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DEVELOPMENT
POLICY AND
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Extreme but not exceptional:
towards an analysis of the agrarian
question in Uganda

by

Mahmood Mamdani

DPP Working Paper No. 5

Faculty of Technology
(Third World Studies)

The Open University

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1. THE THEORETICAL CONTEXT

The world of peasants is neither self-contained nor static. This is why an analysis of agrarian relations, no matter how microscopic its empirical subject, must begin by setting this subject matter within a broad historical context.

To understand this broader historical context in the case of contemporary Uganda is to grasp two features about its political economy. Both evolved during the colonial period and, in both cases, the agency of change was the colonial state. Both express the reality of imperialist domination over agriculture, and have been amply commented on in current literature.

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The first is the divorce of domestic agriculture from domestic industry through the creation of an export-dependent agriculture and an import-dependent industry in the colonial period. This is not to say that the bulk of agricultural activity was at any time directed to export production, only that export production became the dynamic element in local agriculture. On the other hand - and contraposed to this agriculture - developed an industry which, though it produced for the local market, did so through an almost exclusive dependence on imported technology, raw materials, component parts, technical skills and finance. The pivot of this imperialist-dominated economy, because it was the real connecting link through which relations between industry and agriculture were mediated, was export-import trade.

While its overall direction is export-oriented, domestic agriculture reflects a variety of processes at the local level. In the Ugandan context, we can identify three different processes, each representing a different form of regional integration into the colonial economy.

- (a) Cheap Raw Material Production: In these regions, peasant households produce either industrial raw materials like cotton or coffee or staples like banana or millet as exchange values alongside food as use values. Since food for the household is domestically produced, the impetus behind commodity production is the need for cash: to pay tax, to purchase a few manufactured necessities (salt, soap, paraffin, medicine, cloth, sugar, etc) and, over the long run, to replenish a minimum stock of labour implements. The division of labour internal to the family is also adjusted to realise this two-fold production plan: for commodity production alongside food production.

(b) Cheap Labour Production: Instead of producing raw materials, the family produces labour-power as a commodity. Migrant labour is the response to the need for cash, generated by the same circumstances as above. Here, too, a two-fold production plan develops, requiring a division of family labour between commodity and food production. The difference is that in this case the two production processes are separated in space: the worker migrates to a distant location while the rest of the family continues to reside in the village and produce food for domestic consumption.

(c) Cheap Cattle Production: Originally the home of shifting pastoral practices, these areas were subject to a double pressure: on the one hand, forcible land alienation; on the other, forcible commoditisation of cattle. Here, a single production plan continued, for cattle functioned both as commodities and as sources of family consumption.

All three forms of integration were contingent on the peasant family meeting its own food requirements, and therefore, the bulk of its own cost of reproduction. Common to all was the production of cheap labour, whether appropriated directly (as wage labour) or indirectly (as the products of labour). This is the second feature defining the overall context of the agrarian question in Uganda.

This point, that peasant labour is cheap labour, was grasped with some clarity by the most far-sighted representatives of the colonising bourgeoisie in Africa. For instance, Governor Clifford (Buell, 1965: 772) explained to the (colonial) Nigerian Legislative Council that his preference for peasant production over European plantations was because peasant producers

'(a)Have a firmer root than similar enterprises when owned and managed by Europeans, because they are natural growths, not artificial creations, and are self-supporting as regards labour, while European plantations can only be maintained by some system of organised immigration or by some form of compulsory labour;

(b) are incomparably the cheapest instruments for the production of agriculture produce on a large scale that have yet been devised; and (c) are capable of a rapidity of expansion and a progressive increase of output that beggar every record of the past..." (emphasis mine).

One may add that part of the reason peasant producers are "the cheapest instruments" yet devised for the large-scale production of agricultural produce is precisely because they are "self-supporting as regards labour".

This same issue of cheap labour has been dealt with extensively in Marxist literature since the beginning of the century, though the question was formulated somewhat differently: why do small farms continue to persist, even in the face of capitalist competition? For, after all, had not Engels predicted in The Peasant Question in France and Germany that competition from large-scale capitalist farms would lead to a rapid disintegration of small and medium farms?

Both Kautsky and Lenin recognised that this prediction had not come true and both tried to explain this fact, Kautsky in The Agrarian Question and Lenin in The Development of Capitalism in Russia (Hussein and Tribe, 1981: 26-28, 67, 108). The substance of their explanation was that the relation between small and large farms could be stabilized through both complementary and competitive relations. In

the first case, the argument was that often small and large holdings "did not compete with each other in the market for agricultural commodities, but stood in a complementary relation to each other: the latter supplied labour to the former". Whereas large farms sold agricultural products on the market, small farms sold labour-power on the market.

In the second case, where small farms survived in the face of large-scale capitalist competition, argued Kautsky, this was in spite of the technical advantage of capitalist farms. The endurance of the small farm was explained by "the peasants' low level of living and their urgent need for cash to accept whatever prices the market would offer".

The point we need to note is the following: whatever the relations between small and large farms, whether complementary or competitive, the continued survival of peasant production is predicated on cheap labour, once again, whether appropriated directly (as labour-power) or indirectly (as products of labour).

A similar and substantial literature has accumulated over the last three decades on the labour reserve economies of Southern Africa, pointing out that the crisis of peasant production can only be understood as a consequence of their continuing to reproduce cheap labour for adjoining capitalist enterprises. Of particular significance have been essays by Arrighi (1973) on Southern Rhodesia and Wolpe (1972) and Meillassoux (1981) on South Africa.

The same, however, cannot be said of the ongoing discussion on the agrarian crisis in the rest of Africa, where peasant farms are predominantly the site of small commodity production and not labour

migration. Most of the writings in this case can be encapsulated within one of two tendencies.

The first tendency is illustrative of a shift in the literature, away from the analysis of production relations to an exclusive preoccupation with exchange relations. Lines of debate have been drawn within these narrow but shared premises: is the crisis of agriculture the result mainly of "external" exchange relations (adverse terms of international trade leading to unequal exchange and a flow of value to imperialist centers) or is it rooted primarily in "internal" exchange relations (unfavourable terms of trade between agriculture and industry reinforced by overvalued exchange rates)? On one side stand the proponents of dependency theory, on the other the technocrats of the World Bank and the IMF.¹ While an important debate, it is marred by the fact that both sides ignore what should really be the starting point of investigation: an analysis of production relations in peasant agriculture. One point of this paper is to contribute to such a shift in focus.

In contrast, the second tendency does try to focus on production relations, but the attempt is no more than formal. In this case, the study of the peasant question is locked in the perspective of earlier investigations in Asia and Latin America, where agrarian relations have been synonymous with landlord-tenant relations and the peasant question with the land question. On the African continent, however, only pockets show similarities to the Latino-Asian type situation, the largest being Ethiopia. On the bulk of the African continent, conditions are markedly different: land is relatively plentiful, population density relatively light, and peasants do not confront an immediate overlord in the person of a landlord. Several observers

have been impelled by this state of affairs to conclude therefore that there exists no social question in the African countryside. The most extreme statement of this position can be found in the writings of Goran Hyden (1980 and 1983) who argues that the African peasant does not confront any social force, but only nature, and that so long as this peasant remains "uncaptured" - that is, unexploited - there is no possibility of economic development on the continent!

The problem here is a mechanical identification of the agrarian question with the land question. It is the result of trying to find in Africa a mirror image of agrarian relations obtaining in other parts of the world. It is a failure to come to grips with the historically concrete relations obtaining in contemporary Africa.

II THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The empirical basis of this study is an investigation into two villages in Uganda - Kitende and Amwoma - in 1983-84. Kitende lies 9 miles from Kampala on the Kampala-Entebbe Road, and is part of Buganda in Central Uganda. Amwoma is situated in the northern part of the country, in Lango, 10 miles from the nearest trading center (Dokolo) and 40 from the nearest town (Lira). The point of this section is to underline the broader significance of these two villages by placing them in their historical and social context. In doing this, I shall focus on two features; the form of integration into the colonial economy, and the form of property in land.

I have already suggested that the integration of rural Uganda into the colonial economy was not uniform. At least three distinct forms of integration can be identified: as a raw material, a labour or a

cattle reserve. The history of Kitende encapsulates the history of a raw material reserve, that of Amwoma the history of a labour reserve.

The early history of Buganda, wherein lies Kitende, shows a parallel development of peasant commodity production (cotton) alongside British plantation production (rubber). While peasant households were self-sufficient in labour, plantation prosperity was integrally tied to releasing cheap labour from peasant households. This required bringing into full play the repressive power of the colonial state. The two forms of production could not simply coexist side by side.

This contradiction surfaced in the form of a labour crisis for the plantations as peasant households took to cotton cultivation to pay state taxes. At the same time, the crash of world commodity markets following the First Imperialist World War underlined the particularly precarious position of the planters in the face of adverse market conditions. Planter pleas to be bailed out by the colonial state fell on deaf ears. Cotton production, introduced by missionary entrepreneurs in the early part of the century, was after all the fruit of organized attempts by the Empire Cotton Growing Association to develop sources of high quality cotton that would relieve Manchester of dependence on the American South. Cotton from Uganda compared favourably to both the American and the Egyptian varieties. No wonder the colonial state came out firmly in favour of peasant over planter interests.

Following the War, cotton production expanded in the Eastern and Northern provinces, partly as a result of changing conditions that we shall soon examine. In this context, and to relieve its dependence on American-controlled markets for coffee, the colonial state vigorously

encouraged peasant coffee production in ecologically suitable areas, particularly Buganda. That is how Buganda became the heartland of the "coffee belt" in independent Uganda.

The history of Amwoma (Lango, Northern Uganda) is even more complex. At the outset of colonial rule, it was cultivated as one of several labour reserves, a source of labour for not only the plantations and the municipal bodies to the south but also for the repressive forces of the colonial state. Besides Lango, these reserves included Acholi (Northern Uganda), West Nile (Northwestern Uganda) and Kigezi (Southwestern Uganda). As external sources of labour became available, particularly immigrant labour from neighbouring Rwanda, these areas gradually contracted as sources of labour.

The first major out-migration from Rwanda took place in the 1920's in response to intensified colonial Belgian feudal-type exploitation. In response, the colonial state in Uganda introduced cotton cultivation in Lango and Acholi. Similarly, a second wave of out-migration from Rwanda in the 1950's was followed by the introduction of tobacco production in West Nile. The only regional labour reserve within Uganda by independence was Kigezi.

From the 1920's, then, Amwoma became a part of the "cotton belt" in Northern Uganda. But this too changed in the 1970's when the agrarian crisis was felt most acutely in the export sector. Faced with sharply-declining payments for state-marketed crops, peasant producers shifted emphasis to crops destined for domestic markets. Millet replaced cotton as the principal cash crop.

The other side of increased household commodity production was declining labour migration from Amwoma and the surrounding

countryside. While waves of Rwandese immigrants, alongside those from Kigezi, found employment in the rich peasant coffee farms in Southern Buganda in the colonial period, Northern labour migrants became localised in the North of Buganda. With adverse political conditions in the post-independence period, and particularly with the guerilla war of 1981-85 in Luwero (Northern Buganda), even this reduced flow diminished to a trickle.

In sum, so far as the form of integration into the wider economy is concerned, both Kitende and Amwoma function today as raw material reserves. The contemporary significance of their different histories, however, is that commodity relations have a more diversified base in Kitende than they do in Amwoma.

Kitende and Amwoma also present sharply contrasting conditions with respect to property in land. Put simply, while landlord-tenant relations obtain in Kitende, they do not in Amwoma. Amwoma then is far more representative of large parts of Uganda (and Africa) where as yet there is no land question.

The focus of landlordism in contemporary Uganda is in the Buganda countryside, where precolonial feudal-type landlord-tenant relations were restructured and reinforced in 1900 with the grant of land measured in square miles (mailo land) to a class of roughly 8000 landlords in return for political allegiance to the colonial state. I have dealt with the history of the evolution of these relations elsewhere (Mamdani, 1976: chapter 3). Suffice it to outline here the major contours of this history.

The first major limit on the legally unlimited powers of the landlord to squeeze surplus labour out of the tenant peasantry was the 1928

Busulu and Nvujjo Law, really a concession to the powerful tenants' movement that developed in the 1920's. While this law put a strict limit on both the ground rent (obusulu) and the commodity rent (envujjo) a landlord could demand from a tenant, the law had only a temporary significance. (Ground rent is assessed by the area of land occupied, commodity rent as a percentage of the export crop produced on it, which in the 1920's was cotton). The key reason was that its protection was confined to the then existing tenant peasantry. With the passage of time, population increased and with it the demand for what had been until then uncultivated bush or forest land under the control of the landlord, who was now free to sell this land in the open market.

In June of 1975, the Amin regime repealed the 1928 Busulu and Nvujjo law and passed a Land Reform Decree. It specified that all land must henceforth be held on a 99-year lease from the state. Both 'absolute ownership' and 'the power of the customary tenant to stand in the way of development' were abolished. Every 'customary tenant' (peasant) became a tenant-at-will of the state; the Land Commission was empowered to terminate any lease on 'undeveloped' land and grant it to a potential 'developer'. On the face of it, the Land Reform Decree looked like a broom designed to sweep away all medieval barriers to capitalist development.

But its practical significance was very different. In parts of the country like Buganda, where landlordism existed, the landlord became a lessee of the state and the tenant a sub-lessee of the landlord. Without rent control, the landlord was free to rent any part of uncultivated bush or forest land under his control to a tenant. The Land Reform Decree of 1975 ushered in a second flowering of landlordism in Buganda.

The history of landed property in Amwoma is quite different, and far more representative of developments in the bulk of the Ugandan countryside. Here, there is no pre-colonial or colonial history of tenancy relations. Part of the responsibility for this goes to the tenants' movement of the 1920's in Buganda. For it was to avoid the spread of such a movement that the colonial state resolved to prevent the spread of landlordism from Buganda to the rest of the country, in spite of the aspirations of chiefs throughout to become Buganda-style landlords. Instead, all land was declared Crown Land; communal customary law, guaranteeing usufruct rights to peasant cultivators, was given the sanction of colonial law; chiefs were turned into salaried agents of the state.

This state of affairs obtained substantially until the 1975 Land Reform Decree of the Amin regime. In places like Buganda, this Decree reinforced landlordism by repealing the rent control law of 1928. But elsewhere, by repealing - in the name of 'development' - customary forms of tenure that had protected usufruct rights of peasants in land, the law cleared the ground for the entry of capital into the 'communal' countryside. I shall illustrate this below.

This recent development, however, does not mitigate the contrast between the two villages in so far as the prevailing form of landed property is concerned. In Kitende, peasants have a direct overlord; in Amwoma, they do not. In Kitende, monopoly in land has created an acute land shortage for the rural poor; in Amwoma, there is no such shortage.

Through the analysis of conditions in these two villages in 1983-84, I hope to underline two theoretical propositions. First, that the

social differentiation of the peasantry does not have to develop around differentiation in landed property. It may develop around differentiation in any one of the elements of the labour process: land, labour or its implements. The specific form of differentiation reflects the history of agrarian relations in a particular region. Second, that key to understanding the low productivity of labour is a set of controls over labour, all of which require the employment of extra-economic pressures. Instead of concentrating on the question of the cheapness of labour, I shall underline the controls over labour that inhibit the development of its productivity. For, in a situation where competition is not generalized and conditions are not averaged out, attempts to discuss the cheapness of labour inevitably run the risk of turning into so many speculative exercises. A discussion of existing controls over labour, however, is likely to be more concrete. These controls may function either directly (in relation to labour-power) or indirectly (in relation to products of labour). It is these controls that explain how state power is organised, particularly in relation to the peasantry. And it is the dismantling of these controls which must be at the centre of any popular democratic program for social transformation under contemporary conditions.

Each of the sections that follows has been organised around a central question to ensure a step-by-step understanding of the larger issue. First, why do peasants enter into exploitative relations and what are these? What objective and subjective compulsions do they face? (Section III). Second, since exploitative relations are necessarily contradictory, implying a simultaneous loss and gain, what are the forces that benefit from this process, be these internal to the

community or external to it? Concretely, what lines does the process of capital accumulation follow? (Section IV). Third, the effects of these relations on the peasantry are also contradictory, depending in each case on the objective circumstances of the household, and in the long run leading to the differentiation of the peasantry into rich, middle and poor strata. What, then, is the character of this differentiation? (Section V). Fourth, within the objective context of class divisions in the countryside, what is the character of the agrarian crisis that surfaces? (Section VI). Fifth, how is this regime of labour controls reproduced? Specifically, what are the politico-ideological dimensions of this process? (Section VII). Finally, what major agrarian transformation is necessary to resolve the agrarian crisis in favour of the vast majority of direct producers? (Section VIII).

III THE DOUBLE CHARACTER OF PEASANT EXPLOITATION

The exploitation of peasants has a dual character. On one hand, it is the result of the objective context that peasant households find themselves in. This context, this 'dull compulsion of market forces', is why certain peasant households enter into unequal relations, even from a position of disadvantage, simply to reproduce themselves, while this same context allows better-off households to enter these same unequal relations from a position of advantage. This compulsion is indirect and not direct. Its source is the existing socio-economic context and not any political authority. It is in this sense, and only in this sense, that we can say that exploitation is the result of unequal relations entered into 'voluntarily'.

On the other hand, the exploitation of peasant households is also the

result of pressures imposed on them directly and from above. This compulsion is extra-economic, not economic, so that peasant entry into these relations of exploitation has an immediately involuntary character. Let us investigate both these types of exploitation in turn.

In the case of Kitende, the objective context of peasant households is immediately the outcome of the distribution of landed property. Here, the whole village is subject to a single landlord, whose grandfather was the beneficiary of a grant of 8 square miles in 1900, involving Kitende and three surrounding villages. The present landlord owns 4 square miles. The table below shows average landholding by strata:

Table I

Average Landholding by Strata in Kitende

Landlord	4 square miles
Rich Peasant	2.17 acres
Middle Peasant	1.08 acres
Poor Peasant	0.66 acres

The point is clear. Peasants in Kitende are compelled to enter into unequal relations, be these renting land or selling labour-power or its products, because of one predominant fact: they are land-poor.

The situation of Amwoma is different. Here, there was neither a history of landlord-tenant relations nor any shortage of land. And yet, here too, the rural poor 'voluntarily' enter into unequal relations. Why? The reason is clear if we go beyond the formal ownership of land to the land each stratum actually has the capacity to till.

Table II

Peasant Households Access to Land, Labour
and Implements by Strata in Amwoma

PEASANT STRATA	LAND (in acres)		LABOUR*	IMPLEMENTS	
	owned	cultivated		Hoes	Ploughs
Poor and Lower Middle	4.26	1.92	2.59	1.74	-
Middle (Average and Upper)	4.20	3.00	3.90	2.40	0.4
Rich	18.75	6.08	4.50	2.50	2.0

The question of the criteria used to differentiate rich/middle/poor peasants, including the divisions inside the middle peasantry, will be discussed at length in Section V. The question of immediate significance is: why is it that poor and lower-middle peasants who own as much land as do the rest of the middle peasants (4.26 as opposed to 4.20 acres) are in a position to cultivate only 65% (1.92 as opposed to 3.0) of the land the latter do? The difference cannot be explained by the labouring strength of different households, since a rural poor household always lacks the capacity to put into simultaneous motion even that labouring strength which is at its disposal. This is because the decisive difference lies in their respective access to instruments of labour. Though its labouring strength is 2.59 on the average, a rural poor family owns only 1.74 hoes and no plough. This means at no time are there sufficient hoes to utilise family labour to capacity. My point is simple: though not land-poor, a rural poor family must enter into unequal relations because it is implement-poor.

The above objective conditions - shortage of land or of implements - provide one explanation of why peasants enter into unequal relations. Because they are a response to the objective situation of the peasantry, the force of existing circumstances, they have a 'voluntary' appearance about them.

The second explanation of why peasants enter into unequal relations lies in direct pressure from above. The result of political compulsion, this extra-economic pressure has little to do with the immediate economic situation of a peasant household. It is the immobility of peasants, that they are rooted in the ground like the very crops they grow, which makes them easy prey to all

sorts of pressures from above. If the market is the focus of unequal relations 'voluntarily' entered into, the source of involuntary practices is the state.

Extra-economic pressures originate from either the state power itself or from state-connected institutions (the party, the church) or individuals (bureaucrats, chiefs). (At the time of fieldwork the party in question was Obote's UPC). These pressures are expressed in a whole galaxy of compulsions, ranging from forced crops to forced sales, forced land alienation to forced cash contributions, and finally forced labour. Their targets too vary, from labour-power itself (forced labour) to the products of labour (forced crops, forced sales, forced contributions) to the very conditions of labour (forced enclosures). But together, whether direct or indirect, these compulsions constitute one singly integrated web of controls on labour.

Demands for forced labour are seldom presented openly as such. In fact, the core of these are always presented as a continuation of

traditional practices that require each household to contribute labour regularly for community work, called 'Bulungi bwansi' (for the good of the community). The difference is that the labour so extracted is now appropriated by either local state organs or agents, or by state-connected institutions like the party or the church.

Like their urban counterparts, peasant households pay an annual tax to state authorities. But, quite unlike the former, they get hardly any services in return. Every local undertaking must be the result of a local effort, organised and supervised by local state authorities. If a school or dispensary or road or well needs building or repairing or cleaning, chiefs call upon peasant households to send a representative to labour. If it is time to dig, weed or harvest the county chief's garden, surrounding peasants are called upon to do it. If the ruling party is to hold a rally, peasants will have to donate labour to cut poles and grass and to build shelter. They will have to donate grain for the compulsory feast; and donate time before, during and after the rally to attend and entertain the dignitaries from town. Should the party want to build a local office, or the local school need to buy a lorry, peasant 'contributions' will have to take a monetary form. Failure or refusal to comply results in an immediate penalty - without redress. Usually, the authorities will confiscate a cock from a peasant household. If the peasant is too poor to possess one, he is then sent to jail for a period unilaterally decided upon by the chief.

Church authorities also make similar demands. Every harvest is followed by an active collection. Every Sunday service is an occasion for a monetary demand from believers. Important events - like baptism, wedding or death, when church sanction is important and urgent - are easily turned into opportunities for a lively bargain

between sacred authorities and peasant believers on how much of a donation must be made to the 'House of God'. The sanctions at the disposal of the church are inevitably 'moral', such as a refusal to bless the dead or to baptise the newly born.

The details vary from region to region. In some places, as in Western Uganda, the church demands a day's labour every week. In others, as in Kitende, it has a compulsory annual quota ('contributions') to be met by each peasant household. (This is specified in cash but may be paid in cash, kind or labour service). Where the authority of the church is much weaker, as in Amwoma, the greatest pressure comes from local state authorities. In 1984, for example, this included the demand for 8 hours of labour per household every week to repair the mud walls and the grass-thatched roofs of the local primary school, constantly in a state of disrepair.

To estimate how much of a peasant household's time is taken up by the sum total of these extra-economic demands is a most difficult task for a single researcher. What I have done, though, is to make a rough estimate of the labour appropriated from peasant households by a combination of forced labour and forced contributions in the village of Amwoma in 1984. To arrive at a common index, I have converted every 100 shs. of forced contribution into four hours of labour, this being the going wage rate in 1984.

The results show that a rural poor (poor and lower-middle peasant) household is compelled to donate 491 hours a year, or 9.42 hours a week. With a family labouring strength of 2.59, and a family labour time of 62 hours a week - assuming a male works on the average 20 hours in the fields and a woman 30 - we get a rough figure of

approximately 15% of a rural poor household's labouring time being appropriated simply through forced labour and forced contributions. The corresponding figure for a middle (average and upper) peasant household is roughly 10%. The propertied strata in the countryside are usually able to diminish the weight of these demands, particularly those for compulsory labour. Rich peasants normally send a porter to 'represent' them. (English-speaking proprietors refer to land labourers they employ as 'porters'). A village capitalist said he goes to the school "when I have time", and then "to supervise" the labourers!

Political power is also used to create the basis for a monopoly, in either land or trade. Compulsory land appropriation is the basis of landlordism. Its prime example in the colonial period was that of the 1900 Agreement, whose effect on land ownership in Kitende is visible even today. A more contemporary case is that of the wave of land enclosures that have swept parts of the countryside following the 1975 Land Reform Decree. For example, whereas rich peasants in Amwoma own an average 18.75 acres, the average for capitalist farmers is 335.5 acres. Ownership of such large tracts of land is established through claims upheld by District Land Committees constituted under the 1975 Decree. These committees, organs of state power at the local level, are constituted by local state agents and local notables. Land enclosures of this type are prevalent in those areas free of traditional landlordism, where access to land has hitherto been defined under customary tenure. In overriding customary law, the 1975 Land Reform thus cleared the ground for the entry of capital into the 'communal' countryside.

Trade monopolies are quite often the result of a combination of compulsions, including both the cultivation of certain crops (cotton,

coffee, tobacco, etc.) and compulsory sales, usually to parastatal marketing boards. While usually applied to industrial crops for export, administrative compulsion may also be used to create quasi-monopolies in internal trade. In Uganda, for example, all wholesale operations involving major food items in the local market (e.g. cattle, bananas, millet) must be licensed by the Produce Marketing Board. The more lucrative the monopoly, the higher the authority granting the trade license and the stronger the state connection needed to secure such a license. In all these cases, political power ensures a privileged access to the products of peasant labour.

In sum, then, peasant exploitation has a double character: one economic, the other extra-economic; one a result of relations 'voluntarily' entered into, the other involuntarily enforced from above; one the result of 'the dull compulsion of market forces', the other extracted through the active agency of the state or state-connected agents.

IV THE DOUBLE CHARACTER OF CAPITAL ACCUMULATION

The two-fold character of peasant exploitation is the basis of two distinct, and even contradictory, paths to capital accumulation in the countryside, each with its own consequences.

The first is a relatively spontaneous process whereby differentiation occurs through internal unequal relations, the result of competition generated by existing commodity relations. The sharing and renting of labour implements, the 'borrowing' and renting of land on a small scale and the 'cooperation' and sale of labour-power (practices

examined below in some detail) are the stuff of which this process is made. We may characterise this path as that of accumulation from below.

Contraposed to this is the path of accumulation from above, in which market forces are supplemented by extra-economic coercion. It is a practice characteristic of the state as an organised power, of state-connected organisations (party, church) and of individual state agents.

The substance of the distinction being drawn here lies in the role of state power. Certainly, the reproduction of commodity relations - the basis of accumulation from below - is not possible without state power which guarantees the operation of various commodity markets, e.g. those in labour and land. What distinguishes this from the path of accumulation from above is that in the latter case extra-economic coercion is central to accumulation. Here, state power is itself an economic force.

There is a growing literature on newly independent countries which attests to political (state) power being the basis for capital accumulation (Thomas, 1984; Shivji, 1976). It reflects a distinctive process of class formation, in instances where no significant indigenous bourgeois class existed during the colonial period. Independence gave middle class-led nationalist movements access to political (state) power. And it is the exercise of this power - reinforced by a host of imperialist-organised 'aid' schemes - that creates the basis of an indigenous bourgeois class. The capital so accumulated may bear a private or a state character. Its complement is landlordism, when accumulation is the result of a monopoly in land,

also acquired through state connections. Let us now investigate the two paths to capital accumulation in some detail.

The characteristic feature of the development of capitalist relations from below, from the soil of small-scale commodity production, is that it presents the least rupture with existing production relations. Quite often the relations so evolved appear equal. The exploitation involved is disguised because these relations appear a continuation of age-old cooperative practices. Practices cooperative in form cease to be so in content once they are effected between households in unequal positions.

Take the following example of three households coming together to pool their cattle and their labour for joint herding. The only difference with the past is that they no longer share a common economic position: the poor peasant household has two cows, that of the middle peasant eight cows and that of the rich peasant twenty-four. They pool the cows together and build for them a common kraal near the home of the rich peasant. They rotate herding, each owner being responsible for 10 days in turn. While the labour is shared equally, the ownership of cows is not equal. The result can be seen in the following table.

Table 3

Ownership of Cows and Contribution
of Labour in one Herding Pool

<u>Peasant Household</u> <u>by Stratum</u>	<u>Number (%) of</u> <u>Cows in Pool</u>	<u>Amount (%) of Labour</u> <u>Contribution per Turn</u>
Poor Peasant	2 (5.9%)	10 (33.3%)
Middle Peasant	8 (23.5%)	10 (33.3%)
Rich Peasant	24 (70.6%)	10 (33.3%)

Not only are the benefits of cooperation shared unequally, so are the risks should any of the cows stray into nearby farms and damage crops. From the point of view of a poor (or middle) peasant, it is of course better to herd thirty-four cows for 10 days in a month than to herd two (or eight cows) every day of the month! And yet, the real point is that the equal sharing of labour disguises the unequal returns to each household. In practice, this form of 'cooperation' is really a transfer of unpaid labour from poor and middle peasant households to rich peasant households.

Spontaneously developed unequal relations, whether open or disguised, develop in relation to each of the major productive forces: implements of labour, land and labour. A major implement of labour like a plough may be rented or 'shared', as in Amwoma. When rented, its payment is open for all to see: a day's payment to a capitalist farmer or a rich peasant was 1500 shs. for a plough, four oxen and 2-3 labourers. This practice, however, is rare; only an upper middle peasant can afford such a cash payment.

More usual is a practice called 'plough-sharing' between a capitalist farmer (or rich peasant) and poor peasant. The capitalist farmer provides a plough, the oxen and at times even a land labourer. The poor peasant household provides two members for the ploughing team. Together, they plough the lands of the capitalist farmer and the poor peasant in turn. We may note two aspects of this exchange. First, the land of the capitalist farmer will customarily equal six gardens (an acre each); that of the poor peasant only one garden (one acre). While the poor peasant household holds only a seventh of the land ploughed, it provides as much as two-thirds of the labour for ploughing! And second, the land of the capitalist farmer is ploughed

first, to catch the rains in time; that of the poor peasant suffers from late ploughing.

Similar practices pertain to land, when it is scarce. As the following example from Kitende village shows, land may be rented or 'borrowed'. Rent refers to a tenancy where the payment is in cash; 'borrowing' to one where payment is in kind. The rent per acre in 1983 ranged from 1500 to 6000 shillings depending on (a) location, (b) whether bush or cleared, and (c) how long it had been under cultivation.

'Borrowing', on the other hand, includes a wide variety of practices. Common to all cases of 'borrowing' is a fixed minimum extracted as a hidden rent. 'Borrowed' land is inevitably bush. It must be cleared; but it can only be rented for a year, after which it reverts to the owner who will either put it to personal use or rent it for cash. If the tenant wishes to continue to 'borrow', he/she must move to another piece of bush. The going rate for clearing an acre of bush was 2000 shillings in 1983. This then was the minimum hidden rent for 'borrowing' an acre.

The variation above this floor was yet another payment in kind, in the form of a share of crops cultivated by the tenant. While customarily fixed, this payment nonetheless varied from one stratum of the peasantry to another, being the highest for poor peasants. I have converted the share of the crops paid by each stratum into money value at the then going prices, added it to the labour rent paid, and compared it with the cash rent paid, in the table below.

Table 4

Land Rent in Kitende Village, 1983

<u>Form of Tenancy</u>	<u>Rent Per Acre</u>
If renting	1500-6000 shs.
If 'borrowing'	
Rich Peasants	2000 shs.
Upper and Average Peasants	6400 shs.
Lower-Middle and Poor Peasants	8600 shs.

Finally, as is clear from the case of Amwona, labour too can be extracted in multiple forms, openly as wage labour or disguised as communal labour. This is most clearly revealed through an historical examination of changes in the communal cooperative form of labour in this century.

Cooperative labour organisation developed in response to a combination of conditions: relatively plentiful land, a sparse population, a generally harsh environment; in sum, relatively underdeveloped conditions of production. Communal groups, organised on a more or less permanent basis, tilled individually-held plots of land in turn. The host of the day was required to give a token of appreciation, usually in the form of a specified amount of the local millet brew, to the group. The prime requisite for the system to function was a relative absence of differentiation inside the peasantry. For the benefits of the system to be relatively equally distributed, it was necessary that every family could afford the brew necessary to have access to communal labour.

With the internal differentiation of the peasantry, this condition no longer obtained. Households divided between those who could afford

the token and those who could not, between those who usually entered the system as contributors of labour only and those who entered it also as its recipients. The former constituted a pool of cheap labour, especially as their returns were limited by custom to a token of traditional brew.

The system reached a point of crisis with the drought of the late 1960's when more and more peasants were unable to provide millet brew. The system was reorganised as a result of pressure from below. The token was abolished, and all were required to work equally and to receive labour, in turns decided by lot. Membership was now exclusively confined to poor and lower-middle peasants. Whereas the original communal labour system was organised on a territorial basis, with households in a particular location belonging to a single group, the new teams were organised on a strictly class basis, with common labour as the basis of common membership.

Internal reorganisation of the group, however, was not enough to ensure that the labour pooled was used by its contributors. What had not changed was the overall environment, the objective conditions that confronted rural poor households, rendering them implement-poor, and therefore food-poor and cash-poor. Thus more and more members of the team, when their turn came to receive group labour, used it to work for a capitalist employer (retaining the group's payment for themselves) and not to work their own farm. Such labour while communal and cooperative in form, is in its social content a disguised form of group wage labour.

The starting point of capital accumulation from below through peasant differentiation, is in production proper. It is petty accumulation

through petty exploitation. The petty profits so accumulated through a rich peasant-type operation - combining family labour with small scale exploitation, made possible by hiring labour-power or renting land or instruments of labour - are now invested in trade.

The trade a rich peasant can enter with the least difficulty is one that allows small scale operation, which is restricted to commodities destined for the local market: chickens in Amwona, charcoal and cassava in Kitende. Not only is the outlay required small, the license to enter the trade can also be procured from local officials for a small fee.

The next step would be a wholesale operation in the wider internal market. The best example is that of the cattle trade. Cattle are usually bought one at a time, typically from peasant homes in distress, and transported by lorry to urban markets (Busia Mukono, Kampala). Though its profits are substantial, they are bagged in the main by the transport owner, not the trader. Experience makes the village bourgeoisie acutely conscious of the need for its own means of transport. But experience also teaches them that it is not possible to have access to a bank loan substantial enough to purchase adequate transport (e.g. a Leyland 'Land Train') without a state connection. At this point, their problem is political, a point I shall return to.

Suffice it to point out here that the contradictory character of the capital accumulation process, from above and below, gives rise to different fractions of the bourgeoisie. The first historically, emerging through the internal differentiation of the peasantry, is the village bourgeoisie. In contrast is the formation of the 'external' fraction of the bourgeoisie, the bearers of the second path to capital

accumulation in the countryside, that from above. I shall analyze this fraction in both functional (economic) and political terms before underlining its concrete manifestation in the villages of Amwoma and Kitende.

In functional (economic) terms, this fraction is essentially a merchant bourgeoisie. It reflects an overall process whereby capitalist exploitation is predicated on labour processes that are either pre-capitalist (where labour and property are organically united as in a middle or poor peasant family farm) or semi-capitalist (where this organic unity is partially ruptured as in a labour-employing rich peasant family farm). Here, surplus labour is immediately pumped out of small commodity producers in the form of merchant's profit, later to be divided between different fractions of capital.

The case of Kitende illustrates a variation on this basic theme. Here, surplus labour is pumped out in a dual form, as both merchant's profit and landlord's rent. Both, we may note, have an essentially unproductive character.

In political terms, merchant capital has both a private and a state character. In Amwoma, a region producing food for the internal market, merchant capitalists are prominent state bureaucrats, able to use their political connections to set up independent commercial operations. In Kitende, in a region producing an export crop, the principal merchant is the state power itself, in the form of a parastatal marketing board. Central to the development of merchant capital from above are two connections, those with foreign capital and the state. As we see below, even when the original locus of merchant

capital is trade in the internal market - as with the food trade in Amwoma - further expansion necessarily leads it to involvement in the export-import trade, where the most profitable investment opportunities are to be found. Thus the operations of the most prominent merchant capitalists necessarily assume a comprador character as do those of the state power which monopolises the trade in export crops in Kitende.

In functional terms, then, the 'external' fraction of the bourgeoisie is a merchant bourgeoisie. In political terms, it is a comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie. Unlike the agrarian bourgeoisie of the village, its starting point is not production proper, but a state connection. Political power can be employed for economic gain either by state agents acting individually or by the state itself as an organised power. The first is illustrated best by the case of Amwoma, where peasant production is confined to that of food crops for the internal market; the second by the example of Kitende, where the local cash crop is also an export crop, coffee.

In the village of Amwoma, there are three families which may be classified as capitalists, whose members have moved out of the labour process and whose income is more or less exclusively the result of exploitation. one reached this position as the result of differentiation from below; the other two, also the largest, exemplify the development of commercial comprador capital from above. Both are headed by men with important state positions who reside in urban areas, with their village operations managed by one of their wives.

In the octopus-like movement of individual capitals into the countryside, we can identify at least four steps. The first involves

gaining control over substantial tracts of land. Whereas the historical precedent here was the 1900 Agreement in Buganda, in contemporary times this tendency has received a major boost from the Land Reform Decree of 1975. Riding roughshod over all forms of customary tenure, this Decree introduced capitalist-type 99-year leases on land taken over in the interest of 'development'.

In practice, capitalist reforms are intermeshed with pre-capitalist traditions, but in ways that illustrate how capital can shape and bend 'tradition' to suit its own interests. The sale of land is a recent phenomenon in Amwoma where peasant practice widely observes customary clan-supervised land tenure. Since no outsider is allowed to have access to village land, even through purchase, every land-hungry bureaucrat is compelled to return to "his own" area and to none other. But the same practice allows this capitalist simply to "claim" the land without payment. What he does is return to the village of his fore-parents and lay claim to tracts of unused land, say from 50 to 500 acres - as land his fore-parents farmed shifting from here to there over the years, and thus land which is his by way of traditional inheritance, as if they had only one fore-son! The point is that what is vital for the claim to stick is not the accuracy of its historical basis but preferential treatment by local chiefs and other state officials who comprise the District Land Committee.

Having established a foothold in the village, capital is now in a position to turn every development to its advantage. This is particularly true of crisis, which simultaneously undermines the autonomy of pre-capitalist forms of activity and facilitates the rapid expansion of the most efficient forms of capital. Take the case of land and cattle, neither ordinarily considered by peasants as

commodities for sale, but both forcibly converted into commodities and sold in times of crisis. Consider, for example, the response of the largest capitalist when asked to identify the critical period in the family's accumulation in the village: "What helped us was the famine of 1980. People were hungry and they sold us things cheaply. We could buy land at 250 to 300 shs. an acre and a cow at 2000 shs. That is when we really started buying." In other words, crisis acts as a catalyst which pushes social goods from the commodity markets. The process had advanced so far that, among what is considered a cattle-keeping peasantry, 82% of peasant households in Amwoma do not own even one cow today!

Now, the point of getting control over a substantial plot of land is not for capital to seize hold of and transform and process of production on that land. Quite the contrary. The land acquired is surveyed and a legal title obtained, so it may be presented to the state bank as collateral for a loan. The point is to acquire means of transport, usually a lorry, which is the second step in the penetration of individual capitals into agriculture.

The third step comes with its movement into trade, the most lucrative being the trade in staples. In Amwoma, this means the millet trade. We shall later see the profits that may be accumulated from such an investment. Quite often, however, entry into trade does not require prior ownership of means of transport. In fact, the successful capitalist is one who gets access to institutional (cooperative, ministry, parastatal, church, prison, army, etc.) transport and uses it for personal accumulation to then acquire his own transport.

Up to this point, the operations of capital are confined to the home market, buying from the countryside and selling in the city. Its

ultimate goal, however, is to enter the most lucrative market, that for exports and imports. Once again, a state connection is vital, as this step can not be taken without a substantial bank loan in foreign exchange to enter the import trade (usually in necessary consumption goods like second hand clothing or soap, in great demand in rural areas) and because export trade (usually in grains like simsim or maize) requires a state licence.

It is this final step which gives the most successful of private capitals a comprador character. Every step in the development of captial illuminates yet another link in the chain that shackles the direct producer in the neo-colony. Not only are the most important bureaucrats in the state at the same time comprador capitalists, the state as an organised power is at the same time an organised comprador power.

This is best illustrated by the case of Kitende where the marketing of coffee is the legal monopoly of the state-controlled Coffee Marketing Board. Three agents intervene between the peasant producer of coffee and the Coffee Marketing Board (CMB). The bicycle trader, usually a rich peasant, goes from farm to farm purchasing coffee in small amounts. This he sells to a store, owned individually or by a cooperative. The store, in turn, sells it to a processor (usually a cooperative) who passes on the clean coffee to CMB for export. At the start of each coffee season, the government announces prices for each transaction in the chain, with the exception of purchasers by local bicycle traders. The returns to the bicycle trader are a deduction from the official grower's price. Table 5 shows the distribution of coffee proceeds between the various agents in the 1982/83 season.

Table 5

Distribution of (Robusta) Coffee Proceeds by Official
Prices per Kg. of Clean Coffee, 1982/83 Season

	<u>Uganda Shillings</u>	<u>% of Export Price</u>
To Grower	115.20)	19.0)
	134.40 ¹	22.2
To Bicycle Trader	19.20)	3.2)
To Store	19.20	3.2
To Processor	39.50	6.5
To Exporter (CMB + Export Tax) ²	414.46	68.1

Export Price Total	609.86	100.0

1. This was the official producer price equivalent of 1kg. of clean coffee, from which the bicycle trader's margin is deducted. 1kg. of clean coffee is equivalent to 1.92 kg. of coffee berries. The official producer price per kg. of berries was 70 shillings; from this, the bicycle trader's margin was 10 shillings.

2. The cost of transport from Kampala to Mombasa plus other costs (siding charges, custom bond in Kenya, etc.) was estimated at 18 shillings per kilo, or 2.9% of the export price, for small consignments by G. Freightmasters in Kampala. The actual cost to the CMB would be much lower as coffee is carried in bulk.

Of the two tendencies to capital accumulation outlined here, the stronger and more dominant is that of comprador/bureaucrat capital from above, which is closely interlinked with extra-economic coercion in the countryside. No wonder the peasantry, and particularly middle and poor peasants, are especially hostile to it. To them, comprador/bureaucrat capital signifies the most blatant usurpation of

the community's wealth from without, blazing a scorched earth policy of accumulation practices like the enforced sales of land, crops and cattle that have absolutely no precedent and are gross violations of community interest. All this is in sharp contrast to the record of the rich peasantry and village bourgeoisie who are much more likely to resort to traditional communal practices, bending these to their advantage but over a much longer timespan, and whose property therefore appears to peasant eyes more a result of their own hard labour than the appropriation of someone else's.

V. PEASANT DIFFERENTIATION IN TWO VILLAGES

By social differentiation, I refer to a process that divides the peasantry into groups whose conditions of life are defined by qualitatively different production relations and material conditions.

My analytical starting point is the middle peasant household.

Historically the core of the peasantry, it best exemplified a feature common to all peasant strata: the organic unity of labour and property in a family of small proprietors working on family land with family tools. With no other regular economic ties than those to the market, the middle peasant family exercises autonomy over its labour process.² As the organic connection of family labour and family property is partially ruptured, through either adversity or prosperity, the middle peasantry begins to differentiate.

The differentiation of the middle peasantry creates on either side the rich and the poor peasantry through enrichment and impoverishment irrespectively. The rich peasant household has a regular surplus above the needs of simple reproduction, and is able to combine the

returns from its labour with those from small-scale exploitation, such as renting out land or hiring wage labour.

Whereas a regular surplus allows the rich peasantry to augment its income with exploitation, a regular deficit compels the poor peasantry to enter into relations with other classes or strata in the countryside which deprive it of at least a portion of its surplus labour, simultaneously compromising its autonomy over the uses of its labour.

All three strata (rich, middle, poor) belong to the peasantry as all are involved in the labour process as owners of petty property in land and of instruments of labour. This characteristic of combining some participation in the labour process with some ownership of productive property is not shared by other classes who live in the countryside and derive their income from the land.

On the one hand, standing alongside the rich peasant, are the capitalist farmer and the landlord. Neither small proprietors nor direct participants in the labour process, their large-scale property is predominantly the result of someone else's labour, exploited either directly as wage labour (capitalist farmer) or indirectly through rent (landlord).

On the other hand, alongside the poor peasant stands the land labourer. Here, too, the organic connection between labour and property has been broken. Without the necessary productive property to give effect to his/her labour power, a land labourer must find employment with one or another member of a propertied class to get access to means of consumption.

While the classificatory description employed above helps to clarify the terms employed, it leaves obscure the dynamic aspect of development: what is the cutting edge of this differentiation process? A reading of Engels (1970) and Lenin (1967) shows that both emphasized the development of wage labour in the countryside, giving rise to capital accumulation by one stratum of the peasantry (the rich) and leading to the progressive proletarianisation of another (the poor). Both wrote in a context where feudalism had substantially disintegrated and capitalist commodity relations were expanding. Both understood their historical context as one of a transition from petty commodity production to capitalist production in agriculture, thus their emphasis on the development of wage labour as the principal indicator of differentiation in the peasantry.

Mao-tse-tung (1965), on the other hand, wrote in a different context, that of an imperialist-dominated semi-colony. The dominant tendency he observed in the countryside was not that of a transition to capitalist agriculture, but that of a relative stabilisation of landlord-tenant relations ('semi-feudalism'). His analysis thus highlighted not only wage labour but also tenancy relations as routes by which a stratum of the peasantry is enriched at the expense of another. In the Chinese countryside of the 1920s, a rich peasant might not employ any labour but still regularly practice exploitation by renting out a part of his/her land; correspondingly, a poor peasant might never enter the labour market and yet be regularly exploited through tenancy. In fact, in the Chinese situation, and that of Asia more generally, the agrarian question became synonymous with the land question.

The Ugandan situation also calls for a concrete analysis, for a recognition that differentiation proceeds by multiple routes that are

historically and socially specific. The pool of unequal relations that differentiate peasant households from one another may develop around any one of the elements of the labour process: land, labour or its implements. This pool can include, besides wage labour and land tenancy relations, the renting or major implements of labour. Or, to put the same thing differently, households with roughly equal land holdings may yet belong to different strata because of unequal access to implements of labour, as we saw in the case of Amwoma.

To be more specific, in analysing the results of the empirical surveys I carried out in Amwoma and Kitchen³, I proceed as follows. Those households that reproduced themselves through the application of family labour on family property, and did not have any regular economic ties with other strata of the peasantry, I characterised as middle peasant households. Of these, households which could marshal an occasional surplus to enter into exploitative relations - by renting out land or implements of labour, or by employing wage labour - were characterised as upper middle peasants. Similarly, those households faced with an occasional deficit compelling them to enter, however irregularly, unequal relations from an unfavourable vantage point, were classified as lower middle peasants.

By this criterion, rich peasant households are those with a regular surplus enabling them to combine family labour with petty exploitation. Conversely, poor peasant families are compelled by a regular deficit in their productive resources and/or output to rent in implements or land, or to engage in part-time wage-labour. These categories of the peasantry were distributed as follows.

Table 6

Classes and Strata in the Villages
of Amwoma and Kitende (%)

	<u>Amwoma</u>	<u>Kitende</u>
Landlords	-	1.1
Capitalist	0.4	-
Rich Peasants	2.7	9.8
Middle Peasants	12.0	37.0
Poor Peasants	83.1	26.1
Land Labourers	1.7	26.1
TOTAL	99.9	100.0

First, a word of caution before we proceed with the analysis. It is not my contention that the division I have outlined above is actually how the different classes and strata in the two villages perceive themselves. The purpose here is simply to uncover the actual process of exploitation in these villages and to show how it objectively differentiates the peasantry (and other classes).

This is not to say that the question of peasant consciousness is unimportant. It is obviously of great significance for understanding the nature of peasant political action, which I shall return to below. For the moment, the analysis concerns the objective situation of the two village populations, including the following differences between the two villages.

First, Kitende is characterised by landlord-tenancy relations while Amwoma is not. Kitende and four surrounding villages have a single landlord, resident in Kitende. The landlord's income is primarily derived from renting agricultural land (19 households), forest land

for charcoal production (4 households) and swamp land for clay extraction (4 households), and also from renting property in a nearby (semi-urban) marketing center. His secondary sources of income are trade and production proper in that order.

The absence of capitalists in Kitende, however, is not just explained by the predominance of landlord-tenant relations. Also relevant is the fact that the major capitalist in Kitende is the organised power of the state itself, in the form of the Coffee Marketing Board, whereas in Amwoma the grain trade is controlled by individual private capitalists with a direct presence in the village.

Second, the greater weight of the middle peasantry in Kitende (37%) than in Amwoma (12%) is explained by one single fact: that petty trade is far more preponderant in Kitende, which is much closer to large urban markets than Amwoma. Table 7 shows that the direct producer stands to retain a much greater share of the final market price where trade is competitive (petty trade) than where it is monopolised.

Table 7

Type of Trade and Share of Direct
Producer in Final Market Price

<u>Type of Trade</u>	<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Share of Final Market Price to Direct Producer</u>
Petty Trade	Cassava (Kitende)	67%
	Charcoal (Kitende)	50%
Monopolistic	Coffee (Kitende)	19%
	Millet (Amwoma)	25%

Nearness of urban markets in the case of Kitende is crucial to understanding the ability of middle peasants to enter trade. It means that commodities can be taken to the market on a bicycle only and the entire transaction completed in a day. The farther the market, the more expensive the mode of transport, the larger the scale of the

trade and the greater the time involved - all of which account for successful monopolisation by those with the necessary financial resources and political connections.

That is why the scope of petty trade is much larger in Kitende where, of the 17 households involved, 14 are middle peasants and 3 are rich peasants. To middle peasants, petty trade offers a dual opportunity. Not only does it mean an additional source of income for those involved in it (14 out of 34 middle peasant households), it also means a higher return to the producer than would be the case if the trade were monopolised.

The third main difference between the two villages lies at the lower end of the social scale. Amwoma has a huge poor peasantry (83.1%) and a negligible class of land labourers (1.75%); Kitende has its poor roughly divided between the two (26.1% each). To put it differently, wage labour in Kitende is more proletarianised; in Amwoma it is predominantly semi-proletarian. This, once again, is the direct result of a land monopoly in Kitende, where land scarcity is acute and the land question real, in contrast to Amwoma where neither is pronounced.

The differences we have noted above reflect a variety of local conditions that shape the process of differentiation from below. But Kitende and Amwoma also have important similarities, the result of a shared overall context, of common conditions that together give rise to the preponderant tendency of accumulation from above. This similarity is most obviously reflected in a single but sweeping fact: the general impoverishment of the working peasantry and land labourers.

To the eyes of even a casual observer, the social conditions of the rural poor - lower-middle and poor peasants and land labourers - are no less that shockingly depressed. They live in mud huts, the majority with grass-thatched roofs, a minority with old iron sheets crying out for urgent repair or replacement. They sleep on papyrus mats or on grass or at times on the bare ground. Seldom do these peasants have a second change of clothing or a night covering. Quite often, in the rainy season when temperatures are lower than average, the same piece of cloth that the wife wraps around her in the day time is what the couple used as a sheet to cover themselves at night. It is people in such situations who most often resort to drinking cheap but strong brew, that also serves as a sleeping sedative. Dire need shapes habits which give the comfort of a crutch in the short run but turn into a sapping dependence over the long run.

A constant part of the diet of these rural poor consists of cassava, with some salt added. It may be complemented in good times by beans, in times of hardship by one of several semi-bitter vegetables, usually freely picked from the village environs. Meat or chicken is a rarity. As a long-time observer of the Ugandan countryside puts it: "A peasant eats a chicken either when the peasant is sick or when the chicken is sick".⁴

VI. CRISIS OF REPRODUCTION

Such debilitating conditions express one cardinal economic fact, that the surplus labour extracted by the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie and by landlords is seldom ploughed back into the village economy. The unproductive character of the dominant exploiting classes explains why no major advances are observed in farm technology. But then, is

not the continued reproduction of cheap labour predicated on two conditions: one, that peasant producers continue to meet a substantial part (food) of their cost of reproduction; and two, that living labour continues to be the major input into the production process?

To put it differently, peasant production has a tendency to be reproduced on a simple basis. For an individual peasant household, of the three elements of the labour process - land, labour and its implements - it is the implements of labour which represent the least dynamic aspect. The tendency for more and more peasant households to become implement-poor can be observed in both Amwoma and Kitende.

Though the ox-plough was introduced in Amwoma in the 1920's, its ownership is confined to capitalists, rich and upper middle peasants, who together constitute 5.8% of the village population. The bulk of the peasantry cultivates its farms using the hand hoe. Here too, as we have seen, rural poor households are deficient in resources: an average family with a labouring strength of 2.59 can only muster an average of 1.74 hoes (see Table 1).

Even for those owning them, the use of the ox-plough is confined to turning over the land. All other agricultural operations, like weeding and harvesting, are carried out with the same technology as existed at the turn of the century, the traditional hand hoe for weeding millet and the traditional finger cap or knife for harvesting millet or simsim.

In Kitende, three households (one landlord and two rich peasant) hired a tractor to clear their lands in 1983; all other households, on the other hand, depended on the hoe for all work on the land. But even that hoe is seldom effective. The table below gives the time taken by each section of the peasantry to purchase a new hoe.

Table 8

<u>Peasant Stratum</u>	<u>Time Taken to Purchase New Hoe</u>
Rich Peasant	.45 years
Upper and Average Middle Peasant	1.85 years
Lower Middle Peasant	3.45 years
Poor Peasant	7.14 years

According to the reckoning of peasants, under conditions obtaining in Kitende, a hoe needs replacement in 18-24 months for effective use. This means that even when the rural poor in Kitende - 57% of its population - have a hoe to work with, it is typically too old and worn out for effective labour.

Under these conditions, as rural poor households try to better living standards, or even simply to defend existing levels, the elements of the labour process that they find relatively dynamic, that they actually try and shape to suit individual need, are land and labour. And yet, attempts to maximise land or labour for production, seen as immediate solutions to the short run crisis of an individual household, in fact turn into the elements of a comprehensive social crisis of reproduction. Such is the genesis of both the ecological crisis and the crisis of relative over-population emerging in neo-colonies like Uganda.

Ecological Crisis: The ecological crisis is most obvious where landlordism is an immediate barrier to the extensive development of agriculture, as in Kitende, and the land question is acute. As an expanding peasant population is hemmed in by relatively restricted

land frontiers, attempts are made to intensify production, but without a corresponding development of farm technology. Periods of fallow become shorter, as the same land is 'mined' over and again. It becomes tired and yields less and less.

As land enclosures gather momentum, as in Amwoma, previously communal resources are brought under private control. Swamps are reclaimed as private land, as they have been in Western Uganda over the past decade. Sources of water (streams, ponds), of energy (bush) and pastures are privatised. With population increasing against a backdrop of diminishing resources, peasant households must search for new sources of energy and new pastures. One inevitable result is deforestation. The process has been observed by numerous writers, for example, in both West Africa (Watts, 1983) and Latin America (de Janvry, 1981).

The most acute expression of the ecological crisis, however, is where peasant production is pastoral, in those areas where the land question was already most acute in the colonial period. In Uganda, the crisis is most evident in Karamoja. As I have documented elsewhere (Mamdani, 1982), the people of Karamoja lost about 20% of their grazing land through a series of usurpations by colonial and neo-colonial authorities over four decades, from the 1920's to the 1960's. The large-scale deforestation that took place in the wake of this development can only be understood in relation to the search for new pastures in the context of an expanding human and cattle population.

A Relative Over-population: The only advantage that peasant farms have over more advanced forms of production is in their access to labour-power. This is because peasant households are simultaneously

units of production of material values and of reproduction of labour power in a context where living labour continues to be the major input to the labour process.

The tendency of the rural poor to have larger families reflects an assessment of their socio-economic context, which is two-fold. First, the nature of the labour process allows for the productive use of child labour. Farm work can be divided into heavy and light. The former includes all tasks which require adult muscle power, like felling trees, clearing the land and turning it over. Often, these are defined as 'male' tasks. The rest of the work - and also the bulk of it - is tedious, repetitious and time-consuming. It includes farm work like weeding and harvesting, auxiliary work like tending to farm animals and fetching water and firewood, and domestic work like drying and threshing grains. It can be done by children, as by adults. It is this light labour, not to be confused with easy labour, that is usually the preserve of women. Since it is also the labour most easily shared by children, the attraction of large families as sources of labour is not lost upon female members of the household.

Secondly, family discipline permits control over child labour, more so than in the case of other classes. Because the peasant family is at the same time a labouring unit, the discipline of labour is reflected in the internal discipline of the family. Parental authority is supreme. The life cycle of an individual is shaped by demands placed on him/her by the family as a labouring unit. No sooner are they of an age when simple and light tasks can be performed, say 5 or 6 years, then children are put to work. Unlike children of the propertied classes, children of the working peasantry do not grow up into adolescents - they become young adults. This generalisation remains

true for the whole of the labouring peasantry, in spite of other important differences between the strata comprising it.

As with the search for more land - whether to cultivate, to graze or as sources of energy - the attempt to maximise family labour also has a contradictory consequence. This is because individual and social rationality do not always coincide. What is a short run solution for an individual family turns into a long run social crisis as the contradiction between an expanding population and backward relations of production surfaces as a crisis of relative over-population, relative, that is, to the resources that can be generated in the confines of existing social relations.

Intensified Extra-Economic Coercion: While both the above forms of crisis are internally produced as peasant households devise short-run individual solutions to a systemic problem, the third is externally introduced as the state power and the dominant classes look for solutions to their own predicament.

The crisis of the ruling power is the result of a double pressure from opposite directions. On one hand, transmitted from below is a crisis of under-production, diminishing the surplus that can be squeezed out of peasant producers. On the other hand, passed on from above through imperialist pressures, is the crisis of over-production and financial speculation of the world capitalist economy, in the form of inflation, declining terms of trade and worsening balance of payments.

The solution of the ruling power is to try to squeeze even more surplus out of peasant producers through a combination of pressures, both direct and indirect. Direct pressure in turn takes a variety of forms. Peasants are exhorted to step up export production. Depending

on whether the dictatorship in power wears a civilian or military face, these 'Grow More Cotton' or 'Grow More Coffee' campaigns are put under the charge of local chiefs or local army officers. These attempts at enforced commodity production are supplemented by direct usurpation. Peasant labour is demanded for a whole series of 'community' projects, as their pockets are emptied to comply with equally compulsory demands for 'contributions' to another assortment of 'development' projects. The air is charged with calls for 'self-reliance' as 'fund-raising' campaigns abound.

While direct compulsion on the peasantry increases, yet another series of indirect measures simultaneously reduce the returns to the peasantry, both individual and social. On one hand, inflationary trends may undercut individual returns to peasant commodity production; on the other, IMF-style privatisation of social services (medicine, education, transport), shifting their cost directly to working people, just as surely undermines the social returns to the peasantry.

My point is that whatever form these exactions take, none of them can be enforced in practice without direct resort to coercion. The more intense the crisis of reproduction, the less effective are market relations in extracting surpluses from peasant households who produce the bulk of the cost of their own reproduction (food) and thus the greater the resort to extra-economic coercion. And, in turn, the more effective the forms of extra-economic coercion, the more is the wealth-producing machine that is the labouring peasantry sucked lean and dry.

It only needs a glance at the sharpening crisis through the Amin to the second Obote regime in Uganda to see how these developments can

unfold in practice. A series of 'reforms' by the Amin regime simultaneously cleared the ground for the penetration of capital into the countryside and for its easy access to the machinery of extra-economic coercion. I have already argued that this was the point of the 1975 Land Reform Decree. The administrative reforms that went alongside it, redrawing the administrative map of the country and putting each province under the command of a military governor, should be seen as an administrative complement to that legal reform. The more inefficient and decentralised the administrative machinery - in the context of a dictatorship - the greater the possibility of its arbitrary use to serve individual interests.

Parallel to this was another development whereby most social services to the countryside dried up through the 70's, the coup de grace being given by the IMF program of 1981-84. Similarly, all those programs that go by the name of 'extension services', designed to ensure the reproduction of the technical basis of peasant production, ground to a trickle. The result was a looting capitalism. Comprador/bureaucrat capitalists, organised in factions, enriched themselves in turn at the expense of not only the people but also the general interests of their own class!

Crisis brings to the surface more sharply than under normal conditions the contradiction between individual and class rationality, between particular and general interests. The hurried scrambles of individual members (or factions) of the ruling class, each impatient for their own solution, can only add up to a monumental crisis for all classes. In the extent of this process, the Ugandan case may be extreme but it is not exceptional.

VII. THE REPRODUCTION OF CRISIS

To complete the analysis of agrarian relations in those rural areas I have considered concretely in this essay, it is necessary to complement the analysis of production relations with that of how political power is organised.

Central to the analysis of class relations in the countryside are two political issues. One, even at its most passive, what form does the resistance of the oppressed against the oppressors take? And two, how is this antagonism contained within existing relations, and in fact turned into a force for the reproduction of these very relations, and not for their transformation?

No matter how peaceful and stable the social order, at no time are the rural poor absolutely reconciled to the existence of oppression and exploitation as if these were natural facts. At no time is their antagonism to the oppressors totally latent. To grasp the nature of peasant action, it is necessary to understand how peasants perceive different forces. How do they understand their own social position and how do they view other classes in the countryside? So far as the latter are concerned - landlords and capitalists at the upper end and land labourers at the lower end - their conditions of social existence are so clearly demarcated from those of the peasantry, through the absence of any physical labour in the case of the former and of ownership of productive property in the case of the latter, that their existence as distinct social groups is more or less clearly reflected in the consciousness of all villagers.

The same, however, cannot be said of the social recognition of different peasant strata, either by peasants themselves or by members

of other classes. What exists in this case, in fact, is a dual consciousness. To the extent that peasants perceive a differentiation amongst themselves, it is between two groups: on one hand the peasant poor (poor and lower middle peasants, but at lean times the rest of the middle peasantry), on the other, the peasant rich (rich peasants, and during better times upper middle peasants as well). The dominant consciousness, however, is that of peasants as a single community. This cannot be understood as simply a linear development of historical traditions from the past to the present. It is at the same time shaped and reinforced by resistance to the dominant type of capital accumulation process in the villages concerned. Tradition, in this sense, is recreated and born out of confrontation. It is not an historical anachronism.

Whether their resistance to capital is individual or collective the reference point of peasant action is inevitably the community. Because community-centred practices subordinate individual to collective interest, they protect peasant producers against scorched-earth policies pioneered by capital, particularly in its comprador/bureaucrat form. This is clearest in the case of Amwoma, where commodity relations are less advanced and kinship/community relations much stronger than in Kitende.

In the name of community and tradition, peasants oppose the fencing of land (except for a kraal) and the growing of perennial crops; doesn't tradition demand that livestock be allowed to graze village land as free range during the dry season? In the same vein, peasants demand that village land be open to purchase only by members of the community, and that pastures, swamps and forest land remain communal, both in ownership and control. While peasants appeal to 'tradition',

capitalists decry this as 'backward thinking' that blocks 'development and progress in the village'.

Echoes of the same struggle can be heard in Kitende. There, too, rent struggles against the landlord are fought out by peasants in the name of tradition. Should not 'traditional' limits to rent be observed, regardless of the rights the law may confer on the lord of the land? 'Tradition' here refers, of course, not to any pre-colonial practice but to practices conditioned by the 1928 Busulu and Nvujjo Law.

But rent increases do happen. Land enclosures do take place. What is more, these developments are enforced, sanctified and safeguarded by the state through legislation which now creates a whole range of crimes which never existed before: grazing or gathering firewood in previously common lands is now considered 'trespassing' or 'theft'; hunting big game is branded 'poaching'.

One witnesses a day-to-day confrontation between capital and the peasant community. As peasants resist in the name of the community, they are confronted by the state, the community of capital. As they decry capital accumulation practices as violations of tradition, these same practices are upheld in the name of the law. In this see-saw battle, it is once again extra-economic coercion that tilts the balance.

It is through such experiences that peasant morality develops a character antithetical to that of legal norms. For at such times, neither trespassing nor theft nor poaching bear any stigma in a peasant community. All are condoned, even heralded by the community, as a defence of its interests against outside usurpation. The active defence of pre-capitalist practices in this context is not an

anachronistic hanging on to age-old customs. It makes sense only in its modern context: as an active resistance against capitalist accumulation.

But this type of resistance, no matter how pervasive, is at best defensive. It is a rearguard action that is incapable of arresting the process of capital accumulation, let alone transforming the social order. In the dialectic between resistance to the social order and integration into it, its significance is secondary. The primary tendency is the integration of the peasantry into the existing order.

The issues around which the peasantry is so mobilised and integrated are not artificially imposed on it; they reflect contradictions actually felt in the village. In fact, the starting point of the integration of the peasantry is the same as the reference point of its resistance - that is, its constitution as a community - but with one important difference. The community so constituted is organised from above under the leadership of the propertied strata in the village, be they the village bourgeoisie or rich peasants - in sharp contrast to peasant resistance which has a tendency to construct the peasant community from below. The target of this organisation is now exclusively the 'external' fraction of capital. The result is contradictory conceptions of the community: one an outcome of peasant resistance from below, the other a product of capitalist organisation from above.

The point is worth elaborating. Historically, the two fractions of capital represent two paths of accumulation from above and from below. I have already argued that, from the point of view of the peasantry, there is a sharp contrast between wealth accumulated through

competitive market relations and that acquired through a state connection. This, however, should not obscure the fact that the distinction between the two fractions of capital is a relative one. No Chinese wall separates them. As they seek to expand the scope of their operation, individual members of the village bourgeoisie inevitably try to follow the path charted by the 'external' fraction of capital, that is, the path of large-scale land enclosures, of legal titles to these, and securing hefty bank loans on this basis. They clearly understand that none of this is possible without a political connection, and it is precisely this realisation that guides their active involvement in village politics.

The contradiction between the two fractions of capital hardly ever assumes a violent form, not even in scattered episodes, unlike the contradiction between the labouring peasantry against capital. The process of its resolution, however partial, is essentially a bargaining process. The negotiating strength of the village bourgeoisie derives from its ability to enlist peasant support, organised through local level institutions like the party branch or the church. In Amwoma, the chairman of the party branch is a village bourgeois; in Kitende, he is a rich peasant. Both are acutely conscious that this otherwise formal and ceremonial position can become a springboard of important advantage at election time or in a political crisis. For it will allow them the possibility of delivering the village - in terms of voting or backing - in exchange for definite material returns.

The organisation of competing fractions of capital is one side of the political process; its other side is the actual disorganisation of the peasant community through its formal mobilisation from above. To

begin with, this is a highly personalised process. Personalities predominate over issues. You identify with an individual, not his/her stand. The rural poor march behind local 'opinion makers' - a school teacher, a priest, a prominent village capitalist - like sheep behind a shepherd.

Support is given in expectation of, or in response to, the delivery of patronage. Voting is an opportunity to exchange an empty right for a material benefit, say a few kilos of sugar or a blanket. In practice, the politics of patronage has a disintegrating effect on the peasant community as appointment from above replaces election from below. The lower classes seek out and put their trust in individuals from the upper classes who are said to be 'on our side'. They hope to maximise their welfare individually through charity from above, not collectively through democratic struggle and movements from below. The poor are atomised as each seeks a personal advantage against another, as each looks for a private solution to a social problem. This type of ruling-class organised politics does not reinforce and strengthen the community, giving it a concrete understanding of wider social forces, whether friend or foe, but renders it into a relatively passive following,, and thereby disorganises it and disintegrates it.

This is clear if we shift our focus to the wider political scene. At the local level, I have highlighted the rift between the village bourgeoisie and the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie as the major contradiction internal to capital. That, however, is not necessarily true from a countrywide perspective. It should be obvious that the village bourgeoisie, by the very fact of its highly localised existence, cannot possibly form a cohesive force countrywide. But neither can the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie, despite its state

connections. The reason lies in the historical background to the capital accumulation process: the minute it turns to the countryside, each faction of comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie necessarily returns like a predator to feed on 'its own' nationality ('tribe'). Only there can it hope to defend itself against both its peasant victims and bourgeois competitors, on the basis of communal/pre-capitalist traditions. Thus, the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie has a tendency to organise in factions based on nationality, and only then to relate to other similar factions, whether through collaboration or contention.

Each of these nationality organisations is constructed through a process of bargaining between the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie of that nationality and a host of village bourgeois-led local political bodies. The existence of organisations defined along nationality lines should not be taken to be a negation of class politics. It is in fact an expression of a particular type of class politics, that of the bourgeoisie, under particular historical circumstances. For each nationality organisation is in reality a united front of all classes in that nationality under the leadership of 'its' bourgeoisie.

Neither should this be seen as the result of clever manipulation, of a conscious strategy of divide-and-rule, of a ruling class conspiracy. It is simply the objective result of a process whereby bourgeois factions, as they struggle against each other, reach down to organise popular classes in order to buttress their respective strength and position. It simply reflects the weakness of the peasantry and the initiative of the bourgeoisie in existing social conditions.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The starting point of the analysis was the two-fold character of peasant exploitation, the basis of a two-fold capital accumulation process in the countryside, one developed relatively spontaneously through existing commodity relations, the other the result of an organised state connection, necessarily requiring a complement of extra-economic coercion.

It is this latter fact, this element of extra-economic coercion, which is the key to understanding the variety of labour controls in the countryside. The economic effects of such a regime are obvious. Forced labour, forced land enclosures, forced contributions, forced crops, forced sales - all these amount to a systematic devalorisation of labour and its products. Neither the persistently narrow home market, nor the continued function of export-import as the axis of the development that does take place, can be understood without grasping this elementary fact.

From this point of view, unequal relations in the countryside can be divided into two. To the extent that they rely on extra-economic coercion for their reproduction, as is characteristic of practices associated with the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie and landlordism, they have turned into so many shackles on peasant productivity. To the extent that their reproduction is free of extra-economic coercion, as is characteristic of rich peasant and village capitalist exploitation, they still contain the potential of enhancing peasant productivity.

Of course, the above distinction is not watertight in practice. There are instances when market relations are intertwined with extra-economic coercion. Similarly, one does not find a polarised

opposition between village capitalists and the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie; the relations between the two reflect more a mixture of cooperation and competition.

This is why a demand to rid the countryside of practices of extra-economic coercion is most likely to divide its inhabitants into three, and not two, groups. While firm opposition can be expected from the clear beneficiaries of the present order, the comprador/bureaucrat bourgeoisie and the landlords, firm support is just as likely to come from its victims: the entire peasantry and land labourers. In contrast, village capitalists are more likely to occupy a middle and shifting ground, without a consistent stand, whether in support or in opposition.

The other side of this regime of labour controls is represented by its political effects. While market relations (though unequal) are in theory fully compatible with democratic freedoms for the peasantry, the same cannot be said of practices connected with extra-economic coercion. Where direct compulsion is an integral part of production relations that define the life activity of the vast majority, no consistent democracy is possible. In such a situation, direct force is very much part of relations between the exploiters and the exploited, and not simply between the rulers and the ruled. Political power does not simply weigh in the balance to reproduce relations between classes; it is intrinsic to the process of surplus labour extraction from direct producers. It is itself an economic force, marking the character of the state power that attempts to stabilise basic relations in society.

This is why in such situations, even if central state power may be

legitimated through formal democratic practices like multi-party competition and regular elections, state structures in the countryside do not allow for any democratic forms of control. Neither the administrative hierarchy of chiefs, nor the judicial hierarchy of courts, nor the various District Land Committees, allow for popular intervention in their functioning. They cannot because these are precisely the state organs tied up with the regime of labour controls reproduced through extra-economic coercion.

Without appreciating this, it is not possible to give concrete content to the demands of the democratic struggle in this context. If the democratic struggle is confined to no more than a narrow demand for a multi-party system and free and fair elections, its significance is immediately confined to only those classes already free of extra-economic coercion. Thus a liberal democratic reform could only be a minority reform, of meaning to the bourgeoisie and the middle classes, and at most to the working class as well.

What is needed is a much broader and popular conception of democracy, whose kernel must be the emancipation of the peasantry, the majority of society, from all forms of extra-economic coercion. The pre-requisite for such a sweeping political reform is no less than a change in the production relations of society. It is tantamount to a social transformation. At the same time, I am not suggesting that ending the practices of extra-economic coercion will automatically bring in its wake a flowering of popular democracy. While the reform is a necessary condition for the latter, it is in no way sufficient. Democratic freedoms have never come about as a logical consequence of a free market, they have always had to be won through popular struggle.

Neither can the programme for such a popular and democratic struggle come from within the peasantry itself. In as much as all strata of the peasantry are petty commodity producers, they embody various contradictory combinations of labour and property. To that extent, then, they are incapable of evolving autonomously a consistent agrarian program, whether from the point of view of labour or of capital. A consistent program for the emancipation of the peasantry as part of the labouring masses can only come from that section of the labouring people - the working class - which is itself emancipated from private property in production. The peasantry is necessarily led by either the bourgeoisie or the working class. Without grasping this, it is not possible to counter the present bourgeoisie, by a struggle to reconstitute the peasant community from below.

FOOTNOTES

1. A recent article (Lofchie, 1985) attempts to sum up the debate, in the process giving detailed citations from the relevant literature. It too, however, remains trapped within the same narrow perspective.
2. This should not be confused with autonomy vis-a-vis the production process. No peasant household in a commodity economy can really be autonomous so far as the production process is concerned.
3. I carried out a comprehensive survey of all 92 households in Kitende in December, 1983. In Amwoma, three separate investigations were carried out in July of 1984; (a) comprehensive and extended house-to-house interviews of one complete Wang Tic (the village comprises 8 Wang Tic units of unequal strength) with 28 households; (b) structured interviews of 9 selected households of mainly the propertied peasant strata; and (c) comprehensive records of the property holdings of each tax-paying peasant at the county headquarters in Dokolo, and checked and revised on the basis of information gathered in the village.

On the basis of the above, I drew up classification tables for both the village as a whole and the Wang Tic. The results are shown in the table below:

	<u>Village</u>		<u>Wang Tic</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>%</u>
Capitalists	3	0.4	1	3.6
Rich Peasants	19	2.7	-	-
Middle Peasants	85	12.0	4	14.3
(Upper Middle)	(19)	(2.7)	(2)	(7.1)
(Average Middle)	(37)	(5.2)	(1)	(3.6)
(Lower Middle)	(29)	(4.1)	(1)	(3.6)
Poor Peasants	587	83.1	19	67.9
Land Labourers	12	1.7	4	

The difference between the two is accounted for primarily by the fact that this Wang Tic is the home of the largest of the 3 capitalists in

the village, thus over-representing capitalists and land labourers, and under-representing peasants, compared with the village as a whole. Grouping capitalist with rich peasants, and poor peasants with land labourers, gives an almost identical distribution for both this Wang Tic and the Village.

	<u>Village</u>		<u>Wang Tic</u>	
	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>%</u>
Capitalists/Rich Peasants	22	3.1%	1	3.6%
Middle Peasants	85	12.0%	4	14.3%
Poor Peasants/Land Labourers	599	84.8%	23	82.2%

4. Chango Machyo,, a conversation in October, 1984.

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