

## CLASS, RACE AND THE OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE

by

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I. Introduction

This paper attempts to examine certain changes which are occurring in the South African occupational structure and to suggest an approach to the explanation of these changes.

The analysis presented here is somewhat tentative, in part owing to the fact that the statistical data available for the period after 1960 (during which the major changes have taken place) is fragmentary (1) and, in part, to the virtual absence of mobility and other specifically relevant studies of South Africa to which reference could be made.

The paucity of empirical material is, however, a less important contributing factor to the tentative nature of the analysis than the fact that no coherent and satisfactory framework for the analysis of South African society is available. Indeed, a major purpose of the present paper is to contribute to the development of such a framework, through the examination of an empirical "problem".

It is to be noted that very little assistance can be gained from any of the more general work on South Africa, since almost all of it is written from an underlying perspective which tends to obscure important changes in the social relationships within the society. All this work, although differing in some respects, shares a basic common feature, as can be seen from the following, highly condensed discussion.

In much academic as well as political and journalistic writing the position of Africans in the society generally, and in the occupational structure in particular, is simply ascribed to the operation of race prejudice. Typical of this approach is Hepple's statement that

"The extent to which race prejudice has driven South Africa to fly in the face of economic realities is

best illustrated in employment. The country pursues a policy designed to exclude non-whites from most jobs, yet without non-white labour South Africa's industry and trade would grind to a halt". (Hepple, 1969, p. 37)

Likewise, the industrialism thesis which asserts that the inherent tendencies of the industrialization process lead to the continuous repatterning of the occupational structure by increasing higher level occupational roles and, in the long run, to the application of universal, rational criteria of recruitment to these roles, also ascribes the "distortion" from this rationality to particularistic, irrational racial criteria operating from outside the economy to impose a racial stratification on the occupational structure. (2) (Kerr et al.: Hunter, 1965; Horwitz, 1967; Hutt, 1964.)

It is, however, in the theory of pluralism (which is sometimes combined with the industrialism thesis) that this type of approach appears in its most developed form. (Van Den Berghe, 1967 [a].) For not only, in this theory, are racial ideologies the salient factor in action, for example,

"Clearly, pigmentation rather than ownership of land or capital is the most significant criterion of status in South Africa" (Van Den Berghe, 1967 [a], p. 267),

but also (quite logically) the groups whose relationships are determinate of the processes of the society are constituted solely in terms of these ideologies. (Van Den Berghe, 1967 [a], 1967 [b]; Kuper and Smith, 1969.)

Thus, on the one hand,

"... racist ideology, in so far as it is applied in practice, constitutes the major facet of what may be termed the social (as opposed to cultural) pluralism of South Africa. Society is compartmentalized into four main racial castes ..." (Van Den Berghe, 1967 [a], p. 267),

and, on the other hand,

"Of greater interest yet is the lack of salience of social class in South Africa. Social classes in the Marxian sense of relationships to the means of production exist by definition, as they must in any capitalist country, but they are not meaningful social

realities". (Van Den Berghe, 1967  
[a], p. 267.)

This conclusion is, of course, arrived at by collapsing Marx's distinction between the "class-in-itself" and "the class-for-itself". The importance of this distinction relates to the fact that the former concept is part of the characterization of the dynamics of the social system in terms of the mode of production, whereas the latter refers to the analytically and empirically quite separate issue of conflict and the consciousness of classes of their position in that mode of production.

A central problem is precisely the analysis of the conditions in which class consciousness does or does not develop within a society which has a particular mode of production. Stated more generally, the problem is to uncover the relationship between subjective meanings and objective conditions. The fact, therefore, that at a given moment the content of group consciousness and the basis of group cohesion is race or colour rather than class is a matter for analysis and not something to be taken as given.

In the pluralism theory, however, not only are racial groups conceived of as the only salient or "meaningful" groups in the society but, by excluding the non-ideological structures and processes from the analysis, the racial basis of group definition is treated as unproblematical. No doubt the very obviousness of race in the South African situation seems to justify the explanatory salience accorded to it. But this is an instance, I would suggest, where "The obvious is literally that which stands in one's way ..." (Laing, 1968).

Since physical characteristics are relevant "... as they are seized upon ... as criteria of group definition, and as pegs upon which to hang prejudice and discrimination" (Van Den Berghe, 1967 [a], p. 266), the question now becomes one of explaining how it is and under what conditions particular racial (or other) definitions are successful. Now, since the problem to be determined is how group definitions arise, it makes no sense to attempt to do this in terms of relationships between groups which are themselves constituted by the very definitions which are the subject of the investigation. It is necessary to go "outside" of these groups and definitions, and this immediately involves an analysis of the systemic processes which generate social, political and economic power and their relationship to the operative definitions.

Neither pluralism nor any of the other approaches already mentioned does this. At best, they add a description of the economic, political and social (that is, stratification) correlates of the different racial groups. To quote Van Den Berghe (1967 [a], p. 267):

"To be sure, there exists income and occupational strata within each of the four races ..." (my italics)

What is altogether absent, however, is any theoretical conception (which parallels or substitutes for Marx's conception of contradictions in the mode of production) of characteristics, systemic "factual" structures, processes and their relationships, their links with the ideologies which groups develop or, for that matter, with the way they lead to the formation of ideologically constituted groups. (For a discussion of these points, see Gouldner, 1959; Lockwood, 1964; Godelier, 1967.)

There are two important related consequences of these features of this type of approach. Firstly, since the ideologies of specific groups are not related to their position in the social structure, except in so far as the social structure is defined in terms of racial values, ideologies become treated as detached, autonomous determinants of action. Secondly, the failure to examine the changing non-ideological conditions in which specific groups apply, and therefore interpret and therefore modify their ideologies, results in the treatment of the latter as unchanging entities. By simply ascribing all action to generalized racial beliefs, prejudices or ideologies, the specific content of changing social relations and the conditions of change become excluded from the analysis.

In the analysis of the South African occupational structure specifically, the application of the perspectives under discussion leads, on the one hand, to a description of the racial status of different occupations (that is, for example, whether an occupation is "white" and skilled, unskilled but "civilized", "black" and unskilled, etc.) and, on the other hand, to the assertion that the entrance of non-whites into "white" occupations is blocked by racial ideologies or prejudices. In relation to the former aspect, the intrinsic nature of the approach inhibits any explanation of how, under what conditions, and by what processes a particular system of occupational stratification is produced. In relation to the second aspect, there is no analysis of the non-ideological conditions which might be relevant both to occupational mobility and to the specific form ideologies might take in concrete conditions.

This appears more concretely from the analysis which is generally made of the cause of the acute shortages of skilled and semi-skilled manual and various categories of non-manual workers which have accompanied the rapid expansions of the South African economy over the last decade. These shortages are ascribed to the conventional as well as the statutory colour bars (3) which exclude non-whites from the relevant categories of work, and this is represented simply as the actualization of racial beliefs, prejudices or ideologies stemming from outside the economy and inhibiting the rationality of the latter.

The crucial question, however, is: Which specific groups support which particular type of racial exclusions/inclusions, and why? Once the question is posed in this way, it is no longer possible to treat white or non-whites as undifferentiated populations nor Apartheid as an undifferentiated ideology or system of relationships (compare Johnstone, 1970). It becomes necessary to locate groups in the socio-economic structure and to view their ideology and practice in the context of this position. This argument is clearly illustrated by the different stances adopted in relation to the labour shortage "problem". Thus, white miners' trade unions oppose any changes in the racial distribution of occupations in the mines; the Trade Union Congress of South Africa, on the other hand, supports the entry of non-whites into "white" jobs but demands equal pay for equal work. The problem is to account for such differences.

There is implied in the above argument the more general proposition that any theoretical approach which assumes a separation of the polity from the economy and treats these as if they constitute autonomous systems or sub-systems will be unable to provide an adequate analysis. How, for example, would such an approach deal with the political control of the economy by nationalization of transport, SASOL, FSLOR, etc., or the utilization of the State funds to build up agriculture, or the utilization of political power to accumulate capital?

It is only by making the assumption mentioned above and by ignoring the structural position of groups that it is possible to contend that the "economy" tends to act out some kind of formal, abstracted rationality. Indeed, the very notion of "the economy" masks the fact that it is a historically specific form of "the economy" constituted by classes having specific (contradictory) interests and relationships.

The approach in this paper is that the first task for analysis is precisely to establish the nature of the class relationships. This involves, initially, an abstract characterization of the relationships in economic terms which simultaneously characterizes the "model" of the society. But this is certainly not to argue that that is all that is required. On the contrary, an analysis of a particular society demands an analysis of the concrete legal, social and political content of the class relationships which give the latter their historical specificity. That is to say while class relationships are "ultimately" economic they are also always political, social and legal as well.

Applying this to South Africa, an analysis of the abstract class categories and relationships leads to its characterization as a capitalist society. At the concrete level, the specific form of these relationships is defined by the content of Apartheid. The "colour bar" in the economy may be the result of political decisions (as is frequently argued), but it nevertheless defines the relationship between classes (and sectors of classes).

Apartheid is "economic" no less than it is political.

It follows from this that the simple assertion, which is frequently made of South Africa, that there is a contradiction between Apartheid (conceived of as a political force external to the economy) and the economy, is inadequate. Obviously, Apartheid and class relationships are not coterminous and it is possible that racially structured political relationships and institutions may develop which will come into contradiction with racially structured class relationships in the economy. This in no way affects the contention, which is implicit in the above discussion, that contradictions inhere in the class relationships themselves. Indeed, the position advanced here is that Apartheid can be viewed predominantly as an attempt to order the non-white working class in terms of the specific demands of different classes and sectors of class. From this point of view, the main contradiction in South Africa is in the relation of production between the white capitalist class and the non-white working class.

This, of course, does not preclude (has not precluded) the possibility that the non-white sectors of other classes operation within a different set of class relationships from the non-white working class may have their situation ordered in terms of Apartheid. The fact that this occurs creates, within certain limits, an identity of interests between the non-white sectors of different classes and gives rise to the appearance that race is the salient factor.

Similar processes occur between the white sectors of different classes. What is of equal, if not greater, significance, however, is that the interests of these different classes, within particular racial groups, tend to become contradictory and the outcome at any time in terms of policies turns on the changing power situation.

The specification and analysis of the dominant and subordinate contradictions and their relationships is a requirement of an adequate analysis of South Africa.

In the remainder of this paper an attempt is made, through an examination of changes in the occupational structure, to analyse, in a sketchy way, some of these contradictory relationships and their consequences.

Specifically, the contention is that the configuration of conditions which previously brought into existence and which operated within the structure of South African society to maintain in existence a cheap, unskilled, non-white industrial labour force are giving way to conditions, within the same basic capitalist structure, in which a substantial section of this labour force will provide cheap, semi-skilled labour and skilled labour.

The meaning of this contention, in terms of the distribution of occupations, is best clarified by a reference to the position in 1960. Tables 1 and 2 present the relevant statistics. (4)

Table 1

Persons Engaged in Some Form of Managerial or Professional Work (Excluding Farming), 1960

	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Coloureds</u>	<u>Asiatics</u>	<u>Africans</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Professional, Technical	132,546	13,830	5,124	48,714	200,214
2. Administrative, Executive and Managerial	57,003	1,210	2,568	4,796	65,577
3. Sales, Working Proprietors	21,633	3,875	8,924	13,624	48,061
Totals 1 + 2 + 3	211,182	18,915	16,621	67,134	313,852
	67.3%	6.0%	5.3%	21.4%	100.0%

Table 2

Persons Engaged in Some Form of Skilled Occupation, 1960

	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Coloureds</u>	<u>Asiatics</u>	<u>Africans</u>	<u>Total</u>
Clerical Workers	280,838	8,166	8,199	19,472	316,675
Artisans and Semi-Skilled Industrial Workers	258,461	113,515	26,171	23,948	422,095
	539,299	121,681	34,370	43,420	738,770
	73.6%	16.4%	4.1%	5.9%	100.0%

What I am suggesting is that the conditions which developed in South Africa during the 1960s will result in a vast increase in the number and proportion of non-whites (particularly Africans) in the clerical and semi-skilled categories of work, and that this will occur at the expense of the very large unskilled sector of the non-white labour force. This will be accompanied, I suggest, by an increasing proportion of the white population finding employment in the categories included in Table 1.

Although it is not possible to show the changes which have already occurred in the 1960s in a systematic form, it seems clear that the "penetration" of non-whites into semi-skilled, skilled and lower white-collar jobs is already well under way. The fact of "penetration" is not new; what is new is the extent to which this is now taking place and the degree of legitimacy which is accorded to the shifts in the occupational structure.

Within different occupational or economic sectors, the employment of Africans and other non-whites in occupations or at levels which were previously the preserve of whites appears to take place under one or other or both of two different sets of conditions. Firstly, in some sectors the demand for labour to fill jobs hitherto defined as white has exceeded the supply of white workers, and in that event non-white workers have been, and are being, employed. Secondly, in other cases, the dilution and fragmentation of skilled white jobs has led to the introduction of new, semi-skilled jobs which are filled largely by African labour.

It is not possible, for reasons of space, to set out fully the data which show both the extent of the changes resulting and the fact that the new, emerging employment pattern leaves relatively unaltered the structure of wages. Indicative data are set out in the notes (see note 5). Suffice it to say that the developments which are occurring contradict the contention that Apartheid is consistent only with the employment of Africans and other non-whites exclusively, or almost exclusively, in unskilled work.

How are these changes in the pattern of employment to be accounted for?

## II. The Basis of the Changing Pattern of Non-White Employment

The explanation lies in a combination of changes in the class structure and in the structure of occupational rôles. These have, in turn, led both to a redistribution of power as between different sectors of the capitalist class and as between different segments or strata of the working class. Racial ideologies have begun to transform themselves to fit this new situation.

### The Situation Prior to the 1960s

The single most significant fact about South Africa prior to the 1960s is the dominance of two sectors of the economy - mining and capitalist agriculture. For present purposes the importance of these two industries can be indicated by their contribution to the national income.



Table 3 (6)

Percentage Contribution of Agriculture, Mining  
and Manufacturing to the Gross Domestic Product

	<u>Agriculture</u> (a) %	<u>Mining</u> (b) %	<u>Total</u> (a) % (b) %	<u>Manufacturing</u> %
1912	21.6	26.6	47.9	4.3
1920	22.4	17.4	39.8	7.4
1930	14.4	15.1	29.5	9.4
1940	12.3	18.9	30.9	12.5
1950	17.3	13.1	30.4	16.8
1955	15.2	11.7	26.9	18.8
1960	12.2	13.6	25.8	19.0
1966	10.3	12.2	22.5	21.7

This table shows that the primary sectors of the economy contributed nearly 12 times more than manufacturing in 1912, and as late as 1960 25% more than the latter to the gross domestic product. Similarly, the number employed in the primary sectors exceeded employment in manufacturing by approximately 8 times in 1921 and by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times in 1960.

Two features of these important sectors of the economy, which were themselves the outcome of the conditions in which they developed, affected the nature of South African society in general and the pattern of non-white employment in particular. Firstly, both were (and are) dependent upon or insistent upon a continuous supply of cheap, unskilled African labour. (7) The creation or maintenance of the conditions which ensured this supply had consequences for the society as a whole. Secondly, the nature of the gold mining industry was such that it had little or no interest in the industrialization of South Africa; agriculture, on the other hand, whatever its interests, was unable to invest in the development of manufacturing.

The dependence of these industries on African labour and the cheapness of this labour has been fully documented (De Kiewiet, 1942; Hepple, 1969, 1966; Horwitz, 1967), and it is therefore unnecessary to deal with the statistical aspects of this.

The interest of the Chamber of Mines in obtaining cheap African labour, and its capacity to secure it, was a function of two conditions. The Chamber's interest in cheap labour was not merely a question of the realization of profit but, more specifically, the realization of profit in conditions of a fixed market price for gold and continuously increasing price of capital

equipment, stores and white wages. The question of power was central to all these conditions. Thus, the Chamber had no control over the international market which fixed the price of gold, nor did it have power over the price of stores and capital equipment. The political power of white workers and the organizational power of their trade union presented a formidable obstacle in the way of the Chamber's attempt to substitute African workers, as the 1922 Strike showed, or the possibility of lowering their wages.

The capacity of the gold mines to secure cheap African labour was a product of the political and economic powerlessness of the unorganized African "reservoir" of labour, both inside South Africa and in the external territories. This situation of the African population in the industrializing economy within South Africa was the outcome of military conquest, the introduction of a capitalist economy to a people no section of whom had wealth capable of being converted into capital, and the restriction of the predominantly rural African population engaged in subsistence farming to 13% of the land.

The confinement of subsistence farming, which involved extensive rotation of land, to a relatively small land area rendered it incapable of producing the subsistence needs of the population. In these circumstances, the intrusion of a money economy in the form of manufactured consumer goods and the imposition of compulsory taxes provided the "push" required to ensure the flow of rural Africans into the labour market. It only needed the recruiting organizations of the Chamber to channel this labour in the form of migrant, contract labour into the mines.

Thus, the underdevelopment and impoverishment of the African reserves was a condition of the development of the mining industry - a fact reflected in the almost total unavailability of any resources to develop the reserves. The continuation of this relationship required the maintenance of the political and economic powerlessness of Africans, and this, in turn, was effected by and reflected in the entire economic, political and legal structure of the society and the racial character of this structure.

An important element of the economy relates to the position of manufacturing, and this raises the second feature of the mining industry to which I referred above, that is its interest or lack of interest in the industrial development of South Africa.

The rate of development of the manufacturing sector in South Africa up to the second World War was slow. This is, in part, reflected in Table 3 above. The main reason for this was the lack of investment capital, and this in turn leads to an examination of the mining industry which was by far the main possible source of capital. The mining industry, however, did not invest in manufacturing, and there would appear to be two reasons for this. Firstly, not only was the major portion of investment in mining obtained from foreign sources (£120 million out of £200 million by

1932) but also gold was, of course, not produced for the home market, and consequently the development of a consumer market through the growth of employment in manufacturing was no particular concern to the industry. Frankel (1938, p. 110) noted that

"During the last quarter of century no outside observer of the Union's development could have at any time failed to notice the unanimity with which the legislature and electorate alike declared it to be their policy to develop the resources of the country in such a way that its dependence on what it has been usual to call 'wasting' mineral assets could be lessened, and provision be made for the distant future when the mineral industries might no longer prove a source of income. Yet, notwithstanding continuous legislation designed to foster other activities, the country appears to be more dependent on mining than ever before."

Secondly, the growth of manufacturing itself presented a double threat to the mining industry. On the one hand, it could lead to competition for labour and challenge the mines' virtual control over the labour market. On the other hand, the nature of manufacturing labour requirements - relatively stable and at least partly trained labour - posed a potential threat to the whole system of cheap, unskilled African labour.

In the case of the white rural bourgeoisie, their inability to foster industrial development which would have created a larger home market for their products was the basis for their support for a system which ensured the supply of cheap labour and made impossible the rapid growth of the home market. The low level of mechanization, the relative infertility of the land, and inefficient methods of farming were among the factors which made cheap labour a condition of survival of this class and prevented the accumulation of capital for investment in industry.

The common interest of the two major sectors of the economy in maintaining the system of cheap, unskilled, non-white labour was unambiguously supported by the white working class - it was precisely this which guaranteed their monopoly over higher paid skilled and white-collar work, and also over higher paid unskilled work under the Civilized Labour Policy. There were two significant features of the situation of the white working class. Firstly, one consequence of the slow rate of industrial growth was that the number of jobs also increased at a slow rate. Given the rapid migration of "Poor Whites" from rural to the urban areas (particularly in the 1920s) and the fact that there were some 200,000 unemployed whites out of a population of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million, the

competition for "white" or "civilized" jobs was extremely strong. Secondly, and related to the above, the flow of Africans into the town and their availability as cheap labour presented a threat which was met by a racial ideology which defined what work was suitable for which race and a successful struggle to maintain monopoly control over "white" jobs in the absence of job opportunities at other, higher levels. This competition over work is one of the crucial factors which divided the working class and which led to the white working class' support for a system which maintained black workers in a weak position.

### The Situation in the 1960s

A number of the relationships discussed above and the conditions in which they occur have undergone significant changes in the 1960s.

The continuous growth of the manufacturing sector which took place before the 1960s (see Table 3) occurred not only largely without the participation of capital from gold mining or from farming but, in fact, in opposition to those industries. Not that cheap labour was unattractive to the manufacturing industry - in this sector, too, the differentials between African unskilled and white skilled wages is roughly in the ratio of 1:6. However, as I suggested above, the greater capitalization of production and the greater specialization of labour involved made stability of labour also important. This potentially brought manufacturing into contradiction with the gold mining industry, since the development of conditions of labour stability tended to undermine the conditions necessary for the migrant labour system. In addition, the expansion of the home market, which was one condition of the growth of manufacturing, was also in contradiction of the interests of the gold mines, since this threatened to push African wages up beyond the extremely low level of the mine wages.

Two developments have served to change this relationship between mining and manufacturing, so that it is no longer as true as it once was that

"... The Chamber of Mines, which represents the gold industry and constitutes the most powerful economic group in the country, has a strong vested interest in the migratory system". (Van Den Berghe, 1967, p. 192)

The first of these developments relates to the increasing inter-penetration of mining and industrial capital. The second relates to the increasing utilization of foreign African migrant labour in the mining industry.

The inter-penetration of mining and industrial (and, to a lesser extent, agricultural) capital is taking place in two directions. That is to say, mining capital is being invested directly or indirectly through finance corporations in manufacturing industry and industrial and finance capital (particularly, it would seem, of Afrikaner origin) is being invested in mining.

It has been estimated that at least £300 million have been invested by mining companies in industrial and commercial undertakings. (8) The reports of some of the larger mining houses are revealing.

The estimated value of the industrial and commercial companies of the gigantic Anglo-American Corporation increased in 1969 by £35 million to £175 million. The investment portfolio of the group shows that

- (a) Investment in gold mining declined from 26% in 1968 to 21% in 1969
- (b) Diamond investment remained at 33%
- (c) Platinum and copper investments increased from 6% to 8%
- (d) Industrial investment went up by 2% to 22% of the total.

Johannesburg Consolidated Investments has £32 million invested in industrial takings. This represents 32% of its total investments. The company's investments in mining declined from 41% of its total portfolio in 1968 to 39% in 1969, while the share of its industrial investment increased from 28% in 1968 to the 32% mentioned in 1969. (9)

The Anglo-Vaal Corporation's investments in 1969 totalled nearly £17 million, of which 35% was invested in industry and 38% in finance. (10)

Although it has not been possible to obtain figures at the date of writing, the reverse trend is exemplified by the large Federale Volksbelegging Beperk's investments from finance, industry and agriculture into mining.

While quite clearly far more research needs to be done, it is undoubtedly no longer possible to regard mining and manufacturing as two totally separate, contradictory sectors of the economy. (The same cannot be said of agriculture because its position does not seem to have changed to the same extent.) The stake of mining in manufacturing industry brings its interests into alignment with the latter.

This is underlined by the second factor referred to above, namely the increasing dependence of the mining industry on foreign African unskilled labour. Foreign African labour has always been important in the mines - the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association was formed in 1895 to recruit labour from territories outside South Africa. However, what is important is the ever increasing proportion of African labour which is recruited externally. Thus, whereas in the earlier period approximately 50% of African mine workers were foreign, in 1967 over 65% came from the former British protectorates, Portuguese East Africa, and Malawi, etc., and by 1970 this figure had reached 69.5%.

It is probable that the economic underdevelopment of these other countries and the powerful competition for African labour resulting from the massive growth of manufacturing (see Tables 5 and 6 below) account for the changing proportions of African labour recruited externally. Only approximately 100,000 South Africans know work in the mines. Whatever the reason, the mines no longer have the same interest in the continuation of the conditions which ensure the system of migratory labour inside South Africa.

The changed relationship between mining and industry has been accompanied by changes within manufacturing which affect the position of the white working class.

The trends indicated in Tables 3 and 4 appear to have continued at an accelerated rate in the 1960s. It is estimated that the share of mining and agriculture has declined to 20% in 1969 while that of manufacturing has continued to rise. (11) There are other indications of the growing importance of manufacturing - the mounting volume of production and increased investment. (12) Of greater relevance for the argument in this paper, however, are the dramatic changes in the structure of employment in the 1960s.

Table 5 (13)

Industrial Classification of the Population

No. and percentage of Total Economically Active Population Employed in Mining, Manufacturing, and Commerce and Finance (All Races)

	<u>1951</u>		<u>1960</u>		<u>1969</u>	
	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%
Mining	511	11.1	614	10.7	632	9.1
Manufacturing	503	10.9	643	11.2	1,104	15.8
Commerce & Finance	327	7.1	518	9.1	?	?

The shift towards manufacturing and commerce and finance is revealed even more clearly, however, if the percentage increase over the earlier years is calculated for each sector.

Table 6

Percentage increase over previous year of Employment  
(All Races) in Mining, Manufacturing, and Commerce and  
Finance as a percentage of previous years

	<u>1951</u>	<u>1960</u>		<u>1969</u>	
	No. (000's)	No. (000's)	% increase over 1951	No. (000's)	% inc. over 1960
Mining	511	614	20.2	632	2.9
Manufacturing	503	643	27.8	1,104	71.7
Commerce & Finance	327	518	58.4	?	?

It has not been possible to obtain statistical data for employment in commerce and finance during the 1960s, but impressionistic reports suggest that the trend revealed in 1960 was continued into the 1960s.

These developments have given rise to acute labour shortages in the skilled, semi-skilled or non-manual categories. Various estimates put the shortage of skilled and semi-skilled workers in 1969 at 47,700. Shortages have also been claimed among scientists, nurses, managers, teachers, and in the professions generally.

There are no mobility studies which would enable firm conclusions to be drawn about the movement of white labour, but there are data which suggest that the white population is moving from manual work into non-manual work and from skilled manual into technological positions. The evidence on the latter aspect is clearest.

Overall, the statistics show a declining trend in the (percentage of the ?) employment of white workers in manufacturing. This trend is corroborated by the fall off in registration of white apprenticeships in a number of industries from 8,569 in 1966 to 7,263 in 1968.

Table 7 (14)Percentage of White and African of Total Workers  
in Manufacturing

	<u>Africans</u>	<u>Whites</u>
1960	47.9	32.7
1962	52.8	26.5
1967	52.7	25.3

Furthermore, whereas in 1960 whites constituted 16.3% of the manual labour force, excluding farming (a decline of 4.3% compared with 1951), they constituted 77.7% of the professional, technical, administrative, clerical and sales occupations (a decline of 0.3% as compared to 1951). The proportion of the white economically active population in different occupations, excluding farming, from 1921 to 1960 as compared to the African population is shown in Table 8.

Table 8 (15)Whites and Africans in various Occupations, expressed as a  
Percentage of the Economically Active Population of Each  
Group (Excluding Farming)

Occupation	<u>1921</u>		<u>1936</u>		<u>1946</u>		<u>1951</u>		<u>1960</u>	
	White	Afr.	White	Afr.	White	Afr.	White	Afr.	White	Afr.
1-4	31.3	.8	33.1	.9	38.4	1.9	44.4	1.9	49.4	2.4
6-8	6.2	28.3	6.5	24.6	14.0	28.0	19.3	35.9	29.0	43.9
9	7.3	33.1	8.8	33.2	18.0	26.0	14.6	27.1	16.5	25.0

1-4 Professional, Technical, Managerial, Administrative, Executive, Clerical and Sales

6-8 Miners, Transport Workers, Unskilled and Skilled Industrial Workers

9 Service, Sports, Entertainment, etc.

Further support for the contention that whites are moving into the higher level occupations is to be found in the increased enrolment in the universities. Thus, whereas 37,934 white students (compared with 4,381 non-white students) were registered in 1960, by 1968 there were 66,659 white students (and 8,605 non-white). (Horrell, 1962, 1968)



That a shift of white workers out of skilled manual work is occurring is also suggested by the comments of various trade unionists. Both the Trades Union Council of South Africa and the President of the Railway Artisans Staff Association have pointed to this trend. The latter stated (16):

"The drain of trained artisans not only in the railways but in other industries, to work outside of their particular trades, had become serious. This was a feature of the acute manpower shortage and represented an almost total loss of skilled workers."

It is contended, then, that there is evidence of changes in the occupational structure which have opened up avenues of employment and mobility not previously available, at least not in the present number, to white employees. This, I would suggest, is an important factor in accounting for a diminution in the opposition by white workers to the employment of non-whites in semi-skilled jobs.

It is neither necessary to suggest, nor is it supposed, that the emergence of opportunities of upward mobility have entered fully into the organized consciousness of the white working class. What seems clear, however, is that the degree of opposition (even within the gold mining industry) to the utilization of non-white (particularly African) labour in more skilled occupations is by no means as monolithic as it was. Indeed, one of the most interesting phenomena is that in conditions of acute shortages of skilled and semi-skilled manpower white organized workers have, despite their strong market and organizational position, agreed in important industries (steel engineering, construction and railways, for example) to both job dilution and African employment in semi-skilled occupations.

It is important, however, to bear in mind that the analysis of the white working class and, indeed, of the other classes in the economy requires to be refined. The changes to which I have referred do not take place evenly or uniformly throughout the economy. For example, in a sector where rapid upward mobility of whites is occurring, there is likely to be less opposition to the introduction of Africans into semi-skilled occupations than in a declining industry. Thus, it is necessary to examine in detail the position of different groups in order to understand the support they give to different policies.

Finally, it is to be noted that the situation in the agricultural sector has also undergone changes, although the nature of these is somewhat obscure. It seems likely that capital, derived from non-agricultural sources, has been utilized by various companies to secure agricultural land on a large scale. One consequence of this would be to diminish the extent of the holdings and the economic power of individual farmers. It is

possible that the conflict between the "verligtes" and the "verkramptes" reflects the continued interest of the latter in the maintenance of a system which perpetuates the position of Africans as a source of unskilled labour.

### Conclusion

I have tried to show in this paper that an analysis of the position of different racial groups in the occupational structure can be understood only as part of an analysis of the whole society in terms of a configuration of contradictory relationships.

It is obvious that in a systematic analysis it would be necessary to incorporate more fully the social and ideological structures of the society.

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### Notes

- (1) The latest census for which reports are available was held in 1960. No data is yet available from the census taken in May 1970.
- (2) For a critique of this thesis, see H. Wolpe (1970).
- (3) Statutory colour bars refer to legislative provisions such as the Mines and Workers Act 1911 as amended, Bantu Building Workers Act 1951, etc., which specifically exclude Africans, etc., from certain work. Conventional colour bars refer to those which have developed in various industries through agreement between white workers and employers or otherwise and have become "traditional".
- (4) Taken from Malherbe (1969), Tables X and XI.
- (5) Substitution of White Workers by Non-Whites in Existing Categories of Work

#### Railways and Harbours

The total numbers employed in the South African Railways in 1969 was 223,549, of whom 115,432 were white, 93,756 African, and 14,361 Coloured and Asian.

By 1964, 11,036 non-whites (including 9,537 Africans) were being employed in semi-skilled work at rates of pay below those received by whites doing the same work.

By 1964, the number of non-whites in skilled and semi-skilled jobs had risen to 16,000.

#### Distributive Trades

In 1970, 445,300 workers were employed in retail and wholesale trade; of those 190,800 were white and 254,500 non-white. This represented an increase of 15,700 over 1968. Of the 15,700, 10,500 were non-whites and again the non-white workers were receiving rates of pay below those paid to whites doing the same work.

#### Mining

The data is confused, but there is evidence of Africans employed as pump men (5,000) and as drivers of underground locomotives.

#### Various Industries

That the application of "job reservation" (the reservation of particular jobs for special racial groups) under Section 77 of the Industrial Conciliation has had little or no effect on the "penetration" of non-white workers into semi-skilled, etc., jobs is shown by the following:

- (i) Only 1.5% (108,000) jobs have actually been affected.
- (ii) In the Metal and Engineering, motor vehicle, clothing, furniture, footwear, building, and motor transport industries (and others) general or partial exemptions to job reservation orders had been granted.

e.g. Determination No. 8 of 1960 laid down that in the Transvaal the proportion of the labour force in the Garment Industry was to be 19% white, 37% coloured, 44% African, and that additions to the industry were to be in the ratio of 25% white, 37½% coloured and 37½% African. The 1969 statistics showed, however, that the actual composition of the labour force was 9% white, 32% coloured and 60% African.

NOTE: In the "Border industries" (e.g. textile, motor, canvas goods) Africans are earning less than whites doing the same work in the cities (e.g. in the clothing industry machinists are earning £5.5.0. p.m. compared to £7.10.0. and £8.7.6. in urban areas).

#### Job Dilution

In two major industries job dilution and fragmentation is an important mechanism by means of which Africans are absorbed into relatively skilled jobs at low rates of pay. These are Metal Engineering and Construction.

Thus in the former industry the revision of work schedules has accelerated the decline of whites in semi-skilled and operative jobs and the penetration of Africans into these jobs. New technology has affected this, e.g. automatic lathes and drilling machines are turning out work previously done by skilled

artisans paid at the rate of 86.5 cents per hour. The non-white operatives are getting the same job done for 22 cents an hour.

In the Building Industry in 1966, at the same time as whites were granted large pay increases and fringe benefits, a new "operator" category of "non-white" work between that of labourer and artisan was created. Wages for this work category were to be between labourers' wages and 60% of the wage prescribed for artisans.

- (6) The full table appears in State of South Africa Year Book 1969, p. 250. The net national income table shows an earlier shift in favour of manufacturing, but this does not affect my argument. See Hobart-Houghton (1964, p. 228).
- (7) It is not strictly accurate of the gold mining industry to say that it insisted only upon unskilled African labour. Its demand was for cheap labour at other levels too - the 1922 Rand Revolt was a direct outcome of the attempt to introduce Africans at a lower rate of pay into jobs previously held by whites only.
- (8) Sunday Times, 15/3/1970.
- (9) Sunday Times, 15/3/1970.
- (10) Sunday Tribune, 16/11/69.
- (11) Dr. P. E. Rousseau in an address to the 25th Congress of the Handelsinstitut in April 1970.
- (12) Figures prepared by the Northern Transvaal Chamber of Industries in June 1970, although showing a fall-off, indicate the high rate of investment.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage increase over Previous Year of Private Investment in Manufacturing</u>
1963	33
1964	56
1965	22
1966	10
1967	1

- (13) This table is adapted from the Population Census of 1960. The figures for 1969 are from Tables B-7, B-3 of the Bulletin of Statistics of March 1970. The 1969 percentage figures, however, are calculated on the basis of the Bureau of Statistics' estimate of the total economically active population for the end of 1968 as reported in Hansard 7/2/1969.
- (14) From TUCSA (1969).
- (15) Adopted from 1960 Census Report.
- (16) Rand Daily Mail, 21/4/1970.

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