

# THE RHODESIAN JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS

The Quarterly Journal of the Rhodesian Economic Society

Editorial Board:

A. M. Hawkins (Editor), D. G. Clarke, J. A. C. Girdlestone, P. S. Harris,  
A. F. Hunt and M. L. Rule.

ARTICLES		Page
<i>Colonial Labour Policy and Rhodesia</i>	J. M. Mackenzie	1
<i>Settler Ideology and African Underdevelopment in Postwar Rhodesia</i>	D. G. Clarke	17
<i>Ten Popular Myths Concerning the Employment of Labour in Rhodesia</i>	P. S. Harris	39
<i>Devaluation and the Rhodesian Dollar — A Comment</i>	D. I. Ramsey	49
REVIEW		
<i>Domestic Workers in Rhodesia by Duncan Clarke</i>	reviewed by M. G. Whisson	53
<i>Commercial Banking in Rhodesia</i>	R. L. Cole	55

# THE RHODESIAN JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS

The Quarterly Journal of the Rhodesian Economic Society

Editorial Board:

A. M. Hawkins (Editor), D. G. Clarke, J. A. C. Girdlestone, P. S. Harris,  
A. F. Hunt and M. L. Rule.

ARTICLES		Page
<i>Colonial Labour Policy and Rhodesia</i>	J. M. Mackenzie	1
<i>Settler Ideology and African Underdevelopment in Postwar Rhodesia</i>	D. G. Clarke	17
<i>Ten Popular Myths Concerning the Employment of Labour in Rhodesia</i>	P. S. Harris	39
<i>Devaluation and the Rhodesian Dollar — A Comment</i>	D. I. Ramsey	49
REVIEW		
<i>Domestic Workers in Rhodesia by Duncan Clarke</i>	reviewed by M. G. Whisson	53
<i>Commercial Banking in Rhodesia</i>	R. L. Cole	55

## SETTLER IDEOLOGY AND AFRICAN UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN POSTWAR RHODESIA

D. G. CLARKE

A largely ignored aspect of underdevelopment in Rhodesia, which plays a crucial role in legitimating the dominance, policies and status of the ruling group in the economic structure, is the conception, construction and transformation of ideology. By ideology is meant what Plamenatz has called the 'sets of ideas or beliefs or attitudes characteristic of a group'.<sup>1</sup> The group whose ideology is being examined here is essentially, though not exclusively, the white community's whose ideas, beliefs about and attitudes towards black economic structures, enterprise and labour have created an ideology, sometimes unsophisticated and in other instances sophisticated, which has been readily expounded to 'explain' African underdevelopment in Rhodesian society.

It will be a thesis advanced here that these ideological tenets have been, and still are, common to most whites in Rhodesia, that they concern economic issues which are important to the white minority, and have served the functional purpose of legitimating privilege and providing an explanation for co-existent development and under-development in an increasingly class stratified socio-economic structure. It will also be argued that the ideology held by whites has in the main been a class ideology, *viz.*, it can be distinguished from the ideology of other classes in significant ways; and that, whilst essentially capitalist in origin, this ideology has important components in its make-up which derive from the specific historical and contemporary settler colonial situation. The contrived ideology has been a necessity to the governing class and has served (at times) various purposes. It has provided a part justification in formulating economic policies, for designing economic structures in the way in which they have been formed and maintaining various discriminatory institutional arrangements. The ideology has also provided a pseudo-authoritative rationalization of the *status quo* and attempts have been made to use these ideological tenets to provide a veneer of quasi-respectability for, in some cases, paternalist capitalism and, in other instances, for maintaining dependency and underdevelopment in various semi-feudal economic structures. An important aspect of this ideology has been its propensity to direct attention away from the institutional structure as a contributory cause of Rhodesian underdevelopment. In particular, this has manifested itself in various forms of racism in attempts to explain black poverty as a result of human-specific characteristics 'peculiar (unfortunately) to the African population'.

Once these ideological foundations are accepted — as they have been by most whites — a particular view of Rhodesian society is fostered in which under-development comes to be regarded as a result of factors outside the realm of social control and of basically non-materialist origin. In this regard, the 'religion of the market'—with discussion on the forces of supply and demand weighing heavily—conveniently provides the 'magic box' out of which 'casual' explanation is produced. Typically, little or no attention is given to the institutional structure within which these 'forces' must operate, or, if not thus ignored, the institutional framework is invested with the

seemingly ordained property of unchangeability; and thus the mystifying picture of the 'forces' of the market, wildly determining all in a vacuum, like the (almost) extra-terrestrial 'Invisible Hand' of a vulgarized Smithian economics, is perpetuated.

This particular 'market mentality' and the institutional structure it constructs, together with an ideology which suggests that the real causes of African underdevelopment are predominantly internal to the psyche, make-up, ways, behaviour, tradition and culture of *the* African, externalizes the origins of inequality from itself, on the one hand — by absolving itself of any responsibility for 'directing and structuring' the alignment of market forces — while, on the other hand, it attributes this causal responsibility almost entirely to the subjects of underdevelopment. From this philosophical standpoint, little can be done to alter what is conceived of as an original and endemic state of underdevelopment, which is (mysteriously) unrelated to development elsewhere in the economic structure. Gradualism, long-term evolution, luck and fortuitous circumstance become the watchwords of (hopefully) potential progress in this situation. Little can be done in the interim except wait.

It is the ideological fabric which makes up part of this embracing conceptual scheme that will be examined here, firstly in its more populist forms, as evidenced through various official, governmental and day-to-day statements taken variously from the 1940-72 period, and secondly, in the more professionalized (academic) constructs of some contemporary sociologists, economists and social scientists whose common views broadly suggest a 'cultural-theoretic' explanation of inequality, poverty and under-development in Rhodesia. This ideology will only be examined in respect of three major classes in black society — workers, peasants and black capitalists — though more encompassing views, or attitudes towards, and beliefs about *the* African are also relevant and will be incorporated.

### THE AFRICAN

The crudist form of racist ideology concerned *the* African — a simple stereotyped individual of easy persuasion, defective mental faculties and slothful indolence. As the Minister of Native Affairs — a man traditionally invested with the wisdom of *knowing* the African — put it in 1942, in giving a reason why the Compulsory (Native) Labour Act should be introduced and reliance should not be placed on the 'voluntary system' (allowing wages to rise and so attract labour supplies); 'the voluntary system is absolutely inadequate . . . one can well understand that that would be the case, because the native is essentially slow to make up his mind'.<sup>2</sup> In general terms, the African was regarded as being deficient in intelligence, this being rationalized by liberal critics of government into an argument claiming that 'we expect too much intelligence and understanding from the native'.<sup>3</sup> Parliamentarians were reminded regularly about this particular 'fault': 'we must not forget that the mind of the *local* African with a few exceptions is undeveloped, and I suggest for consideration that he needs a certain amount of direction such as a European child has to have'.<sup>4</sup> Hence this speaker's advocacy of the institution of a government sponsored Native Labour Supply Commission in 1946 to recruit *foreign* labour — after all, the locals just were not up to it. Also, it was recognized, some locals were more deficient than others: 'in addition to that, there are many natives who are certainly below the normal

intelligence and so on, and to them also (as to child labour) the minimum wage (should) not apply'.<sup>5</sup> The African was 'not as far advanced as the European'.<sup>6</sup> He had a low mentality, which in part accounted for his weakness of succumbing to 'all sorts of mischief'.<sup>7</sup> Agitators would arouse him, mislead him and spur him on, making trouble where none existed. For this reason, amongst others, African unionization could not be permitted in 1947 and a paternalist, more embracing, control system of Labour Boards was established to 'manage' *the* African worker's problems. This need for paternalist guidance was even recognized by solid white labourites who thought it proper to give 'sympathetic consideration to those of an inferior race'.<sup>8</sup> On top of this, the inferior African was really alike a wayward child: he needed guidance, supervision and above all discipline. This was convenient. The 'superior', skilled, more advanced whites were (luckily) in a position to provide this 'missing ingredient', though of course selective use would also be made of 'boss boys' to control workers by proxy where white manpower was limited or funds were scarce. This was all part of the white man's burden, a 'responsibility for the native (to) guide him justly and correctly as far as we can'.<sup>9</sup> To this end forced labour was regarded as 'in no way derogatory to that'.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, at least some saw this as guiding the African 'with a rope around his neck'.<sup>11</sup> Government spokesmen over-rode these chilling complaints through various appeals to the civilizing mission of colonial expansion: 'Possibly we have been sent here by Providence in an endeavour to uplift the black races in this part of the continent'.<sup>11</sup> The mission was also a *special* one because, after all, 'generally speaking the Mashona in this country is far inferior to the native in that part of Africa' (West Africa).<sup>12</sup> Better, then, to have compulsory rather than a voluntary labour system, because one could not get the 'boys' to do in 8 hours work which they were supposed to do in 12 hours between sunrise and sunset. This was 'quite impossible, especially on farms'.<sup>13</sup> With this particularly unfavourable labourer, specific injunctions were required to see that the job was done properly. They had to be told what to do. And, like children, the 'boys' (sometimes referred to as 'adult boys' or 'fully grown boys') needed guidance and constant supervision.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, this was to be 'good' for them: 'The effect of getting them out to work will I believe mean that later on they will come out voluntarily'.<sup>15</sup> Further, the Africans, or some of them, were eventually to see the benefit of forced labour: 'I would point out that a lot of the Africans conscripted under the Act will receive a tremendous benefit by virtue of the fact that they are conscripted'.<sup>16</sup> 'Loafers' would be weaned from their wasteful ways and the 'dignity of labour' would be inculcated into them — for the benefit of all and the satisfaction of the common good. In any event, they too were citizens of Empire and were not only expected to pay allegiance to it, but were willing to do so: 'I believe we are fortunate in the fact that the natives are loyal; they are prepared to give their loyal support to the Empire in her time of need'.<sup>17</sup>

### THE AFRICAN WORKER

Whilst general stereotyped views existed about *the* African, a whole separate but integrated ideology has grown up about *the* African worker. Whites *knew* that blacks were intellectually inferior, but that was not sufficient to explain why the African would not work — it only accounted for his inability to advance, to perform particular types of work, and to meet

specific occupational requirements.

Another theory was therefore required. It was found conveniently in the moral laxity of African society and in the general propensity for Africans to 'loaf'. Hence, there grew up the theory of the (African) loafer.

The moral backwardness of Africans was something deeply ingrained, perhaps unchangeable. Even economic progress would not raise or change their morals.<sup>19</sup> It was recognized that at root the labour supply shortage experienced continuously in various low-wage industries — particularly plantations — was somehow related to deep psychological propensities *within* the African himself: 'we will have to get right down and change the native himself before the (labour supply) problem will be solved.'<sup>19</sup> And this was the liberal hope. The rest implicitly accepted that really this was impossible, a daydream. Africans had come from a state of idleness. The mission of the liberal colonist was to rescue him from it: 'it is . . . not in the long term interests of our African brethren that they should be left in the state of idleness in which they are today.'<sup>20</sup> This was 1948. Even 58 years of colonization, urging, enticing, persuading and compulsory labour had not apparently fully worked. More was needed. But in the interim foreign labour—which somehow was more willing, indeed better—would be required. The first principle of 'native affairs must be to inculcate into the African the idea that labour is the lot of man and that only by labour can he improve his position and only by labour can he live'.<sup>21</sup> The African must not be encouraged 'to remain indolent and to live a happy-go-lucky life, no matter how pleasant it sounds, because ultimately it is fatal'.<sup>22</sup>

The theory of the loafer served a variety of purposes: it 'explained' the persistent labour shortage on farms and on mines; it provided a rationalization for importing 'boys' from outside the country; it attempted (not always successfully) to draw attention away from the wage structure and incentives for peasant labourers to seek employment; it provided the basis for influx control policy in the towns and for creating a labour supply mechanism for the plantation economy; it legitimated the idea that many Africans in urban areas were really 'vagrants'. The theory had, and indeed still has, various strands. All Africans had a strong propensity to loaf. Thus the Minister of Labour Social Welfare and Housing noted in 1959, whilst introducing the so-called non-racial Industrial Conciliation Bill, that 'The indigenous population had never had any real need, desire or interest for work'.<sup>23</sup> They had experienced a 'background of centuries of ignorance and indolence which blunted any incentive to economic betterment'.<sup>24</sup> Hence it was not surprising that there existed many loafers and 'won't works'. Work, after all, was only a recent phenomenon as far as the African was concerned: 'it is historically true that the native really did not get down to doing any work at all until he discarded his skins and put on clothes,' noted the Prime Minister in 1948.<sup>25</sup> Work was essentially a post-1890 phenomenon.

But not all would succumb to the various pressures to work or so gladly take up the numerous offers of employment that were available. Whilst such persons were in abundance, they created particular problems when they congregated in the *white* towns, causing trouble, 'living off their wits', sponging on the 'honest' Africans and indulging in and promoting all sorts of vices. Indeed, the loafers were often blamed for fomenting the 'General Strike' of 1948. The solution was (relatively) simple: 'I feel that the Govern-

ment should at this time try to clear out some of the loafers from the towns. It would not only in a small measure alleviate the acute (labour) shortage in the outside districts, but it would help to avoid some of those unpleasant situations which develop from time to time.'<sup>26</sup> In the mid-1940's the farm 'labour shortage' was worrying both farmers and government. The Compulsory Labour Act had been repealed since it had been a war measure and its justification had fallen away. New labour supply mechanisms were needed. Policy changes also required a new theoretical background perspective and justification. The theory of the (urban) loafer was convenient for this purpose. In 1948 a motion on the labour shortage was introduced into the House of Assembly calling for immediate action by government to rigidly enforce all existing relevant laws in order 'to remove unemployed natives from urban areas'.<sup>27</sup> The motion was put and agreed to. It was claimed that there were several thousand loafers in Salisbury alone, itself evidence of the Africans (by now) well known love of leisure and disinclination to work. Housing controls, pass laws, police surveillance and other measures were suggested to deal with the problem. The liberal perspective was that 'the loafers in the big cities especially should be put away'.<sup>28</sup> The more reactionary viewpoint added another twist to the (popular) theory of the loafer: 'If we are going to enforce laws to remove these (loafers) from the towns, the fact that they are sent back into the country will not change their habits.'<sup>29</sup> In short, once a loafer, always a loafer: 'If a native is a loafer in town he will be a loafer for ever.'<sup>30</sup> Part of the problem was seen to be the ease with which the loafers could loaf: 'It is far too easy for loafers to loaf.'<sup>31</sup> In more recent times the 'loafer' has been transformed into the 'vagrant'. However, the concept has remained the same. Only more sophisticated language has been substituted and a slightly more intellectually presentable case has been propounded for why the 'vagrants' ought to be removed from the urban areas. As a result, the Vagrancy Act of 1960 has been applied, along with other controls, and has been extended in scope and application in the 1973 amendment which widened the definition of a vagrant considerably.

A more sophisticated variant of the loafer has been the theory of the black 'target worker' which explains African labour supply responsiveness in terms of a 'limited wants' thesis which argues that Africans only seek jobs for the purpose of securing specific amounts of income, sufficient to cover the costs of particular items or needs. Once this wage or income is obtained, the target becomes satisfied and the worker withdraws from the labour market. This theory is closely linked to, indeed it is part of, the theory of the backward bending supply curve of effort which it was argued applied to *the African*: 'In fact, generally, if you increase the natives wages you get less work'.<sup>32</sup> Optimal labour policy therefore ought to be a low-wage policy, if only to save the African from his own irresponsibility: 'I fear that any increase in native wages will mean that there will be more gambling and more native beer drinking unless there is more control over the native than we have today'.<sup>33</sup> Low wages suitably laced with widespread control was the panacea for development. Moreover, it was a particularly coherent little theory. The Africans had few wants or needs. These could be too easily satisfied if wages rose. Keep wages down and ensure that labour supplies are maximized. Some settlers had even calibrated the relationship between increased wages and the ensuing fall off in effort: 'If you pay (the) native double the wages he is accustomed to now he will just work 50 per cent

less than he does now.’<sup>34</sup> The reason for this, in part, lay in African arrogance: ‘invariably it means that by increasing native wages he does less work because he thinks he is indispensable.’<sup>35</sup> Extra wages would be disastrous because ‘the natives are great gamblers and many (spent) practically all their wages in gambling.’<sup>36</sup> It was conveniently overlooked that this was inconsistent with the pure theory of the target worker, except insofar as the target was set by the desire to gamble a certain sum of money. Also, because the employers (generally) were thought to provide for all basic needs, the justification for wage increases simply fell away. ‘Rations’ were provided, accommodation made available and the cash wage was ‘pocket money’. At the end of the month the cash wage was ‘clear as all other expenses are paid, bar the clothes he wants to buy, by his employer’.<sup>37</sup> Extra wages would simply be squandered. Indeed, the argument went, wages really did not matter: ‘The experience of many farmers is that it does not matter very much the rate of wage as long as the native is fed, housed and treated like a human being.’<sup>38</sup> Equitable treatment would be a sufficient recompense for arduous labour because ‘you will find he is not so interested in the wages he (receives)’.<sup>39</sup> Even if extra wages were not spent on drinking, gambling and having a jolly good leisurely time, ‘the native is a most wasteful individual. (Even if) he buys a blanket he will not look after it’.<sup>40</sup> Better to save him from his folly. Indeed, remarked one farmer, with regard to housing, ‘I find my natives are perfectly satisfied with a well-built kaffir hut’.<sup>41</sup> As regards food, ‘many natives like a good feed rather than an increase in wages’.<sup>42</sup> Hence, continuation of the ‘rations’ system, employer controlled housing and pocket-money-wage-policies would be adequate. There was no need to undermine these semi-feudal, long standing labour policies.

Another variant of the theory of the loafer concerned the reluctance of *indigenous* Africans to take work on plantations. Various explanations—other than those relating to the inadequate wage policy of the plantation economy — were offered for this. Local Africans were just ‘unwilling’ to do farm work, to get their hands dirty, even though, strangely enough, similar tasks would be performed by these same ‘loafers’ in the peasant economy. This was of course overlooked and instead employers cultivated the myth of the well-looked-after-farm-boy: ‘on the farms the natives get everything. And the money they get is completely free from all expenditure for themselves except of course luxuries and their annual hut tax.’<sup>43</sup> Some believed natives would not work outside. Others blamed the labour shortage on education, agitators, and the old fall-back, the (local) African’s *natural* reluctance to do farm work.

Proposed solutions to this crisis in labour supplies varied: compulsory, forced labour was introduced, despite objections from a few ardent white laborites about tyranny, exploitation and slavery;<sup>44</sup> a foreign contract labour system was begun; migrant labour agreements were entered into at governmental level; one proposal suggested setting up a central labour agency to handle all labour contracts, to pay all Africans the same wage in order ‘to eliminate competition for labour by employers increasing wages’;<sup>45</sup> suggestions were mooted to increase the supply of females into domestic work, so releasing males for the rest of the employer needs; farmers ‘offered to finance the capital outlays to recruit up to 2 000 “boys” from Nyasaland provided the financiers received 50 per cent of the labour supply’;<sup>46</sup> one bizarre proposal was ‘to start establishing at once native peasants on the land, breeding

up their families to be agricultural workers' — and this from a member of the Rhodesian Native Labour Supply Commission;<sup>47</sup> loafers were to be ferreted out of their urban hiding-places, despite the fact that a 1946 study in Salisbury showed that the loafer 'element' was a gross exaggeration because of 10 921 Africans examined only 176 were not on their 'lawful business';<sup>48</sup> it was suggested that the period of duration of validity of the urban pass be reduced, so enabling a quicker turnaround of Africans towards plantation employment; a slogan was suggested, to be given wide publicity in order to encourage the dis-hoarding of labour, which said: 'Are the boys you employ really necessary?';<sup>49</sup> farmers were encouraged to 'arrange some scheme of co-operation by sending their boys over to do a spot of work for a neighbour for a day or two';<sup>50</sup> Africans who owed tax but had left the colony, it was suggested, should be given dispensation from liability;<sup>51</sup> and a motion in Parliament to introduce minimum wages, predictably, was defeated, not to reappear again for 25 years; the name of the Labour Supply agency set up by government was cited as the Labour Supply *Commission* and not *Bureau* following its predecessor (Rhodesian Native Labour Bureau 1903-33) 'because the word "bureau" is so offensive to the natives'.<sup>52</sup>

The ideology concerning African workers, cultivated by settlers and government alike, satisfied advocates of the *status quo* about the wisdom of their policies, the correctness of the economic structures so established, as well as their general benevolence. Africans had different needs from Europeans, and the latter *knew* these best. The ethos of the 'civilizing mission' of bringing labour to the indolent African transformed itself into providing the 'guiding hand', exercising 'trusteeship', and, more recently, into 'responsible decision-taking' and providing the skills and 'know-how' for 'modernization'. Whilst some ideologists were conscious of their role, some appear as having been blinded to this prospect as, for example, the 'liberal' Minister of Labour in the late 1950's who, along with others, continued to speak of the Masters and Servants Act as essentially 'non-racial'.<sup>53</sup> Nonetheless, the ideology that had been built up over decades did not remain static. It changed and adapted itself to new circumstances and economic demands. Thus, following strikes and labour unrest in the late 1940's and political agitation in the 1950's, it was deemed desirable to incorporate Africans in industry under the Industrial Conciliation Act. A new ideological shift became necessary. Not *all* Africans now were irresponsible or unfit for unionism. Some were; but, to avoid them falling prey to agitators, controls were kept and steadily applied so that the nascent African unionist movement would always be manageable and under control.

### THE AFRICAN PEASANT

Whilst much of the ideology concerning Africans has been about workers, various views about peasants have also held strong sway and have been important in providing the ideological underpinnings of policies *towards* 'African' agriculture, policies which over the decades have resulted in the (relative) underdevelopment of the peasant economy and its displacement as capitalist penetration has increased. The cruder ideologies about the peasantry basically claimed that the peasants experienced an easy, lazy life, a life of few worries and general indolence. The peasant economy has been regarded as a wasting asset, inhabited by a privileged and pampered section of the society: 'natives are able at this moment (1942) to live at their kraals

on land that is reserved for them free of charge.<sup>54</sup> They too were essentially 'loafers' and had lots of spare time: 'The native could very well do three times as much work without suffering any hardship at all.'<sup>55</sup> It was even believed possible to forcibly withdraw peasant labour supplies from the peasant economy with such a resource re-allocation having no effect on peasant welfare: 'I do not believe that the calling up of boys during those periods (during the reaping period) would have any real effect on production in their own reserves.'<sup>56</sup> At this time, and late into the 1960's, officials cultivated the view that their existed widespread disguised unemployment in peasant agriculture. Peasants would be better off at *real* work — in mines and on the plantations, especially. They were also a political threat, of a type: 'We are allowing them to live in a communistic state and they will be ripe for the seeds of the very doctrine we do not want them to espouse.'<sup>57</sup> If only the peasants could be turned into capitalists, with individual ownership of land and property. In the light of more recent, post-1965 community development policies, emphasizing community ownership and decision, the turnaround in perspective has been almost complete, though in recent times this has been necessary to establish a low-cost social security policy for the peripheral groups in rural society. Nonetheless, in the 1940's, peasant structures needed to be done away with, at least in so far as they hindered the free flow of labour supplies. Various myths were cultivated to provide justification for this: 'In his life in the reserve there is a minimum of responsibility.'<sup>58</sup> The peasant male particularly, the labour 'unit' in demand in the capitalist sector, had a life of luxury and ease which he ought to be rescued from: 'They have lived in their kraals and the women have done the work when they have got above the juvenile stage, and actually it will not at all be a bad thing for those natives to be turned out to work for a period'.<sup>59</sup> The rural life of the African, so long idyllic and blissful, could not last in the face of advancement: 'the African cannot expect to go on much longer living in the reserves. It is not in his interests to do so.'<sup>60</sup> Peasants ought to be proletarianized, for their own good: 'to leave him there and to encourage him to stay there is inimical to his own interests.'<sup>61</sup>

Not only were the peasantry dominated by the centre but their status in the periphery-centre situation was like that of a child-parent relationship. The creation of labour supplies was thus regarded as an essential part of a maturation process. In order to legitimate this process, and provide a justification for not developing the peasant economy, a theory had to be created. This theory had a number of tenets, many of which still pertain in the 1970's and are applied not only to peasants, but also to African workers in the rural and urban sectors. This theory rested upon notions of a backward bending supply curve of effort in respect of price incentives to peasant producers; on the 'irrationality' of peasant asset-holding policies in respect of cattle, the principal form of stock-holding; and the 'unwillingness' of peasants to seek wage employment on the farms and mines. Belief in these tenets implied various optimal development strategies: if peasant responsiveness was price-neutral, various forms of 'forced' labour were better than price policies to bring about an increase in output or effort; irrational cattle-holding policies could only really be altered through *compulsory* de-stocking which would therefore be in the peasants' *own* interest; and foreign labour should be imported to overcome 'labour shortages' created by the indolence of unwilling indigenous peasants. Above all, the true believers

judged peasant economic policy by impossible standards, and within the structures of their own creation, ignoring the important differences between the peasantry and the capitalist centre. This meant penalizing peasants for 'perceived' differential performance in a system which was designed to displace the peasant mode of production and induce a proletarianization process. Denied the means to achieve economic ends, the peasantry were castigated for not being able to meet capitalist desires, objectives and levels of development. The ideology was well expressed in the Second Report of the Development Co-ordinating Commission in 1949: 'Sudden and substantial raising of price, even of one commodity, may be making it easier to win a subsistence from the land, induce less instead of greater effort. Risk of this is especially great where the Native population has wide freedom to ensure subsistence by various combinations of wage employment and working (or half working) its own land.'<sup>62</sup> Yet even the records of Chief Native Commissioners in the 1940's provided the data to undermine this rationalization. Thus after the 1949 devaluation, which led to an increase in maize prices, the following was reported: 'With the rise in maize prices following devaluation there was a sharp rise in the amount marketed and the figure rose from 388 726 bags in 1949 to 791 488 in 1950 . . . It is quite obvious that the price incentive has stimulated maize production.'<sup>63</sup> Yet, when producer levies were introduced for Africans around the same time, the disincentive effects were *not* considered to be powerful enough to cause a revision of the policy of taxing peasant production.

It was in respect of the 'irrationality' of peasant asset holding policy—the 'the Africans inherent love of and attachment to cattle'—that the ideology of Rhodesian development policy was, and still is, strongest.<sup>64</sup> In 1944 the Production and Trade Commission expressed the conventional ideology: 'Natives rarely follow economic principles in raising cattle, being content to sell a beast only when they need some money.'<sup>65</sup> Even in this statement, however, can be found part of the answer to the Commission's problem, *viz.*, that cattle, as wealth or assets, perform an important security function in a low-income society which tends to only release or liquidate these assets in time of need. The rising price of *lobola*, in terms of cattle, also raised fears in the Commission's eyes: it would reduce marketed supplies, contribute to over-stocking and eventually lead to land deterioration. The Commission's recommendations, aiming at the limitation of the size of each family's herds and limitation or price control on the value of *lobola* contracts, struck at the very heart of peasant opportunities for capital accumulation and investment in peasant production. Destocking policies were opposed by peasants for this very reason, especially since cattle, which are in the nature of a producer good, yield future incomes and assets beyond their immediate current output.<sup>66</sup> In practice, of course, peasants were responsive to cattle prices *as well as* the effects of seasonality on the returns from grain production. Thus the Chief Native Commissioner had to report in 1942 that 'The number (of cattle) sold to Europeans represents an increase of 19 407, and in view of the fact that prices were generally somewhat higher, would seem to refute to some extent the argument held in some quarters that in years of enhanced prices the Native owner sells fewer cattle.'<sup>67</sup> Indeed, the importance of the mix of price and seasonality in influencing asset sales patterns was strongly brought out in the Chief Native Commissioner's report for 1943: 'Natives were freely selling at the current prices, and this, notwithstanding the fact that owing

to the shortage of trade goods and the inadequacy of kraal food supplies, there is little incentive at the present time for an owner to turn his cattle into cash.<sup>68</sup> The comprehension of the peasant's economic problem—income maximization within a context of security maximization, i.e., a *weighted* mix of economic objectives — was entirely outside the mind of policymakers, even though on occasions this relationship was recognized.<sup>69</sup> Administrators generally ignored the context within which peasant production, marketing and survival had to occur.<sup>70</sup> The holding of assets in the form of cattle was necessary for optimization of peasant output from available factor inputs. It was not a mystical policy pursued for love, passion or anything else.<sup>71</sup> Pecuniary considerations in the long run played the dominant role. Cattle were important as a form of draught power for ploughing; they provided natural fertilization for crops; they were a low-cost source of meat-supplies; they performed an asset function as a store of value; in one sense they were also an insurance against inflation; and as a producer good, not simply a capital good, cattle were a valuable and lucrative investment. These factors were typically overlooked in the conventional wisdom and invalid comparisons, made between the marketed stock output of European and African agriculture, continued to perform the legitimating role of a policy designed to develop the former and not the latter. The myth of the gross inefficiency of the African peasant persisted.<sup>72</sup>

Ideological perfections of peasant economic abilities and behaviour have not changed much throughout the 1940-70 period, though the *style* of approach to the 'management' of the peasant problem did. **Inefficiency and laziness** was one such theme: 'Early evidence suggested and later evidence fully confirmed that irresponsibility and undiscipline were prevalent among Natives. For reasons which will be given later, practical measures to remove or diminish these undesirable features became a major issue of our inquiry.'<sup>73</sup> The Chief Native Commissioner's report of 1961 spoke of 'a mass apathy or cultural resistance'.<sup>74</sup> In more recent times this has been further legitimized by the 'professionalization' of cultural theoretic interpretations of peasant underdevelopment.<sup>75</sup> Danckwerts, for instance, has argued the immutability of peasant culture to change and enable people living in it to acquire and effectively utilize modern technology.<sup>76</sup> The culturalist case is also used in genetic terms, by influential decision-makers such as the Minister of Finance who in 1968 argued as follows: 'Hereditary characteristics of the rural African—and here I must generalize because there are always exceptions to the rule—intertia, a high leisure preference and a degree of want that is easily satisfied, are characteristics which can only inhibit efforts made to increase productivity.'<sup>77</sup> Peasant underdevelopment was also thought to be causally connected to 'a record of apathy amongst the tribesmen'.<sup>78</sup> Peasants had limited wants it was believed because 'the degree of felt need in the rural African (was) far lower than in more civilized peoples'.<sup>79</sup> This cultural dualistic model of underdevelopment, with all its ideological trappings, found fertile soil in colonial Rhodesia and its underlying psychology has a long history in Rhodesia which has changed little in substance, though perhaps in rhetoric over the 1940-70 period.<sup>80</sup> It imbued in administrators, the class of rural whites most directly in contact with the peasantry, a sense of satisfaction with their efforts and even, as late as 1971, the Secretary for Internal Affairs could report, to his apparent satisfaction and without fear, at least as he saw it, of being contradicted by the historical record: 'A final word of

warning to those who continually shout that we must develop the tribal areas. I have heard this story for over forty years and have seen elsewhere the nugatory results of heeding these theorists who have persuaded various governments to pour millions into the bottomless African pit.'<sup>61</sup> The fact of peasant poverty, however, could not be dismissed in reality as it had been in theory. A sufficiently powerful theory was needed to replace the obvious vision of reality — and so the myth of the content, but poor, peasant was assiduously cultivated. African peasants were stereotyped as true 'loyalists' and, in the days of pre-independent settler colonialism, were deemed to have a primary interest in even the royal trappings of Empire. Thus in 1947 the Chief Native Commissioner reported that 'The chief event of the year was the visit of Their Majesties the King and the Queen'.<sup>62</sup> The whole African populace are reported to have been highly appreciative of the 'personal contact with the Royal party throughout the tour'.<sup>63</sup> Only later in the same report it is recorded that the second major event of the year 'was the unprecedented drought'.<sup>64</sup> Not only were peasants intensely loyalist, royalist and cheerful in the eye of administrators.<sup>65</sup> They were also 'non-political' in inclination and did not take any interest in active politics either during the war period or in the period of Federalization of the economies of Nyasaland with Southern and Northern Rhodesia.<sup>66</sup> Contented with their lot, African peasants were perceived of as essentially 'happy' even — as some have claimed — the 'happiest Africans in the world'.<sup>67</sup> In this fashion, an ideology for under-development contributed to the development of Rhodesian ideology.

#### THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF POPULIST IDEOLOGY

The foregoing has dealt with general views of development ideology in Rhodesia. As important are the more 'professional' perspectives, particularly academic theories, which express elements of these populist views in a more coherent fashion. Academic views may legitimate the more popular ideological tenets, lend respectability and authority and even provide a dynamic element insofar as the academic theses lead popular opinion in certain directions.

In this section, the views of a cultural-theoretic school will be examined, their model contrasted with the foregoing populist ideology, and some criticisms offered concerning the cultural-theoretic interpretation of under-development in Rhodesia.

The 'cultural-theoretic' model is here used as a generic term to refer to a set of theses closely akin to the famous Boeke theory of cultural dualism.<sup>68</sup> This latter theory sought to explain the existence and process of dualistic underdevelopment in (Eastern) society as a function of attitudinal and behavioral patterns which *inter alia* characterized peasant economies. These are typified by the 'limited wants' thesis (i.e., the backward bending supply curve of effort), and absence of risk-taking and capitalistic enterprise, low aspirations and limited time-horizons, a lack of organizational competence and technological backwardness. The essence of these theses, taken together in Boeke's dualistic framework, was that cultural perspectives determined economic advancement. The latter condition would thus have to await cultural change, *viz.*, attitudes, behavioural patterns and culture generally were responsible for (dualistic) underdevelopment. Much depends on what is meant by culture. This analysis will treat 'cultural factors' as a

rubric which refers to what M. J. Herskovits and W. R. Bascorn have called 'the way of life of a people . . . their traditional behaviour, in a broad sense, including their ideas, acts and artefacts'.<sup>89</sup> It is the essence of this definition, as Patel has pointed out, that culture is learned; and what has been learned can be modified through further learning processes.<sup>90</sup>

The 'cultural-theoretic' model has been applied to underdevelopment in Rhodesia by a number of writers who have sought to explain the differential economic position of Black and White in Rhodesia in strong culturalist terms. Reader, for instance, has argued that 'Europeans do not acquire their occupational expertise so much from their formal education as from the general cultural milieu in which they are reared. Not only are they exposed to western technology from the earliest possible moment, but they grow up in an atmosphere of a profit-maximising, production-oriented, monetary culture'.<sup>91</sup> In short, they are born capitalists. Whites, it is argued, acquire their skills from birth and almost 'unconsciously from growing up in a European environment'.<sup>92</sup>

Reader typologises African and European cultural values using polar types to represent each.<sup>93</sup> Africans, it is suggested, have an agricultural time-sense oriented to the slow rhythm of the seasons; they use simple hand technologies and lack a quality sense; communal attitudes to property are strongly held and services are rendered without expectation of immediate return; Africans have personalized relationships in the main, primarily in the kinship and not the economic field; communal action is the norm, so discouraging personal initiative which is regarded as abnormal; African loyalty and morality only operates within the social group and all outsiders may be exploited or disregarded; Africans appeal to supernatural causation in all situations which are not under cultural control; they are collectively accountable and refer back all their reports to their kinsmen or senior spokesmen; also, should they operate outside the traditional context, there is a tendency to over-individualisation, or anticipatory exploitation, allowing one to legitimately take for oneself all that previously had to be shared in a communal context. The parallels between these views and populist ideology in the 1940's-1960's as well as in contemporary times is sufficiently clear as not to require detailed comments.

The contrast drawn between the African cultural type and the European cultural type is striking. The latter group has an industrial time-sense and treats time as an accountable commodity; theirs is a machine technology and they have high quality finish expectations; individualistic and exclusive rights over property and services are guarded by severe and enforceable legal sanctions; predominantly impersonal relations occur in a sophisticated economic system; Europeans also possess mental flexibility and personal problem solving is accentuated; their morality is impartial and their dealings are honest, especially in professional matters; they adopt a scientific and empirical approach in all matters; Europeans accept personal responsibility in law for their own actions; finally, they have a sense of compromise or realization with experience that social contract prevails in which all may have some if none takes all.

Two other proponents of the 'cultural-theoretic' model in Rhodesia are Danckwerts and Sadie.<sup>94</sup> The former has attempted to explain the competitive weaknesses of the peasant economy whilst the latter has argued a culturalist

interpretation of the weaknesses of black capitalism. The Danckwerts arguments have also been applied to the category of high level manpower in the Rhodesian labour market in a recent study on Black graduate manpower supply and demand.<sup>95</sup> (I shall refer to Danckwerts' study on the peasant economy as Danckwerts I and the latter theses as Danckwerts II.)

In Danckwerts I it is argued that 'economic development depends on technological development and cannot be achieved without it'.<sup>96</sup> And the rate of technological development, according to Danckwerts, depends upon 'the *willingness* and *ability* of the population to sustain technological advance'.<sup>95</sup> Technological progress is therefore socially determined. It is not a function of technological diffusion from the centre of the periphery. Rather, technology is seen as being 'culture-bound', both in origin and utilization. Thus Danckwerts asserts that African culture 'lacks the scientific and empirical approach on which modern production is based'.<sup>99</sup> Africans, it is argued, are 'ill equipped to assess the relationship of cause and effect';<sup>100</sup> and, instead, seek explanation in terms of a complex 'system of beliefs'.<sup>101</sup> These traditional beliefs are woven into 'the whole fabric of tribal culture . . . (which) means that members of such societies may be unable to increase their scientific competence simply because they cannot discard the shackles of their traditional beliefs'.<sup>102</sup> The Danckwerts I thesis may be summed up briefly: African culture is non-scientific; scientific rationality is a pre-requisite of technological advancement; technological progress determines economic development. This 'vicious circle' ensures underdevelopment. Hence it is not surprising that the tenor of Danckwerts' arguments confirm Boeke's statement that 'We shall have to accept dualism as an irretrievable fact'.<sup>103</sup>

In Danckwerts II culturalist assumptions are extended to the labour market for graduate manpower in an attempt to explain the differential distribution of Black and White graduates in the occupational structure. In general, Danckwerts discounts discrimination as an adequate explanation of differential performance in the graduate labour market. Employer behaviour, Danckwerts argues, 'may be a reasoned differentiation based on assessments of the chances of African graduates' ability to make a success in the type of work associated with graduates'.<sup>104</sup> Ignoring the question begged by the distinction drawn between 'discrimination' and 'reasoned differentiation', Danckwerts applies culturalist assumptions and extrapolations to explain differential racial competitiveness between Black and White graduates. Danckwerts II is wholly coterminous with Reader's arguments about the economic determinacy of cultural differences.<sup>105</sup> In any event, Reader's theses are closely related to Danckwerts I, and the latter's theoretical position is somewhat more polarized towards the less qualified type of 'cultural theoretic' model. Most of the arguments put forward in Danckwerts I are given a more articulate airing by Reader. However, similar views and assumptions pervade both analyses. Both are solidly ground in the Boeke tradition of socio-cultural dualistic analysis.

In Sadie it is argued that 'economic development is fundamentally a function of the religious, social and cultural values of a society and the psychological traits of its members, which together constitute a way of life'.<sup>106</sup> Sadie offers as a datum the thesis that a 'study of the Bantu peoples of Africa reveals the absence at this stage of most of those elements which are conclusive to economic development as an endogenous process'.<sup>107</sup> In par-

ticular, Sadie believes African culture to be antinimous to the development of entrepreneurship and in consequence he recommends that Rhodesia relies for this factor input 'upon an adequate supply of European population'.<sup>108</sup> This argument forms a fundamental premise of Sadie's planning advice which advocated greater white immigration and a policy focus on generating employment opportunities outside the peasant sector. The rationale for this latter approach was also founded on culturalist assumptions: 'It appears to be much easier, in fact, to transform tribesmen from subsistence plottolders into efficient industrial labourers than into productive farmers'.<sup>109</sup> Put another way, the proletarianization of the African peasantry was deemed to be easier and preferable to attempts to develop the peasant economy. The significance of this choice will be discussed more fully in a later section.<sup>110</sup>

From the above brief synopses of the postulates of three principal proponents of the culturalist school, it is apparent that the authors believe their model to be applicable throughout the range of the Rhodesian economic structure, even though individual authors may have confined themselves to advocating the 'cultural theoretic' explanation in selected situations. It may be further argued that many of the premises of culturalist theorists are strongly held by white employers and also form part of the basis of official public policy. Indeed, it may be a close approximation to argue that 'cultural theoretic' interpretation of the economic impact of African culture represent the norm of white attitudes. As such it is the conventional wisdom of the Rhodesian oligarchy. The comments which follow are intended to apply in Rhodesia to the 'cultural theoretic' model in general.

#### A CRITIQUE OF THE CULTURAL-THEORETIC MODEL

There are a wide range of questions raised by the assumptions, framework, focus and character of empiricism employed in the application of the 'cultural theoretic' model to Rhodesia. Here only brief reference is made to some of the deficiencies of the model as an explanation of Rhodesian underdevelopment.

Firstly, there are serious definitional problems in the 'cultural-theoretic' model which some proponents have overlooked. In places it is not clear just what is implied by *culture* and whether or not it is a received socialization pattern or something deeper and more immutable. Danckwerts (I) regards cultural beliefs as being so rooted and 'irretrievably woven throughout the whole fabric of tribal culture'.<sup>111</sup> In this situation underdevelopment appears as an original state, and an aspect of the *status quo* that cannot readily be mitigated, because Africans may not be able to 'discard the shackles of their traditional beliefs'.<sup>112</sup> Sadie is less unequivocal but still regards the 'breaking of the fetters of tradition (as) a most difficult operation (which) may take a long time'.<sup>113</sup> From this premise follows Sadie's advocacy of economic development through the modern sector, or rather white society, 'from (whose) ranks emanates the spirit of enterprise which is the *fons et origo* of economic advancement and the generation of employment opportunities'.<sup>114</sup> Reader, by contrast, argues implicitly that culture is mutable, that disadvantages incurred by an individual from his cultural background, '*disqualifying him from competition in (a western industrial milieu) against Europeans of comparable formal education*',<sup>115</sup> can be counter-acted through appropriate educational inputs. But, as shall be argued below, Reader's arguments on this score invalidly attach what may be a rural peasant culture

to the individual (African) so competing against his (European) counterpart in industrial employment. In other words, the factors being compared are not the same and the difference in occupational position and expertise is causally attributed to the 'cultural factor'. The argument thereby assumes what has to be demonstrated.

Secondly, there is a tendency not to distinguish various *forms* and *sources* of discrimination and an attempt is made to define such discrimination in culturalist terms. The effect is to shift the focus of analysis and to obscure the relationships of cause and effect. For instance, in Danckwerts II a distinction is drawn between 'discrimination' and 'reasoned differentiation'. A reading of the context in which this distinction is drawn leads this observer to see no such distinction, except insofar as Danckwerts is legitimately making reference to the employer's response to a discriminatory environment in which discrimination arises from various sources, *viz.*, consumers, employees, government and unions. In positivist terms, the effect, *i.e.*, discrimination, is the same and only the *source* differs. It may be a critical observation to record, as Lester Thurow and Gary Becker have pointed out, but it is discrimination nonetheless.<sup>116</sup> Equally pertinent is the fact that discrimination may take various *forms*, *e.g.*, in wage structure, in internal labour markets, in hiring and firing policies, in investment policies, etc. For a full understanding of the *process* of discrimination in the context of underdevelopment, a broad approach is required and a consideration of the economic theory of discrimination and underdevelopment is of fundamental importance. In general, the culturalist school pay minimal attention, if any, to these theses and the crisis in their development model can largely be traced to this inadequacy. Thus, when Reader notes that 'the employer who decides to take the *cultural risk* and employ educated or trained Africans at senior and responsible levels'<sup>117</sup> has problems (*e.g.* the official requirements to establish separate toilet facilities, white consumer discrimination and white employee discrimination), the argument is really nothing to do with 'cultural risk' *per se*, whatever that may be. Rather, it is rational profit maximizing behaviour by employers within a discriminatory environment and the employer response is an expression of this discrimination. The latter, it is submitted, is a more adequate theoretical and empirical representation of reality than the mystification that is perpetrated by use of an inadequate and inappropriate framework.

Thirdly, in some culturalist theorizing there is an implicit assumption made that technology is 'culture-bound'. Certainly this is a strong assumption in Danckwerts I where the latter goes even further to argue that development is a function solely of the rate of technological advancement. Clearly, economists would regard this conception as far too narrow a production function to apply to underdeveloped countries. And whilst it may be accepted that technology is part of culture, it is also universal, transferable, adaptable and, in today's world, cannot be regarded as being restricted by cultural boundaries.<sup>118</sup> It is not altogether clear exactly the Reader assumption is on the universality or otherwise of technology, but in any event, even if the Reader typology of African-European cultural values assumed that technology could be diffused, the cultural theoretic model applied by the latter to the area of Black-White competition in the Rhodesian labour market implicitly assumes that the Black worker is bound by the cultural type and technological

capabilities of a stereotyped rural African peasantry.<sup>119</sup> This comparison, it is argued here, cannot be legitimately upheld: which brings this critique to a fourth observation.

A basic flaw can be noted in the application of the cultural-theoretical model as *applied* to competing groups in the market-place. As has been argued elsewhere,<sup>120</sup> the Reader typology may even be correct as a representation of the culture of African peasantry and of Europeans in a 'western industrial milieu'. The model is only useful, however, as a causal explanation of African underdevelopment, if certain conditions can be satisfied and demonstrated.

Firstly, the cultural typology must be representative and relevant to the two groups of competing workers. This note would submit that the Reader typology is fundamentally in error on this score when applied to the Rhodesian labour market.<sup>121</sup> The extreme polarity of a rural peasant cultural-type cannot be regarded as an adequate description of the cultural milieu of an urbanized, industrialized, unionized Black proletariat. Additionally, there is reason to suspect that the cultural values set down as applicable to 'Europeans' are also representative of a polarity *within* white society.

The second necessary condition pertains to the need to demonstrate a casual link between the cultural traits of, let us say, group X and that group's occupational *position*,<sup>122</sup> mobility, opportunity-cost and productivity, etc. It is one thing to note an *association* between two factors: it is quite another inference to record a *casual relationship* between them as well as to express certitude about the direction of that link. Casual relationships need to be theoretically as well as empirically demonstrated. At this point the cultural-theoretic model breaks down almost entirely. As Higgins has recorded in his critique of Boeke, the theory of cultural dualism looks 'in the wrong place for (an) *explanation* of dualism'.<sup>123</sup> There is adequate evidence of a similar shortcoming in the application of the cultural theoretic model to Rhodesia. A number of problems can be identified in this regard. For instance, many cultural traits are specified in such a fashion as to beg the question by assuming what has to be proven. What exactly is an 'agricultural time-sense'? And what degree of conceptual and empirical elasticity is required for analysts to accept that this is a typical trait of the Black worker who is competing directly with Whites? Even if it did exist as a demonstrable cultural trait of Black industrial labour, insofar as this group retains and maintains rural links and rural investments, is it not simply a case of incomplete proletarianization forced upon the labourer by the economic structure which pays his below poverty datum level wages and so requires him to retain two homesteads and seek ultimate security in the rural area?<sup>124</sup> Indeed, evidence from a number of sources records a rapid stabilization of the Black proletariat in Rhodesia.<sup>125</sup> Similarly, we are told by the cultural theorists that 'communal attitudes to property' confer a disadvantage on Blacks competing in a modern industrial environment. The representativeness and casual link of this hypothesis have not been demonstrated. And, indeed, the degree of income inequality that exists within the Black proletariat at least provides *a priori* evidence on the relative irrelevance of communal attitudes to competitive capacity in the labour market. Intra-family rural-urban income transfers cannot be taken in this regard as *proof* of communalist and non-individualistic behaviour. They are more appropriately regarded as long-term

welfare maximizing policies adopted by individual workers who must rely on rural links as a substitute for low wages and inadequate pension provisions in the urban economy. Finally, another weakness of the empirical approach of cultural-theoretic models is their tendency, at least when applied in Rhodesia, to be based on invalid comparisons. For instance, Danckwerts records that 'On the grounds of commonsense it seems reasonable to conclude that levels of income in each sector (Black peasant and White plantation economies respectively) are a reflection of different levels of technological attainment'.<sup>126</sup> In *part* this is true. But it is nowhere near a sufficient and holistic explanation of differences in the economic structures and income receipts of these two economy-types. Danckwerts' identification of this differential as a simple technological (and in his terms cultural) gap is fundamentally erroneous. It ignores land policies, land distribution, the spatial significance of the Land Tenure Act, the scale of production, the differential public sector investments in the two sectors, the structure of capital subsidies and fiscal incentives. Put simply, Danckwerts has not standardized the two sectors (factors) being compared and his results are biased accordingly. What is explained as a differential that is culturally determined can be far more adequately explained by reference to economic phenomena. This lack of empiricism is not confined to Danckwerts' model but may also be found in Sadie.<sup>127</sup>

Fifthly, without going into detail, some of the general propositions of the Boeke-type model applied to Rhodesia by Danckwerts, Sadie and Reader may be criticized for their theoretical weakness, in a similar fashion to the critique applied by Higgins to Boeke. The empirical data to support culturalist propositions in Rhodesian circumstances is also weak. Peasants in the Tribal Trust Lands do not, from all available evidence, have 'limited wants'. Their behaviour, as evidenced in migrancy and an appreciation of their opportunity-cost in plantation labour, the urban informal sector and in formal urban employment, is strongly representative of maximizing behaviour, albeit a mix between security and incomes.<sup>128</sup> Even historically, the thesis of the 'delayed response' of peasant society to the economic demands of capitalism has been shown to be of little substance by both economists and historians.<sup>129</sup> Sadie's speculations, for they are little more than this since they are not based on any relevant empirical inquiry, concerning the lack of entrepreneurial initiative and the cultural restraints on Black capitalism, do not accord with the facts of the situation. African business does function under restraint, but not simply under cultural restraint. More important structural factors account for the character of black business in Rhodesia, both in the formal and informal sectors.<sup>130</sup>

Sixthly, the most important deficiency of the cultural-theoretic model is its failure to appropriately specify the economy-type and mode of productions within which economic competition takes place. Cultural theorists, in recognizing that the Rhodesian economy is structured along the lines of capitalism, partly controlled and directed by an internal racial oligarchy, have failed to specify that the economy-type is an underdeveloped one subject to significant foreign investment interests, particularly from South African multi-national corporations. By concentrating on 'cultural factors', the model attempts to explain away two important development processes that characterize Rhodesian economic experience: the pursuit of discrimination as a means to ends set and dictated by the centre; and, the historical process of underdevelopment in the peasant economy. The 'cultural theoretic' model

is not able to adequately address itself to these two crucial historical processes and therefore fails as a critical model of underdevelopment applicable to Rhodesia. The cultural theoretic model is not only ahistorical in its approach but also has little reference to economic structure and the mode and objectives of production and distribution in Rhodesia. It glosses over the nature of decision-taking within the economy in the setting of macro-economic relationships and opportunities and in designing a framework and policy within which the (implicit) planning objectives of policy-makers are pursued. The cultural-theoretical model has ignored the real determinants of underdevelopment, growth and income distribution in Rhodesia.

In labour markets, it ignores government policy; the character of industrial relations; the structure of legislation; the procedures and practices of collective bargaining; the function and nature of unionism; monopsony; the 'traditional' wage policies pursued in the plantation economy; and the price, incomes and distribution policies of the private and public sector.

In capital markets, the culturalists ignore the structure of the Land Tenure Act and the associated implications thereof; the monopolistic character of production; the dominance of white institutional influences; the collusive links between white capitalism and the white controlled government; the role of foreign capital in the primary sector and the structure of capital subsidies (implicit labour taxes) that underwrite large scale enterprises.

In respect of the peasant economy, culturalist theory has failed to explain and coherently analyse the process of underdevelopment of the peasant economy in Rhodesia. More specifically, it ignores the whole history of land alienation; differential product pricing by (racial) producer group; differential public sector investment policies towards the peasant economy and the centre's sponsorship of a competitive plantation economic system; the distribution of drought-aid disbursements; the character of research and development in the centre to the detriment of the welfare of the periphery; the effect of a regressive tax structure on peasant producers; and the detrimental effects of the contract and foreign labour system over the last 75 years in undermining the supply price of 'necessary' peasant labour exports to the centre. Additional points could be raised but it is argued that sufficient indications are given here to demonstrate the structural weakness of the cultural theoretic model.

A final observation may be made which is closely related to the above discussion. Whilst here it is being argued that economic factors are of significance in explaining underdevelopment, it is also worth raising the question of the factors which actually determine cultural type. In the Reader typology of cultural variation between 'Africans' and 'Europeans', a more accurate specification pertains to the categories 'peasant (rural African)' and 'high income group (urban white)'. This alternative classification throws into sharper relief the significance of economic factors in shaping culture-type and further undermines the relevance of the cultural theoretical model as a *causal* explanation of underdevelopment.

#### THE ORIGINS OF A THEORETICAL CRISIS

In development theory, the culturalist model has been largely rejected by the bulk of scholars.<sup>131</sup> Despite these theoretical developments and the strong trend in development economics to re-structure dualistic theory in

'non-culturalist' terms, at least since Lewis' seminal contribution in 1954,<sup>132</sup> as well as the gradual rejection of the *economic* model of dualism by a growing number of scholars, and in addition the substantial critique of classical dualism (a la Barber) as applied to Rhodesia,<sup>133</sup> the model persists in its appeal to some Rhodesian academics. However, the later group of analysts have consistently failed to respond to the empirical and theoretical critique against the model which they rely upon. Indeed, the real crisis in the cultural theoretic model is its divergence from observed reality and its increasing theoretical inadequacy.

The cultural-theoretic model in its professionalized form has a long (populist) history in Rhodesian ideology. The origins of its *crisis of inadequacy* stem from its failure to address itself to the significant variables in the situation and to ignore structural factors. Discrimination is ignored to the point of absurdity, yet it is clearly one of the most prominent features of Rhodesian social, political and economic life. The process of class formation and stratification in both black and white society is left unexplained in terms of culturalist theses. This theory is still in the realm of analyses of *the* African, with *the* European thrown in for good measure. No connectedness is made between poverty and affluence — they are assumed unrelated and are regarded as almost entirely determined by cultural factors, a 'magic box' of similar design to the 'market mentality' which ignores the institutional structure. Indeed, cultural theorists proceed *as if* society operated in an institutional vacuum. There is no role for government. Instead it is ignored, implicitly assuming that it has a neutralist impact on development and underdevelopment.

The real role served by the professionalization of ideology in abstract, theoretical terms must be sought in its function of legitimating the social order to which it relates. This is no more and no less true of culturalist theory in Rhodesia which has made, and is attempting to make, the cruder forms of populist ideology about black economic propensities more acceptable to the intellectual and the political elite.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>John Flamenatz, *Ideology*, Macmillan, 1970, p.16.

<sup>2</sup>Southern Rhodesia, (*Legislative Assembly Debates*), 1942, col.1447.

<sup>3</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1943, col.1599.

<sup>4</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col.241, *my italics*.

<sup>5</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1943, col.1378.

<sup>6</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1947, col.2217.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid.*, col.2220.

<sup>8</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1943, col. 1381.

<sup>9</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1942, col.1482.

<sup>10</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1942, col.1469.

<sup>12</sup>*ibid.*, col.1476.

<sup>13</sup>*ibid.*, col.1475.

<sup>14</sup>*ibid.*, col.1695.

<sup>15</sup>*ibid.*, col.1454.

<sup>16</sup>*ibid.*, col.1676.

<sup>17</sup>*ibid.*, col.1453.

<sup>18</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col.256.

<sup>19</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>*ibid.*, col.264.

<sup>21</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>*ibid.*, col.265.

<sup>23</sup>Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1959, col.1538.

<sup>24</sup>*ibid.*

- 25 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col.343.  
 26 *ibid.*, col.250.  
 27 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1946, col.1800.  
 28 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col. 260.  
 29 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1946, col.1805.  
 30 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col.254.  
 31 *ibid.*  
 32 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1943, col.1399.  
 33 *ibid.*  
 34 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1942, col.1703.  
 35 *ibid.*, col.1705.  
 36 *ibid.*  
 37 *ibid.*, col.1707  
 38 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1943, col.1591.  
 39 *ibid.*, col.1594.  
 40 *ibid.*, col.1593.  
 41 *ibid.*, col.1585.  
 42 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1946, col.1820.  
 43 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1942, col.1456'.  
 44 See here the speeches of Wing Commander Eastwood in the debates on Compulsory Labour legislation in 1942.  
 45 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col.244.  
 46 *ibid.*, col.252.  
 47 *ibid.*, col.254.  
 48 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1946, col.1833.  
 49 *ibid.*, col.1818.  
 50 *ibid.*, col.1819.  
 51 *ibid.*, col.1820.  
 52 *ibid.*, col.1946.  
 53 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1959, col.1545. An analysis of the Masters and Servants Act and its influence on the labour market can be found in D.G.Clark, *Domestic Workers in Rhodesia: The Economics of Masters and Servants*, Mambo Press, 1974.  
 54 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1942, col.1468.  
 55 *ibid.*, col.1463.  
 56 *ibid.*, col.1454.  
 57 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col.255.  
 58 *ibid.*, col.257.  
 59 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, col.1469.  
 60 Southern Rhodesia, *L.A.D.*, 1948, col.265.  
 61 *ibid.*  
 62 Southern Rhodesia, *Development Co-ordinating Committee*, 1949, p.9-10.  
 63 Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, The Chief Native Commissioner and the Director of Native Development for the Year 1956*, p.11, hereafter cited as *Report of the S.N.A., C.N.C. and D.N.D. for the Year (1956)*. See also Southern Rhodesia *Report of the Native Production and Trade Commission*, 1944, p.4, hereafter cited as *RNPTC*, 1944.  
 64 The term 'love of cattle' is taken from a statement made in *RNPTC*, 1944, p.29.  
 65 *ibid.*  
 66 There is also an obvious micro/macro conflict here which is often unrecognized by policy-makers. It is to the individual's advantage to keep his cattle, but may be to the community's collective disadvantage if he does so. Each individual will therefore oppose destocking of his stock. One cannot infer from this that the collectivity (of Africans) is "irrational".  
 67 *Report of the SNA, CNC and DND for the year 1942*, p.58.  
 68 *Report of the SNA, CNC and DND for the year 1943*, p.16.  
 69 See for example the *Report of the SNA, CNC and DND for the year 1951*, p.20.  
 70 Cf. M. Yudelman, *Africans on The Land*, 1964, points out the differences in factors influencing African and European stock output, p.189-190.  
 71 See A. J. B. Hughes, Present Western Concepts of Development and Customary Tribal Attitudes, Seminar on African Agriculture Development Marketing Committee, undated, mimeo.  
 72 See *Report of the SNA, CNC and the DND for the year 1956*, p.13, for statements on African farming inefficiency.  
 73 *R.N.P.T.C.*, 1944, p.10.  
 74 *Report of The SNA and CNC for the year 1961*, p.9.  
 75 It is not being argued here that this professionalization process has necessarily been concious.  
 76 J. P. Danckwerts, Technology and Economic Development of African Agriculture in Rhodesia, *Rhodesian Journal of Economics*, vol. 4, no. 4, December, 1970, p.27.  
 77 J. J. Wrathall, Developing The Tribal Trust Lands, *Rhodesian Journal of Economics*, vol. 2, no. 4, Dec., 1968, p.59.  
 78 *ibid.*  
 79 *ibid.*, p.64.  
 80 Compare present perspectives with those in *Report of the SNA, CNC and DND for the year 1948*, p.10.  
 81 See W. H. Nicolle, The Development of the Subsistence Sector in Rhodesia, *Rhodesian Journal of Economics*, vol. 5, no. 4, December, 1971, p.8.  
 82 *Report of the SNA, CNC and DND for the year 1947*, p.1.

<sup>83</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>84</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>85</sup>See *Report of the SNA, CNC and DND for the year 1943*, p.1.

<sup>86</sup>See *Report of the SNA, CNC and the DND for the year 1941*, p.2.

<sup>87</sup>See A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and White Elites in Rural Rhodesia*, Manchester University Press, 1973.

<sup>88</sup>J. H. Boeke, *Economics and Economic Policy of Dual Societies*, New York, 1953.

<sup>89</sup>Melville J. Herskovits and William R. Bascom, *Continuity and Change in African Cultures*, University of Chicago Press, 1959, 1968, p.1.

<sup>90</sup>Hasu H. Patel, Technology and Culture: Some Problems and Prospects for Africa, in Ali A. Mazrui and Hasu H. Patel (eds.), *Africa in World Affairs: The Next Thirty Years*, The Third Press; New York, 1973.

<sup>91</sup>D. H. Reader, African Education and The Rhodesian Employer: A Sociological Perspective, *Rhodesian Journal of Economics*, vol. 6, no. 2, June, 1972, p.2.

<sup>92</sup>*ibid.*, p.2-3.

<sup>93</sup>*ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>94</sup>J. P. Danckwerts, Technology and The Economic Development of African Agriculture in Rhodesia, *Rhodesian Journal of Economics*, vol. 4, no. 4, December, 1970, and Rhodesia, *Report by J. L. Sadie on Planning For The Economic Development of Rhodesia*, Government Printer, 1967.

<sup>95</sup>J. P. Danckwerts, *op. cit.* The findings of this report have not yet been published.

<sup>96</sup>*op. cit.*, p.20.

<sup>97</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>98</sup>*ibid.*, p.28. These are Danckwerts' italics.

<sup>99</sup>*ibid.*, p.27.

<sup>100</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>101</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>102</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>103</sup>cited in B. Higgins, *Economic Development*, Constable, second edition, 1968, p.229.

<sup>104</sup>*op. cit.*, Part II, p.15.

<sup>105</sup>*ibid.*, p.19.

<sup>106</sup>*op. cit.*, p.2.

<sup>107</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>108</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>109</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>110</sup>The historical processes relating to this phenomenon are well discussed in G. Arrighi, Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: The Proletarianization of The African Peasantry in Rhodesia, *Journal of Development Studies*, vol. 6 no. 3, April, 1970.

<sup>111</sup>*op. cit.*, p.27.

<sup>112</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>113</sup>*op. cit.*, p.2.

<sup>114</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>115</sup>*op. cit.*, p.3. The italics are Reader's.

<sup>116</sup>Lester C. Thurlow, *Poverty and Discrimination*, Brookings Studies in Social Economics, 1969, and Gary S. Becker, *The Economics of Discrimination*, Second Edition, University of Chicago Press, 1971.

<sup>117</sup>*op. cit.*, p.4. The italics are mine.

<sup>118</sup>These issues are discussed at length in Hasu H. Patel, *op. cit.*

<sup>119</sup>A detailed critique on these lines can be found in D. G. Clarke, Differential Racial Labour Competitiveness in Rhodesia: An Economic Critique of Cultural Theories, *Society*, vol. 3, July, 1972.

<sup>120</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>121</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>122</sup>It may be noted that Reader's phrase is 'occupational expertise' yet his thesis is really addressed to 'occupational structure'. The two are not the same.

<sup>123</sup>*op. cit.*, p.232. The italics are those of Higgins'.

<sup>124</sup>For further relevant data on Rhodesia see Arrighi, *op. cit.*, and also G. Arrighi, International Corporations, Labour Aristocracies, and Economic Development in Tropical Africa, in R. I. Rhodes (ed.) *Imperialism and Underdevelopment*, Monthly Review Press, London, 1970. Also P. S. Harris, A Closer Look at the Wages Gap, Address to Rhodesian National Affairs Association, 1973, (mimeo).

<sup>125</sup>This is evidenced in a variety of works. See G. Arrighi, *op. cit.*, and also W. J. Barber, *The Economy of British Central Africa*, O.U.P., 1961. Some recent data, pertaining to Rhodesia Railways personnel, is relevant. Out of a total Black labour force of 13 149 (as at 11th December, 1972) only 30 per cent had been employed by Rhodesia Railways for less than 10 years. Data provided by Rhodesia Railways Associated Workers, Union, 1973.

<sup>126</sup>*op. cit.*, p.29.

<sup>127</sup>It is worthwhile pointing out that Sadie's analysis contains no data to support his far-reaching assumptions relating to the entrepreneurial capacity of Blacks in Rhodesia. Sadie's inferences are based on a model contained as an appendix to his report. This appendix is based on the grossly erroneous 'n-achievement' theory advocated by David McClelland and South African data, little of which is in fact cited. For a critique of McClelland from the perspective of development economics see Sayre P. Schatz, *'N-achievement and Economic Growth: A Critique*, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1965.

<sup>128</sup>For an excellent theoretical analysis of this issue see M. Lipton, *The Theory of The Optimizing Peasant*, *Journal of Development Studies*, April, 1968.

<sup>129</sup>G. Arrighi, *op. cit.* For an analysis of this issue prior to colonial domination see N. M. B. Bhebe, *The Ndebele Trade in the Nineteenth Century*, Henderson Seminar No. 25, Department of History, University of Rhodesia, 1973, (mimeo).

<sup>130</sup>Data on the informal sector are not yet widely available. However, from survey data gathered recently

by the author, there is clear evidence of a nascent and vibrant urban petty capitalism at work in the informal sector. Indeed, far from Africans being ill-equipped for capitalistic enterprise, the data support the thesis that, where institutional restraints are less and where opportunities arise, black capitalism is flourishing. The author would disagree, however, with the Reader thesis that this might represent 'anticipatory exploitation'.

<sup>131</sup>P. T. Bauer, *Dissent on Development*, London, 1971.

<sup>132</sup>W. A. Lewis, *Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour*, *The Manchester School*, May, 1954.

<sup>133</sup>See G. Arrighi, *op. cit.*



This work is licensed under a  
Creative Commons  
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 License.

To view a copy of the license please see:  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This is a download from the BLDS Digital Library on OpenDocs  
<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>