Online Article

The Petty Bourgeoisie in the Thought of Amilcar Cabral and Walter Rodney

Paper presented to the International Symposium entitled:
'Amilcar Cabral: A national and universal heritage',
in commemoration of the centenary of Cabral's birth held at Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau from 9 to 12 September, 2024

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On Petty Bourgeoisie

One of the most debated ideas of Amilcar Cabral is that of the suicide of the petty bourgeoisie. Much has been written on this idea, a few in context but much out of context, thinking of it as a dictum or an edict. In revisiting this statement, I want to locate it in its historical and political context: why it was said, in what context and with what political purpose in mind. Cabral and Walter Rodney always emphasised the specificity of discourse—to be concrete and contextual and discuss concepts and ideas emanating from our own specific conditions and political practices. Before I do this, it is relevant to discuss the social category of petty bourgeoisie, which both Cabral and Rodney used freely in their writings. This is important because their meaning of 'petty bourgeoisie', particularly in the political context, is slightly different from that of the Marxist classics.

In the *Communist Manifesto* ([1850] 1973: 62–98), Marx and Engels seemed to imply that in Europe there were two types of petty bourgeoisie: the 'old' petty bourgeoisie (artisans, shopkeepers, etc.), who were remnants from the precapitalist formations (feudalism, in the case of Europe), and the 'new' petty bourgeoisie, formed in developed capitalism and ensconced between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, 'fluctuating between proletariat and bourgeoisie and ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of the bourgeois society' (ibid.: 89).

The idea of the fickle nature of the petty bourgeoisie oscillating between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was formulated more graphically by Marx in his polemical text against Proudhon. He described Proudhon as a petty bourgeois who was 'continually tossed back and forth between capital and labour …' (Marx and Engels [1847] 1976: 178). The fickle or unreliable nature of petty bourgeoisie has remained with us and is often deployed in polemical writings. However, we do not find this in Cabral or Rodney, who took the role of the petty bourgeoisie seriously, notwithstanding its fickle nature. Once again, Cabral and Rodney cautioned that we should desist from generalisations and be context-specific.

There is another important point to add in reference to Marx's writings on the petty bourgeoisie. From his historical conception of it as an intermediary class without independent material interests,[1] Marx could not envisage the petty bourgeoisie getting into political power on its own and becoming a ruling class serving its own interests. Even where it did get into state power, it was objectively serving the interests of the bourgeoisie (see, for instance, Marx [1852] 1973). This is important, because in some of Rodney's writings we come across the idea of the petty bourgeoisie as the ruling class (Rodney [1975] 1990: 54–55). More on this later.

Matters stand differently when it comes to colonial and neocolonial formations, which were the domi-

nant framework for Cabral and Rodney. On the place and political role of the petty bourgeoisie, there are certain commonalities and significant differences between their writings.

Firstly, the most significant difference between the European situation and struggles that Marx was writing on, and the African situation, was the central factor of imperialism. Whereas in the European case the formations and transitions from one to another were largely autonomous, dependent on internal social and political contradictions that were ultimately decisive, in the colonial and neocolonial contexts, internal contradictions were muted under colonialism. The internal contradictions between classes and social groups surfaced after independence under neocolonialism. In the anticolonial struggle, almost all colonised people were fighting against the colonial power. As soon as independence was achieved, social classes and groups began to assert their own interests, albeit under the overall hegemony of imperialism (Cabral [1966] 1969: 57 et seq.).

Secondly, in the colonial and neocolonial situation the petty bourgeoisie was more than an intermediary. Tethered to the metropolitan bourgeoisie under colonialism and tied to the international bourgeoisie in many ways under neocolonialism, the petty bourgeoisie, or at least large sectors of it, was a transmission belt. Its privileged position and perks were best served by playing second fiddle to the international bourgeoisie.

Thirdly, national liberation in Africa, whether through armed struggle or peaceful means, was a kind of alliance between classes led by the petty bourgeoisie, or some sectors of it. On this Cabral and Rodney agreed. They saw the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie as almost inevitable. The petty bourgeoisie under colonialism was the class nearest to the colonial state apparatus, or in it; had a broader view of the world than the working people; had some education to articulate the demands of the people; knew the colonial ways of the Europeans; and had a personal interest in fighting for independence given that it subjectively felt the racial discrimination and the humiliation of petty European officials, their bosses, in spite of the latter being less qualified. This was the point made by Cabral, giving his own example.

Cabral was a highly qualified agronomist in the colonial civil service but earned far less than his Portuguese boss, to whom he could have 'taught his job with my eyes shut' (Cabral [1966] 1969: 52). Cabral added that such discrimination and affront suffered by the African petty bourgeoisie mattered 'when considering where the initial idea of the struggle came from' (ibid). This ought not to be generalised because there are instances in many African countries where the initial ideas for freedom and independence came from some sectors of the working people, even though in such cases too, eventually, the leadership landed in the hands of the more educated petty bourgeoisie.

Fourthly, although Cabral and Rodney drew their classification of the petty bourgeoisie from Marxism, their application was not slavish. In Cabral's astute analysis of what he called 'the social structure in Guinea' (Cabral [1964] 1969: 46–61), he separately considered towns and the rural areas, Fulas and Balantes. In towns, he identified several groups, including workers (for example, dockworkers), European bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, African petty bourgeoisie of different social gradations, African shop workers employed by European merchants and commercial houses, prostitutes, thieves and other déclassé elements. He characterised Fulas as semi-feudal, having two main classes: chiefs and peasants. Between these two classes are intermediate social groups, like artisans and Dyulas (itinerant traders), who could be classified as petty bourgeois. Balantes hardly had much stratification, land was communally owned, instruments of production were privately owned and the product went to the one who laboured.

In his synthesis of the social stratification of Africans, Cabral saw higher and middle officials and liberal professionals as a group, followed by petty officials, commercial employees and small farm owners as the petty bourgeoisie (ibid.: 48). He was somewhat hesitant to place higher officials and liberal professionals in the petty bourgeoisie but made a rather tantalising observation: '… if we were to make a thorough analysis the higher African officials as well as the middle officials and members of the liberal professions should also be included in the petty bourgeoisie' (ibid.). I venture to say that Cabral was inclined to include this group in the African petty bourgeoisie. (In our East African debates of the 1970s, such a group was unambiguously included in the petty bourgeoisie—see Shivji 1975, passim.)

What is perhaps most interesting in Cabral's essay is not so much the analysis of the social structure, which is somewhat schematic, but his *political* analysis of the attitude of each class and social group to national liberation and social revo-

lution. This was rooted in the current social conditions of Guinea-Bissau, though in its methodology Cabral seems to have leaned heavily on classic Marx. He refused to call workers 'working class' or the 'proletariat'. His argument was that there could not be a proletariat in the absence of a national bourgeoisie. By the same token, he refused to call déclassé elements the lumpen proletariat since there cannot be a lumpen proletariat in the absence of a proletariat.

It is difficult to agree wholly with this *logical* argument. But then one must keep in mind that Cabral was writing this in 1964 based on the actually existing conditions in Guinea-Bissau. He did not have behind him the experience of independent African countries, since most had become independent only a couple of years earlier. He could not be expected to predict outcomes in independent African countries that eventually did experience the development of the proletariat and some bourgeoisie—albeit dependent bourgeoisie, mostly compradorial classes in both public and private sectors.

Another interesting point in Cabral's analysis is that he did not consider the peasantry as a revolutionary force. Although the peasantry is most exploited, that does not in itself make the peasantry a revolutionary agency (ibid.: 51). And he certainly did not see revolutionary potential in the déclassé elements of what traditionally is called the lumpen proletariat. In both these respects, Cabral departed from Frantz Fanon, who considered the working class as some kind of labour aristocracy and the peasantry as the revolutionary force (Fanon 1967; see also Macey 2000: 390 et seq.). In fact, Fanon disagreed with the Angolan People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which based its struggle in urban areas and neglected the peasantry (Macey ibid.).[2]

Whereas Cabral's conception was based on the experience of Guinea-Bissau (and he always emphasised this and refused to generalise), Rodney's arose from his experience of the Caribbean, and of East Africa where he participated in the vigorous debates of the 1960s and 70s at the University of Dar es Salaam. At the time, the term petty bourgeoisie was in vogue to the extent that many of us involved in those debates took it for granted that it was the petty bourgeoisie that was in power, albeit as a dependent class. Rodney, writing in 1974 (Rodney 1975a, 1975b) and in 1975 (Rodney [1975] 1990), continued to adhere to the concept of the petty bourgeoisie, sometimes even calling African states petty bourgeois states. In hindsight, we can legitimately ask whether it was correct not to recognise the differentiation of the petty bourgeoisie in state power after independence.

As a participant in those debates, I tried to develop the concept of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, particularly after the 1967 nationalisations in Tanzania. My argument then was that the petty bourgeoisie, having lacked an economic base when it came to power, had sought to create such a base through nationalisation. My position was that the state had become the site of accumulation for the collective interest of the whole bureaucratic bourgeoisie, though consumption remained individual. Yet I continued to include the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the petty bourgeoisie. I did not fully develop the argument that, in fact, the petty bourgeoisie had morphed into a bourgeoisie, a bureaucratic bourgeoisie. One commentator on the earlier version[3] of my *Class Struggles in Tanzania* (1973) observed that I always bracketed the term 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' in inverted commas, implying perhaps a tentative formulation or that the class was not yet fully developed (Foster-Carter 1973: 12–24). I later changed my position, recognising the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as a class (see, for instance, Shivji et al. 2020: book 3: passim). It is not clear if Rodney, too, changed his position.

In his Hamburg lectures in 1978, Rodney had come a long way from his hopes for Tanzania's Ujamaa and his tentative formulations on class and class struggle. According to his biographer, while giving some credit to the nationalism of the Tanzanian petty bourgeoisie, Rodney showed surprise at how the bureaucratic bourgeoisie had abandoned the Ujamaa project and embedded itself in the international capitalist system (Zeilig 2022: 268–283). I cannot conclusively say that Rodney had by then come to accept that the bureaucratic bourgeoisie had developed into a class in itself because I have not heard or read the original lectures. However, the biographer quotes one statement from the lectures which I find pregnant, as if Rodney were moving towards identifying the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as a class in itself. 'The idea of class struggle does not suit a bureaucratic bourgeoisie or any sector of the petit-bourgeoisie, because it's an idea that speaks about the negation of their own existence over time' (ibid.: 284). Be that as it may, what is important for the purpose of this paper is to underline that in Rodney we do not find a fully fledged analysis that the petty bourgeoisie in power had transformed into some other kind of bourgeoisie.

There is another piece of analytical observation by Rodney that I find both refreshing and illustrative of his refusal to slavishly apply theories developed elsewhere. In his conversation with the comrades of the Institute of the Black World, over a period of two days on 30 April and 1 May 1975, he said:

> We still have a large peasantry. Do we treat them as petty commodity producers and as a consequence as members of the petit bourgeoisie, or do we see them as part of the working people, the producers in our country? What do we do with the large number of unemployed? Thirty-three per cent of our population is unemployed. Do we call them 'lumpen proletariat' and with all that that implies—that they're outside the working class, that they are even in some ways antisocial—or should we understand that this is a fundamental part of the thrust of capitalism to keep our working people from having the right to work. (Rodney 1990: 107)

In this observation, Rodney was hinting at an extremely useful concept, the concept of the working people. Inspired by Rodney, I have developed the concept of the working people further (Shivji 2017). I consider Rodney's concept of the working people as his most important contribution to the theory of class and class struggle in Africa and the Caribbean.

Let us return to Cabral. Did Cabral think that the petty bourgeoisie in power would change into some kind of a bourgeoisie either through the state or in alliance with the comprador bourgeoisie outside the state? Remember, Cabral did not have the experience of neocolonialism behind him. He was in a sense extrapolating, yet his observations are very sharp and revealing. In his 1966 essay, 'The weapon of theory', Cabral began talking about the possible class structure and class struggles under neocolonialism. He argued that 'imperialist action takes the form of creating a local bourgeoisie or pseudobourgeoisie, controlled by the ruling class of the dominating country' (Cabral [1966] 1969: 82). He used 'pseudo' because, in his main thesis, this class is incapable of releasing the free development of productive forces or, in the language of class, is incapable of becoming a true national bourgeoisie.[4] Fanon described well the characteristics of the 'national middle class' ('pseudobourgeoisie' in the words of Cabral, or 'compradorial class' in the language of East African debates) in his celebrated passage:

> in underdeveloped countries no true bourgeoisie exists; there is only a sort of little greedy caste, avid and voracious, with the mind of the huckster, only too glad to accept the dividends that the former colonial power hands out to it. This get-rich-quick middle class shows itself incapable of great ideas or of inventiveness.[5] (Fanon 1967: 141)

Elsewhere, Cabral described succinctly the differentiation of the petty bourgeoisie once in power:

> the creation of a native pseudobourgeoisie which generally develops out of a petty bourgeoisie of bureaucrats and accentuates the differentiation between social strata and intermediaries in the commercial system (compradorial), by strengthening the economic activity of local elements, opens up new perspectives in the social dynamic, mainly by the development of the urban working class, the introduction of the private agricultural property and the progressive appearance of an agricultural proletariat. (Cabral 1969: 82)

This comes close to my analysis of Tanzania in *Class Struggles*, but unlike Cabral, both Rodney and I (I now believe wrongly) continued to talk about the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as a part of the petty bourgeoisie. That, writing as early as 1966, Cabral could almost foresee the morphing of the petty bourgeoisie into another bourgeoisie after independence is not only prescient but the result of his deep theoretical insights and powerful belief in the socialist revolution as the most viable option for progress in a neocolony. Contemplating a socialist path, Cabral had already begun to think of the possible class enemies that the working people would have to face. I return to this subject again in the next two sections.

On the Petty Bourgeoisie Committing Suicide

There are two instances in which Cabral deploys the idea of the petty bourgeoisie committing suicide. In both, the context was his political discussion on the possible trajectory of the petty bourgeoise that led the national liberation movement as it was poised to take over state power on the morrow of independence. The first instance is in his essay 'Brief analysis', where Cabral says that the petty bourgeoisie has only two options: either 'ally itself with imperialism and reactionary strata in its own country' or 'ally itself with the workers and peasants', in which case 'Are we asking the petty bourgeoisie to commit suicide?' 'Because if there is a revolution, then the petty bourgeoisie will have to abandon power to the workers and the peasants and cease to exist qua petty bourgeoisie'[6] (Cabral [1964] 1969: 57).

The second instance is in his 1966 theoretical essay 'The weapon of theory'.

Before dealing with this, let me make one thing clear. Unlike Rodney, Cabral stated very clearly that the petty bourgeoisie was not capable of retaining political power and becoming a ruling class, even if it came to power, because it lacked an economic base. It was essentially a service class not involved in the process of production (ibid.: 89). This is very much in line with the classic Marxist view of the petty bourgeoisie discussed above.

Cabral argued that for the petty bourgeoisie to retain the power that national liberation had put in its hands, it had two options. The first option, which meant allying itself with imperialism and reinforcing neocolonialism, was 'to give free rein to its natural tendencies to become more bourgeois, to permit the development of a bureaucratic and intermediate bourgeoisie, in the commercial cycle, in order to transform itself into a pseudo-bourgeoisie' (emphasis mine).

The second option was not to betray the objectives of national liberation, which meant:

> strengthen its revolutionary consciousness, … reject the temptation of becoming more bourgeois and the natural concerns of its class mentality, … identify itself with the working classes …. This means that in order to truly fulfil the role of the national liberation struggle, the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie must be capable of committing suicide as a class in order to be reborn as revolutionary workers, completely identified with the aspirations of the people to which they belong. (emphasis mine) (Cabral [1966] 1969: 89)

There is no concept in Rodney of the petty bourgeoisie committing suicide, although he too urged the people of middle classes, in the words of Eusi Kwayana et al., 'to a commitment to service of the masses of the working people' (Kwayana et al. 2009: 130). Rodney also talked about certain sectors of the petty bourgeoisie, like intellectuals, 'grounding' with the people to be able to play a revolutionary role (Rodney 2013: 300). Fanon, on the other hand, came very close to the formulation of Cabral in his formulations. The 'authentic national middle class in an underdeveloped country is to repudiate its own nature in so far as it is bourgeois' and 'make itself the willing slave of that revolutionary capital which is the people' (emphasis mine) (Fanon 1967: 120). In other words, like Cabral, Fanon was urging the 'national middle class' 'to betray the calling fate has marked out for it, and to put itself to school with the people …' (ibid.).

I conclude this discussion on the idea of the petty bourgeoisie committing suicide by underscoring four principal issues of methodology and perspective that are embedded in Cabral's approach.

Firstly, Cabral's approach was political, based on class and not some reified or metaphysical perspective, although he used words like 'reincarnate', 'reborn' and such like. Secondly, in this context, Cabral was not talking about going back to the roots, to 'return to the source', or identifying with the masses or returning to culture/tradition. Rather he was calling on the petty bourgeoisie to repudiate its class nature (see Fanon above) and 'acquire … a working-class mentality'[7] (Cabral 1969: 55).

Thirdly, Cabral's formulation in 'The weapon of theory', that the petty bourgeoisie should commit suicide 'as a class', has often troubled me. Did he mean the whole of the petty bourgeoisie committing suicide, which would be absurd, or some individuals from the petty bourgeoisie? After carefully re-reading the essay and its context, I come to the conclusion that the phrase 'as a class' is not a reference to the petty bourgeoisie as a social category. Cabral was rather implying that the petty bourgeoisie betrays, so to speak, its petty bourgeois class nature to become more bourgeois. Thus, Cabral was talking about the nature or aspiration of the petty bourgeoisie to become bourgeois, which it is called upon to repudiate so as to become revolutionary and join the working people in their historical role to transcend the system of capitalist imperialism.

Finally, let me re-emphasise that the context of this idea was the transition from anticolonial national liberation to postcolonial revolution. Cabral was already thinking and agonising over what would happen after the victory of national liberation, that is, whether the country would fall into neocolonialism and therefore under the hegemony of imperialism, or advance to a social revolution. This marks out Cabral from many of his contemporary African leaders of national liberation, including those of Marxist orientation, and takes me to the final section of this paper.

National Liberation and Social Revolution

Rodney stated: 'Our predicament at the present time throws up new questions. Neo-colonial man is asking a different set of questions than the old colonial man' (Rodney 1990: 69). And he went on to urge his audience not to get trapped in the colonial moment where the

struggle is of the whole people, Africans, against the dominant Europeans. Under neocolonialism, the new question is whether Africans are a homogenous mass or differentiated into classes. And if they are differentiated, then against which class or classes are the working people struggling?

Rodney was raising these questions almost fifteen years after the independence of most African countries and therefore had the benefit of the experience of neocolonialism and internal class struggles. Cabral did not have that benefit. He was writing only a couple of years after the independence of some African countries and before his Guinea-Bissau became independent. Therefore, in Rodney's formulation, Cabral was the 'old colonial man' raising and grappling with the new questions of the 'neocolonial man'. Cabral combined both. In this respect, he was ahead of his time. He was raising questions of social revolution beyond national liberation and positing a possibility of national liberation seamlessly flowing into anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist social revolution. This is contrary to the widely held belief in many national liberation movements then, of two stages—first the national democratic stage and then the socialist stage.[8] This position also suggests that Cabral appreciated the limits of nationalism spawned by anticolonial struggles while at the same time seeing in them a potential to advance to social revolution. Presumably, he would have called this a 'national liberation revolution' rather than simply 'national liberation' with an ultimate goal of independence and state sovereignty.

In the context of training cadres for national liberation, in his 1964 essay Cabral observed: 'we realized that we needed to have people with a mentality which could transcend the context of the national liberation struggle ...' (Cabral [1964] 1969: 55). Cabral was already thinking in terms of transcending the anticolonial struggle. Referring to the historical situation where imperialism was dominant and socialism was consolidating itself in a large part of the world, Cabral reiterated the necessity of eliminating imperialism. Thus, there were only 'two possible paths for an independent nation: to return to imperialist domination (neocolonialism, capitalism, state capitalism), or to take the way of socialism' (ibid.: 87). Needless to say, then, for Cabral social revolution meant a revolution against imperialism and capitalism and going 'the way of socialism'.

Almost sixty years down the line, virtually all African countries have taken the path of neocolonialism entangled woefully in the imperialist web. Cabral's hope and wish for national liberation to transform into a social revolution was dashed, even in his own two countries (Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde), for whose liberation he sacrificed his life.

The neocolonial and neoliberal reality of the African world has been so pervasive that some scholars, even radical ones, are damning the national liberation struggles for which thousands of people sacrificed their lives. Cabral indeed showed some reservations about the national liberation struggles but with a different motivation and without repudiating the anti-imperialist struggle against colonialism. His major concern was that the national liberation struggle for independence and self-determination should become a national liberation revolution which would seamlessly flow into a socialist revolution.

Cabral asked whether national liberation could be taken simply as a revolutionary trend or required a deeper analysis. '[I]n fact I would even go so far as to ask whether, given the advance of socialism in the world, the national liberation movement is not an imperialist initiative' (Cabral [1966] 1969: 58). He continued with a series of rhetorical questions:

> Is the judicial institution which serves as the reference for the rights of peoples to struggle to free themselves a product of the peoples who are trying to liberate themselves? Was it created by the socialist countries who are our historical associates? It is signed by the imperialist countries, it is the imperialist countries who have recognised the right of all peoples to national independence, so I ask myself whether we may not be considering as an initiative of our people what is in fact an initiative of the enemy? (ibid.)

Cabral then proceeded to answer his own questions explaining why he was raising them in the first place.

> This is where we think there is something wrong with the simple interpretation of the national liberation movement as a revolutionary trend. The objective of the imperialist countries was to prevent the enlargement of the socialist camp, to liberate the reactionary forces in our countries which were being stifled by colonialism and to enable these forces to ally themselves with the international bourgeoisie. The fundamental objective was to create a bourgeoisie where one did not exist, in order specifically to strengthen the imperialist and the capitalist camp. … We are therefore faced with the problem of deciding whether to en-

> gage in an out and out struggle against the bourgeoisie right from the start or whether to try and make an alliance with the national bourgeoisie, to try to deepen the absolutely necessary contradiction between the national bourgeoisie and the international bourgeoisie which has promoted the national bourgeoisie to the position it holds'. (ibid.: 58–59)

The international situation has changed enormously since Cabral raised these questions. The socialist camp does not exist anymore—but the imperialist capitalist camp does. It has become even more ferocious than ever before. The comprador classes that wield state power in our countries are hand in glove with the international bourgeoisie. Within the process of classes and class struggles, the revolutionary forces of the working people have to continuously face the question of building broad alliances so as to isolate the reactionary forces. In this context, if there are enduring lessons to learn from Cabral, then they are these.

- One, the absolute importance of doing a concrete analysis of our concrete conditions, in particular that of the class structure.
- Two, to try and understand politically the attitude of each class and social stratum towards the revolution as opposed to imposing revolutionary agency doctrinally.
- Three, build an ideological hegemony of the working people in civil society by engaging in intellectual and ideological struggles with the dominant hegemony both to dent the credibility of the ruling ideology but, even more important, to develop a 'pedagogy of the oppressed', to use Paulo Freire's revolutionary concept (Freire [1970] 1993).
- Four, to be cautious of populist regimes which may mouth nationalist or anti-imperialist slogans.
- Five, radical scholars need to be cautious of some ruling classes deploying anti-imperialist slogans or even struggling for state sovereignty while at the same time using the repressive state apparatus against their own people. This does not necessarily mean that radical intellectuals may not lend critical support to such struggles depending on each concrete situation.
- Six, and finally, to identify non-dogmatically the classes and forces with which revolutionary forces of the working people can ally at each conjuncture. All this involves organisation, on which Cabral also had some very profound observations to make. A discussion on revolutionary organisation/s will have to wait for another occasion.

The youth of Africa, or Generation Z[9] as the Kenyan youth call themselves, have a lot to learn from Cabral.

Cabral's legacy endures. It teaches, inspires and mobilises, all at the same time.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Dr Carlos Cardozo for inviting me and to Dr Godwin Murunga, through CODESRIA, for enabling me to travel to Guinea-Bissau.

Notes

1. In Marxist political economy, 'material interests' refers to those interests that arise from the specific role a class plays in the process of production. This is distinguished from 'privileges' that a class or sector of it may enjoy arising from its social status or role in the sectors servicing, directly or indirectly, production or related processes.
2. The veteran Pan-Africanist revolutionary, C. L. R. James, also considered the peasantry in Africa a revolutionary force (James 2012: 60). Robin Kelly, in his introduction to the book, points out that 'Insisting that the peasantry—in this case ex-slaves—could be a revolutionary force in and of itself was not entirely new. Indian Communist M. N. Roy had made a similar point in his 1920 debate with Lenin over the national-colonial question' (ibid.:18).
3. The earlier version was called 'Tanzania: The Class Struggle Continues', which I had shared with a group of comrades, including Rodney, before it was first published in 1973 in a mimeographed form by the Institute of Development Studies, University of Dar es Salaam.
4. In the language of Samir Amin, this class is incapable of developing an autonomous economy based on its own internal, rather than external, logic (Amin 1990: xii).
5. Fanon used the term 'national middle class' and 'national bourgeoisie' interchangeably. This is probably a carry-over from the historical French discourse in which the rising bourgeoise was considered a middle class, between the aristocracy and the peasantry, in the transition from feudalism to capitalism. In the situation of Africa, Fanon could have been referring to some kind of a compradorial class or a petty bourgeoise, which is doubtful. Fanon never used the terms 'comprador' or 'petty bourgeoisie'.
6. In 'Brief Analysis', he again talked about the petty bourgeoisie having to commit suicide if it wanted to identify its interests with those of workers and peasants. However, by doing this it would not lose 'by sacrificing itself [because] it can reincarnate itself, but in the condition of workers and peasants' (Cabral 1969: 59).

7. Cabral was using this phrase in the context of training cadres who were from different social categories, but it is equally applicable to the petty bourgeoisie.
8. For a more nuanced stageist argument, see Slovo 1988. Joe Slovo was then the General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, which was closely allied with the African National Congress (ANC), then the leading national liberation movement of South Africa.
9. For some snippets of the struggle of Gen-Z in Kenya, see Durrani 2024: 14 et seq.

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