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**STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND
MULTIPLE MODES OF SOCIAL
LIVELIHOOD IN NIGERIA**

by

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Preface

The bulk of the sprawling literature on the economic crisis and structural adjustment in the 1980s has been concerned primarily with technical analysis of the impact on macro-economic imbalances and efficiency in resource allocation. In recent years, some attempts have also been made to analyse the consequences of stabilization and adjustment policies for social welfare, poverty, employment and income distribution. So far there has been relatively little discussion of the impact of these policies at the micro and local levels. In particular, little research has been done on the reactions and livelihood strategies of different social groups, communities, households and individuals in response to sharp changes in macro and micro policies and reduction in state support for basic needs provisioning.

The UNRISD project on Crisis, Adjustment and Social Change is supporting field research by multidisciplinary teams on these issues in four countries: Chile, Jamaica, Nigeria and Zambia. Efforts are under way to extend the research to other countries in Africa and Latin America. The African component of the project is being co-ordinated by Yusuf Bangura and the Latin American by Cynthia Hewitt de Alcántara. The author of the present paper, Abdul Raufu Mustapha, is a member of the Nigerian team of researchers. He was educated at the universities of Ahmadu Bello and Oxford and is currently Lecturer in Political Science at Ahmadu Bello in Nigeria. He has written extensively on the political economy of crisis and structural adjustment in Nigeria.

Economic crisis and structural adjustment have intensified the informalization process in Africa. As incomes and social services decline and prospects for stable employment diminish, social groups are forced to develop complex strategies to sustain their livelihood systems. These often entail the use of flexible methods of work (as individuals straddle between several enterprises and activities), the reorganization of social networks and relationships, and the development of new rules for allocating household and community resources. The processes of change under way in most African countries do, indeed, challenge many of the existing frameworks for understanding the nature and dynamics of these societies.

Mustapha's paper analyses the various survival strategies that social groups in Nigeria have pursued in response to the changing macro-economic environment, following the sharp drop in oil revenues and the introduction of a structural adjustment programme in 1986. The paper also discusses the developmental value of some of the informal sector enterprises as well as their political implications.

Households of all social categories are engaged in multiple income-generating activities as opposed to the pre-crisis period when such activities were confined to the working and artisanal classes. But, as the paper points out, the types of informal activities

individuals and households engage in depend on their location in the economy and social structure, and the skills, assets and connections at their disposal.

Although multiple survival strategies were central to the early evolution of the Nigerian working class, the oil boom of the 1970s, which helped to institutionalize a "living wage", encouraged the development of a distinct and fairly stable working class identity. But this stable identity, as the paper argues, is being "deconstructed" by the current patterns of coping strategies. Whereas the pre-boom strategies of straddling between different jobs enhanced the workers' bargaining position in industry by containing the rigours of proletarianization, the new forms of straddling are said to intensify self exploitation as they are primarily concerned with basic survival.

Professional groups have also been badly hit by the crisis and adjustment measures. However, as the paper argues, unlike the desperate living conditions of working class households, the threat to survival is not that critical for professionals. The latter essentially seek to contain, and possibly reverse, the erosion of their middle class standards of living. They can draw on a wide range of financial and political resources to support their growing informal enterprises.

In understanding the coping strategies of the peasantry, the paper argues that the broad question of social class has to be linked with more specific and localized factors like ethnicity, history and cropping systems. For instance, whereas strategies of generating multiple sources of income represent a downward spiral in the accumulation process of the Yoruba peasantry, the reverse is the case for the grain-growing Hausa peasantry for whom the multiple modes logic has been a central aspect of the accumulation process.

Although many informal sector businesses are far from being marginal activities and could form the basis for renewed growth in the future, the paper warns against the glorification of informalization as there are several economic and socio-political factors which tend to render such activities counter-productive in the long run. Low wages may erode present levels of efficiency and productivity by undermining work standards and morale.

At the social level, multiple modes of livelihood are said to encourage increased individuation and personalization of some aspects of public life, breeding new forms of clientelism and corruption. Challenging some of the recent perspectives on the connections between economic liberalization and democracy, the paper concludes that the reality of political life under conditions of crisis and structural adjustment is the intensification of repression and the contraction of democratic political space, even though Nigeria's vibrant civil society will ultimately counteract these negative tendencies.

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Dharam Ghai
Director

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*Lately in Moscow one of the nastiest curses you
can hurl at a person is: "May you live on one salary!"*
(Remnick, 1990:18-19)

Introduction

Declining oil revenues from 1981, massive corruption and mismanagement of the economy, and an externally oriented import-substitution industrialization programme, all combined to plunge Nigeria into a severe economic crisis in the early 1980s. In October 1985, a 15-month national economic emergency was declared, to be followed in July 1986 by the adoption of a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). SAP policies in Nigeria include the abolition of the import licencing system, reduction in public expenditure, reordering capital expenditure, eliminating subsidies, especially on petroleum products, promoting exports, especially agricultural exports, abolishing agricultural commodity boards, reducing the volume of money supply, and deregulating interest rates. Of the greatest significance, however, was the managed-floatation of the *naira* under the Second Tier Foreign Exchange Market (SFEM), and the convergence of both foreign exchange windows into the Foreign Exchange Market (FEM); between 1986 and 1990, the *naira* was allowed to depreciate by 87 per cent relative to the dollar.

SAP has had fundamental consequences for Nigerian society, politics and economy. Nowhere are these consequences as profound as in the drastic fall in the living standards of those sections of the population dependent on fixed salaries. Equally affected are some sections of the rural population and urban artisanal groups. This erosion of living standards has spurred many households to seek additional income by engaging in multiple jobs. In this paper, the attempt is to examine the dynamics and possible implications of this intensified struggle for survival through the pursuit of multiple modes of earning a livelihood.

• Analytical and Conceptual Problems

Multiple modes of earning a livelihood are an aspect of the concept of household survival strategies, which attempts to explain the mutual interactions between domestic units and macro socio-economic structures and processes, especially in periods of rapid changes and increased social stress. These concepts represent an attempt to move beyond the static analysis of "marginality" and the "informal sector", and aim at the introduction of the dynamism of human agency into the analysis of changing forms of production, and the resultant activities of domestic groups in their attempts to meet immediate material needs (Redclift, 1986). The analysis of survival strategies therefore facilitates the mutual

comprehension of macro trends and micro-level market and non-market responses.

Discussions of survival strategies usually commence with an examination of either the household or the economy. Proceeding from the latter invariably structures the analysis in terms of the dichotomies between "urban" and "rural", or "industrial" and "agrarian" (Redclift, 1986). Beginning from the household has the advantage of a greater capacity for generating empirical data, while an economy-focused analysis is better able to capture the dynamic of shifting macro trends. The former is essentially quantitative analysis, while the latter is basically qualitative. The economy focus of this paper is therefore biased towards qualitative analysis.

But the choice of primary focus - household or economy, and quantitative or qualitative - is not the only analytic problem. It has been claimed by Wolf that the conceptualization of some phenomena as "household survival strategies" is often a figment of the researchers fertile imagination. She asserts that unwarranted assumptions about individuals and households often lead to a mis-representation of intra-household behaviour, and the distortion of stratifications based on gender and generation. Contrary to most "survival strategies" analysis, she conceptualizes the household as both a co-operative and conflictual unit, within which the "survival" of some may be at the expense of others (Wolf, 1990). Considerations of issues of gender and generation are therefore important in penetrating the reality of the household and its "survival strategies".

In the Nigerian context, these pose a number of difficult analytical problems. Independent income by wives has always played a major role in the sustenance of most Nigerian households, and it is therefore difficult to specify precisely what constitutes a "living wage" for the working classes, against which the need for additional "survival strategies" can be assessed. Furthermore, are wives trading incomes to be considered as part of their households "survival strategies", even when they may have exclusive control over them, and only specified household obligations?

Though the concept of multiple modes derives most of its meaning from the concept of survival strategies, there may still be the need to specify its salient characteristics. Firstly, multiple modes of earning a livelihood are characterized, not so much by the condition of the individual involved, but should primarily be seen as a process of income generation (Castells and Portes, 1989). Poverty, crisis and survival are not absolute terms. Secondly, unlike the informal sector, multiple modes of earning a livelihood may include "criminal" activities,¹ providing that these activities assume a systemic dimension. However, in reality, most activities falling under the multiple modes of earning a livelihood may simply be quasi-illegal, like moonlighting which involves avoiding the taxman; or non-legal, like the informal sector.

1. Castells and Portes differentiate between informal and criminal activities by pointing out that "Those labeled 'criminal' specialize in the production of goods and services socially defined as illicit", while informal activity is characterized by being "unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated" (Castells and Portes, 1989:12 and 15). Informal activities produce socially accepted goods and services, but often through non-legal means, while criminal activities like the drugs trade produce illegal goods by illegal means.

Thirdly, the contemporary intensification of the multiple modes dynamic is an international phenomenon, consequent on the structural and technological changes going on in the world economy. Redclift and Mingione, for example, have examined the changes in post-industrial societies, and the attendant "struggle for livelihood" at the household and community levels. They highlight the European "discovery or rediscovery" of the world of work "outside" capitalist relations of production (Redclift and Mingione, 1985). Similarly, Thurman and Trah point out the increasing tendency towards part-time work in industrialized societies (Thurman and Trah, 1990), while Michael Redclift examines the nature of survival strategies in rural Europe, pointing out that British data suggests that full-time farmers "have largely been replaced" by part-timers with little previous experience in agriculture (Redclift, 1986:225). However, within the context of SAP in a developing society, these global tendencies take on an added potency.

Finally, unlike most European and Latin American analyses, it is argued here that the contemporary relevance of the multiple modes concept in Nigeria transcends the levels of the individuals, households and communities; public and private institutions are equally involved in the process. For example, declining subsidies and revenues have forced the Nigerian Airports Authority (NAA) to go into commercial agriculture, involving the preparation and leasing of the tracts of land within airport parameter fences.² Similarly, universities are now establishing consultancies and holding companies which engage in such activities as running petrol stations and bakeries.³ Not even the church is immune from the process; in the face of dwindling individual contributions, the Celestial Church of Christ launched a series of "industrial projects" in the hope of augmenting its income.⁴

What is the economic and social context for the intensification of the multiple mode of earning a livelihood in Nigeria? What are its impacts on different social classes? What is its "political economy"? Can it contribute to sustainable adjustment? What are its impacts on the exercise of state power?

The adoption of SAP was accompanied by the setting of various macro-economic targets. The budget deficit was to be reduced to under 3 per cent of the GDP; non-statutory transfers to all economic and quasi-economic parastatals were to be confined to not more than half of their 1985 levels; public sector employment was to be frozen; wages were to be increased at less than the rate of inflation, through the maintenance of wage controls;⁵ and as the Central Bank noted, under SAP, an annual growth rate of about 6.8 per cent was envisaged (Central Bank of Nigeria, 1987).

The attempt to control the budget deficit took the form of cutting public expenditure. But this was not an across-the-board

2. *Business Concord*, 2 June 1987, p. 1, and 12 June 1987, p. 12.

3. For an example of the University of Ibadan holding company, see *Business Concord*, 27 October 1987, p. 5.

4. Cf. *Business Concord*, 19 April 1988, p. 3.

Socio-economic Context: Unemployment, Self-employment and Inflation

5. Cf. Alhaji A. Alhaji (Min. of State, Budget and Planning), "We have faced the challenge", *Business Concord*, 27 June 1989, p. 7.

approach; some sectors were more affected than others. Social services, specifically education and health, suffered more drastic cuts while the security services and the financial institutions did much better.

Table 1

Recurrent Expenditure of the Federal Government: 1986-1989 (% share)				
	1986	1987	1988	1989
Administration	34.8	38.6	29.8	24.1
General				
administration	19.7	19.0	18.4	14.3
Defence	9.5	12.6	6.9	6.5
Internal security	5.6	7.0	4.5	3.3
Economic services	6.7	7.0	6.3	5.5
Agriculture and				
water resources	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6
Construction	3.7	4.1	3.6	1.9
Transport and				
communications	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.1
Others	1.3	0.6	1.1	1.9
Social services	11.2	3.0	10.9	16.3
Education	6.3	2.3	7.5	11.6
Health	3.2	0.4	2.2	2.2
Others	1.7	0.3	1.2	2.5
Transfers	47.3	51.4	53.0	54.1
Debt charges	39.0	39.5	47.6	51.0
(1) Internal	32.1	24.4	21.7	23.1
(2) External	6.9	15.1	25.9	27.9
Pensions	8.0	1.0	4.9	2.7
Total expenditure (N Million)	7,697	15,646	19,409	25,994

Sources: Central Bank of Nigeria, *Annual Report*, 1988 (p. 86) and 1989 (p.88).

Tables 1 and 2 show that the attempt to control the budget deficit took the form of cutting the share of federal government expenditure, but some sectors were more affected than others. For instance, between 1986 and 1987, while the share of overall recurrent government expenditure increased, social services, particularly education and health, suffered drastic cuts, along with pensions,

Table 2

Capital Expenditure of the Federal Government: 1986-1989 (% share)				
	1986	1987	1988	1989
Administration	2.9	28.5	22.8	17.4
General				
administration	2.0	24.2	14.3	12.4
Defence	0.8	2.9	4.6	3.6
Internal security	0.1	1.4	3.9	1.4
Economic services	12.1	33.9	25.5	22.9
Agriculture and				
water resources	4.1	7.0	7.9	11.5
Manufacturing, etc.	1.5	15.8	9.2	5.6
Transport and				
communications	3.1	8.5	5.6	3.7
Others	3.4	2.6	2.8	2.1
Social services	7.2	9.7	20.7	12.3
Education	4.3	1.5	3.9	2.6
Health	0.7	0.9	1.9	1.5
Housing	-	-	9.3	8.0
Others	2.2	7.3	5.6	0.2
Transfers	77.8	27.9	31.0	47.4
Capital repayment	65.0	20.9	25.0	40.1
(1) Internal	-	1.9	1.6	0.9
(2) External	-	19.0	23.7	39.2
Total expenditure (N Million)	9,077	6,373	8,340	15,034

Sources: Central Bank of Nigeria, **Annual Report**, 1988 (p. 87) and 1989 (p. 89).

while security services (and perhaps financial institutions) did much better. The absolute capital expenditures on social services, especially education and health, also declined significantly. Increased shares in the budget (both recurrent and capital) for education and health in 1988, may actually work out to a fall in real terms (at 1986 prices),⁶ because of the devaluation of the *naira* in 1986 and the intensification of inflationary pressures. Furthermore, after 1987, the increase in the amount allocated to general administration was higher than that to social services. This does not appear to indicate a healthy state of the civil service, particularly as the increases largely financed two new states created in 1987, and a plethora of new governmental agencies like the mass mobilization agency (MAMSER). Similarly, new resources committed to agriculture did

6. The increases may have been precipitated by the charge, by the former Head of State, General Obasanjo, that SAP lacked "the milk of human kindness".

7. Alhaji A. Alhaji, op cit.

not go to the ministries of agriculture, but to a new rural development agency (DIFFRI). Partly because of the continued significance of a statist orientation within Nigerian ruling classes, funds channelled to parastatals rose rather than diminished.⁷

Table 3

Nigeria: Budget Deficits, 1986-90, as a percentage of GDP	
Year	Percentage
1986	10.3
1987	4.2
1988	8.5
1989	2.9
1990	4.4*

* Percentage of Gross National Expenditure (the GDP figure is higher).

Sources: Various copies of Central Bank of Nigeria, **Annual Reports**, and **Business Concord**, 15 August 1989, p. 15, and 9 January 1990, p.16.

Meanwhile, despite the selective cuts in public expenditure, the budget deficit did not attain the targeted goal of below 3 per cent (except for 1989), as table 3 illustrates; and the 6.8 per cent annual growth has remained a mirage.

But some SAP targets were met: real wages were brought down and public sector employment was frozen, natural wastage notwithstanding. Official Nigerian labour statistics are completely unreliable and cannot form even a rudimentary basis for assessing unemployment trends. However, it would seem that, within the civil service, embargoes on the filling of existing vacancies were used to depress manning levels and foreclose employment opportunities. Within parastatals and the private sector, similar embargoes have been accompanied by retrenchment drives aimed at those already in employment; in the first half of 1987 alone, the organized manufacturing sector was reported to have shed 14 per cent of its labour force.⁸ Many jobs have been lost, in a situation in which new employment opportunities are rare.

The generation of public and private sector unemployment which was an aspect of the pre-SAP economic crisis, has continued under SAP, and has influenced the tendency towards multiple modes of livelihood. Firstly, the unemployment trend is closely associated with the casualization or re-casualization of some of the labour still in employment (Andrae and Beckman, forthcoming). Secondly, sacked workers, being more desperate, have tended to initiate forms of survivalist economic activities - the conversion of personal motorbikes into "express taxis" is but one example - which soon spread to the ranks of the poorly paid still in employment. Thirdly, the potential threat to the SAP project, and indeed to the régime, arising from the unabating tide of unemployment, prompted the initiation of many self-employment and open apprenticeship

8. Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), cited in **Monthly Business and Economic Digest (BED)**, Vol. 10, No. 7, July 1987, p.3. In 1988, a prominent labour economist, T.M. Yesufu, claimed that 4 million unemployed youths were roaming the streets of the country, **BED**, Vol. 11, No. 11, November 1988, p. 5.

schemes under the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). These schemes made available some technical and financial assistance to the self-employed and, coupled with the emphasis on developing a "maintenance culture" in the country, created many possibilities of moonlighting by various categories of workers.

The government hopes that its unemployment problem will be largely solved through the vigorous promotion of self-employment. By the end of 1987, 100,000 youths were expected to have gone through the open apprenticeship scheme.⁹ And, contrary to the previous situation under which university graduates looked for jobs in the public sector, parastatals, and the organized private sector, the new drive was to get at least 20 per cent of the graduates of 1987 involved in self-employment. It was hoped that this figure would rise to 60 per cent by 1992.¹⁰ This deliberate de-institutionalization of employment and economic activities (Castells and Portes, 1989) is a crucial "enabling environment" for the intensification of moonlighting and other multiple modes of earning a livelihood.

Consequently, the informal sector, which is the primary focus of multiple modes activities in Nigeria, is changing under the impact of new entrants. It has been claimed that this sector occupies between 50 per cent and 70 per cent of the urban working population in many developing societies (Cornia, 1987). In the late 1970s, a study of Lagos estimated that the informal sector in the city occupied about 50 per cent of the city's working population (Fapohunda, 1985). Lagos is likely to have the largest formal and informal sector economies in Nigeria. Under SAP, however, it is likely that a larger proportion of the working population is now dependent on informal sector activities, possibly pushing the percentage in most Nigerian cities to close to 70 per cent of the working population. This possible expansion in the personnel involved in the informal sector is coupled with decreasing economic opportunities under SAP. The result is likely to be a general reduction in, and an increasing unevenness in the distribution of, returns. Employment conditions may also have deteriorated, especially for women and children.

• Inflation

Apart from unemployment and self-employment, another socio-economic factor which forms the context for understanding the logic of the multiple modes tendency in Nigeria is an inflationary spiral, which ceaselessly reduces even the waged to the level of the barest "hand-to-mouth" existence. SAP was predicated on a rate of inflation of about 16 per cent per annum. But as table 4 shows, even contested official statistics¹¹ indicate that the situation is far worse. While official figures indicate that the rate of inflation in 1986 was a mere 5.4 per cent, the then Minister of Information was reported to have claimed that the prevailing rate of inflation was 300 per cent.¹² Whatever the true figures may be, the fact is that, since the introduction of SAP, workers on restrained wages and others on fixed incomes are caught in the "scissors" action between a massively depreciated currency on the one hand, and spiralling prices, on the other.

9.BED, Vol. 10, No. 10, October 1987, p. 13.

10. BED, Vol. 10, No. 6, June 1987, p. 7.

11.Professor Dotun Phillips, Director-General of Nigeria's premier social science research institute has accused the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) of putting out dubious and unrealistically small inflation figures.

12.Mr. Tony Momoh, cited in BED, Vol. 9, No. 12, December 1986, p. 7.

Table 4

Nigeria: Changes in Composite Consumer Price Index (percentage), 1982-1989.			
Year	Percentage	Year	Percentage
1982	7.7	1986	5.4
1983	23.2	1987	10.2
1984	39.6	1988	38.3
1985	5.5	1989	47.5

Sources: Various copies of Central Bank of Nigeria, **Annual Report**, and **The Nigerian Economist**, 19 February 1990, p. 32.

13. This is a "guesstimate". After months of negotiations with unions and employers, the government agreed to raise the minimum wage in January 1991. The unions have accused the government of reneging on the agreement.

14. Cf. **BED**, Vol. 9, No. 12, December 1986.

In the pre-SAP period between 1975 and 1985, civil service real wages in Nigeria fell by about 58 per cent for the lowest basic salary earners, and by about 78 per cent, for the highest basic salary earner (Robinson, 1990; Chew, 1990). These falls were also reflected in the private sector. These long-term declines in urban incomes in most of sub-Saharan Africa have seriously eroded the urban-rural income divide (Jamal and Weeks, 1988). However, the additional hardships caused by the post-1985 adoption of SAP has led to some measures, allegedly tailored to compensate for falling real wages. Salary scales have been "elongated", and a "SAP relief package" involving additional allowances has been promised, though not always paid, to all wage earners. But these increments have been miniscule compared to the rate of inflation and the depreciation of the currency. Real wages continue to fall and, between 1986 and 1990, it is possible that real wage rates have declined by at least 25 per cent.¹³

Against the above background, government-sponsored charades like the 1986 "Campaign Against Rising Cost of Living" are neither convincing nor effective.¹⁴ Many workers are compelled to find ways of augmenting their income if they and their households are not to go under. And, invariably, it is a question of running in order to keep still. Multiple modes of earning a living were always a feature of the Nigerian economy; the economic crisis of the early 1980s could only have added more dynamism to the tendency. SAP has also had a fundamental effect on the process. Firstly, it has intensified the process of informalization within the economy, with the attendant expansion in the informal sector. Secondly, SAP policies have also encouraged a tendency of decreasing and uneven returns within the expanded informal sector. While some sectors are booming, many others are hardly adequate for ekking out a living. Thirdly, conditions of service within the informal sector have deteriorated; many Nigerian newspapers are filled with sorrowful stories of little children who have been withdrawn from school by their parents, so that these children can join in petty trading and roadside vending. Fourthly, in pre-SAP times, the multiple modes tendency was largely limited to

the working and artisanal classes, and to sections of the peasantry. But, with the erosion of the incomes of professional classes, many of them are now involved in the dynamic; SAP has led to the widening of the social base of the multiple modes dynamic. Finally, there seems to be an increase in socially harmful activities, such as part-time prostitution by students, within the multiple modes dynamic.

Urban Social Groups and the Multiple Modes Tendency

The reality of the multiple modes tendency differs from one social group to the other, depending on their location within the economy, the skills, assets and connections at their disposal, and their overall ability to profitably convert these variables into an income-generating dynamic. Within the basic division between urban and rural groups, it is possible to examine the differences between three urban groups; the working class, professional classes, and youths and artisans.

• The Working Class

The very history and psychology of the working class has tended to move it in the direction of the multiple modes tendency. The process of proletarianization from the end of the nineteenth century was fiercely resisted (Hopkins, 1979). Wage labour was not associated with "free" labour and the contract, but often equated with servitude. The ambition of many workers was the accumulation of enough capital to "regain their freedom" through the recourse to trading (Williams, 1980). Straddling between waged employment, and the informal and agrarian economies was pervasive. Often, workers took temporary industrial employment during the dry season, only to return to their farms in the rainy season (Main, 1985). Though the wage rates up to about 1983 roughly approximated a "living wage", it was often the case that the acquisition of luxury items, educational fees for the children, remittances to kin, and even basic sustenance within the household, depended also on the independent incomes of wives, earned through activities like petty trading. Therefore, the multiple mode of earning a livelihood has deep roots in the Nigerian working class.

From the mid-1970s, however, changes were taking place in this process of proletarianization. Formal sector employment became increasingly valued and many workers would hold on to it on a much more permanent basis; there emerged a noticeable preference for full proletarianization. Such was the attachment to urban, working class values that even retrenched migrant workers sometimes refused to return to rural life and farming (Main, 1985). The depreciation of rural incomes in the oil boom years, and the simultaneous appreciation of urban ones, tended to lead therefore to the consolidation of a distinct and fairly stable working class identity (Lubeck, 1986), based roughly on a "living wage". The renewed emphasis on the multiple modes tendency within the

15. BED, Vol. 8, Nos. 1 and 2, January-February, 1985, p. 4; and Vol. 8, No. 8, August 1985, p. 3. In January 1991, the federal government dismantled the unified salary structure of the civil services of the Federation. Henceforth, local and state governments are free to negotiate and fix whatever wage rates they deem adequate.

working class under SAP may therefore be seen as a process of "deconstructing" the evolving working class identity.

How have the crisis and the multiple modes tendency manifested themselves within the working class? Under Shagari, (1979-1983) the economic crisis affected the working class through the inability of many employers to pay their workers promptly at the end of the month. The nationalist and repressive Buhari régime (1983-1985) eliminated subsidies, raised the cost of social services, retrenched many workers and unilaterally imposed many "development levies" on the working class. Some states - Imo and Niger - even suggested the adoption of the infamous "Imo Formula", under which the governments unilaterally assumed the right to determine a worker's wage at the end of month. Workers wages were thereby to be determined, not by their contracts, their productivity or the cost of living, but by the whims of state bureaucrats whose major concern was the cash-flow crisis of the states.¹⁵

Under Babangida, (1985-) an initial effort was made at continuing the overtly authoritarian measures aimed at bringing down the wage bill. The national economic emergency declared in October 1985 was accompanied by compulsory deductions from workers wages. In 1987, an attempt was made to modify the Minimum Wage Act in such a way that would exclude many workers from the provisions of the Act. In the final analysis, the major instrument the Babangida régime has used to curtail workers' income has been the exchange rate.

The urban working class wage is no longer adequate to support the average family, and not even the trading activities of wives can guarantee continued access to minimum levels of sustenance. For millions of Nigerian workers, the answer is to engage in multiple modes activities; not only are working class wives enmeshed in the informal sector, the workers themselves must engage in second, or even more occupations. Firstly, private assets and skills are commercialized. Private motorcycles are periodically converted to taxis called "express" in Kaduna, *ina zaki* (where are you going?) in Sokoto and *achaba* in Kano. The Kano term has the slight connotation of the "dishonest" pursuit of gain. In Gusau, workers in a textile mill have consistently refused to do overtime work on Sundays despite increased incentives; they claim that they make more from their "express taxis". Typists, artisans and technicians regularly engage in moonlighting.

Secondly, many other workers, lacking in private assets and skills, simply take a more serious interest in farming. Despite workers resistance to a return to semi-proletarianization, many have effectively regressed from proletarians to peasant-proletarians. They may be "permanently" employed, but there is no doubt that their interest in their jobs has become "periodic". Thirdly, those lacking access to farm land take to petty trading; clerks and other lower level bureaucrats engage in petty corruption. Every survivalist stratagem permitted by the circumstance is

utilized. Some combine different types of multiple modes activities.

But this "new" tendency towards the multiple mode is not completely identical with the similar process which characterized the initial constitution of the working class. Then, workers "straddled" many modes of income generation largely by moving from one to the other. Straddling was a strategy for containing the rigours of proletarianization; excessive demands by the colonial state were thwarted by reversal to peasant status. The "new" straddling always combines wage employment with other activities, reflecting both the working class commitment to proletarianization and its inability to secure a "living wage" as a class. It amounts to a last-ditch defence mechanism by a working class on its knees, while the "old" straddling was an assertion of the workers limited control over his life. By presenting him with an alternative, it enhanced his bargaining position within industry. On the other hand, the "new" straddling is simply the intensification of self exploitation for survivalist ends.

• The Professional Classes

The professional classes, like the working class, exist under the ravages of unemployment and inflation characteristic of SAP. Even wives of officers of the ruling military establishment claim that their husbands' salaries are no longer enough for maintaining their households in the style they are accustomed to. Consequently, officers' wives are said to have abandoned their traditional role as home-makers and embarked on strategies for acquiring additional incomes. Some take on office jobs, while others, less educationally endowed, take to sewing, hairdressing and trading.¹⁶ Additionally, many sections of the professional classes have complained about the inability of the state and other employers to maintain the minimum standards necessary for the proper execution of their duties. Similarly, others have complained about increased state repression and authoritarianism (Jega, 1989). The pay levels, and the conditions of service are therefore alienating many professionals from continued concentration on paid employment.

However, the logic informing the increased participation of professional classes in multiple modes of earning a livelihood is essentially different from that of large sections of the working class. For most members of the latter class, engagement in multiple modes activities is critical to individual and household survival. This may even be at reduced levels of nutritional intake, and the inability to meet medical, educational and utility bills. For the professional classes, however, the threat to survival is not that stark and dire. Access to housing, medical, educational and nutritional resources, albeit at a decreasing standard, are tenuously maintained. For these classes, multiple modes activities are seen essentially as a means of containing, and possibly reversing, the obvious slide in their living standards, which, within the context of a developing society, can be said to be "middle class". Between 1984 and 1987, there has been a boom in the number of people taking out life policies with insurance

16.Cf. Speech by Mariam Abacha (wife of the Defence Minister and Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff), entitled "SAP and Army officers' wives", *Business Concord*, 31 May 1988, p. 7.

17. *Business Concord*,
4 September 1987, p. 5.

companies.¹⁷ Most of those involved are likely to be professional people. This phenomenon is graphically illustrative of the uncertainties and fears unleashed under SAP; especially the fear that one's household was somehow threatened with the possibility of sinking into the ranks of the "new poor".

18. *Business Concord*,
14 March 1989, p. 15.

Another important distinction between the involvement of the working and professional classes in the multiple modes strategy is that, while the former are largely confined to labour-intensive, capital-scarce and low-returns operations on the margins of the economy, the latter have better financial and political resources which they could put to more effective income-generating use. The income differential between senior and junior workers in 1986 was reported to be 1:27 and 1:10 in the private and public sectors respectively.¹⁸ The professional groups also have better access to banks and political networks. They are therefore able to invest in small-scale manufacturing units, installed at the back of the house or in the garage. They are also better able to make the political connections necessary for the procurement of the needed raw materials.

19. *Business Concord*,
16 December 1988, p. 8.

Thirdly, by virtue of their training, the professional classes tend to have better business ideas when engaged in multiple modes of earning a livelihood. Refuse collection is packaged as "environmental sanitation"; sewing mistresses give way to "fashion designers" - a social group which has grown enormously in Nigeria. Essentially, the professional classes tend to have a better idea of what they have, and what income they may be able to generate therefrom; an advertisement appeared in a business journal, stating that a young man wanted to start a *garri*-processing project. He did not have the capital of 10,000 *naira* needed, but had a second-hand car. The purpose of the advertisement was to solicit for a loan of 1,000 *naira* with which to repair the car, which he would then run as a *kabukabu* (an unlicensed and unpainted taxi). He hoped that his *kabukabu* business would then pay off the loan of 1,000 *naira*, and also constitute the basis for accumulating the 10,000 *naira* which was really his primary objective.¹⁹ These professional classes are also more conscious of their supposed contributions to "economic recovery", and they expect, or demand, government recognition and assistance.

Sectorally, the participation of professional classes in the multiple modes dynamic is heavily biased towards small-scale manufacturing - the proverbial "cottage" industry - commercial (and subsistence) farming and moonlighting of all types, including *kabukabu* business.

The tendency towards small-scale manufacturing is encouraged, not just by the resource base of the professional classes, but also by the nature of the organized manufacturing sector which hitherto had been largely reliant on imported inputs. Rising costs of capital and foreign exchange, and administrative and other overheads have eroded capacity utilization, and also pushed up the prices of the finished products to well beyond what the average Nigerian is willing to pay. The Nigerian consumer is now prepared to purchase the

cheaper, but poorer quality products of the small-scale sweat-shops owned and managed by members of the professional classes. From reports of the activities of the machine-tools industry, it would seem that the favourite sub-sectors appear to be food processing, soap and cosmetics, and candle-making, in that order of importance.²⁰

20. *Business Concord*,
18 March 1988, p. 10.

Nigerian professionals have become more involved in farming, and many of them are now big-time farmers. Many university academics run big farms whose outputs are partly for consumption, but also for profit. This pronounced profit motivation differentiates the farming businesses of professional classes from the more subsistence-oriented working class farming. Some professional class farmers have even established a measure of forward integration; their food-processing establishments use the proceeds of their farms. The more common model is to run the farm largely from hired labour; family labour is also important, especially for mobilizing inputs and supervising farming operations. Many academics-cum-farmers even procure specialized skills (e.g. for making particular yam mounds) from places hundreds of miles from their abode. Such is the commercial dimension to this dynamic - some may still be basically subsistence - that some academics specialize in land preparation and leasing. Even in crowded Lagos, the increasing interest in farming is noticeable; the putrid jungles bordering the highways leading into the city have fallen under cultivation:

"Such developments in market-gardening are becoming commonplace. Every evening, civil servants bring their children to the grounds in their cars to tend their spaces for the fortunes that lay inside the soil. The discovery [of civil servants] in the Badagry and Ajao farms creates an impression that most Nigerian top workers are now into farming while at the same time keeping their jobs in Lagos.... They are absentee farmers, trying to strike gold by using full-time labourers..." (Ogbuile, 1990:B1).

The moonlighting skills of the professional classes are most graphically illustrated in the story of the *kabukabu*. As a Lagos observer noted:

"Until the late 80s, unregistered and unlicensed cab operators - otherwise called *kabukabu* - were a rarity. Those who operated *kabukabu* did it as a pastime, there were no hazzles [sic] and the person hiving a ride paid only a token - usually less than half of the usual fares, just enough to support maintenance savings. But all that has changed. From a casual pastime, *kabukabu* became a part-time [job] for hard-pressed civil servants..."²¹

21. "The changing face of *kabukabu*", *The Guardian* (Lagos), 30 June 1990, p. 12.

Another keen Lagos observer also pointed out that:

"*kabukabu* is virtually on every route. In fact, *kabukabu* rules some routes, constituting the only fair means of transport. No painted taxis, no public buses; *kabukabu*

22. *Business Concord*,
16 October 1987, p. 8.

holds sway... Young clearing and forwarding agents supplement lean times by hauling passengers from Ikeja [airport] all the way to Apapa Wharf, while middle-aged couples secure the days sustenance on the road via *kabukabu*.²²

It is hardly surprising that in April 1990, the Lagos state government was reported to be considering the legalization of the *kabukabu*; and the Federal Road Safety Corps is planning to bring motorcycle "express taxis" under regulation.

• Youths and Artisans

Bauer long ago pointed out the critical importance of trading within the Nigerian economy (Bauer, 1955). About 20 per cent of the GDP is derived from trading activities. Much of this trading - especially the "petty" trading end - is dominated by women, youths and even small children. This system of trading has historically been marked by the multiple modes tendency, as seasonality in the supply of goods forces traders into different branches of commerce, or momentarily out of commerce entirely. A survey of traders in Samaru in 1989 revealed that only 45 per cent of the traders interviewed were full-time traders. Fifty-five per cent combined trading with other activities, such as farming, teaching, sewing, typing, mechanical repairs, and schooling (Yaro, 1989). Forty-six per cent of all the traders interviewed had a weekly turnover of about 25 *naira* (3 US dollars), reflecting the extremely marginal nature of much of petty trading. Most of the petty traders were youths, and a high proportion of them were women.

23. *Business Concord*,
5 July 1988, pp. 1 and 9.

SAP may have intensified the search for income through a combination of petty trading and other activities, but it is doubtful if it has improved the prospects for accumulation or even economic survival through such activities. What is clear is that increasingly, many Nigerian women and youths are gravitating towards other forms of generating income. On the positive side, there is the increasing proliferation of "fashion homes" for designer clothes, sometimes run by those still in employment. The "sporadic growth" of these fashion houses has been cited as the major source of problems for organized manufacturers of garments.²³ On the other side, is the noticeable increase in prostitution and drug trafficking largely by young, female clerks, traders, housewives, students, etc. Nigeria is now acknowledged as a leading carrier country in the international drugs trafficking circuit.

The Rural Economy and Multiple Modes

Location within the national economy - urban or rural - and social class have so far been the organizing variables in this examination of the multiple modes dynamic in Nigeria. However, these two variables are insufficient for explaining the relationship between the rural economy and multiple modes of earning a living. Unlike workers or professionals who exhibit broad similarities, different peasantries relate differently to the multiple modes dynamic. It is therefore necessary to be more specific and localized when analysing the relationship of peasant societies to the multiple modes dynamic; ethnicity, history and cropping systems all become relevant factors. These issues can be illustrated by brief summaries of the histories of the cocoa growing Yoruba peasantry in south-western Nigeria, on the one hand, and the grain-growing Hausa peasantry of Kano on the other.

The nature of rural Yorubaland was dramatically transformed in the 1890s by three factors: the end of the Yoruba Civil War, the imposition of British colonialism and the introduction of cocoa. Cocoa became the single most critical factor in the countryside. A peasantry evolved, completely tied to the fortunes of cocoa, and accumulation from cocoa cultivation was used to expand cocoa fields, to maintain the household and to educate the children of cocoa farmers (Agboola, 1980; Berry, 1975). The dynamic of multiple modes of accumulation - either as the simultaneous combination of farming and other activities, or as the development of a complementary non-farm sector - was not crucial to the cocoa growing peasantry. From the 1960s, however, the cocoa industry went into decline. Peasant accumulation, and even survival, through cocoa cultivation was put under severe stress. In response, peasant households diversified into petty trading and other service activities to maintain their livelihood. The recourse to the multiple modes strategy amongst the cocoa growing peasantry is therefore a reflection of the failure of continued accumulation through agriculture (Berry, 1985).

Field work in rural Kano in 1986 - just before SAP - revealed that almost all members of the rural Hausa village of Rogo included in the sample were engaged in own-farming. A few rich farmer-traders maintained large farms through hired labour and the help of supervisory farm servants, while some artisans engaged in small-scale farming through the use of hired labour. The prevalence of farming was, however, matched by the equal prevalence of subsidiary occupations; most household heads in the sample had two or more subsidiary occupations. Non-agricultural income was 18 per cent of the total cash income of the rich peasantry in the sample. The same figures for the middle and poor peasants in the sample were 50 per cent and 85 per cent respectively (Mustapha, 1990).²⁴ Researchers elsewhere have also noted that no Hausa peasant depends exclusively on agrarian cultivation, farming being often mixed with as many as four other supplementary occupations (Hill, 1972).

24. The 18 per cent is undoubtedly an underestimate. It is possible that the rich peasant household heads were reluctant to disclose the full extent of their non-farm incomes.

25. National Archives
Kaduna, Kanprof., 1708A -
Taki Assessment and
Revenue Survey - Kano
Province.

Indeed, such has been the centrality of supplementary occupations to the Hausa peasantry that in 1925 a colonial official denied that there was any large "agricultural class" in Kano Emirate.²⁵ Clearly, the simultaneous combination of farming and allied subsidiary activities, and the development of a complementary non-farm sector, are both pronounced aspects of agrarian accumulation in rural Hausaland.

If the multiple modes dynamic represents a downward spiral in the accumulation process of the Yoruba peasantry, the reverse is the case for the grain growing Hausa peasantry for whom the multiple modes logic has historically been a central aspect of the accumulation process. Here, it represents an upward, not a downward spiral; farming creates the basis for branching out into more lucrative activities. It is therefore impossible to generalize about the role of the multiple modes logic within the peasantries of Nigeria; neither is it possible to generalize about the impact of SAP on that role. The comments that follow are therefore limited to the grain-growing Hausa peasantry of rural Kano.

• SAP and Supplementary Activities

The intimate connection between farm and non-farm production in rural Kano demands an examination of both sub-sectors if the impact of SAP on one form of production is to be understood. That SAP is "good" for agriculture has since passed from the realms of official propaganda into popular myth. In reality, however, it is too early to draw conclusions; contradictory tendencies abound, and more time is needed for them to work themselves out (Mustapha, forthcoming). Some aspects of SAP, like increased local sourcing by industry and the banning of wheat and rice imports, have boosted the demands for, and prices of, agricultural products. Farmers have responded to these incentives; the aggregate index of agricultural production is on the increase, from 3.5 per cent in 1988 to 6.1 per cent in 1989.²⁶

26. *New Nigerian*, 20 June
1990, p. 3.

A limited re-survey of Rogo in July 1990 revealed that this positive aspect of SAP is clearly noticeable. Some rich peasants have expanded their holdings by about 20 per cent between 1986 and 1990. These rich peasants claim a general improvement in their farming operations in the region of 50 per cent. Some have actually doubled their plough teams and fertilizer use. But even these rich peasants who appear to benefit from SAP have had to make some adjustments in their farming operations; some now appear to place greater emphasis on improved seeds which are more pest resistant. This is clearly a strategy to confront the escalating cost of pest control chemicals. Others have dropped labour intensive crops like pepper - again, a move dictated by the need to contain rising labour costs.

But underlying these positive trends are counter-trends which question the sustainability of agrarian improvements under SAP.

The Central Bank itself stated that improved production in 1989 was due to favourable weather, increased hectareage cultivated, and improved storage facilities. It also pointed out that there were "severe shortages" in inputs - fertilizers, chemicals and tools.²⁷ Government monitoring agencies have also collected evidence which suggests that fertilizer use may be on the decline and that increased fertilizer costs may be cutting into farmers profit margins (Wedderburn, 1988). For its part, the Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB) has pointed out that SAP "seriously hinders" agricultural mechanization, because of extremely high costs of capital and tools.²⁸ This squeezing of the input base of agriculture - reminiscent of colonial economic policy which concerned itself with balancing the budget at the expense of developmental investments - suggests that much of the increased production may be from the expanded hectareage. Given the low level of production technology, and population pressure, it is doubtful if this model of agrarian accumulation - "on the cheap" - can be sustained for very long without serious environmental and productivity consequences.

27. *New Nigerian*, 20 June 1990, p.3.

28. *Business Concord*, 28 August 1987, p. 16.

Indeed, these negative aspects of SAP are equally manifest in Rogo. A rich peasant who used 140 50 kilogram bags of fertilizer in 1986 could only get 20 in 1990. Many denounced the increasing personalization of fertilizer distribution, and its escalated price; from 10 *naira* (official) and 17 *naira* (market) per 50 kilogram bag in 1986, to 80 - 100 *naira* in 1989, and 47-50 *naira* in 1990. Labour costs have also increased by about 120 per cent between 1986 and 1990; and tractor hiring costs by about 500 per cent. Agricultural expansion in Rogo from 1983 was based on the cultivation of high-yielding, but input-intensive varieties of maize and beans. Maize will not do well without fertilizer; beans are prone to pests and need chemicals. There has, therefore, been a noticeable decline in the cultivation of these crops, as farmers return to local varieties of guinea-corn and millet, which do not necessarily need much fertilizer and chemical inputs. But this shift in the crops grown reduces agricultural productivity, and cannot address the problem of escalating labour costs and general inflation.

Whether SAP is really "good" for agriculture remains a debatable point which cannot be categorically answered for now. What is clear, however, is that it is beginning to affect the supplementary activities of many peasants. A rich peasant who combined farming with selling fertilizer, trading in grains, selling firewood, and running a transport business, now claims to be in dire straits; he cannot get fertilizer to sell, profitability of the grain trade is reportedly down because of high production costs, and many ordinary peasants now prefer to go into the bush for their own firewood rather than waste their limited financial resources on firewood purchases. Only the transport business appears to be unscathed. On the other hand, another rich peasant is apparently so sufficiently well-to-do that he recently opened a vehicle spare-parts shop, a line of business usually dominated by Igbo traders.

Conclusion: Multiple Modes and Sustainable Adjustment

Some members of the rural semi-proletariat may also have benefited from higher labour prices; one has been able to buy some land between 1986 and 1990. Some others complain that inflation has cancelled out all their gains from increased monetary wages. Rural artisans too may be affected by the increasing production of cheap and poor quality household goods in the urban informal sector, for there has always been an intimate connection between urban and rural artisanal production (Jaggar, 1973). For now, however, Rogo artisans appear to have a greater volume of business, but complain about greater difficulty in getting inputs like scrap metal. They also complain about costs.

It is clear from the Nigerian evidence that the very survival of many households under SAP depends on their ability to augment their formal sector wages through informal sector activities; the Moscovite curse, referred to at the beginning of this paper, is indeed potent in Nigeria. Equally true is the claim that informal sector activities of the multiple modes type help to release the "creative imagination" of the Nigerian public; and far from being marginal activities, some of them actually have some scope for dynamism (Meagher, 1990). Some multiple modes activities may also be said to be socially relevant; the Lagos *kabukabu* plays a crucial role in the city's transport system. Based on these arguments, it is tempting to conclude that multiple modes activities contribute to "economic recovery", and may form the basis for renewed growth in the future. However, it would seem that there are economic and socio-political issues which suggest that, in the long run, multiple modes activities may be counter-productive and anti-developmental.

• The "Economics" of Multiple Modes

The economic issues which demand attention when considering the relevance of multiple modes to sustainable adjustment are: the relationship between wage rates and productivity levels; work standards and morale; profitability; macro and micro linkages.

Considering the problems confronting Nigerian workers under SAP, it is hardly surprising that those sympathetic to the trade union movement are arguing that "the price of labour should reflect the cost of producing it" (Bello, 1989:9). Expressing a contrary opinion, a senior member of the business community called upon the government "not to link disposable incomes, especially salaries on the present cost of living, but on the level of productivity".²⁹

This contradiction between a living wage and productivity lies at the heart of the economic pitfall of the multiple mode. Some members of the business community expect productivity increases from workers who are not paid a living wage, and who survive out of increased self-exploitation. This seems to be expecting too much,

29. Dr. Omolayole, in *Business Concord*, 11 April 1989, p.10.

and the history of forced labour in colonial Africa suggests that labour, paid below the "standard wage", is neither co-operative nor efficient. Because the multiple modes tendency is premised on the neglect of "*garrinomics*",³⁰ it undermines any possibilities for sustained productivity increases from labour.

Secondly, it may even be the case that the multiple modes tendency is not only compromising future productivity increases, it erodes present levels of efficiency and productivity by undermining work standards and morale. The civil servant farmers of the Lagos swamps are still on their farms well after the commencement of office hours in the morning. And, though academics from agriculture and related disciplines may benefit from the welcome opportunity to relate theory to practice, it is also the case that tight farming schedules compete with the demands of students and other academic pursuits. The government is allegedly worried about the extent of the involvement of university teachers in private businesses, and the National Universities Commission (NUC) has accused such teachers of "double dealing".³¹ It is equally noteworthy that, while Nigerian academics are complaining about under-staffing and lack of autonomy, the NUC is advocating a policy of "complete autonomy" for university-run consultancy companies. These companies, the NUC argues, should be allowed to move out of university premises, and take relevant university staff along with them on secondment.³² It is only to be hoped that things will not get to a stage where the tail will wag the dog.

Thirdly, it cannot be said that all multiple mode activities are profitable. Some people, fearful of sitting still whilst the economic system is crumbling, jump into activities of dubious profitability. In this particular regard, lack of specialization is not a virtue conferring a measure of flexibility, but a decided handicap. For example, many bureaucrats and academics from Kano have established farms around Dambatta, using the peasants of that area as farm supervisors and labourers. It is said that many of the peasants are now to be heard, asking their friends: *wawanka nawa?* (How many fools have you got?). Apparently, the peasants divert the farm inputs supplied by the urban-based absentee-farmers, whom they regard as fools, to their own farms.³³ For many people, multiple modes activities may not amount to more than a frantic, but futile, psychological attempt to escape from threatened destitution.

Finally, economic analyses of informal sector activities like the multiple modes type are often at the micro level, without any attempt to explore the over-arching macro economic climate. Furthermore, the micro-level analyses may reflect more of ideological prejudice - like the unbridled belief in local sourcing - than economic reality. This may sometimes result in disaster. Some experiences in Nigeria illustrate this point. The Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industrialists (NASSI) pointed out that 720 small businesses had collapsed, in Lagos state alone, between January 1987 and June 1988. The association was obliged to try to correct the "general impression that local raw materials could be sourced anywhere at little or no cost".³⁴

30. *Garri* is a basic staple.

31. *The Guardian* (Lagos), 8 November 1990, p. 1.

32. *Business Concord*, 6 November 1987, pp. 5 and 7.

33. Personal communication, Shehu Yahaya.

34. *Business Concord*, 2 August 1988, pp. 1 and 7.

35. *Business Concord*,
14 March 1989, p. 11.

Similarly, when farmers complained about the escalating cost of cutlasses, the World Bank representative in Nigeria, Mr. Tariq Husain, urged the farmers not to worry; he opined that the cutlass they buy in 1988 would last for 5 to 10 years, and further advised that, instead of buying expensive, imported flat steel cutlasses, the farmers should use cutlasses made from locally available scrap. In response, a farmer pointed out that "the type of cutlass Mr. Husain is talking about does not last. They can not even withstand the rigours of farming because they bend easily".³⁵

36. *National Concord*,
22 June 1990, p. 16.

It is this same uncritical - even uneconomic - belief in local sourcing which led some analysts to praise the ingenuity of some local motor refurbishers who are converting old trucks into public transport buses, called *molue*. The refurbishers were hailed as "automobile doctors", and their products were praised as being "deceptively new" and "specially built for Nigerian roads" (Ekwegbalu, 1987). By 1990, however, the same *molues* were being described as a "menace" to the public; in Lagos alone, the buses are said to have sent over 2,000 people to early graves.³⁶ An editorial in a Lagos newspaper aptly sums up the issue:

37. *Daily Times*, 30 June
1990, p. 6.

"Today, the commuter is left at the mercy of cheap metal constructs masquerading as buses; often, a seven-tonne body is knitted and painted onto a five-tonne chassis."³⁷

38. In 1990, the sale of defective paracetamol syrup resulted in the death of about 100 children all over the country. In January 1991, press reports suggest that table salt, contaminated with toxic substances, have found their way into the Nigerian market.

To be viable on a long-term basis, the informal sector - including many multiple modes activities - must integrate macro and micro analyses which confront the problems of duplication of businesses, poor quality products and lack of standardization.³⁸ As Jolly points out, micro-level approaches of the survival strategies type will never form an adequate basis for tackling the problem of poverty in the long run (Jolly, 1988). And Cornia has also observed that though survival strategies can be useful as "buffering mechanisms" in times of economic crisis, they are not inexpensive laissez-faire solutions, and their negative or doubtful effects deserve appropriate attention. Support for survival strategies should therefore be seen as complementary to, and not substitutes for, macro-economic policies aimed at growth and equity within the formal sector (Cornia, 1987).

• Social and Political Implications

Survival strategies are not purely economic responses to economic crisis, for they also have important political ramifications. In Nigeria, there are two major issues involved. The first is the increased individuation and personalization of some aspects of public life, and related problems of clientelism and corruption. The second, deals with the role of repression and the prospects for democracy.

At the household and community levels, economic crisis can often generate survival strategies aimed at pooling resources between

households, thereby expanding the scope for community co-operation. In *barrios* of Lima such as Huaycán, poor households are reported to be pooling together their feeding and child-care responsibilities in the face of a worsening economic crisis. The families chip in to buy the minimal things needed to keep a soup kitchen going. The same spirit of community co-operation has been reported for Kenyan women, who have responded to the crisis by forming many womens' and church self-help groups.³⁹ In Nigeria, a similar spirit of community co-operation existed before SAP; in Lagos, for example, attacks by armed robbers led to the formation of many street and neighbourhood associations, for the mutual protection of lives and property. In Zaria, academics joined together in "meat clubs" for getting cheaper meat through by-passing the middlemen and buying live cows for slaughter.

39. Personal communication, Adhiambo Odaga.

However, since SAP and the deepening of the general and economic crisis of the Nigerian state, it would seem that the new, and more dynamic, forms of co-operation are not those organizations based on neighbourhoods or streets, but a resurgence of particularistic ethnic and religious groupings which not only help their members to cope with the crisis, but also help ultimately to fragment the collective spirit or identity of the neighbourhood or community. There is the distinct impression that even community-based organizations have been weakened by the economic and political-cum-religious crisis of the Nigerian state. The "meat clubs" of Zaria have all but disappeared, and many womens' savings societies (*adashu*), as in the rural Kano village of Diribo, have collapsed.⁴⁰ But some forms of community-based co-operation still persist; farmers join together to hire water-pumps, families and households exchange gifts and food, and community resources are mobilized for the building of village utilities. There is even the claim that womens' groups are being formed under the government-sponsored Better Life For Rural Women programme; it is, however, unclear if this claim is correct, or just another publicity gimmick. Occasionally, disparate social groups and forces come together temporarily in anti-SAP riots.

40. Personal communication, Ayesha Imam.

At the level of trade unions and professional organizations, however, the impact of economic crisis and its attendant survival strategies are often more distinctly disruptive. Trade unions are always weakened by a convergence of economic crisis and high unemployment; scope for union gains narrow and union activity becomes oriented towards the protection of past gains rather than the advancement of present needs. Even this defensive position may be untenable. Workers invariably resort to a personal struggle for survival through survival strategies and seek new access to needed resources, thereby further eroding the collective commitment of the union. This access may be through the agency of familial, township, ethnic, regional, "old-boy" or religious organizations.

Collective unionist consciousness is increasingly undermined by competing particularistic ties. It is not an accident that such particularist organizations have become prominent within the

professional classes in Nigeria in the late 1980s. The quest for personal advantage and survival also undermines the bureaucratic ethos in many public and private sector bureaucracies. Favouritism, clientelism and corruption are intensified, as any observer of contemporary Nigeria would note. The tendency towards state failure is enhanced by poor wages and the recourse to such "survival strategies" (Klitgaard, 1989).

The above dynamic may also affect the peasantry. In Rogo, political power was monopolized by the traditional aristocracy between 1903 and 1966, largely under British colonial tutelage. From the late 1960s, there was an increasing opening up of the rural political process to other social groups. Consequently, rich farmer-traders have tended to wield considerable political influence in the countryside, and mediate the political and economic interaction between town and country. This "gate-keeper" role is performed within the context of the dominance of a populist ideology and a clear orientation towards political calculation on the part of most peasants (Mustapha, 1990). Increased clientelism and corruption in the state, parastatal and commercial bureaucracies in the country may affect this urban/rural economic and political interface by putting more pressures on the farmer-traders. Complaints about the personalization of fertilizer distribution and increased favouritism are rife in the village.

These connections between structural adjustment, survival strategies and the nature of the African state have been the subject of recent academic speculation. The role of repression, and the prospects for democracy are central concerns. Redclift and Mingione have noted the paradox that, under late capitalism, organizational decentralization of capitalist enterprises is accompanied by increasing concentration of capital and its hegemonic hold over society (Redclift and Mingione, 1985). A similar paradox exists under SAP; increasing economic liberalization is accompanied by increased political repression.⁴¹

Herbst has sought to explain this linkage between structural adjustment and repression. He argues that African politics was essentially the institutionalization of patron-client relationships. Pre-structural adjustment politics was based on the use of various resources by the leader to buy political support. Under SAP, he argues, the government is obliged to change its constituency - from those dependent on state patronage to those reliant on market forces - as the ability of the state to hand out patronage diminishes. This weakening of the patronage system will weaken the state's power structure, and make it "less flexible" in dealing with political crisis. The change in constituency is closely followed by a change in control mechanism; the absence of patronage leads to increased repression (Herbst, 1990).

Defending an opposing position, Bratton argues that the control of the African state over society has historically been weak. Economic crisis and subsequent liberalization leads to the

41. The Buhari régime sought to undermine and disband many organs of civil society - the news media, trade unions, students unions and professional associations. Babangida's régime has continued, if not intensified, this trend.

"contraction" of the state. This "retreat" of the state, he argues, will, "willynilly", enlarge the political space for democratic intervention by popular associations in civil society (Bratton, 1989). Some other theorists have elaborated the dynamism which transforms structural adjustment into increased democracy. They argue that as the state withdraws from many economic activities, the ruling class learns to live through non-state activities, while non-ruling class groups gravitate towards survival strategies, independent of state patronage. Increasingly, the ruling class, free of the pervasive grip of the state, has less need for the zero-sum logic of much of African politics, and increasingly gravitates towards the rational and democratic resolution of intra-ruling class problems. Through survival strategies, non-ruling class groups also break out of patronage networks and press for more autonomy, rationality and democracy.⁴²

42. Personal communication, Yusuf Bangura.

The major problem with both approaches at associating structural adjustment and survival strategies with the political process is that they rely, not so much on the reality of African politics under SAP, but on a mechanistic association of economic trends with particular political possibilities.

Herbst's argument rests on a number of false assumptions. African politics is completely subsumed under a patron-client dynamic, ignoring other impulses, such as the role of associational life in civil society. Contrary to the Nigerian experience, he asserts that SAP will do away with the patronage system; the diminishing resource base of the patronage system does not mean that the whole system will disappear. It may even be that diminishing resources within the patronage system may lead to increased favouritism and factionalism as the struggle for the little resources left intensifies. In Nigeria, the Central Bank was accused of patronage in the distribution of scarce foreign exchange in pre-SAP days. It was felt that "market forces", working through the decentralized commercial banks, would eliminate this patronage system. In reality, however, reports in the Nigerian media show clearly that the commercial banks have since spun their own patronage and racketeering webs.

The argument that structural adjustment and survival strategies will lead to increased democratization is equally based on abstract logical deductions, unrelated to reality. Under SAP, the ruling class is no less dependent on the state, and national politics does not look any cleaner; involvement in survival strategies by non-ruling class groups does not lead to a break out of patronage networks. Involvement in such networks may even intensify in the struggle for survival.

The reality of political life under SAP is the intensification of repression and the "contraction" of democratic political openings (Ibrahim, 1986; Yau, 1986; Mustapha and Othman, 1987), not as a result of the need by the state to fill the void created between erstwhile patrons and clients, as Herbst argues, but because the adoption of SAP as state policy contains within it an unstated predisposition towards the incorporation or dismantling of associations in civil society whose members are likely to bear the brunt of SAP

policies. Repression occurs not because people want patronage, but because they want to defend their livelihood against swingeing cuts in the standard of living. SAP has closed, not opened up, democratic space; but it will still have to contend with civil society.

In the face of SAP, many individuals and households in Nigeria have adopted survival strategies like the multiple modes tendency, and it is only to be hoped that the nation, and its composite individuals, households and institutions, will survive these survival strategies.

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