

POLITICAL CHANGE AND THE BLACK MIDDLE CLASS IN DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA.

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The development of a black middle class was deliberately stunted under segregation and apartheid. Economically, a black middle stratum was seen as potentially competitive to white accumulation. Politically, it was viewed as articulating demands for racial equality and inclusion. Consequently, rather than being absorbed into a capitalist democracy, the African middle class (save for minority 'collaborationist' elements) was thrust into the welcoming arms of the liberation movement, whose design - as expressed by the African National Congress (ANC) - was to overthrow 'racial capitalism' and achieve a 'national democratic revolution' (NDR) as precursor (at least in the views of some) to the eventual establishment of 'socialism'. Yet almost inevitably, the post-liberation nature of the black middle class was left largely undefined. On the one hand, the enormity of the struggle against apartheid subordinated speculation about the future to the immediacies of the present. On the other, consideration of the post-revolutionary role of the African middle class was both highly problematic (posing hugely awkward questions around leadership, function and potential privilege) and potentially divisive (challenging the assumption of the non-antagonism of classes within the liberation family).

The ANC's assumption of power in 1994 occurred in circumstances which were far less favourable than much previous 'liberation' theorizing had imagined. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the triumph of a raw capitalism globally placed severe constraints upon the ANC, which via South Africa's negotiated settlement achieved political office within a liberal democratic framework which left multinational and 'white national' capital in charge of the economy. In these circumstances, although the ANC retained a real aspiration towards 'delivery' of basic improvements to the poor, its principal goals were now to become first, the consolidation of its control of the state, and second, the 'transformation' of societal institutions and the economy. These were to be pursued principally through strategies of 'affirmative action' and 'black economic empowerment' (BEE). The present article examines the impact of these political changes upon the black middle class.

Defining 'Black Middle Class'

The very notion of 'middle class' in industrialized, industrialising and post-colonial societies is problematic. Most particularly, the massive expansion of middle-strata has long brought into question the classic Marxian notion of capitalist societies polarizing into two antagonistic classes. The 'new middle class', which is typically in government or corporate employment, shares many of the characteristics of the classic proletariat, notably in the sense that it has no direct ownership of the means of production and is in a subordinate relationship to capital-owning employers. Significantly, such salaried employees often enjoy a higher income than members of the 'old middle class', which is typically composed of middle to small-scale owners of capitalist enterprises and who therefore often employ others in the production process. On the other hand, advanced capitalism is characterized by a significant (although very far from absolute) divorce between ownership and control, which renders managers (often characterized as 'middle class') rather than share-holders the typical decision-makers concerning the deployment of capital, this entire situation

complicated by the direct or indirect (via invested savings and pensions) ownership of capital by both middle and working classes.

Two traditions have developed in response to these developments, the one neo-marxist, the other neo-Weberian. The former has sought to explain why large sections of the populations of advanced capitalist countries have failed to support working class parties. As Crankshaw (1996: 636) notes, they have therefore been preoccupied with defining the boundary between the working class and 'the new middle class', 'petty bourgeoisie' or whatever, and as Rivero, du Toit and Kotze (2003: 10) observe, are driven by political motivations and assume a conflict of interests between property-owning and non-property-owning classes. The second tradition, in contrast, allocates individuals to a variable number of classes according to their occupation, income, education and other 'life-chances', and does not assume any inherent antagonism between them. Given such huge debate around class categorization in the modern world, I am going to duck these tricky issues by adopting an empirical definition which, I trust, embodies a widely understood meaning: that is, the middle class (or petty bourgeoisie) is characterized by its drawing its primary income (directly or indirectly) from non-manual employment, as 'white-collar employees', managers, self-employed business persons, or professionals¹.

Before proceeding further, it is also important to deal with 'race', for given the ideal of non-racialism, it may appear anachronistic to refer to the 'black' middle-class. I argue, in contrast, that the racial configuration of South Africa renders this term meaningful, in the sense that race 'exists' as a social (rather than a biological) construct. The present reality is that 'race' remains a (the?) major determinant of South African social structure. Overall, whites are hugely advantaged compared to blacks, amongst whom Africans (79% of the population) are relatively disadvantaged compared to the Indian (2.5%) and Coloured (8.9%) minorities². 'Race' also matters in the sense that historical racial group disadvantage is today central to politically driven attempts to 'transform' post-apartheid society in order to render the political economy 'representative'.

Before 1994, the separation of races meant that the historical trajectories of middle class elements within these communities were different, so that there were in fact identifiable 'African, Indian and Coloured' middle classes. Whilst they all shared the *fact* of racial oppression, they were *differentially* oppressed. This allowed, for instance, for the development of an Indian merchant class in Natal which strides ahead of an African trading petty-bourgeoisie, which was subject to much more crippling restrictions. This has meant that in practice study of the disadvantaged middle classes has replicated apartheid divisions, rendering treatment of the 'black' middle class(es) difficult³. Hence although this paper will refer to the 'black middle class' as an emergent reality, it will of necessity draw primarily upon the literature which has dealt with the 'African' middle class.

This 'reality' of the 'black middle class' does not mean that tensions between its different racial segments do not exist. Far from it. Indeed, although the present drive for 'transformation' legally defines the historically disadvantaged as 'blacks', the political practice is a more Africanist one, where Africans are most highly valued, and Indians (amongst whom the proportion of educated and professionally qualified

individuals is highest) are the least favoured. Hence whilst the notion of a 'black middle class' may well have an increasing salience, its coherence cannot be taken for granted⁴. These tensions, however, are not the present object of inquiry.

The Black Middle Class before 1994

Thinking about the black middle class in South Africa has drawn heavily upon both the neo-marxist and neo-Weberian traditions. Inevitably, this has reflected the 'revisionist' and 'liberal' approaches which did battle with each other from the 1970s, although these two schools were often combined in fruitful combination. Broadly speaking, however, we may characterize the neo-marxist approach as having been primarily oriented towards determining the political orientation of the black middle class towards the defeat of apartheid; and the neo-Weberian approach as viewing the development of the black middle class as simultaneously an instrument and outcome of the modernization and growth of the economy. Both approaches have offered rich insights – and almost as many problems.

The Neo-Marxist Approach

The origins of the African middle class as mission-educated elites who engaged in early constitutional protest politics has been well documented by liberal as much as revisionist historians. An important presentation is provided by Odendaal, who depicts the members of the early political organizations which preceded the formation of the South African National Native Congress (the SANNC, forerunner to the ANC) in 1912 as a "political class" which was "Born into traditional African societies and equipped to fit into European society by virtue of their education, Christianity and economic assimilation". This class called for African inclusion in national institutions (Odendaal 1984: 286). However, this moderate political strategy was to be overtaken by the shift to industrial society and the establishment of the segregationist Union of South Africa in 1910.

The focus upon the historical origins of the African middle class was of particular importance to the revisionists, typical of whom was Bonner, who related how this early petty bourgeoisie was subject to contradictory pressures imposed by colonial racism. On the one hand, it identified with the values of the liberal (mainly imperial) bourgeoisie against more immediate white oppressors; on the other, as was noted by the Godley report in 1921, the membership of the SANNC was comprised of "natives who have acquired a certain amount of education only to find the professional, clerical and skilled avenues of employment closed to them" (Bonner 1982: 272). The colonized petty bourgeoisie was therefore unable to articulate with conviction the metropolitan values it espoused, although for every member of the petty bourgeoisie, there was "always a correspondingly great substratum among the upper level of the working class – generally described at the time as the 'educated' or 'civilised' – who aspired to their position and struggled to get in" (ibid). Consequently, a downward identification of at least one section of the petty bourgeoisie was always on the cards, and the extent to which this class managed to cohere was to be determined by class struggle.

Reflective of Bonner's analysis, the revisionist literature which theorised the black petty bourgeoisie recognized the contrary pressures to which it was subject and the differential responses they evoked. Nzimande has identified two main approaches⁵.

The first was embodied in the theory of Colonialism of a Special Type (CST), and its derivatives. This argued that South Africa was principally a class society characterized by capitalism, but its colonial nature meant that the class exploitation of Africans in particular, and of blacks in general, could not be separated from national oppression. The petty bourgeoisie was therefore more immediately linked to the black working class than to their class counterparts across the colour line. Even so, CST theorists simultaneously recognized that class differentiation amongst the oppressed allowed for a petty bourgeois ‘project’ which might divide them from the black working class. Hence Slovo (cited by Nzimande 1990:168) referred to a black capitalist class which favoured capitalism, and noted that black middle and upper classes which took part in the broad liberation alliance would be the most likely to espouse reformist rather than revolutionary outcomes. The task of the liberation movement was therefore to win these elements over rather than alienating them. Elaborations of CST were provided, inter alia, by Nolutshungu (1982), who stressed that racially exclusive nature of the South African formation was likely to render the black petty bourgeoisie open to alliances with the rest of the oppressed, and Wolpe (1988), who adopted a less deterministic approach, which proposed that in practice the relationship between the petty bourgeoisie and the black working class was fixed neither *in favour of* national liberation nor always *against* an alliance.

The second approach, developed in academic literature from the 1970s, dealt with the changing location of African traders and capitalists triggered by late-apartheid reforms involving the lifting of restrictions upon them. This suggested that “a qualitative change (was) taking place in the position of the urban African petty bourgeoisie” which was to render unlikely their “durable participation ... in a popular alliance struggling for national liberation”. In essence, African capitalists (who were largely dependent for their existence upon the support of capital and the state) and associated political segments of the petty bourgeoisie (such as homeland politicians and urban councillors), were overwhelmingly collaborationist and wedded to projects of apartheid-era reform. However, this perspective is presented by Nzimande (1990: 173) as ‘reductionist’, as failing to recognize that oppression affected all classes within the black community, albeit unevenly⁶.

Nzimande constructed his own approach upon the basis of debates around CST, arguing that the consolidation of monopoly capitalism and apartheid from around the early 1960s had drastically changed the composition of the African petty bourgeoisie, which by the late 1980s was composed of four distinct fractions:

The bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie (BPB) was composed of rural, Bantustan and urban, township based strata. Whereas the former element was so closely tied to the apartheid state and monopoly capital that some of the most reliable allies of the white ruling bloc had been drawn from its ranks, the latter – whilst also closely tied to apartheid structures – was severely challenged by the militance of the urban masses. Overall, the BPB constituted the fully coopted stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, whilst constituting only a tiny stratum of the latter as a whole.

The trading petty African bourgeoisie (TAPB) was composed of three strata. The first consisted of traders in the bantustans, whose fortunes were closely bound up with those of the rural BPB. The second was made up of traders in the urban areas, and

was similarly associated closely with the interests of the urban BPB except in so far as the militancy of the youth (via boycotts, burning down of properties etc) forced it to relate to the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM). Finally a third fraction, the 'autonomous' TAPB, which was hegemonic within the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC) – the primary class organ of the TAPB – had openly sympathized with the MDM. However, although undoubtedly anti-apartheid, it was equally definitely pro-capitalist.

The civil petty bourgeoisie (CPB) consisted of the civil servants and state employees in both the apartheid central state administration and the bantustans. This was the largest stratum of the African petty bourgeoisie, and was composed largely of nurses, teachers and clerks. It was from its ranks that independent professionals (who had provided the leadership of the national liberation movement) had been drawn. The CPB was potentially the most reliable ally of the working class and progressive forces because its reproduction was dependent on neither the continued existence of apartheid nor even capitalist structures. It also shared many of the conditions of the working class in relation to the state and bantustan authorities (such as poor salaries and despotic working conditions).

In contrast to these three strata, which had existed from the early 1900s, *the corporate petty bourgeoisie (COPB)* had emerged from the early 1970s, since when corporate capital had sought to legitimize capitalism through the discourse of the 'free enterprise system'. Strongly supportive of 'deracialised capitalism', the COPB was simultaneously hugely frustrated by limited opportunity and white managerial racism, uneasily situated as it was between capital's attempts to create a black middle class and white management's defence of its own class interests.

The Neo-Weberian Approach

From the 1960s, liberal scholars began to interpret the efforts by employers to respond to a shortage of white artisans by promoting African workers as evidence that the colour bar was eroding. Whereas revisionist scholars argued that this led to work previously performed by white workers being done by Africans at cheaper wages, liberals responded that the wage gap between white and African workers was narrowing. However, by the late 1970s both sides of the debate were able to agree upon the growing presence of African middle strata, with Wolpe (1977) pointing to an "enormous increase in the African middle class between 1960 and 1970", and Simkins and Hindson (1979) indicating the growing upward mobility of blacks into clerical, technical and non-manual jobs and of Africans into skilled employment.

Crankshaw (1996: 635-6) observes that despite agreement about the growth of the African middle class, there were wildly varying estimates of its size, ranging from Nolutshungu's (1983) estimate of its numbering 121, 948 in 1970 to Wolpe's figure of 1 315 800 for 1974. This, he argues, was the result of scholars using different definitions of the 'middle class' and the fact that official employment statistics did not readily translate into categories demanded by class theories. Furthermore, he proposes that the use of neo-Marxist categories is inappropriate because they generate broadly-defined classes that do not provide the detail "that is required for an understanding of the precise ways in which the racial division of labour may be eroding in South Africa" (Ibid: 638). Hence for instance, it would be crucial to know whether or not an

“increase of the African middle class was due ... to the expansion of African employment in teaching or nursing jobs or in middle management”.

To overcome such difficulties, Crankshaw develops a classification scheme which builds upon insights from both neo-Weberian class schemes (based on occupation) and labour process theory (which offer explanations about *why* changes in the racial division of labour come about). This incorporates both workplace (eg differences between managers and workers) and labour market (eg control of access to occupations) dynamics. He demonstrates difficulties presented by Census and other data used by most analysts for disaggregating occupational categories into class categories; and argues the superiority of Manpower Surveys (undertaken between 1965-1985 by the Department of Manpower and from 1987 by the Central Statistical Service) which recorded employment by race and sex for some 600 occupations. These latter allow him to develop a classification which ranges from senior management at the top to unskilled manual labourers at the bottom. Thereafter, his findings include the following:

- “The almost insignificant extent of African advancement into managerial and professional occupations (at a mere 3 and 11 percent respectively in 1990) contrasts with the extensive advancement of Africans into semi-professional occupations” (Crankshaw 1996: 643). This is mainly a function of the high number of African nurses and teachers.
- “The African proportion of routine white-collar employment doubled between 1965 and 1990, rising from 15 percent to 31 per cent...from 89, 425 in 1965 to about 300 906 in 1990”. “Africans form a fairly substantial proportion of a range of the most common routine white-collar jobs in shops, offices and transport establishments” (Ibid: 645-6).
- “The decline in the employment levels of white routine white-collar and artisanal workers has been a result of their upward occupational mobility, of either an inter- or intra-general character, into managerial, professional, semi-professional and supervisory jobs” (Ibid: 652). There is evidence, in other words, of a ‘floating colour bar’ “whereby African advancement only takes place when whites move upwards into more skilled and better paid jobs” (Ibid: 656).

Crankshaw has added major substance to the debate about the character of black advancement. Yet how can his insights be combined with those drawn from the neo-Marxist tradition to assist us to understand the impact of political changes *after 1994* upon the black middle class?

Re-thinking The Black Middle Class Post-Apartheid

Rivero, du Toit and Kotze have recently attempted to describe the South African middle class by contrasting responses to questions about occupation asked in its February Omnibus survey in 1994 and 2000 by the Human Sciences Research Council. Their major findings are that:

- The middle class as a whole increased considerably in size, from 8.8% of the population (around 3 571 350) in 1994 to 11.9% (around 5 333 550). Proportions of the different population groups belonging to the middle class (new and old) was Africans 7.8%, White 33.0%, Coloured 15.6%, and Indian

20.7%. This translates into a black middle class in 2000 of 3 616 504 (Rivero et al: 17).⁷

- Whereas the old middle class decreased relatively in size, the new middle class increased from 7.5% of the population (3 043 770) to 11.3% (5 065 630) (Ibid: 16).
- The major factor responsible for the enlargement of the middle class is the increase in the proportion of Africans who belong to the new middle class from 3.3% in 1994 to 7.8% (2 762 460) in 2000. (The proportions of Coloureds belonging to the new middle class increased from 9.1% in 1994 to 15.6% in 2000 and of Indians from 18.5% to 20.7%) (Ibid: 16).
- African advance has been swiftest at the highest – namely the ‘professional’ – level (up from 1.7% of Africans in 1994 to 4.9% in 2000), and much slower in the ‘managers’ (0.1% to 0.4%) and ‘clerks’ (1.3% to 2.0%) categories, largely as a result of affirmative action within public institutions (Ibid: 18).
- Whereas 29% of the middle class was African in 1994, the corresponding figure for 2000 is around 50%. “This means that whites have been overtaken by blacks as the largest population group within the middle class” (Ibid: 19).

Having started from literature that proposes that a well-developed middle class plays a positive role in democratization, Rivero et al. note that although it has increased since 1994, the middle class in South Africa remains small. They therefore remain uncertain whether its enlargement will consolidate democracy, and whether class will come to overtake race as the major cleavage within the political system.

The contribution of Rivero et al. provides a broad brush picture of the South African middle class under democracy, yet it remains hugely problematic. For instance, they ignore many of the difficulties raised by Crankshaw, most notably in their failure to interrogate the ‘professional’ category and their unquestioning depiction of this as belonging to the upper middle class. Most particularly, however, although they problematise their enquiry around the potential contribution an enlarged middle class may make to democratization, they ultimately fail to tell us anything about that issue at all! That, I would argue, is because in their haste to impose a ‘democratization’ perspective upon post-apartheid South Africa, they have dismissed the rich body of neo-marxist thinking which has developed around the struggle for South African liberation. I argue in contrast that Nzimande’s ‘fractionalisation’ of the petty bourgeoisie, derived from debates around CST, is far more useful in assisting political analysis, even though necessarily it needs considerable adjustment to enable us to understand developments post-apartheid.

The Black Middle Class and the State

Any analysis of the contemporary black middle class necessarily begins from the fact that the national liberation movement has captured control of the machinery of state, and in so doing has been able to make substantial changes to the political *and economic* terrain. During the period of late apartheid, Nzimande and others could refer to the ‘ruling white bloc’. Today, in answer to the key question “Who Rules South Africa?”, Tom Lodge (2002: 22) answers pragmatically “those people who constitute the ‘governing class’: presidents, premiers, members of the cabinet and executive (provincial) councils as well as the heads of civil service departments”, noting further (2002: 25) that “command of the state invests politicians and administrators with considerably social autonomy, but an autonomy that is

constrained by social actors, by ideology and moral beliefs, and by perceptions of the possible". I largely agree with Lodge, not least as he suggests (2002:31) that the interests the ANC represents are amorphous ("organized labour, black entrepreneurs, an emergent managerial class, rural poor, a multiracial intelligentsia informed by competing humanitarian and radical traditions").

Where I depart from Lodge is with regard to his failure to engage with the pre-1994 notion of the 'ruling bloc', which suggested the close entanglements of the then rulers with white monopoly capital. Now, whilst Lodge is correct to emphasise that the state possesses considerable autonomy (and hence, for instance, had considerable differences with large scale capital during the 1980s), it does not follow that the political influence of white capital has, post-1994, suddenly melted away!

The theory of the NDR acknowledges that the defeat of national oppression will lead to the development of a black capitalist class and the major growth of black middle strata. This, it stresses, would be a welcome development, although it also recognizes the dangers attached to the creation of a crassly consumerist, capitalist-oriented black bourgeoisie amidst a South Africa which retains the major contours of mass poverty and social inequality. The way forward, it is therefore argued, is for the masses to maintain vigilance to prevent the new bourgeoisie from becoming the tools of monopoly interests, or parasites who thrive on privilege and corruption. In this context, the ANC should engage with the black bourgeoisie to secure their adherence to codes of conduct which are compatible with the postponed goals of the liberation movement. The new bourgeoisie should be 'patriotic' rather than parasitic (Jordan 1997; Netshitenzhe 1996).

There is much that is left unsaid in this regard by the theory of the NDR, not least of which is the assumption that a watchdog ANC will retain its 'historically progressive role', when an alternative scenario might see it becoming rather more the vehicle of middle class interests. Other difficulties are raised by Adam, Slabbert and Moodley (1997: Chapter 11). A 'patriotic' bourgeoisie is expected to remember the African communitarian tradition, yet moral obligations towards the poor are likely to be undermined by rapid enrichment. Egalitarian reasoning can easily be overwhelmed by selfishness and greed, whilst ethics of communal solidarity will impede the accumulation of fortunes. And celebration of black capitalism can invoke class warfare and encourage a destabilizing inequality.

This focus upon black capitalists is understandable, if only because the sudden appearance of black business magnates is one of the most dramatic developments of the democratic era. Yet, as critics of BEE regularly imply, such individuals constitute only a tiny, albeit highly visible, elite. In contrast, we gain a deeper understanding of contemporary South Africa by looking at the wider middle class, and its changing relationship to the state and 'white' and multinational capital. It will therefore be useful to return to Nzimande's categorization of the petty bourgeoisie, although prior to that it will be useful to revisit the overall size and income of the black middle class.

The Black Middle Class - Size, Growth and Income

Given Crankshaw's strictures regarding the difficulties of using official occupational data to determine class categories, it may seem particularly contrary to refer to Table

1 to provide an indication of the size and rate of growth of the black middle class between 1991 and 1999.⁸ However, cautiously utilized, the data is instructive.

Table 1
Selected Employment by Occupation, Race and Sector

| <i>Occupational category</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>African</i> | <i>Coloured</i> | <i>Asian</i> | <i>White</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---|-------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| <i>Professional, semi-professional and technical</i> | 1991 | 287 503 34.3% | 72 448 8.6% | 38 739 4.6% | 442 058 52.7% | 838 748 |
| <i>Managerial, Executive & Administrative</i> | 1991 | 33 320 9.57% | 15 303 4.4% | 23 707 6.8% | 275 827 79.2% | 348 157 |
| <i>Clerical & Sales Occupations</i> | 1991 | 519 490 32.4% | 183 718 11.5% | 122 691 7.7% | 777 860 48.5% | 1 603 759 |
| <i>Total Economically Active</i> | 1991 | 7 497 041 | 1 359 215 | 379 702 | 2 388 410 | 11 624 368 |
| <i>Professionals, Associate Professionals & Technicians</i> | 1999 | 744 670 46.7% | 158 650 9.9% | 80 900 5.1% | 628 000 39.3% | 1 596 000 |
| <i>Legislators, senior officials & managers</i> | 1999 | 199 050 29.1% | 60 190 8.8% | 47 200 6.9% | 374 830 54.8% | 684 000 |
| <i>Clerks</i> | 1999 | 450 890 42.1% | 153 150 14.3% | 81 400 7.6% | 383 420 35.8% | 107 000 |
| <i>Service, shop & market sales workers</i> | 1999 | 839 130 68.5% | 133 530 10.9% | 42 330 3.7% | 204 580 16.7% | 1 225 000 |
| <i>Total Formally Employed???</i> | 1999 | 6 667 270 | 1 285 760 | 394 020 | 2 001 220 | 10 369 000 |

Adapted from Central Statistical Services 1993: 1.14 and SAIRR 2000/01: 346, citing Stats SA, October Household Survey 1999. Figures for 1999 are rounded.

As Crankshaw would immediately point out, the data for 1991 and 1999 is not strictly comparable, as all the listed occupational categories have changed somewhat. Furthermore, the categories of ‘Sales’ (1991) and especially ‘Service, Shop and Market Sales Workers’ (1999) will include large numbers of employees better identified as ‘working’ rather than ‘middle’ class. Nonetheless, these categories would seem to account for the large body of middle class occupations.

Overall, the numbers of Africans and blacks employed in these categories have grown dramatically. According to Statistics South Africa (2002c: 86), only 36% of employees in services in 1999 occupy managerial, professional or technical positions, additional to which clerical workers in the sector should be included as ‘new middle class’. Taken together, therefore, if we arbitrarily define one half of ‘Service, shop & market sales workers’ as white-collar employees rather than working class, then we may ‘guestimate’ that by 2004 around 1.8 million African employees, or around 27% of formally employed Africans, can be *broadly defined* as ‘middle class’, the equivalent figures for blacks as a whole being around 2.5 million and 30%.

This 'guestimated' figure of 2.5 million is considerably below the 3.6 million which Rivero et al. provide for the size of the black middle class. As neither of our methodologies are rigorous, our difference merely goes to endorse Crankshaw's insistence upon extremely careful disaggregation of official data to arrive at anything approaching accuracy regarding the allocation of the population into class categories. However, it may be significant that my 'guestimate' suggests that blacks today constitute around 60% of the middle class as a whole, rather than the 50% suggested by Rivero et al. Meanwhile, if we conceive of professionals and managers as providing the core of an 'upper middle class' and clerks and sales persons as 'lower middle class', we arrive at approximate totals of 950 000 and 1.5 million Africans and blacks as belonging to the upper middle class respectively, contrasting with around 870 000 and 1.2 million Africans and blacks belonging to the lower middle class.

The distinction between an upper and lower middle class is important as it would seem that it is the former sub-category which is the principal beneficiary of a changing distribution of income. Three basic points need to be made in this regard.

- First, long-term trends point to a substantial growth in the distribution of national income accruing to blacks: the African and black share of total income increased from 19.8% and 28.9% in 1970 to 35.7% and 48.1% in 1996 (SAIRR 2000/01: 376).
- However, income accruing to the upper middle class is increasing, whilst the share of that of the lower middle class is decreasing. Hence average annual income of heads of household from managerial, professional, technical and administrative grades increased from R116 000 to R150 000 (29.3%) between 1995 and 2000 (at year 2000 market prices value), whilst decreasing from R79 000 to R59 000 for those from Clerical and Sales grades (SAIRR 2002/03; 179 citing Stats SA 2000a)⁹.
- Thirdly, overall, whilst increasing numbers of blacks are joining whites amongst the upper middle class, South Africa is seeing a widening income gap between the rich and the poor. The country's gini co-efficient rose from 0.73 in 1995 to 0.80 in 1998, that for whites increasing from 0.55 to 0.67 and for Africans from 0.70 to 0.81 (SAIRR 2000/01: 374 citing StatsSA 2000b).

Re-visiting Nzimande

This brief excursion provides an important backdrop for assessing the utility of applying Nzimande's categorization of the black petty bourgeoisie. Yet post-1994 political changes demand some adjustments.

Bureaucratic bourgeoisie or 'State Managers'? An immediate problem is posed by the overlap between Nzimande's *bureaucratic* and *civil* petty bourgeoisies. This distinction is consonant with literature which drew a distinction between the bantustan political leaderships, chiefs and the senior bureaucrats who 'ruled' and who directly benefited from the bantustan state apparatus, and the bulk of homeland civil servants, who merely 'administered' and who shared many of the disadvantageous conditions of the working class in relation to the state as an employer (eg. Graaff 1990).

Clearly, Nzimande's categorization of the BPB as ruling on behalf of apartheid no longer stands given the post-1994 absorption of the homelands and the unification of local government. Another problem is that the term 'bureaucratic

bourgeoisie’ has perjorative overtones that imply authoritarian class rule, repression and undue privilege which cannot simply be assumed under present conditions. Nonetheless, intuitively, the distinction between ‘ruling’ and ‘administering’ retains value: the functions clearly overlap, yet it is not difficult to identify a hierarchy of senior politicians and civil servants who are responsible for the major decisions which determine policy, and the far more plentiful middle-level and junior state civil servants and state employees who are largely responsible for implementation of policy. The term ‘bureaucratic bourgeoisie’ is therefore better replaced by the more neutral term ‘state managers’, a term borrowed from Graaff (1990), (who, ironically, used it to depict the rulers of the bantustans).

State Managers and the Civil Petty Bourgeoisie. The fraction of *state managers* is composed of those elements which Lodge has depicted as ‘the governing class’ – the president, premiers, members of the cabinet and provincial governments, and senior civil servants, plus (I would add) the senior executives of parastatal organizations. As well as composing the key political decision-makers, it is a small, relatively tight group bonded together by an ideology of public service, and for the majority, by loyalty to the ANC. In contrast, the *civil petty bourgeoisie* is a much larger and more heterogeneous fraction, composed overwhelmingly of those employed in white-collar and service occupations. As before 1994, the CPB may be said to include many independent professionals *outside* the public service, yet is overwhelmingly composed of the mass of civil servants below state manager level, as well as professionals *inside* the wider public service (notably teachers and nurses). The two fractions are closely interlinked, not least through the transformation of the public sector.

Following the ANC’s ‘capture of state power’, the reformulation of the shape and composition of the public service has been extensive, entailing both the merging of formerly racially segmented administrations and major efforts to render this restructured public service ‘representative’. This can be presented as follows:

First, in pursuit of what the ANC-in-government considered the need to rationalise the public service, the number of employees within the ‘government sector’, extensively defined, was considerably reduced after 1994:

Table 2
Employment in Government Sector 1994-2001

| <i>Year</i> | <i>National</i> | <i>Provinces</i> | <i>Local Govt</i> | <i>‘Other’ Govt</i> | <i>Govt Business Enterprises</i> | <i>Total Govt Employees</i> | <i>% Formal Employment</i> |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1994 | 549 336 | 701 632 | 238 247 | 100 011 | 207 890 | 1 797 117 | 33.7 |
| 2001 | 323 152 | 802 587 | 220 759 | 88 449 | 147 372 | 1 582 319 | 34.0 |
| % change | - 41.2 | 14.4 | -7.3 | -11.6 | -29.1 | -12.0 | - |

Source: SAIRR 2002/03: 150.

Second, the representivity of the government sector has massively improved. Although not strictly comparable to Table 1, Table 3 is illuminating:

Table 3
Racial Composition of the Civil Service, 1993 and 2003

| | <i>National 1993</i> | <i>Non- Independent Homelands 1993</i> | <i>National 2003</i> | <i>Provinces 2003</i> |
|----------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| African | 316 929 41.3% | 241 335 | 195 238 62.8% | 563 300 78.6% |
| Asian | 30 453 3.97% | | 16 641 5.4% | 21 493 30.0% |
| Coloured | 124 711 16.25% | | 91 994 29.6% | 65 152 9.1% |
| White | 295 429 38.50% | | 73 319 23.6% | 66 797 9.34% |
| Total | 767 521 | | 310 907 | 716 742 |

Sources: SAIRR 1994/95: 476 and Public Service Commission, 2004.

It is immediately evident that the African and Coloured groups have been the principal beneficiaries of civil service ‘restructuring’. This has been brought about through strategies of affirmative action, spelt out in the Employment Equity Act of 1998 and the White Paper on the Public Service of 1995. Overall, proclaims the Public Service Commission (PSC), “the Public Service has succeeded admirably in addressing racial imbalances in a fairly short space of time” (PSC 2004: 34).

It is only a small minority of civil servants that belong to the senior echelons, as defined by the PSC, and who can therefore qualify as *state managers*. In the year 2000, the Department of Public Services indicated that there were 1766 ‘senior managers’ in national departments, and 1175 in the provinces, of whom around 60% were black,¹⁰ (compared with a black composition of the ‘management echelon’ of only 6% in 1994). This development has been reflected in the government sector more widely. For instance, a majority of the directorships of the key state parastatals are now black (Southall 2004), as increasingly are the senior positions in institutions such as universities and research councils.

Meanwhile, alongside their ‘blackening’, the state managers are leaving behind the ANC’s apartheid-era rhetoric of class and national struggle in favour of a more ideologically neutral language of representivity, accountability, ‘delivery’, management and human resource development. There is no question that this shift is necessary to cope with the highly complex challenges posed by running a modern state and that it is attuned to an ideology of professionalism and public service, for as Graaff (1990) notes, state managers often make decisions which conflict with direct class interest. Most certainly, today’s state managers would lay claim to be ruling in ‘the national interest’. Nonetheless, the management ethos is itself one which is likely to encourage state managers to define the public good in a way which favours middle class interests.

As noted above, the CPB is much larger and more varied than the tightly knit fraction of state managers. Its core continues to be rooted in the public service, yet Nzimande’s pre-1994 categorization should be qualified in at least two regards. First, as we have seen, there has been a continuing expansion of African white-collar employment by the private sector, rendering this element an increasingly important segment of the CPB. Second, black professionals who are independently or privately

employed are better included amongst the ranks of the corporate bourgeoisie, not least because there is an increasing tendency for them to hire out their services either to the corporate sector directly, indirectly to the corporate bourgeoisie or to public sector organizations.¹¹ However, the principal point is that the black CPB is extensively unionized.

During the late ‘struggle years’, trade unions were able to dictate the direction of change in industrial relations. In contrast, the concurrence of democratization and globalization during the 1990s has thrown them onto the defensive. Although, overall, the membership of registered unions has increased (from 2.9 million in 1992 to 3.9 million in 2001), union membership as a proportion of the economically active population has declined (from just under 25% to around 21%)(SAIRR 2002/03: 185-86). Within this context, the most rapid growth of unions has taken place within the public service, matching a shift from repressive labour relations to a system of representative collective bargaining (Macun and Posel 2000: 101). The outcome of this rapid unionization in income terms is difficult to unravel. Woolard (Undated) demonstrates that union membership enhances earnings by as much as 32%, although this effect is considerably more pronounced in the private than the public sector.

These findings are consonant with comment concerning growing inequality, more particularly a widening gap between the formally and the informally unemployed. Yet there is the further complication that in the public sector, collective bargaining has to accommodate the interests of the public as well as those of the state and its employees. Seekings (2004) suggests that this has not always been achieved. Whilst the trade union movement has espoused increased public spending on ‘poor’ reforms, these calls have, in part at least, been driven by “the self-interest of sections of the non-poor”. He argues this by reference to teachers (located in the highest decile of income-earners), who have been represented largely by the South African Democratic Teachers Union. Per capita expenditure on poor children has increased, but the large proportion of this improvement has gone on paying higher teacher salaries, without resulting in superior educational outcomes.

In summary, it may be argued that the black CPB is Janus-faced. It has been a major beneficiary of ANC rule, affirmative action and long-term trends working towards the deracialisation of the economy. On the other hand, whilst ideologically sympathetic to the poor, its self-interest appears to be widening the gap between at least the upper sections of the black middle class and the poor. In other words, the progressive role which it has played historically may be at increasing variance in the future with aspirations to achieve greater social equality between the classes.

The Black Trading Petit-Bourgeoisie: African business under apartheid was deliberately stunted by a system of official licensing which restricted African entrepreneurs to operating in racially demarcated areas. To be sure, from the 1960s, these restrictions were complemented by the encouragement of African business in the homelands via the development corporations, this leading to the emergence of a stratum of businessmen which was closely tied to bantustan structures. Subsequently, too, after the 1976 Soweto uprising, Pretoria hastened to promote African business in the urban areas to develop a black middle class (Southall 1980). Both these strata were to be identified by the mass movements as beneficiaries of apartheid, although – as Nzimande argues – the urban element was rendered ambivalent by political pressure. As he also demonstrates (1990: 200-03), African business operated under

the financial shadow of monopoly capitalism, which provided it with the overwhelming supply of its finance, credit, and supplies. Nonetheless, he also asserts the emergence of an ‘autonomous’ stratum of the trading bourgeoisie, which he implies developed late, became hegemonic within NAFCO, and aligned itself politically with the MDM. These latter were individuals who were capitalists, yet they were too few and weak to constitute an African capitalist class as such.

Today, there are quite striking continuities *and* discontinuities with the apartheid era. The major discontinuity, of course, is the collapse of the bantustan/urban African business divide into a more integrated, small and medium business sector, which overlaps heavily with the informal economy. However, as under apartheid, African enterprises remain undeveloped, and Africans as a whole continue to lack relevant experience, traditions, skills and capital, (even if this generalization applies considerably less to the Indian community).

Some indication of the character of small enterprise is offered by Ntsika Enterprise Promotion Agency. The businesses it identifies are distinguished as ‘survivalist’ (hawking etc), ‘micro’ (informal, with a turnover of less than R150 000 per annum and a maximum of five employees), ‘very small’ (self-employed individuals or small enterprises operating in the formal sector, with up to 19 employees), ‘small’ (more complex operations with up to 49 employees), and ‘medium’ (still owner/manager controlled, yet with up to 200 employees in the more advanced sectors of the economy such as manufacturing and mining):

Table 4

Distribution of Small Business Sector by Race and Size, 1996 and 1999

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Survivalist</i> | | <i>Micro</i> | | <i>Very Small</i> | | <i>Unspecified</i> | |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | <i>Black</i> | <i>White</i> | <i>Black</i> | <i>White</i> | <i>Black</i> | <i>White</i> | <i>Black</i> | <i>White</i> |
| 1996 | 163,268 | 24,125 | 271,150 | 200,700 | 15,875 | 84,411 | 16,625 | 29,745 |
| | 87% | 13% | 57% | 43% | 22% | 78% | 36% | 64% |
| 1999 | 88% | 12% | 63% | 37% | 12% | 88% | 32% | 68% |

Sources: SAIRR 2000/01: 412 and 2002/03: 200.

Overall, it is estimated that survivalist enterprises provided 2.2%, micro businesses 10%, very small 13%, small 15.7%, medium 13.01% and large-scale businesses 46.1% of total employment in 1999, with micro enterprises contributing 5.8%, small businesses 13.9%, medium 15.1% and large businesses 65.2% of GDP in year 2000 (SAIRR 2002/03: 194-5).

It is immediately evident that there is a strongly inverse relationship between size and racial ownership, with blacks far more likely to own the smallest enterprises. Only around one-fifth of ‘very small’ businesses are black-owned. The proportion of ‘small’ and ‘medium’ sized ones which are black-owned will be even less. This implies the tiny size of the black TPB nationally, as intuitively it is difficult to conceive of characterizing owners of ‘micro’ and even many ‘very small’ businesses

as 'middle-class'. Not surprisingly, therefore, given that the small business sector is regularly hailed as the key to the promotion of both employment and BEE, it is the target of official assistance. Hence, whilst the homeland development corporations are long gone, the state continues to provide support to small black enterprises through ventures such as the Black Business Supplier Programme and the South African Women Entrepreneurs Network (both operated by the Department of Trade and Industry), as well as through affirmative procurement. However, the impact of these initiatives remains uncertain, especially given that the potential of the informal sector for generating growth may be reaching its limit (Simkins 2004).

Its small size suggests that the political weight of the trading petty bourgeoisie is minimal, at least in comparison with that of the increasingly influential black corporate bourgeoisie. This has recently been recorded by bitter struggles within NAFCOC. By 2003, the presidency of the organisation had been assumed by one of most prominent black industrial magnates, Patrice Motsepe, who proceeded to steer towards the merger of NAFCOC with the white-dominated South African Chamber of Business (SACOB). By promoting closer relations between black business and white capital, this would have primarily promoted the interests of emergent black empowerment companies. However, as small black business feared even greater domination by white business, the merger talks were to be severely compromised by dissension within NAFCOC, resulting in a unification structure which – at least at lower levels – reflected historical racial divisions. (Get details).

Nzimande noted the heterogeneity with NAFCOC, yet argued that by the mid-1980s the 'autonomous' TAPB had become hegemonic within it, and was supportive of the MDM. He is less clear on the basis for the 'autonomy' of this element, but by implication he is referring to emergent, large-scale African capitalists. What is clear today is that these latter have joined the corporate bourgeoisie, and are amongst the primary beneficiaries of BEE.

The Corporate Black Bourgeoisie: Nzimande's COPB was composed of Africans employed at managerial level by corporate capital. This trend has developed considerably since 1994, promoted latterly by the Employment Equity Act of 1998 and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000. Whereas the former required all medium and large-scale employers to submit once-off equity reports, profiling their employment demographics and plans to achieve representivity, the latter imposed wide-ranging prohibitions of unfair (racial and other) discrimination upon all manner of institutions (including companies). As yet, the level of compliance is uncertain. However, legislative impetus is supported by the pronounced skill shortage amongst blacks, with employers reportedly paying premiums in excess of 30% to attract and retain appropriately qualified black staff (SAIRR 2002/03: 207).

Increasingly, this stratum of black corporate employees overlaps extensively with an identifiably black capitalist class, whose formation has been hugely assisted by BEE. Summarising from earlier work (Southall 2004a,b) we may characterize this development as follows.

First, despite setbacks during the first decade of BEE, black penetration of corporate ownership is growing, albeit slowly. Measurement of progress remains as problematic as it remains controversial (Southall 2004b). In broad terms, an early

flurry of empowerment deals which saw black business secure up to 10% of shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) by 1997 fell victim to the latter's catching a heavy dose of Asian flue, resulting in a sharp fall-back in black ownership to between 1% and 3% by 2000. Basically, shareholdings purchased by black consortia through finance capital had underperformed, with their value further undermined by the stock market crash of 1997. White institutions had therefore repossessed the monies they had lent to black consortia, which increasingly thereafter disposed of their assets on the JSE and focused on unlisted ones.

Overall, careful distinction needs to be made between black majority-owned companies and total black investments. According to BusinessMap the number of black controlled companies on the JSE increased from 17 in October 1997 (with a market capitalization of R37 billion) to 38 in August 1999 (R98 billion) before dropping to 22 in September 2002 (R33 billion). However, according to another calculation, black investors currently indirectly own 22% of shares on the JSE, which are managed for them by institutional investors (SAIRR 2002/03: 209). These contribute to an appreciably changing backdrop, against which a number of black controlled conglomerates (such as Johnnic, MTN, Mvelaphanda Holdings and NAIL) have become significant players which are increasingly teaming up with established corporate capital via joint ventures and holdings. However, black ownership at this level is highly concentrated, symbolized by the massive wealth accumulated by individuals such as Patrice Motsepe, Cyril Ramaphosa and Tokyo Sexwale, leading to widespread accusations that empowerment deals have favoured a small black elite rather than facilitating a wider re-allocation of wealth.

Second, to promote a more determined assault upon white economic power, the government has recently adopted a more assertive strategy to render BEE more 'broad-based'. Most particularly, this has taken the form of official prodding of the different sectors of industry to draw up Empowerment Charters. These establish targets to be met regarding ownership, employment equity and training, worker conditions, procurement from black owned firms, and community development over a given time span (usually between ten to fifteen years). Although not backed by legislative sanction, realization of targets will be spurred by government's deployment of its spending power only to those companies which can demonstrate achievement of targets. Overall, these initiatives seem likely to boost the rapid expansion of the black managerial elite.

Finally, the drive towards the blackening of capitalism is politically driven. This has several interrelated aspects. The first is quite simply that the government is transforming the political and legislative environment so as to tilt the playing fields in favour of blacks. Secondly, BEE has become tainted with suggestions that it is promoting 'crony capitalism', with certain individuals and companies closely associated with the ANC having benefited in dubious circumstances from the award of state contracts. Even though the allegation is probably overstated, it remains the case that at the highest levels, the empowerment elite is largely drawn from an ANC background and retains close links with the party. This in turn means, thirdly, that the route into high level business is often through politics or the state, there being an increasing trend for high-level politicians and civil servants to secure highly paid positions in the private sector after acquiring skills and information within the public

service. In other words, there is a very close relationship between ‘state managers’ and the emergent black corporate bourgeoisie.

Conclusion: The Black Middle Class and Democracy

This review of the post-apartheid black middle class is highly tentative. Much more extensive debate between the neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian traditions is required before we can have an adequately nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play within the black middle class, between its different fractions, between its African, Coloured and Indian segments, and between this class and other classes, and upon the character of South African democracy. However, the following broad propositions can be ventured.

The most obvious point is that a fairly rapidly growing black (new) middle class is the prime beneficiary of ANC rule. The liberation struggle against apartheid objective had as its prime objective the capture of state power. Although the negotiated settlement placed constraints on the extent and character of political change, the first ten years of the ANC in power have registered a remarkable transition away from white minority rule. Today, high political and state office is truly reflective of the demographic composition of the population, whilst the public service as a whole has made massive steps towards ‘representivity’. This transformation is the single most important factor accounting for the present rate of growth of the black middle class, and is clearly instrumental in consolidating if not accelerating the growth in the distribution of national income accruing to blacks. Even so, various fractions of the black middle class have shared these benefits differentially.

One of the great ironies of the arrival of the democratic era is the widening inequality of incomes that characterizes today’s South Africa. Within this context, it is ‘state managers’ and the corporate fractions of the black middle class, along with the more advantaged sections of the civil petty bourgeoisie, which are joining the majority of whites on higher income levels. Most particularly, of course, it is the two prior fractions which can be depicted as working most closely with, the wider ‘ruling bloc’. Blacks may have taken over the state, and may now largely control the parastatals, yet whites (via national and multi-national corporations) continue to dominate the economy, whose direction is largely determined by South Africa’s need to compete in an increasingly globalised world economy. At this stage, we still know relatively little about the interface between the new government and corporate capital. However, what is already clear is that the large corporations are energetically courting the new rulers and the new breed of black magnates.

The emergent alliance between large-scale capital, state managers and the COPB (some of whom have already clambered into the topmost corporate elite) implies the embrace of capitalism by blacks which was suggested by the ‘economistic’ critics of the theory of CST. However, this blunt conclusion needs to be qualified, for whilst both government policy and the aspirations of the COPB are directed unambiguously at the ‘blackening’ of capitalism, there remain major counterpressures within the ANC which impose ideological and policy constraints upon the movement’s explicit adoption of a pro-capitalist path. The pursuit of ‘socialism’ may have dropped off the agenda, and ‘national’ rather ‘class struggle’ continues to receive the major emphasis. Nonetheless, as implied by CST theory, the tradition of liberation struggle, of ‘freedom for all’ and the pursuit of equalitarian goals continues

to impose constraints upon the ANC's adoption of a raw capitalism in favour of a more redistributionist vision, entailing the 'delivery' of services to the poor (which is the particular objective, even if technocratically pursued) of state managers. Importantly, too, as outlined by the theory of the NDR, it remains the role of popular forces to ensure that black capitalists remain 'patriotic': that is, that they combine their pursuit of personal gain with reinvestment of profits within the country and their recognition of obligations to the black communities from which they have sprung.

The pressures imposed upon the ANC to realize the fruits of racial equality are imposed to a significant extent by the civil petty bourgeoisie. This is the largest fraction of the black middle class, and it is one which – on the whole – has recorded substantial gains since 1994. Most particularly, it has benefited from affirmative action and equity legislation which have brought about, for many, increased incomes, secure employment and improved working conditions, even if – especially in the private sector – its advance remains constrained by an upward floating colour bar. Whilst macro-data may suggest that the lower middle class is less well placed than thirty or forty years ago, that lower middle class was largely white and the present one is increasingly black. As Seekings (2004) describes them, they are the 'non-poor' in a country in which the proportion of people in informal employment, or who are unemployed, is inexorably growing. Nzimande defined the COPB before 1994 as the most reliable ally of the working class and progressive forces. However, their relative advantage today is likely to have rendered them more ambivalent to the pursuit of greater social equity. It would seem, in contrast, that it is the black trading petty bourgeoisie, largely locked into the informal economy, which is objectively the closest to the working class, even if its aspirations towards entrepreneurship may compromise its alignment with progressive goals.

The ANC continues to see itself as pursuing the NDR. However, the growth of the black middle class suggests that the equalitarian aspirations of the latter are now at risk, and that differences of interest between the middle class and the poorer mass of the population are increasingly likely to arise.

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¹ I say 'indirectly' as I would argue that retired or unemployed middle-class persons living on savings and pensions or state benefits have largely derived these from earlier direct employment.

² The 2001 Census gave the South African population as Black Africans: 34 416 166; Coloured 3 994 505; Indian or Asian 1 115 467; and Whites 4 293 640 for a total of 44 819 778. (SSA 2003: vii).

³ Cf, Kuper (1965); Southall (1980); Nyquist 1983; Nzimande (1990); Hart and Padachayee (2000).

⁴ I cannot back these statements up save through a general interpretation of reports in the media and my personal understanding of what is taking place in the public service.

⁵ Actually, he laid out four approaches, but I have condensed those founded upon the theory of the CST.

⁶ The principal targets of Nzimande's criticism were Hudson and Sarakinsky (1986) and "to a certain extent" Southall (1980)!

⁷ The numerical estimates of the size of the middle class are my own calculations, based upon the size of the population as indicated by the 1996 and 2001 censuses respectively (Stats SA 2003).

⁸ Statistics SA (formerly the Central Statistical Services) replaced its October Household Survey by the Labour Force Survey from the year 2000. The latter does not list occupation by race.

⁹ According to Professor Sampie Terreblanche, income distribution by class was as follows: the bourgeois elite: 7.2%; the 'petit bourgeois': 17.2%; the 'upper lower class': 7.3%; the 'middle lower class': 2%; and the 'lower lower class': 1.3%. He estimated the 'lower class' as comprising two-thirds of the population. (SAIRR 2002/03: 208).

¹⁰ I cannot give exact figures, as I have only had access to bar charts.

¹¹ For instance, the implementation of Equity legislation has significantly increased the demand for services of especially black labour lawyers and human resource consultants.