves of the bourgeosie, and the bourgeois state, they are daily enslaved by the merchine by the over looker, and above all by the industrial bourgeois manufacturer himself.' Also within the same capitalist context other classes like the pensantry, the lower levels of the commercial sector petit bourgeosie adopt a working class political orientation.

According to the logic of capitalist development there arose gradually a process of polarisation

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31. Ibid, p.41.
32. Ibid.

where the middle classes are increasingly integrated with the state and the bourgeosie or they are pushed into an allience with the working class. In most cases since their small material base might not be sufficient for large scale agricultural and industrial production, the petit bourgeosie classes might not compete effectively with the bourgeosie in commerce and industry. They thus do not have the privilege of location among the bourgeosie, therefore they identify more with working class conditions even though they might do so for the purpose of strengthening their own positions.

In similarity with this tendency for capitalism to polarise and in some cases proletarianised lower sections of the opprossed classes - we see another tendency which is logically derived from the first, and it manifest itself in the emergence of a radicalized section of the bourgeosie. This radical section we observe as existing in Sokoto especially among the public sector petit bourgeosie more especially the intelligensia. The logic of their radicalisation lay in the fact that individual members of this class are being constantly drawn into the working class through competition, and as capitalism expands they also percieve the possibility of their complete disappearance as

an independent section of society.

This argument is supported by what Marx observed in the situation of industrial societies of Europe and based on that he theorised and arrived at the process of class polarisation within the context of capitalist development.[33]

As a logical consequence of the existence of the radical section of the petit bourgeosie in Sokoto, there exist the conservative section which uses the civil service and managerial structure to entrench themselves. Through their activity they also manipulate the public sector in the fashion which allows them to transfer public funds into private hands. This conserva tive section of the petit bourgeosie usually gets the political protection of the state.

We argue that the radical section of the petit bourgeosie mostly fall within the 'intelligensia' and they are cought up in the conflict between their objective role in the state apparatus and their progressive ideas, which caused them to revolt against the practices of the ruling class - thus becoming at best critiques of the state or in

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33. Ibid.

some cases 'revolutionaries'.

This section of the petit bourgeosie has a strong political orientation towards the resolution of the contradiction between their career ambitions and the acceptance of a left wing ideology. All these processes are consistent with Marx's argument in relation to the petit bourgeosie. He maintained that, the lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shop keeper, the peasant, in short all other classes except the bourgeosie in a capitalist context; fight against the bourgeosie to save themselves from extinction. 'They are therefore not revolutionary,but conservative 'or even reactionary', if by chance they are revolutionary said Marx:

> They are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat, they thus defend not their present, but future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat.34

Therefore, within this context of the capitalist system, both in Sokoto and the country generally - we shall argue that the issue of class politics narrows down in the direction of the two contending forces of bourgeosie, and working class including the peasantry. In essence, 'The development of modern bourgeois society gradually cuts from under the feet of the bourgeosie the very

34. Ibid.

foundation on which it produces. Therefore above all, the bourgeosie produces its own grave diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat according to Marx are equally inevitable.[35]

5.9 Conclusions

The conclusions we draw from the discussion of the state, and the series of problems associated with it in relation to class formation, class organisation, and class politics, are first that the existence of the state in the pre-colonial situation of Sokoto was based on a pre-capitalist mode of production of a feudal type having its roots in the material exploitation of the peasantry backed by an Islamic ideology. The state served the purpose of rationalising and justifying the subordination of the peasant class by the feudal ruling class.

Second, the colonial and post-colonial state in Sokoto we understood to be based upon the transformation of the feudal state to serve the requirements of external domination in the early case of colonial rule, and subsequently to facilitate imperialist domination in the neo-colonial situation. Our argument here is that this role of

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35. Ibid.

facilitating external domination is only one aspect of the colonial and post-colonial state; another aspect is based on the requirements of the internally dominant class forces, mostly consistently represented by the bourgeosie. The state thus serve to create a basis for the expansion of both domestic, and foreign bourgeosie, and in this process generates conditions which facilitate the exploitation of the working class and peasantry.

We also observed that the state in Sokoto is a state of the bourgeosie, and it serves this class as a form of class organisation, just like other formal organisations serve the working class and their interests. The state therefore is equally a class organisation of the bourgeosie. In relation to class struggle, we argue that the state functions as a mechanism which is used by the bourgeosie to repress the working class organisations. It further controls and regulate their activities to ensure the dominance of bourgeois class interest in the society. The role of repression by the state however assumes violent forms whenever necessary. From the struggle and opposition of the working class organisations directed against the state, we observe that class struggle in our context is equally an objective reality.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

This study of class formation in Sokoto town is an attempt to demonstrate the relevance of Marxist class analysis in a remote urban setting in Africa. Its point of departure is a critique of the critics of such a method of analysis. It is often claimed by these critics that the Marxist method is irrelevant because it was developed on the basis of the advanced class relations of metropolitan capitalism. In Africa, it is argued, classes do not exist or are of little significance in comparison with other divisions such as based on ethnicity, regional and religious differences, age groups, urban - rural divisions etc. No attempt here is made to evaluate the relative significance of class divisions.

Our main purpose has rather been to explore how successive stages in the integration of Sokoto into the world capitalist economy have served to transform local society on class lines also manifesting themselves at the level

of class organisations and the class nature of the state. We also find that social differentiation in the pre-colonial period has influenced the process of colonial and post-colonial class formation, especially at the level of the ruling class, where feudal social relations continue to be important in propping up the power of the neo-colonial bourgeosie.

Our method has been to first survey the development of the economy from the origin of the city, emphasing the rapid transformation taking place since the late colonial period and the impact of the petroleum economy in particular. On the basis of such account of the structure of economic activity in the town we then proceeded to identify the various class categories which can be "deducted" from such a structure. To illustrate how some of these class categories can be seen to have concrete organisational form, we then went on to present some organisations in Sokoto which have been established to represent sections of workers, professionals, and business interests. We finally discussed the state itself and how it can be seen as a class organisation of the bourgeosie, in promoting the interests of that class, whether foreign or local.

In this concluding chapter we shall first summarise the empirical argument and then conclude by spelling out some theoretical and political implications.

Pre-colonial Sokoto had primarily an agrarian base. However, there were highly developed crafts industries and long-distance trading, both with other parts of West Africa and across the sahara. Sokoto's position as the capital city of the caliphate ensured particular importance for the feudal bureaucratic and military classes. There was therefore also a significant appropriation of surplus from the surrounding peasant communities, resulting in the concentration of wealth and property in the hands of the feudalists as well as in the hands of the merchant class.

The islamic foundation of the formation of the caliphate, also ensured a prominent place for islamic scholars, teachers and students in the class structure of pre-colonial Sokoto. Slave labour was widely used, both on feudal estates and by merchants and craftsmen. There were also collective forms of appropriation of labour by the feudalists from the peasantry. Some of the crafts industries were organised on

a cooperative basis.

Surplus was appropriated through slave labour, the exaction of collective labour and taxes from the peasants and through commerce. The political economy of Sokoto reflected strong interconnections, between agriculture, manufacture and commerce. Each sector provided other sectors with the basis and resources for continued development. It was a self-generating and self-sustaining socio-economic system.

The process of peripheralization of Sokoto's economy came about as a result of the conquest of Sokoto by the British colonialists. The long distance trade was disrupted. Internal and external trade were now reshaped to follow the direction and pattern set by European commercial firms. In manufacture, local industrial activity especially iron smelting was curtailed through direct colonial state intervention. More importantly, competition from colonial goods undermined the basis of local crafts production.

The main areas of crafts production were in smithing tanning, wood carving, pottery and weaving. Black-smithing was most strategic because of its significance in the provision of weapons and agricultural tools. Leather goods, textiles,

grains, slaves and kolanuts were major items in the trade with the outside areas. The bulk of the rural trade consisted of agricultural products, wooden manufactures, metal (iron) goods and industrial raw materials.

These activities were undermined by the colonial economy, and new processes set in, especially the growth in the export of cotton and groundnuts, which became a dominant feature of the colonial economy. Labour was diverted into new forms of economic activity, for example, the construction of roads; the emergence of colonial firms trading in hides and skins, and the negation of slave trade were other important changes. It was a process of pre-colonial economic disintegration and the expansion of the colonial economy.

The imposition of colonial taxes and the introduction of British currency accelerated the colonial incorporation of Sokoto. The peripheralization of Sokoto's political economy was achieved through subverting the autonomy of the indigeneous economy. Sokoto became integrated into the emerging capitalist system, of which colonialism was the precusor.

Some sections of the population benefited from the new form of colonial trade that was introduced. These were the indigeneous merchants and their agents - who acted as middlemen between the local producers and outside traders, including the colonial mercantile firms. Sokoto became part of a larger global process. The colonial state embarked on a series of activities which generated new forms of social relations.

The colonial administration generated 'white collar' workers, clerks, interpreters, and Teachers. Nigerians from the southern part of the country particularly the Yorubas and the Ibos, moved into the town in search of employment and commercial opportunities. The Ibos came mostly in association with the new colonial trading firms. Sokoto thus remained a significant provincial headquarters, although its political status had declined with the undermining of the political authority of the caliphate.

The state operated in the interest of colonial merchant capital. Rural producers were transformed into colonial cash crop producers and the presence of a wage earning agricultural proletariat began to manifest itself. In the

late colonial period, the state itself emerged as a major accumulator of surplus from this cash crop economy through the establishment of the marketing Boards. The increase in produce advances increased opportunities in trading, craft production, and production of food items for the market. The allocation of produce buying licenses became an important source of bourgeois class formation. The construction of roads was stepped up to facilitate the evacuation of the cash crops.

In the contemporary scene, since the emergence of petroleum, Sokoto has witnessed an unprecedented growth especially in the public sector. The administrative function of the town as a state capital has also reinforced such public sector expansion which again has allowed for rapid expansion in commerce. The expansion in education has been particularly important. There has been a sharp increase in the number of primary schools, secondary school, Teachers Training Colleges, Science, Commercial and Technical schools etc. Other institutions like the college of education, Sokoto State College of Arts and Science in the town are recent developments in this field. The University of Sokoto was established in 1975.

The expansion of the economy based on the flow of the oil revenue created conditions which gave Sokoto a sophistication comparable to other urban areas like Kano and Kaduna. Sokoto however remained largely an administrative and scholarship town. Modern manufacture remains limited. Industrial establishments include the cement company and the Sokoto Tannery (SOKOTAN) which processed local leather. Others are Sokoto Furniture factory, and Sokoto Softs drinks factory. Small scale manufacturing industries, however flourish. They include bakeries, block making, wood-making, garments etc. Much small scale industry and crafts can draw on a tradition of crafts manship going back to the pre-colonial economy.

The state gives credit to some small scale industrialists. It also enters into partnership with foreign and private companies to set-up manufacturing industries. The state is also involved in providing infrastructural facilities for trading activities. The current economic crisis has led to a sharp decline in economic activity, especially as a result of the fall in government revenue. The private sector is facing problems of under production. There has

been massive retrenchment both in private and the public sector. This economic situation was aggravated by inflation in combination with wage freeze and salary cuts.

Within the context of this historically determined political economy, we went on to identify the major classes, starting with the bourgeosie as a small class constituted by the owners of large scale manufacturing industries, large agricultural estates, and extensive commercial enterprises. The bourgeosie is equally made up of major transport owners. Owners of building and construction companies, and big rented property. Company managers top state officials including top army and police officers and senior judges also fall within this category. The top feudal aristocrats inclusive.

The public sector petit bourgeosie is constituted by middle level cadres in the state sector, including the army, police and those in health services like doctors, nurses, journalists, and teachers, including students in secondary and post secondary institutions. This class is distinguished by the role it plays between the producers of wealth in society and those who actually own or control the wealth. This class

is concentrated in the administrative and managerial services including professional activity.

We also identified the commercial petty bourgeosie, which in Sokoto consisted of small businessmen, traders, craftsmen, small manufacturers, and contractors; owners of small rented property, transport business on a lower scale, construction equipment, and the urban based small commercial farmers. The commercial petit bourgeosie equally perform intermediary functions in the political economy, between the mass of working people and the bourgeois ruling class.

The bulk of the Sokoto working class is found in the public service sector, including junior clerks, messengers, drivers, gardners, mechanics and guards. The industrial working class is small but the commercial sector also employs wage labour on both temporary and permanent basis.

At the urban fringe of Sokoto we find peasants as well as farm labourers. There is also a substantial number of 'absentee' farmers in Sokoto, as well as state agricultural enterprises which recruit labour from within the town itself. Such farm labourers are paid on a casual basis.

The lumpen proletariat is taken as a 'residual' category in our analysis; it exists on the extreme margin of society, mostly in the commercial and petty manufacturing sectors. It includes cart pushers, water carriers, loaders and unloaders of vehicles, domestic servants, petty traders, beggars, destitutes and landless peasants. The development of large public and private agricultural development schemes in the state has led to an increase in this urban pool of "free" labourers who have lost their land.

We went on to analyse how the various classes manifest themselves at the organisational level, including the formation of organisations with a distinct class orientation. Along this line we examined trade unions, and the nature of their relations to the state and the organisations of the dominant class, the bourgeosie. Among organisations reviewed we have the NLC as central to working class political activities. The trade unions examined include the Nigerian civil service technical workers union, road Transport Workers Union, Union of Health Service Workers, The Nigerian Union of Teachers, and Radio Television and Theatre Workers Union.

Market Traders Organisations, Guilds and

crafts associations, were taken to represent the organisation, of the commercial petit bourgeosie. We noticed that they are less organised and that they operate in a less formal, and less permanent manner; with the formation of 'fronts' as the most re-occuring feature of the commercial petit bourgeosie. Our argument was that given the objective conditions within which most commercial businesses operate and the fact that such businesses are basically competitive - the commercial petit bourgeosie is less likely to organise themselves collectively. Nor does there exist an apparent class enemy which to confront.

We noticed that on the whole that the commercial petit bourgeosie is organised around specific trade activities like the association of butchers, sellers of food stuff, and kolanuts; dealers in electronics equipment and sellers of auctioned materials. Trade and crafts organisations or associations were formed on a temporary basis around pottery craft, dyeing, tanning, and shoe-making. A higher level of formal organisation is found with the professional associations, mostly petit bourgeois in orientation. These associations include the Nigerian Bar Association, the Nigerian Society

Engineers, the Nigerian Institute of Architects and the Nigerian Institute of Bankers. They seek to protect the interests of the professional fields which they represent. They see their objective role as that of facilitating the operations of their areas of specialization in close allience with the industry or establishment.

As examples of organisations of the bourgeosie we discussed the chamber's of commerce and manufacturers Associations. More importantly, the state itself was discussed as a class organisation of the bourgeosie in a separate chapter. We followed its development from the pre-colonial period when it was based on the need for the dominant class of feudalists to legitimise the then existing mode of property relations which were rooted in a feudal agrarian mode of production.

The state in the colonial situation was adapted to meet the demands of subordinating the pre-colonial capitalist social formation of Sokoto and entrench the dominance of the ruling class which was then constituted by both the feudalists, and the colonialists. Pre-colonial state structures were adapted to the needs of the colonial state.

The state in the contemporary scene is strongly involved in the process of class formation. It transforms the pre-existing social relations, and promotes capitalist accumulation and class formation. We agreed with Beckman's explanation that the contemporary state is an organ of both the domestic and the international bourgeosie.

As a class organisation of the bourgeosie, the state seeks to maintain control over the subordinated classes of the society. We observed that most of the political agitation of the working class and petit bourgeois organisations were directed against the state. We saw how the state attempts to repress opposition from such organisations.

The class politics of the bourgeosie is reflected in the manner through which it seeks to advance itself in the context of capitalist development. The working class respond in a way that would ensure its own survival. It attempts to extract concessions from the bourgeosie. Class polarisation ultimately pushes the petit bourgeosie to line up with either of the two opposing classes. Some sections identify with the working class struggle and take on a radical political

orientation. Others alligned with the bourgeosie and the state.

6.2 Theoretical and Political Implications

To conclude, let us touch on some of the theoretical and political implications of our study of class formation in Sokoto. First, there are some issues relating to the marxist approach to the theory of social classes in Africa. Much of the debate so far had concentrated on the issue of whether or not classes do exist in Africa. From a 'bourgeois' perspective they do not. It is even claimed that the concept of 'class' is not applicable in Africa. This position is maintained by scholars like Marennin.

The classical Marxist position is of course that classes exist in all societies beyond the primitive communal epoch. From a Marxist perspective the existence of classes in Africa can be established through the concrete study of Africa's historical reality past and present. Marxist analysis has been successfully applied to societies with strong pre-capitalist elements by classical writers like Lenin and Mao. The same can be done for Africa. As social researchers it is important for us to de-emphasize fruitless

theoretical debates and demonstrate in concrete way the relevance of class analysis.

Marx did not offer a formal definition of the concept of class, but other scholars like Lenin and Shivji, as well as some Nigerian intellectuals like Eskor Toyo, have attempted useful definitions. Marxist scholars insist that classes must always be studied in their specific historical context. It is thus not a question of the blanket application of unhistorical categories. The Marxist analysis of social class is always linked to the study of development of the political economy of an area over a period of time.

Our study has emphasized the local context of class formation. It should be emphasized that these local classes function in the wider context of the world capitalist economy. The ruling classes that have emerged out of this form of peripheral capitalist economy function to serve imperialist interests. They manipulate the state to entrench their interests and in the interest of their imperialist allies. The working classes that oppose the bourgeosie therefore also stands in opposition to imperialism. In their struggle they do not only seek the defeat of the domestic

bourgeosie alone, but also the defeat of imperialism.

In our attempt to investigate the political dimension of social classes, we demonstrated how classes are organised for struggle through various class organisations including the state. Social classes in Gokoto do not only exist, they manifest themselves more clearly through the structures they formed to protect class interests.

Finally we conclude, that given the objective situation of constant conflict and struggle between the oppressors and the oppressed within Africa, the role of the intellectual could not be that of a neutral and so called objective researcher. The class base of the intellectual remain central to his role in the class struggle.

The problems encountered in this study are associated with the complexity of the methodological approaches to the study of class within the social sciences. The choice of method is not only a scientific decision but also a political one.

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