

EDUCATION AND CLASS FORMATION IN CAMEROUN

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S Y N O P S I S

This thesis is based on research carried out in Cameroun between October 1974 and July 1976. It is concerned with the rôle of education in the process of class formation and reproduction in the five French-speaking provinces of Cameroun, with special reference to the capital Yaoundé and the Centre-South Province.

The theory of social reproduction is discussed in the African context and it is concluded that it is more applicable to the process of class formation, both during the colonial period and since independence, than to class reproduction, a process more evident in societies with advanced class structures.

The importance of education to the process of class formation is discussed at length in connection with the growth of a cashcrop producing rural economy and of urban groups of manual and non-manual workers, traders, businessmen and artisans.

The interrelationships between ethnic-regional, urban-rural and class factors are discussed in the context of educational access and performance (including repeating and wastage) and of the differential expansion of the various educational sectors in the five provinces.

Chapters IV-VI are concerned primarily with the class dimension of performance in Yaoundé and the Centre-South, which have very high levels of primary enrolment for both sexes, and the interaction between class background, ethnicity and birthplace is examined in some detail. The

intervening factors of age, sex and Class 6 repeat rates are discussed in relation to class background, and the material and cultural dimensions of the latter are examined in some detail.

In Chapter VII educational achievement is discussed in relation to the economic and political dimensions of class formation in Cameroun, and the possibility of future class reproduction through educational access and performance is examined in relation to present tendencies in rural and urban stratification.

The concluding chapter summarises the major findings of the thesis, including those concerning the development of class subcultures, and outlines some policy implications and future research priorities concerning education and social reproduction.

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

The research on which this thesis is based was carried out in Cameroun between October 1974 and July 1976, during which period I was working with the Institut National d' Education in Yaoundé. The friendly and spontaneous co-operation of the Directors and staff of I.N.E. helped make my sojourn in Cameroun a happy and fruitful one, and I owe a particular debt of gratitude to the following:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
Synopsis	(i)
Acknowledgements	(iii)
List of French Terms	(vii)
List of Tables	(viii)
List of Figures	(xi)
List of Maps	(xii)
CHAPTER	
I	1
INTRODUCTION: INEQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN AFRICA	
The Theory of Social Reproduction	
The African Case	
Education and Class Formation in Africa	
Methodology	
II	54
COLONIAL EDUCATION AND SOCIETY	
German Colonialism	
Education under the Germans	
Economic & Social Change under the French	
Education under the French	
The End of Colonial Rule & the First Years of Independence	
The Growth of Secondary Education	
The Growth of Higher Education	
III	85
ENROLMENT AND PERFORMANCE INEQUALITIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS	
IV	108
SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE	
Birthplace & Migration. Ethnicity. Occupational Background. Social Background, Age & Pass-Rates.	
Social Background, Sex & Pass-Rates	
Social Background, Repeating & Pass-Rates	
Birthplace & Ethnicity	
The CEPE	
Summary & Conclusions	
V	171
MIGRATION, THE HOME ENVIRONMENT & PERFORMANCE	
Migration & Performance	
Parental Education & Performance	
The Home Environment of Non-migrants	

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont'd)

CHAPTER		page
VI	THE PATTERN OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENTRANCE IN YAOUNDE AND THE CENTRE-SOUTH PROVINCE Recruitment & the Distribution of Secondary Schools Competition for Secondary School Places The Quality of Candidates Age & Birthplace of Candidates Secondary School Entry in Yaoundé	211
VII	EDUCATION AND CLASS FORMATION IN CAMEROUN The Camerounian Occupational Structure Education & the Job Market The Politics of Class Formation	238
VIII	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS Farmers. Manual Workers. Traders. Non-manual Workers. Subcultures Policy Implications Research Priorities	265
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	286
	APPENDIX I The Class 6 questionnaire	297

LIST OF FRENCH TERMS USED IN THE CAMEROUNIAN EDUCATIONAL
AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

In the francophone provinces of Cameroun the administrative and educational structures follow closely the French model and terminology. Below are listed the main terms used in this thesis.

Education:

- BAC Baccalauréat: "A" level equivalent giving access to a university place.
- BEPC Brevet d'études du premier cycle: approximate "O" level equivalent taken in troisième.
- CEPE Certificat d'études primaires élémentaires: first school leaving certificate taken in CM2.
- CE Concours d'entrée en sixième: common entrance exam for academic state secondary schools.
- CM2 Cours moyen deuxième année: Class 6 of primary school.
- CC Cours complémentaire: old name for secondary modern school equivalent.
- CEG Collège d'enseignement général: secondary school of four classes which replaced the CC and leads to the BEPC.
- CES Most recent title for CEG and CC, again leading to the BEPC.
- Lycée: Grammar school equivalent leading to Baccalauréat.
- Probatoire: exam taken in première between BEPC and Bac.
- Sixième or 6ème: first year of secondary school, followed by 5ème, 4ème, 3ème, seconde (5th form), première and terminale (upper sixth).
- TAS Tests d'acquisition scolaire: aptitude tests administered to sample students, adapted from standard French tests.

Administration:

- Arrondissement: administrative unit below the département and run by a sous-préfet.
- Département: administrative unit below the province and run by a préfet.
- Province: main administrative unit run by a gouverneur. There are five francophone provinces: the Centre-Sud, Nord, Est, Ouest and Littoral.

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE II:1	Enrolment in Voluntary Agency and Government Schools in 1912	p.59
TABLE II:2	Enrolment in Voluntary Agency and Government Schools in 1920 & 1937	p.68
TABLE II:3	Enrolment in Mission Schools 1947-71	p.75
TABLE III:1	Provincial Distribution of Total and Primary School Populations (1970)	p.86
TABLE III:2	Enrolment of 6-14 year olds by Province for the Years 1960, 1967 & 1970 (percent)	p.87
TABLE III:3	Enrolment in Academic Secondary Schools by Province, 1971 & 1975	p.88
TABLE III:4	Enrolment of 6-14 year olds in Bamiléké & Bamoun Departments (percent)	p.93
TABLE III:5	Female Enrolment as Percentage of Total Enrolment by Province, 1960 & 1970	p.94
TABLE III:6	Age of Entering Primary School by Province, average for 1966 & 1972	p.96
TABLE III:7	Passage of 1,000 Class 1 Pupils through Primary School, deducting Repeats & Dropouts	p.97
TABLE III:8	CEPE Results by Sex & Province, 1972	p.100
TABLE IV:1	Enrolment of 6-14 year olds by Ethnic Group	p.112
TABLE IV:2	Ethnic Origins of Sample Students	p.116
TABLE IV:3	Occupation of Sample Students' Fathers	p.117
TABLE IV:4	Percentage of 15 year olds by Fathers' Occupation & Ethnicity	p.121
TABLE IV:5	Percentage of Students Taking CE by Age & Occupational Background	p.123
TABLE IV:6	CE Pass-rates by Occupational & Ethnic Backgrounds & Birthplace	p.126
TABLE IV:7	Age Distribution of Candidates by Occupational Background	p.129
TABLE IV:8	Pass-rates by Age & Occupational Background	p.131

LIST OF TABLES (Cont'd)

TABLE IV:9	CE Pass-rates by Sex & Occupational Background	p.137
TABLE IV:10	Repeat rates of Candidates & Pass Rates for Repeaters and Non-repeaters by Age and Occupational Background	p.145
TABLE IV:11	CE Take- & Pass-rates by Birthplace & Occupational Background	p.147
TABLE IV:12	CE Take- & Pass-rates for Ewondo & Bamiléké Pupils by Occupational Background	p.148
TABLE IV:13	CEPE Pass-rates by Age & Sex	p.157
TABLE IV:14	CEPE Pass-rates by Sex & Occupational Background	p.160
TABLE IV:15	Top 20 Percent of TAS & CE Takers by Occupational Background	p.162
TABLE V:1	Percent Passing CE by Birthplace, Fathers' Occupation & Date of Arrival in Yaoundé	p.175
TABLE V:2	CE Pass-rates of Repeaters and Non-repeaters by Occupational Background & Date of Arrival in Yaoundé	p.177
TABLE V:3	Fathers' Education by Occupational Group	p.185
TABLE V:4	CE Pass-rate by Fathers' Occupation & Education	p.186
TABLE V:5	CE Pass-rates in Relation to Education Levels of Both Parents	p.189
TABLE V:6	CE Pass-rate by Fathers' Occupation & Mothers' Education	p.190
TABLE V:7	CE Pass-rates by Mothers' Occupation & Education	p.191
TABLE V:8	CE Pass-rates by Age, Sex & Fathers' Education	p.194
TABLE V:9	CE Pass-rates by Occupational Background & Use of French in the Home	p.198
TABLE V:10	Proportion of Candidates in Top Third of Standard Scores by CE Paper & Use of French in the Home	p.199

LIST OF TABLES (Cont'd)

TABLE V:11	CE Pass-rates by Fathers' Occupation & Living Conditions	p.200
TABLE V:12	CE Pass-rates by Household Size & Fathers' Occupation	p.202
TABLE VI:1	Distribution of Academic Secondary Students in the Centre-South Province	p.221
TABLE VI:2	CM2 Origins of New Secondary Entrants	p.225
TABLE VI:3	Occupational Background of Sample Students entering Various Kinds of Secondary School	p.228
TABLE VI:4	Percentage of Private Secondary Entrants in Technical Schools, by Sex and Occupational Background	p.229
TABLE VI:5	Percentage of Girls in Each Kind of Secondary School by Fathers Occupation	p.231
TABLE VI:6	Age Distribution of Pupils in Private Secondary Schools by Occupational Background	p.233
TABLE VI:7	Occupational Background of Sample Students, of those taking the CE and entering Secondary School	p.236
TABLE VII:1	Estimated Number of Primary and Secondary School Leavers 1971-76	p.242
TABLE VII:2	Ethnic Distribution of the Yaoundé Labour Force	p.246
TABLE VII:3	Occupational Background of Students in the University of Yaoundé	p.251

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE I	School Enrolment by Province	p.93
FIGURE II	Birthplace of Migrants in Class 6 Sample	p.115
FIGURE III	CE Pass-rates for Males & Females from Urban Occupational Backgrounds	p.139
FIGURE IV	Major Variables involved in the Passage from Class 6 to State Secondary Schools	p.165

LIST OF MAPS

MAP 1	Cameroun (General)	p.54
MAP 2	Population Density by Department	p.86
MAP 3	Rural Population Density	p.91

Pour

NDAME ESSOH

Exemple remarquable
de la mobilité sociale

Premier Piagetien

Camerounais

Cher et vrai frère.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the subject, and to a discussion of the various theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the disease. The second part is devoted to a description of the various forms of the disease, and to a discussion of the various methods of treatment which have been employed. The third part is devoted to a description of the various forms of the disease, and to a discussion of the various methods of treatment which have been employed.

CHAPTER I

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There are good reasons to think that our own society is tending toward a period of "meritocracy" as predicted by Michael Young, i.e. rule by the possessors of diplomas and other tickets of admission to the upper reaches of society issued by the educational system. If this is so, the hypothesis of stratification lag would suggest that in due course the members of the traditional upper strata (the nobility, the inheritors of wealth and property) will have to bestir themselves to obtain diplomas and academic titles in order to keep their position; for the ruling groups of every society have a tendency to try to adapt the existing system of social inequality to the established norms and values, i.e their own.

Ralph Dahrendorf

The Nature and Types of Social Inequality
in Essays in the Theory of Society 1968 p 74

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION: INEQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN AFRICA

This thesis is concerned with the patterns of educational access and performance which characterise modern Cameroun. In this introductory chapter, the theoretical issues which led to the formulation of the research project and some of the major methodological issues related to the theory are dealt with. The first section deals with the importance of education in relation to social reproduction in both the Western and African contexts, which leads to the discussion of class and class formation in Africa in the second section. The final section is concerned with the methodology used in past sociological studies of education in Africa as well as with that used in this thesis.

The Theory of Social Reproduction

A number of recent works by sociologists, political scientists, economists and historians have highlighted the function of education as a major contributor to the reproduction of societies (Althusser 1972; Bowles 1971; Bordieu & Passeron 1970; Baudelot & Establet 1971; Marceau 1974). Concern with this aspect of education is not new, however: Durkheim's definition of education as the "systematic socialisation of the young generation" was the first to stress this inherently conservative function of education (Durkheim 1956:124). Durkheim's was an essentially conservative perspective; more recent formulations have come to similar conclusions concerning the rôle of education, but reflect critical rather than laudatory ideologies.

Durkheim's main concern was the reproduction of the moral order, of "religious beliefs, moral beliefs and practices, national or occupational traditions, collective opinions of every kind" (ibid., p.125). More recently, Althusser has

attributed to education both an ideological and a material purpose. Both skills and attitudes are reproduced through education, thus ensuring the continuation of the conditions of production:

"Reproduction of the skills of labour power tends decreasingly to be provided for 'on the spot' (apprenticeships within production itself), but is achieved more and more outside production: by the capitalist education system, and by other instances and institutions....The ideological state apparatus which has been installed in the dominant position in mature capitalist society as a result of a violent political and ideological class struggle against the old dominant ideological state apparatus is the educational ideological apparatus." (Althusser 1972:345,285).¹

In "L'école capitaliste en France", Baudelot and Establet also stress the importance of education to the reproduction of capitalism:

"L'appareil scolaire occupe ainsi une place privilégiée dans la super-structure du mode de production capitaliste car il est, de tous les appareils idéologiques, le seul à inculquer l'idéologie dominante sur la base de la formation de la force de travail." (Baudelot & Establet 1971:287).

These two statements are an extension of Marx's conception of ideology:

"The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force in society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material

production at its disposal, has at the same time control over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it." (Marx & Engels in "The German Ideology quoted by Cosin 1971:176. Stress in the original).²

Bordieu & Passeron, in their intricate theoretical formulation of the general relationship between education and society, make a similar point in the following way:

"Dans une formation sociale donnée, l'action pédagogique que les rapports de force entre les groupes ou les classes constitutifs de cette formation sociale mettent en position dominante dans le système des actions pédagogiques est celle qui, tant par son mode d'imposition que par la délimitation de ce qu'elle impose et de ceux à qui elle l'impose, correspond le plus complètement, quoique toujours de manière médiate, aux intérêts objectifs (matériels, symboliques et, sous le rapport considéré ici, pédagogiques) des groupes ou classes dominantes. (Bordieu & Passeron 1970:21).³

It is widely accepted that the rôle of education as the main arbitor of life chances has become a central feature of the stratification processes of present-day societies, irrespective of level of development or ideology. This tendency was already apparent to Marx, who called it the transformation of profane into sacred knowledge, and later to Weber. Durkheim seems to have ignored this question, which is surprising given his interest in the division of labour. To Weber, what is now known as "credentialism" was a major aspect of the rise of bureaucratic

hegemony in capitalist society. Illich is only the most recent and vocal critic of this tendency, and, like Weber, he appears to think (though he never says so) that bureaucratic domination has increasingly replaced class domination, and can thus be considered sui generis. The following was written by Weber, although its tenor is very Illichian:

"The development of the diploma from universities, business and engineering colleges, and the universal clamour for the creation of educational certificates in all fields make for the formation of a privileged stratum in bureaus and offices. Such certificates support their holders' claims for intermarriage with notable families..., claims for a 'respectable' remuneration rather than remuneration for work done, claims for assured advancement and old-age insurance, and, above all, claims to monopolize socially and economically advantageous positions." (Quoted by Bendix 1960:461).

The Marxist differs from the liberal criticism in that it considers the rise of institutionalised education as a basic characteristic of advanced capitalist society, not a transcendence of it. The argument is given weight by the observation that, in spite of the growth of free, universal education in the 20th century, the amount of occupational mobility resulting from educational achievement and failure has not changed significantly, and has certainly not brought radical change in the social structure of advanced capitalist countries (Anderson 1960; Jencks 1963; Little & Westergaard 1964; Boudon 1974).

The apparent objectivity of school selection processes is the basis of their legitimacy, and the mask of their class

nature:

"... by delegating to the school system the power of selection to occupational and social rôles, the privileged can appear to abdicate their own power to a neutral institution and so appear to renounce the more arbitrary privileges of hereditary transmission."(Marceau 1974:231).

In capitalist society, the total amount of upward occupational mobility possible for a given generation is determined to a large extent by the nature and rate of economic growth and technological change, not by the school system. That there is a certain amount of social mobility channelled through the education system (i.e. institutionalised) serves to give it added legitimacy (Parkin 1973).

As living standards rise, so cultural replace material inequalities as the crucial mediators between class background and educational achievement. If the lower classes continue to think that "education is not for the likes of us", then they are making a not unreasonable assessment of their objective chances of educational success. The American case proves that class variations in motivation are not a sufficient or necessary explanation of differential educational performance. High achievement orientations are more generalised in America than in any other advanced capitalist society, yet there is no evidence that there is (a) more social mobility, or (b) more social mobility channelled through education in America than in the rest of the West (Parkin 1972).

It was hoped that equal educational opportunities would compensate for background inequalities, but recent measures to equalise access to secondary and higher education in the West

have not had this effect. For education to begin to compensate for background inequalities it would have to be provided on a basis of positive discrimination favouring lower class children (Bowles 1972). This rarely happens (the opposite is generally the case) and usually proves ineffective when it is attempted (Illich 1970). In the absence of radical restructuring of school organisation, control and curriculum content, parental education and occupation continue to be the major determinants of educational success.⁴

In the West, the growth of mass education generally coincided with the rise of industrial manufacture. Bowles argues that in the United States schools came to play a vital socialising, even "civilizing" rôle vis-à-vis the new urban working class, only recently separated from rural life, family control and independent production.

"An ideal preparation for factory work was found in the social relations of the school: specifically on its emphasis on discipline, punctuality, acceptance outside the family, and individual accountability for one's work. The social relations of the school would replicate the social relations of the work place, and thus help young people adapt to the social division of labour. Schools would further lead people to accept the authority of the state and its agents..."
(Bowles 1970:260)

It is not surprising that the more forward-looking manufacturers were among the most enthusiastic advocates of mass schooling.⁵ At the same time, the spread of education, like the franchise, often reflected a long and bitter class struggle, marked by the granting of periodic concessions to the working classes which have had the effect of continuously

reincorporating them into the capitalist system (Bowles 1976).

In the 20th century, the development of the tertiary sector of the economy and the relative decline of semi- and unskilled occupations have led to the generalisation of secondary education and the rapid expansion of higher education. Structural change in the economy has meant substantial intergenerational mobility, particularly between the skilled manual and lower middle classes. This mobility has been increasingly based on initial schooling, less and less on on-the-job experience and performance.

As schools have grown in importance in relation to occupational placement, so the demand for equal educational opportunities has risen. Most advanced capitalist societies have now moved from rigid educational stratification on class lines to some kind of comprehensive model which is deemed more democratic. The ultimate legitimacy move would be to abolish all forms of private education, which can only be justified within the democratic paradigm on the basis of considerable ideological gymnastics. If the above arguments are correct, it follows that the introduction of free, universal and "equal" education at the secondary and, ultimately, the higher level, corresponds to the mature stage of social reproduction through education.

To summarise, education has become the key social institution for the reproduction of class relationships in the advanced societies of the West and, increasingly, in Eastern Europe as well. More and more, class appears to be an achieved rather than an inherited status. Occupational mobility based on educational qualification invests the education system with legitimacy, confirming the apparent distribution of ability and merit and partially muting class conflict.

The African Case

For present purposes, the above analysis is of interest to the extent that the theory of social reproduction may be used to explain the development of modern educational and social systems in Africa. We may test the relevance of the theory by asking the following questions:

1. How has the development of education been related to the process of social and economic change in the recent history of Africa?

2. In what way is the education system relevant to the process of social reproduction in modern Africa?

We may treat these questions in turn.

1. It is clear that educational expansion has not been associated with the growth of manufacturing industry in Africa as in the Western case. Most newly independent African countries have only begun to industrialise since the end of World War II, and their economies still continue to be dependent on the export of primary, mainly agricultural, products. There is no doubt that during the colonial period rapid social change did take place in the direction of incorporating large numbers of Africans into a capitalist market economy, but the rôle played by formal education in this process was of a different order to that obtaining in the West.

First, Africans were not being socialised (or "civilized") for urban, factory employment. The overwhelming demand was for unskilled labour: for plantation workers, miners, porters, road and railway navvies, collectors of wild products (e.g. rubber, ivory), dock labourers, etc. Initially, labour was either compulsory or represented a tax commutation. This form of in-

corporation was clearly unrelated to educational provision: it stemmed from the colonial stick rather than the carrot.

Second, increasing numbers of Africans were incorporated into the colonial economy through the development of cash cropping, particularly after 1900. In many cases, the initial introduction of cash cropping did not constitute a radical departure from previous forms of social organisation, productive methods or land ownership, although in the long run these were bound to be undermined, modified or transformed.

After the towns, it was in the cash cropping areas that formal education eventually gained its strongest foothold, though this was generally a slow process and often followed a protracted period of resistance to the educational efforts of the missions and the colonial administration. Initially, the acceptance of Western education seems to have reflected an "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" mentality (see pp.79-80). It seems fair to say that the social relations which developed through cash cropping in no way depended on the growth of mass education. The reverse is more plausible: the demand for education in rural areas where cash cropping had already become established represented an attempt by parents to obtain for their children status, income and occupational advantages outside farming.

In Europe and North America, the growth of manufacturing industry constituted the victory of industry over agriculture, of town over countryside, of capitalist over landlord. The need for agricultural labour declined with the modernisation of the rural economy, creating a labour surplus which was forced by various mechanisms into the growing manufacturing towns and areas. The landless and propertyless had very little choice in the

matter; they either turned to wage labour or starved. The formal education of this new urban working class served to make it accept this situation with as much grace as possible.

In contrast, education had a destabilising effect in African cash cropping areas. Rather than supporting social and productive relations, it helped channel new generations out of the rural economy and into the towns. This was clearly undesirable from the point of view of the colonial authorities, who mistakenly associated the problem with curricular content and tried, unsuccessfully, to reverse the trend by the introduction of "education adapted to local needs". In the absence of industrialisation, the creation of new occupational opportunities was severely limited, which did not stop people competing for the available jobs through the education system.

In the perspective employed here, it was a third group of incorporated Africans who were of critical importance; i.e., those who entered the "modern sector" of government, trading company and mission employment on the basis of educational achievement. It was this group which came to constitute the African "middle class" and the élite which crowned it. The racial occupational segregation of colonialism closed the top posts in the administration to aspirant Africans, and it was from these frustrated spirallists, the most westernised colonial subjects, that many of the nationalist leaders and most of the post-independence élite emerged.

Both British and French colonial authorities realised the potential political dangers involved in the uncontrolled expansion of education, but the French were more successful in limiting educational opportunities to manpower needs. Despite the assimilationist ideology of the "mission civilisatrice",

the provision of post-primary education in French colonies was extremely limited before World War II.

For both French and British colonies the contrast with Western experience is again extreme. In the absence of industrialisation, the tertiary sector naturally assumed an importance unparalleled in the West. There was no question of providing mass primary education to socialise a nascent urban proletariat to new life-styles and working conditions which themselves had little or no inherent attraction. Thus, during the colonial period, education was much more a vehicle of change than of social reproduction, and this is still the case today, although there are signs that education is already beginning to play a reproductive rôle.

Some degree of social change was seen as desirable by the colonial authorities, and education was thought to be the best means of bringing it about.⁶ What they did not foresee was the difficulty of controlling the rate and direction of social change once the process had begun, and the native started to acquire "more education than was good for him".⁷

In Africa, the development of formal education played anything but the conservative rôle which Durkheim attributed to it. Without too much exaggeration, it can be said that, whereas in the West educational growth has been a stabilising force in the development of capitalism, in Africa it has constituted one of the major forces of destabilisation and differentiation. Put another way, in the West educational change guarantees the continuous reproduction of class relations; in Africa, it is intimately related to the establishment of a class system. If this is a correct analysis, we may now reformulate the second question above thus: how is education related to the

general process of class formation in Africa?

2. The aspects of education of interest here are access and performance. In the West, these are functions of social class; in Africa, this is much less the case. To the class dimension must be added the ethnic-regional and the urban-rural, and these three are interrelated in a complex way. If one postulates growing class differentiation in Africa and a tighter relationship between class and education, it may be asked: what changes might be expected to take place in the relationship between class and the other factors which determine enrolment and performance? This question is of practical as well as theoretical importance, for the expansion of education is often assumed to be associated with a reduction in ethnic-regional and urban-rural inequalities in access and performance. If this were true, one would expect ethnic-regional and urban-rural factors to decline in importance as educational provision spreads, and class factors influencing enrolment and performance to increase in importance pari passu. A number of objections can be raised to this line of reasoning.

First, in the present context education is of interest because of its relevance to occupational achievement. It is well known that the relationship between education and occupational opportunities changes with the expansion of education. One of the consequences of rapid educational expansion is the devaluation of qualifications on the job market. Thus, previously marginal ethnic-regional populations may become incorporated into the primary education system over time, but this does not necessarily change their relative life chances. Therefore, real ethnic-regional or urban-rural inequalities need not decline over time. If they follow the pattern of uneven economic

development which characterises many African countries, educational inequalities may indeed be cumulative in nature. This question will be examined in the Camerounian context in Chapter III.

Second, as educational systems expand, so we should turn our attention from the question of access to that of performance. As they expand (assuming that they do), so the question of who goes to which kind of school (general or technical-vocational, of high or low quality/prestige, etc.) and what determines success or failure increases in importance. From the point of view of overall life chances, it is as invalid to study performance variations when enrolment is low or very variable as it is uninformative to study enrolment when this is high. In practice, the factors determining enrolment and performance inequalities are often closely related, but it is very important to separate them for analytical purposes if defective interpretations are to be avoided.

To take some concrete examples: in Africa, secondary school students from farming and working class families do not underperform in exams, and this is also true in primary school systems with low levels of enrolment and/or significant urban-rural or ethnic-regional enrolment inequalities. A Ugandan study by Heyneman (1976) showed very weak correlations between family background and primary school leaving certificate results. Clignet and Foster (1966) have shown that students from underrepresented ethnic groups and occupational backgrounds are as successful in entering élite secondary schools as they are in entering secondary schools in general. None of these findings are proof of the openness of the educational systems involved or of general equality of opportunity. Rather, they show that

27.
students from disadvantaged backgrounds or ethnic groups are often of above-average ability and/or from atypical families within their occupational or ethnic group. The selection process determining who enters the school system and (more important) who stays in it have already eliminated the less able and less privileged from the underrepresented groups.⁸

This means that the equalisation of (say) ethnic enrolment levels in primary school may well lead to an increase in secondary school entrance exam performance differentials between the more and the less favoured ethnic groups. In other words, educational inequalities will be apparent only at the secondary level, as in the West. Here class background is the main determinant of educational performance, but this only becomes evident at the secondary level. Selection at the end of primary school has been replaced by common secondary education for all, except where, as in Britain, there exists an important private sector for the upper classes with its own mode of recruitment from primary to secondary. Thus, it is increasingly performance which decides educational and occupational futures, not the fact of attending one or other kind of school or of leaving prematurely. The "cooling out" process in education is increasingly postponed, though not eliminated. In the United States it is increasingly post-secondary education which determines life chances, and this is soon likely to be the pattern elsewhere.⁹

Third, over time, ethnic-regional and urban-rural inequalities in enrolment and performance levels may become increasingly class-based. This can be demonstrated by an ideal typology of enrolment levels within the context of ethnic-regional and urban-rural inequalities of access.

At one extreme, enrolment levels are so low in primary

schools as to constitute a de facto exclusion from the educational process for children of school-going age. Many of the poorer areas in the poorer countries fall into this category. At present costs and rates of expansion they will never achieve anything approaching universal primary enrolment. For example, it was estimated that in Niger it would cost between 8 and 12 percent of GNP to achieve a 20 percent primary enrolment level (UNESCO 1965). Thus, general educational expansion will have little effect on the life chances of millions of boys and (particularly) girls living in remoter and more sparsely populated areas where the processes of incorporation and class formation initiated by colonialism have not yet transformed the subsistence farmer or nomadic herdsman into a peasant farmer, a landless labourer, a migrant worker or any combination of these. Thus, exclusion from education and the advantages it affords others will be part of the developing class position of these most marginal populations.

One can identify a large and less marginal group for whom schooling is by no means unknown or undesired, but for whom, for the present, the chances of finishing primary school, let alone going further, are very slight indeed. Many factors help to determine the limited opportunities open to this semi-marginal group, including poverty, the need for child labour, lack of parental support, the exploitation of girls, poor teaching and the lack of administrative supervision, and the cultural and symbolic hiatus which exists between the school and the local environment. Falling into this category are children from regions/ethnic groups with below-average enrolment levels and characterised by high dropout and repeat rates. As regards the effect of education on life chances, children in this group

are somewhat less marginal than those described above, but are still severely disadvantaged compared with those in the third group.

This third group consists of children born in or migrating to the urban and (to a lesser extent) rural areas which have been the most radically affected by colonialism and its consequences. This means essentially the larger towns (which are usually regionally concentrated or represented by the sole capital-port-commercial-industrial centre) and the rural cashcrop producing areas which have for many years been incorporated into world markets. These areas are characterised by above-average primary enrolment rates and the virtual monopoly of secondary schools of all kinds. They often experienced the highest rates of enrolment expansion immediately before and since independence, and were the first to adopt formal Western education and to make use of it in the job market.

Having identified three points on an ideal-typical continuum of levels of enrolment, we may now attempt to answer the question posed above concerning the relationship between class, urban-rural and ethnic-regional factors affecting school enrolment and performance.

First, past studies have discounted the independent effect of ethnicity on enrolment and performance variations. In relation to access, Clignet and Foster come to the conclusion that:

"Ethnicity is a rather general term which masks the operation of factors that may be much more important in determining access."(1966:80)

"Although there is some ethnic selectivity... other social characteristics are of greater importance."(Foster 1965:240)

As is well known, the ethnic aspect of educational stratif-

ication is closely related to the nature and timing of the colonial impact in different areas. The differential incorporation of regions and ethnic groups corresponds to the localisation of cash-cropping, urban growth, infrastructural development and schooling. Few cases can be cited where educational expansion has not been causally related to these basic socio-economic forces. We might expect the socio-economic dimension of ethnicity to grow in importance at the expense of any residual, authentically ethnic characteristics affecting enrolment.

A comparative study of enrolment patterns in Ghana and Ivory Coast supports this analysis. There are more children from northern ethnic groups in the larger Ghanaian secondary school system, and they are from a wider range of social backgrounds. But the enrolment gap between the northern and southern ethnic groups is greater in the more developed Ghanaian system. Clignet concludes:

"This would suggest that as total ethnic selectivity declines, social differentiation along ethnic lines increases accordingly." (Clignet 1967:371).

The reduction of ethnic enrolment inequalities depends on the reduction of inequalities between ethnic groups on the level of income and occupational profiles. If, over time, it were possible to predict a convergence in the occupational profiles of different ethnic groups, there is no reason why patterns of enrolment and social selectivity should not also converge. But there is little to indicate, in Cameroun or elsewhere, that such a convergence is taking place; development disequilibria tend to be cumulative in their effect.

We may conclude that ethnic enrolment inequalities are symptomatic of socio-economic inequalities between regions

and ethnic groups. If educational access is important in class formation, the low level of access of peripheral ethnic groups and regions is likely to become an increasingly crucial determinant of their class position.

This does not mean that educational achievement is the only mechanism of class formation. Exclusion from education is only one of a number of forms of incorporation and exploitation emanating from the national centre and affecting the peripheral ethnic groups. Thus, the national distribution of educational opportunities must be studied in the wider context of socio-economic change which determines regional inequalities of all kinds.

As regards the interaction of class and urban-rural factors affecting enrolment and performance, it is clear that the urban-rural dimension is in part a class factor, since most children born and brought up in rural areas will have parents who are involved in some kind of farming activity,¹⁰ whereas those born and brought up in towns will have parents in paid employment (blue and white collar), trading and small commodity production. For convenience, we may concentrate on the urban-rural dimension in the areas of greatest urban growth and cash-crop production.

The urban-rural dimension cannot simply be reduced to class differences.¹¹ First, many pupils from urban families are born in villages, where they spend varying periods of time before coming to town. Second, birthplace itself may have an independent effect on school enrolment and performance, for example, in regard to the availability and quality of schooling and the more widespread use of the European language of school in the urban context.¹² Third, many farmers' children move to town to improve their chances of educational success. This may be

before beginning primary school, before finishing primary school, or on entering secondary school. The modalities of this process will be examined in subsequent chapters.

Two important substantive issues have been raised in the literature in relation to urban-rural and class factors affecting secondary enrolment patterns. Foster's main proof of the relative openness of the Ghanaian school system is the presence in secondary schools of substantial numbers of children from farming families. For the boys in his fifth form sample: "over one-third are the children of rural farmers and fishermen, the overwhelming bulk of whom are totally illiterate." (Foster 1963: 163).

Hurd and Johnson take Foster to task for not distinguishing between cash-crop and subsistence farmers, and for not looking more closely at the educational levels of fathers in the first category. They conclude that children attending secondary schools from farming backgrounds are heavily concentrated among fathers with large cocoa farms and above-average levels of education. The conclusions reached by both Foster and Hurd & Johnson are questionable because of the methods they use, and these will be discussed at the end of this chapter. But it is clearly important to differentiate between subsistence and cash-crop farming and between different modes of cash-crop production in any discussion of farming background and educational opportunity. Later chapters will be concerned with this relationship between rural stratification tendencies and patterns of secondary school entry.

The second substantive issue deals with the educational disadvantages of children from manual compared with farming backgrounds. Hurd & Johnson come to the conclusion that:

"... although the modernisation of the economy creates conditions that are favourable for the expansion of the education system, at the same time there emerge within the modern sector differences of life chances greater than those that distinguish the modern sector from the traditional. In other words, the rigidity of the emerging class system is such that achievement through higher education is more difficult for the children of a labourer than for the child of a subsistence farmer."(Hurd & Johnson 1967:72).

This is probably not true for the children of subsistence farmers, but may well be the case with the children of farmers who sell their crops. It is clear that children from cash-cropping areas enjoy educational advantages compared with the children of subsistence farmers. But cash-cropping areas themselves are, educationally and in other respects, dominated by the urban areas which they surround and which, in a sense, surround them.

The processes of rural class formation are more dependent on population pressure on land, the vagaries of international commodity prices and the scavenging activities of produce buyers, marketing boards, etc. than they are on educational access, but the latter may well be an important consequence or side effect of rural class formation. Thus, investment in education is likely to increasingly characterise the wealthier segments of the rural population.

As regards the initial question concerning the relationship between class and other factors affecting the pattern of educational enrolment and performance, we may conclude as follows: the perpetuation/growth of ethnic-regional and urban-rural inequalities is in no way inimical to the development of the

class dimension of educational stratification. Everyone does not have to go to school before class can become the dominant form of social and educational inequality, as the case of Latin America shows. There is no reason why classes should not develop along ethnic and regional lines, and they most certainly develop along urban-rural lines. We argue, therefore, that ethnicity and birthplace are not independent determinants of educational enrolment and performance, but are increasingly subsumed under class factors.

This study is concerned with the transition from primary to secondary school in an area of high urban and rural enrolment at the primary level. This transition is the most important moment in the school career of all pupils in the area (the Centre-South Province of Cameroun), and it depends very much on performance in the concours d'entrée en sixième or Common Entrance exam. But this does not mean that we can ignore variations in enrolment, repeating and ^{drop-out} abandoning rates at the primary level, which still frequently reflect urban-rural and class background. The important point is that, in this area, differential performance has tended to replace differential enrolment (access) as the defining characteristic of educational selection. It is in such a context that class background can be most satisfactorily studied in relation to education and social reproduction.

Education and Class Formation in Africa

At the most general level, we may define a class society as one in which some group or groups produce more value than they consume and another group or groups consume more value than they produce. Thus, classes exist where surplus value, i.e. all that which is produced over and above the minimum necessary for the

simple reproduction of social and economic relations, is systematically channelled into the hands of the dominant group or groups and out of the hands of those who are instrumental in producing the surplus. The main mechanisms of surplus appropriation are force (e.g. slavery, forced labour), market relations (unequal exchange) and the exploitation of wage labour. The last of these is the principal type of surplus appropriation in capitalist society, and all three have been important in the development of the African class structure.

This definition does not stress the ownership of capital or land as much as the ability, in the final analysis the power, to take advantage of the wealth created from them by the application of labour. For example, in Africa the politico-bureaucratic élite do not in general own the means of production on which their livelihood depends: their means of appropriation are political and relate to the position of the élite vis-à-vis the state apparatus which they control. Conversely, cash-crop production creates much more value than the farmer enjoys: the farmer is at a disadvantage both in relation to the market and to the state apparatus.

Thus, class position is not reducible to occupation, although there is in practice a large overlap between classes and occupational groups. In this and subsequent chapters, class formation will be discussed in terms of four broad occupational categories with a number of possible sub-categories in each one. Class formation is not reducible to changes in the occupational structure resulting from technological and technical changes in the division of labour (Dahrendorf 1968), although these are important in themselves.

For the sake of brevity, only the aspects of class formation

and reproduction which are most germane to the sphere of education will be dealt with in this section. As a first approximation, we may say that education is the link between classes and other social groups and the occupational structure. This link is a spatio-temporal variable, the general tendency being towards reinforcement rather than attenuation over time. The link will necessarily be stronger in relation to employment by state or private employment than to self-employment. In the latter case, the relationship is still important if succeeding generations prefer, or are obliged, not to follow in their fathers' footsteps, but attempt to secure paid employment of one kind or another.

Examples of forced choice are expropriation of land, population pressure, drought and bankruptcy. Alternatively, choice may reflect a preference for white- (or even blue-) collar employment which involves less work, more security of tenure and status, possibly (but not necessarily) higher income.

At the lowest level, those with the least education are obliged to take the most menial, unskilled and poorly paid jobs. At higher levels there will be more or less of a "fit" between educational levels and occupational placement, though the relationship between the two will vary with the relative growth rates of certification and employment opportunities (see Chapter VII for the present relationship in Cameroun).

A poor "fit" will have various consequences. For example, if, as is often the case, certification outdistances the creation of employment opportunities, we may find that (a) minimum qualifications levels for a given occupation will rise; (b) the less competitive will give up; (c) the more competitive will compete harder; and (d) alternative methods of occupational placement will emerge, e.g. based on nepotism or family connect-

ions.

A final important variable is the extent to which social origins determine conceptions of the occupational hierarchy and the willingness to compete for diplomas and jobs of a given level. Low levels of social differentiation and/or slow expansion of job opportunities will lead to high levels of competition, and vice versa. An anomic situation may be said to exist where there is a poor fit between subjective ambitions and objective chances of success. Merton (1956) suggests a number of ways in which the fit can be restored, but these need not concern us here. It is clear that in Africa anomie in this sense has been relatively high since independence. Foster explains the high general level of educational ambition in terms of the absence of class sub-cultures, reflecting the traditional egalitarianism of African cultures. We would argue that subcultural differentiation is an inevitable consequence of occupational differentiation, just as the latter is one of the preconditions of class formation.¹³

As social differentiation progresses, so will long-distance intergenerational upward mobility become increasingly difficult. In this situation, anomic ambitions are likely to be replaced by class-based ambitions. As Boudon points out (1974), even a constant amount of mobility ambition among individuals from different social backgrounds will have different implications in terms of points of arrival. For example, a subsistence farmer's son who wants to become a soldier may be showing as much ambition as a soldier's son who wants to become a white-collar worker or a white-collar worker's son who wants to become a doctor. In other words, existing levels of social differentiation affect conceptions of mobility possibilities within both the educational and occupational structures, as well as the

absolute probability of mobility taking place over certain social distances.

Past studies of the relationship between education and the development of stratification in Africa have concentrated almost exclusively on the "Western educated élite" and on access to élite status. This reflects the importance and visibility of this group, the recent history of its rise to power, and the professional milieu in which sociologists work (and their élitist proclivities?). The consequences of this concentration on the élite for the sociology of education have been (a) an over-concentration on academic secondary and university education at the expense of primary and technical-vocational, and (b) an absence of studies concerned with the effects of educational access and achievement on the formation of classes or status groups below the élite.

There has therefore been a tendency to reduce the impact of education to a dichotomy: the élite have secondary and higher educational qualifications, the non-élite masses do not. In the absence of a basic theoretical framework, most sociologists have slipped into an implicit élite theory frame of reference. Those who have raised the class issue have usually done so in order to dismiss the validity of class analysis in Africa, and consequently the only major issue discussed in the context of education and stratification has been the question of the openness of élite access, and even within this narrow framework sociologists are by no means agreed.

Whilst class and élite analysis tend, in practice, to be mutually exclusive, there is no real reason why this should be the case. To substantiate this point would require a lengthy definitional parenthesis which is unnecessary for present

purposes. The point is made merely to indicate that the use of class and/or élite terminology in the following pages should not be taken as an indication of theoretical confusion. The term élite will be frequently used in subsequent chapters as a shorthand for those at the top of the politico-administrative hierarchy. For convenience, we have also grouped those at the top of the military, police and academic hierarchies and top professionals working for the state, private firms, or independently under the élite rubric. All these groups have their individual characteristics, and the above classification should not be taken to mean that there is any supposed harmony of interests or action characterising the élite as a whole (see Chapter VII for a discussion of this in the Camerounian context). The classification can only be justified in relation to the task in hand, viz. the study of the effect of family background on educational access and performance. From this point of view the classification seems to be satisfactory.

Three categories were identified above in relation to the processes of incorporation characteristic of colonial class formation: labourers, cash-crop farmers and non-manual workers. The fourth category of interest here is composed of traders, small commodity producers and artisans, some of whom prospered and some of whom did not under colonial rule. These four categories will be discussed in the Camerounian context in subsequent chapters, so that here only a brief outline of their recent histories is necessary.

Manual workers.

Over time, forced labour and its indirect tax commutation variant have been replaced by free wage-labour of a capitalist kind. But the low level of industrial investment and its capital

intensive nature have meant that wage employment still characterises only a small minority of the gainfully employed. In 1960, only 5.2 percent of the West African labour force were in non-agricultural wage-employment, and most of this was in the tertiary sector (Doctor & Gallis 1966).

Educational expansion has meant that many manual workers now have some post primary schooling,¹⁴ but of all urban occupational groups, only small traders and artisans have lower average educational levels than manual workers. Like most of the urban population, manual workers are still mainly first generation, farmers' sons, so it is more appropriate to talk of class formation than of class reproduction, both in relation to education and in more general terms. Unskilled labourers in urban areas are generally recent migrants with low levels of formal education. In Peil's sample of factory workers in four southern Ghanaian towns, 56 percent of unskilled workers were born in central or northern Ghana, compared with only 18 percent of skilled workers. Sixty-one percent of the former had no formal education, compared with only 30 percent of skilled workers. Four-fifths of unskilled workers were farmers' sons, as were 63 and 52 percent of skilled and clerical workers respectively (Peil 1972:44,50).

An interesting comparison can be made between the above data and figures from Dakar, where investment in industry began in the 1920s but has tended to stagnate since 1960 (Pfeffermann 1968). Mercier (1954) found that only 45 percent of the employed male population of the town were farmers' sons, ranging from 21 percent of professional workers to 42 percent of skilled and (as in Peil's study) four-fifths of unskilled manual workers. Unless industrial development speeds up significantly, future

generations of manual workers may be increasingly recruited from existing manual than from farming backgrounds.

This is most likely to be the case among the skilled working class, where job commitment is greater than among other manual workers, as we would expect. Some have argued that the relatively high wages and job security of skilled workers in Africa make of them an aristocracy of labour (Fanon 1972, Arrighi & Saul 1973). This point is disputed, but, given the size and growth of the urban labour pool, we would expect the skilled labour force to be relatively stable over time and some skilled workers' children to be upwardly mobile, given the home advantages they enjoy over other working class children and those in the lower reaches of the informal sector.

Increasing unemployment in the towns is likely to make skilled manual occupations increasingly desirable, even among those with secondary education. There are already signs that the educational differentials between those entering manual and non-manual occupations are declining.¹⁵

Rural stagnation and population pressure on the land have tended to make migration an increasingly permanent affair. (Cohen 1976). Educational expansion and growing urban labour surpluses mean that it will be increasingly difficult for new migrants and those with primary education or less to enter wage employment, even at the unskilled level. These are not propitious conditions for upward occupational mobility and we would expect this to decline in both amount and distance. Gutkind thinks that in general "there is less and less social mobility" and that "Africa is taking on a rather rigid socio-economic structure in which mobility for the masses of the population is blocked or restricted" (Gutkind 1969:364). According to Foster "...

aggregate rates of mobility in African society are very low... and they are likely to remain so" (Foster 1976:45). The particular disadvantages of unskilled workers' children regarding education were mentioned above (p.20), and are confirmed by the present study (see Chapter IV). This is an example of class formation and possible reproduction through educational failure.

Cash-crop farmers.

The incorporation of rural areas into the world market system has, in many countries, brought about the decline of communal forms of land ownership and exploitation. At the same time, the relative stagnation of world prices for tropical products, together with the parasitic activities of produce buyers, marketing boards and co-operatives have brought about large and increasing social and economic inequalities between urban and rural areas. These factors, together with population pressures, have constituted the "push" forces behind rural-urban migration.

In some areas, a class of relatively well-off farmers has emerged which employs local or migrant labour, either directly or through various share-cropping arrangements. In others, the nuclear family is the basic productive unit, and food-crops and cash-crops are grown in varying proportions depending on market prices and cash needs. The importance of rural stratification patterns in relation to educational access has already been pointed out, and in Chapter IV this question will be dealt with in the Camerounian context.

It was stated above that the peasantry did not depend on education for its reproduction; education has been and continues to be one of the ways out of a life of rural drudgery. Because

most of the working population still lives on the land, students from farming backgrounds continue to account for quite a high proportion of secondary school and university places, although in relative terms they are generally very underrepresented. Given the structural imbalance between town and countryside, we would expect this imbalance to increase in coming years. It is likely that, soon, only the more prosperous commercial farmers will be able to "seek to educate their children to give them access to the benefits of salaried employment" (Williams 1976: 148). There are signs that this is already taking place in some areas, though the point is disputed.

In relation to university entrance, O'Connell & Beckett state that:

"Comparison of the Ibadan and Ghana data with that (sic) from ABU and Ivory Coast suggests ... that as the proportion of 'farmer fathers' diminish, the proportions of administrative and clerical occupations increase, without comparable increases in the private enterprise and worker categories." (O'Connell & Beckett 1975:322). ✓

In a review of the literature on entry into the University of Ghana, Bibby concluded that "There is no evidence of a trend towards openness (of entry) over the period 1951-65 (Bibby 1973: 371). Van den Berghe, however, found a higher proportion of farmers' children in the University of Ibadan in 1962-66 than in 1948-52. In Nigeria in general we would expect this pattern to continue for a number of years (Van den Berghe 1968:154).

Children from subsistence areas are often characterised by their exclusion from the primary education system; in cash-crop areas we would expect this exclusion to take effect at the secondary level, and this is likely to condition the reproduction

of the peasantry. When the pay-off of education is seen to be low, poorer peasants may stop investing in it (Blakemore 1975; Hinchcliffe 1970).

Traders and Businessmen

The occupational classification used in this thesis distinguishes between small commodity producers, traders and businessmen on the one hand and the small group of more successful entrepreneurs on the other. The dividing line between the two groups is somewhat arbitrary, but will be shown to have some heuristic utility.

The so-called "indigenous bourgeoisie" has grown in size since the Second World War but is still relatively small and weak. Its growth is inhibited by the continued dominance of foreign interests in such vital fields as mining, manufacturing, banking and import-export, and even such spheres as large-scale internal commerce and retailing are often controlled by foreigners. Most local fortunes are made in transport, construction, retailing and other middleman activities rather than in manufacture.

Small trading occupies a large proportion of the urban labour force, but is generally an unrewarding activity, particularly among women. This is the result of the high level of competition (reflecting relative ease of entry) and the ^{exiguity} ~~exiguity~~ of the local market. Petty trading at the lowest level is often the major activity of recent migrants, who often drift in and out of employment, self-employment and unemployment. The lower limit of self-employment is often difficult to distinguish from de facto destitution and marginality.

At the middle and upper levels, non-migrants frequently control most of the commercial sector. Some businessmen are

retired civil servants or ex-employees frustrated by their inability to obtain promotion. These are often of above-average educational levels, but in general success in business is less strongly related to education than is the case in white-collar employment.

The weakness of their economic base means that private businessmen are more dependent on external economic interests and on favours from politicians than vice versa. Similarly, the small trader is often related to the large trader in a patron-client fashion (Peace 1974). At the top, there is an interpenetration between the economic and political élites: big businessmen often enter politics and politicians and bureaucrats often invest in business and property.

Intermediate businessmen may be better off than most white-collar workers, but at equal income levels they enjoy less status than the latter. As a result we might expect them to be relatively prone to status anxiety, which may be channelled into an above-average concern with their children's education. The children of large traders are generally at a material and (often) at a cultural advantage over other traders' children, and we would expect them to be relatively successful in entering secondary schools, both public and private. The opposite is likely to be the case with small traders' children, and we would not expect them to outperform, say, the children of skilled manual workers.

The reproduction of the private business sector is a function of the inheritance of capital (at the top) and the transmission of know-how, skills and contacts (at the bottom). Successful businessmen tend to be highly polygynous, which increases the chances of most of their children moving out of their fathers'

occupation and into salaried employment. This is less probable at the intermediate and lower levels, where there is less polygyny, lower school performance and ability to pay fees, and probably less chance of obtaining privileged access to jobs with the government or private firms. The relationship between diploma devaluation and the educational levels of the self-employed is discussed in the Camerounian context in Chapter VII.

The Elite and White-collar Workers.

In the absence of a large and prosperous private sector, it is white-collar employment in the public sector which constitutes the major channel of occupational mobility for the educated of non-élite backgrounds. The post-independence growth of this sector and the absolute (if not relative) success of the educated from modest backgrounds in entering it have meant the continued concentration of educational efforts in this direction.

The meaning given to the term "élite" has been outlined above (pp.25-6) and this section concentrates on what Dumont calls the "bourgeoisie de la fonction publique"(Dumont 1962), i.e. that group which controls the state apparatus and the benefits which this control affords. This bourgeoisie is not an entrepreneurial class in the classical Marxist sense, i.e. the major owners and manipulators of capital in a market economy. The absence of indigenous capitalist and landlord classes serves to make of the élite a particularly privileged group, somewhat comparable to the soviet "New Class" described by Djilas (Andreski 1968).

In general the élite functions in the same way as the colonial government which it replaced. The most educated members

of the pre-independence middle class generally moved into the new élite, and Africanisation and the growth of the bureaucracy led to the promotion of many of its less educated members. The other major channel of social ascent was via politics, which was used by many of the less educated élite aspirants.¹⁶

Given the occupational structure, it is inevitable that most of the present members of the élite do not come from rich, traditionally prestigious and powerful or educated middle-class families. This is truer for the political than for the administrative élite, although in practice it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between these two branches of government, especially with military regimes. Entry into the élite is still possible for that tiny fraction of farmers', manual workers' and small traders' children who successfully complete secondary and post-secondary education, but the establishment of the present élite makes the continuation of even this small amount of long-distance mobility increasingly problematic.

According to Lloyd:

"...it is becoming increasingly apparent that the well-educated are today able to ensure, by their wealth and their ability to understand and manipulate the school system, that their own children receive as good or a better education than themselves and that they will constitute the educated élite of the coming generation. Conversely, the urban worker has the least chance of any social category that his son will enter secondary school. An open society is rapidly closing."(Lloyd 1974:3).

We would not agree that the urban workers' children are necessarily the most likely to see the élite door closed in their faces, but would argue that this is more probable for

the children of unskilled workers, small cash-crop/subsistence farmers and the smallest traders.

In a similar vein, Dore states that: "It may well be... that the enormous educational advantages which accrue to the children of university-educated parents will lead to sharply entrenched class divisions very rapidly."(Dore 1976:79).

The élite enjoys a number of advantages over other groups in relation to the education system. First, they are closer to it in the sense that education policy-making and administration are controlled by members of the politico-bureaucratic élite, so that, at the very least, it is unlikely that any educational reforms will be introduced which run counter to élite interests. Examples of this will be given in coming chapters.

Second, the élite are in a favourable position to obtain places for their children in the best primary schools, both state and private, as well as in the best secondary schools, even when (in theory) places can only be obtained on the basis of entrance exam results. Again, examples will be given in the text. The élite advantage in the private sector is the ability to pay, which is also an advantage from the point of view of books, private tutors, working conditions in the home, etc.

Third, the educated élite provide a home milieu which is close to the curricular content of the school. Western studies have shown that schools are not culturally neutral (Bernstein 1960, Bordieu & Passeron 1972), and this also appears to be the case in Africa. One of the most important attributes of the élite ('cultural capital') is their mastery of the language of the colonialists, and this is particularly noticeable in ex-French colonies. Fanon described this obsession with academic French among educated West Indians, and his analysis

is also valid for Africa (Fanon 1972). Fallers states that "The only culture self-consciously shared by the new élites has tended to be that imported from France, Belgium or Britain..."(Fallers 1973:77). As a symbol of élite membership and a potent exclusion mechanism, this concern with language is easily understood, and may help explain the reluctance of African leaders to introduce local languages into the schools. In countries where the majority of the population do not speak their national languages, or speak them "badly", it is clearly a tremendous advantage to come from a milieu where this is not the case. The importance of French as a subcultural factor in the home environment will be examined in detail in Chapter V.

According to Carnoy:

"In the low income countries, the dominant domestic bourgeoisie attempts to use the education system to reproduce its class control over the means of production and surplus." (Carnoy 1975:395).

In the African case, this is an exaggeration. For the moment, the élite control neither land, labour nor capital to any significant degree, though they do at least partly control the surplus produced by these. Moreover, they are only partially dependent on the surplus product of the masses, which is in any case small, given the low level of productivity outside the minute modern sector. The wealth of the élite stems from their highly inflated salaries and their favoured position as regards the opportunity to bribe, take favours, embezzle and corrupt, and a large proportion of the economic base which makes this possible comes from aid, budgetary subsidies and

import duties.

The élite is clearly an exploitative group, but it is more dependent on the maintenance of the present system of economic and political relations with the Western world than it is on the surplus extracted from urban and rural workers. Internally, this is a source of strength, externally a source of weakness.

In countries with low average levels of education, the academic qualifications of the élite constitute an important part of its legitimacy. Also, its vanguard rôle in matters of socio-economic development gives weight to its social dominance. Dore points out that "the almightiness of the certificate varies in direct proportion to the predominance of the state in the development process." (Dore 1976:74). In the absence of a powerful indigenous business class, it is inevitable that the bureaucratic-political élite will assume responsibility for development. In an effort to impose consensus and mask conflicts of interest, the élite attempts to reduce political activity and defines development in purely technical terms. The organisation of the development effort becomes increasingly centralised, étatised, élitist and dirigiste. The result is that only the academically qualified are deemed capable of bringing about development, which explains the introduction of élitist education policies.¹⁷ Between 1960 and 1972, primary school enrolment in Africa increased at a rate of 5.7 percent per annum, whereas secondary and higher education expanded at 9.8 and 10.5 percent per annum respectively (New Internationalist, August 1977:5).

Thus, the ideological centrality of education and the absence of any other powerful and organised class or group which might serve to counterbalance the hegemony of the

élite, serve to place the "bourgeoisie de la fonction publique" on the front of the social stage. As Schwarz puts it:

"Scolarisation, emploi bureaucratique et situation élitaires sont liés plus intimement dans les nouveaux états africains que dans la plupart des pays occidentaux." (Schwarz 1974:261).

Miller goes as far as to assert that:

"Because education remains the pathway to élite status, which in turn is usually followed by employment in government, the nature of the educational systems of Africa will play a large rôle in determining whether the élite will solidify its position by becoming a ruling class." (Miller 1974:527).

The weakness of this argument is that it assumes that the education system is independent, "out there", as it were, and incapable of manipulation, covert or overt, by and in the interests of the élite. However, it is not obvious that the élite need resort to such manipulation, for, if the cultural and material gap between the élite and the non-élite continues to widen, this will automatically be reflected in enrolment and performance levels.

It has already been pointed out that the expansion of primary and secondary enrolment levels does not necessarily lead to a more egalitarian distribution of life chances and job opportunities. The degree of élite closure will be a function of the rapidity of expansion of élite positions in relation to the growth of qualified candidates for those positions. We can imagine two extreme cases: (1) élite positions are created at a greater rate than the élite can reproduce itself; and (2) the élite reproduces itself faster

then élite positions are created, so that increasing proportions of the élite will inevitably experience downward mobility.

It becomes immediately clear that élite self-recruitment is not a necessary condition for its crystallisation into a ruling class. In (1) above all élite children may acquire élite status in their turn and social mobility into the élite will still be possible. In the second case (2), all élite positions may be filled by élite-born children, yet a proportion of élite-born individuals will experience downward mobility. This may seem a rather frivolous example, but it raises a point which has been ignored by many previous empirical writings, namely the relationship between the relative openness of the élite and the process of class formation.

This thesis is more concerned with class formation than with social mobility, and in the present section an attempt has been made to evaluate the implications of occupational background (a class index or surrogate) for educational access and performance and subsequent employment opportunities at all levels. This contrasts with the approach of most previous studies which concentrate on secondary school and university access in relation to the attainment of élite and other white-collar status, more or less completely ignoring the rest of the occupational structure.

These two approaches look at social and educational mobility in different ways, our own in a relative and the other in an absolute perspective:

"...in view of the distribution of socio-economic groups in (the) African population as a whole...a sizeable minority or even a

majority of students in secondary schools still come from humbler homes whether measured in terms of the occupational status or the educational level of parents... When one is concerned with mobility processes it is the absolute representation of groups in the student population and not the pattern of relative life chances that is significant: an educational system can remain relatively 'open' even where there are distinct inequalities in opportunities for access." (Foster 1976:18. Stress in the original).

In fact, most studies of social mobility do not follow the method suggested by Foster; they are concerned with the chances of people born into a particular occupational group of staying in it or moving out of it. According to Lipset and Bendix "the social mobility of societies becomes relatively high once their industrialisation, and hence their economic expansion, reaches a certain level" (Lipset and Bendix 1959:13). Foster points out that aggregate rates of social mobility in Africa are very low and likely to remain so, give the "extremely sluggish change in the volume of job opportunities." (Foster 1976:45).

But instead of looking at the overall implications of this in relation to education and life chances, he simply outlines its possible effect on élite closure: "...there will be an increasing tendency for élites to transmit their status advantages to their offspring." (ibid.) This implies that social mobility and class formation are opposite and incompatible processes, at least in the case of the élite.

We would not accept this as being the case, for, without appreciable economic growth, the process of class formation

and reproduction must itself be "extremely sluggish". The development of a vast urban proletariat in the West was the direct result of rapid capital accumulation and industrial development: they were one and the same process. Moreover, social mobility is an integral aspect of contemporary industrial development. For example, there is more social mobility (and class formation) in Ivory Coast than in (say) Niger. The élite has a much better chance of becoming a mature ruling class in conditions of economic growth, when it can continue to guarantee élite status for most of its sons and at the same time continue to assimilate the most able/ambitious of the non-élite, than in conditions of economic stagnation, when frustrated would-be achievers become more and more numerous and internal élite conflict and competition become more manifest.

In short, class formation and social mobility are complementary rather than contradictory processes. Economic growth is inevitably accompanied by relative changes in the size of occupational groups and classes. For example, over time we might expect farming to decline in importance compared with manual or white-collar occupations (see Chapter VII). Without any changes in the pattern of selectivity, this would mean a reduction in the number of farmers' children entering secondary schools and white-collar occupations, but it would not necessarily mean a higher degree of self-recruitment into these occupations. Thus, a change in the absolute representation of white-collar workers' children in secondary schools need not reflect a change in relative selectivity patterns in their favour. If we only concern ourselves with the absolute numbers of children from

different backgrounds entering secondary school, etc. then we ignore the importance of structural mobility brought about by an increase in social differentiation.

It is therefore important to distinguish between the independent effects on educational and occupational life chances of social background (material and cultural) and changes in the occupational structure. In the probable absence of rapid changes in the occupational structure, we would argue that changes in the effect of family background on educational access and performance become the major determinants of social reproduction. This is likely to have the effect of limiting the amount of "pure" mobility, i.e. the exchange of statuses between individuals with different social origins, a point made by Foster:

"This process (the amount of 'pure' mobility) may be effected largely through the superior educational attainments of the upwardly mobile person but this is precisely where the odds are stacked against him since there will be an increasing tendency for élites to transmit their status advantages to their offspring." (ibid. p.45)

Increasingly rigid selectivity patterns in education would thus mean increasing self-reproduction of occupational groups and the crystallisation of a relatively "primitive" class structure.¹⁸ But wide variations are possible between and within countries. We might expect countries like Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Kenya to exhibit a trend towards pattern (1) as defined on p.38, whereas countries with slowly growing or stagnant economies (e.g. Ghana) or simply little chance of economic growth (e.g. much of the Sahel) will tend to move towards (2). This point will be considered empirically

in Chapter VII.

The lower white-collar workers have so far been left out of the discussion, and we need only say a few words about them here. The élite/other white-collar divide is clearly more or less arbitrary, as in the case of farmers and traders. In this study, primary school teachers, those in the intermediate categories of the civil service (grades B and C), nurses and secretary-typists (male and female), clerical workers and the non-commissioned ranks of the armed forces, police and gendarmerie have been grouped together. The wisdom or otherwise of this classification will become evident in due course.

The élite are the patrons of the "lower middle class" defined above in the same way as large traders are the patrons of the small. In both cases, the patrons are likely to be significant reference groups for their respective clients.

The educational levels of lower white-collar workers are second only to those of the élite, though income levels are considerably lower than those of large traders and sometimes less than those of skilled workers. Educational achievement is important for this group because of its essentially bureaucratic nature. The creation of more white-collar opportunities is, ignoring Parkinson's law, a function of economic growth, as in the case of the élite. Many élite aspirants will be forced to settle for second best and become, for example, primary school teachers, while looking for something better and/or continuing to chase elusive diplomas. Also, the downwardly mobile children of the élite are more likely to enter the other white-collar than any other sector, so that diploma devaluation is likely to be very rapid here. ?

Methodology

In the previous section, an attempt was made to evaluate the implications of occupational background (a class index or surrogate) for educational access and performance and subsequent employment opportunities at all levels. The methods used in previous studies of educational access are closely related to the theoretical issues discussed above and are partly responsible for the inconclusive nature of the debate surrounding educational opportunity in Africa.

Clignet, Foster and many others have made great use of the selectivity index, which is a relative measure of school access comparing the school population with the adult male population on a given dimension, e.g. ethnicity, birthplace, occupation. Using the selectivity index, Foster makes generally accepted statements like the following:

"The opportunity for a student from a professional family to enter secondary school is approximately 60 times that of a child from an unskilled worker's family and about 11 times the chance of a student coming from a farming background." (ibid. p.17, figures for Ghana).

We may question both the ratios stated above and, what is more important, the theoretical usefulness of the statement itself. The first criticism concerns the selectivity index as a measure of enrolment differences, the second takes us back to the discussion of the previous section. Both points may be dealt with briefly.

First, the selectivity index ignores a number of important demographic and ecological variables which, if ignored, tend to invalidate the measurement of selectivity. For example,

it ignores age, marriage patterns and fertility variations between occupational groups. We might expect the professionals mentioned in the quotation to be older than the unskilled workers, and therefore to have larger families and more children of secondary school-going age. If this is the case, then the factor of 60 mentioned above is an overstatement. In any case, even if one could compensate for this defect, it is still necessary to base the selectivity index on national census data which are often out of date and/or of dubious reliability. /No.

Also, census data use occupational categories which may not be the most useful from the sociological point of view. This may explain why Foster does not differentiate between northern subsistence farmers and southern cash-croppers in his "farming background" category. Clearly, the children of cash-croppers are better represented in secondary schools than the children of subsistence farmers, so that a figure for their combined representation does not really tell us very much.

Less obvious, but closely related to the above point, are the limitations which the use of the selectivity index imposes on the analysis of the interrelationship between independent variables affecting enrolment. Thus, it is possible to consider ethnic, parental occupational and educational factors, birthplace, etc. separately but not as a set of interrelated influences on enrolment. Consequently, the reader is presented with a list of factors affecting enrolment which are only perfunctorily connected to one another.

A further consequence of this is that it is difficult

to investigate the exact way in which background factors affect enrolment. For example, it is clearly important to know how much selectivity at the secondary level is the result of the availability of both primary and secondary schools, how much reflects primary wastage, and how much is the result of failure in the primary leaving or secondary entrance exam. Up to a point, secondary enrolment must be a reflection of primary school performance, and from the class formation point of view it is vitally important to find out which background factors affect performance variations and how.

Foster's explanation of what he sees as a relatively open education system in terms of recruitment lies in what he terms the "fundamentally egalitarian culture" of most traditional African societies (Foster 1963:167). He does not deny the existence of objective occupational strata, but rather the existence of class subcultures comparable to those found in the West. These latter explain the relative "stickiness" of recruitment patterns in Europe and North America even after the elimination of purely material obstacles to the further education of working class children. Among certain class subcultures the idea still persists that "education is not for the likes of us"; alternatively, it is deemed useless in the acquisition of status. In both cases the important variable is motivation (ibid.)

We would challenge both Foster's account of the Western pattern of access and his assumption that class subcultures do not exist in Africa and/or are unlikely to emerge. The selectivity index cannot be used to investigate the existence or otherwise of sub-cultures in Africa, which explains why Foster cannot substantiate his assertion that they do not

on the basis of hard data. Since his pioneering work, little or no research has been carried out which addresses itself to the question of subculture formation in relation to school access and performance., and the debate has yet to get beyond the level of speculation and assertion. Even Hurd and Johnson's attempt to refute Foster's conclusions was based on almost identical methods and concentrated on similar levels of education, so it is not surprising that they generated very similar data, differing only as to the extent of selectivity variations, and to their interpretation.

The question of subcultures cannot be investigated at the level of upper secondary or university education, where most of the forces determining enrolment and performance have already worked themselves out. At this level, social background has little or no effect on performance or on levels of educational or occupational aspirations (Clignet & Foster 1966).

To overcome these methodological difficulties, it is necessary to study the process of secondary school entry itself, and in a context where all or most children from every kind of social background reach the end of primary schooling. In this way we may gather information concerning the majority of less able and/or less privileged pupils who do not manage to obtain secondary school places, and who thus escape the sociological net cast over the fortunate and highly untypical minority who have so far been the centre of interest.

Finally, we may question the utility of the selectivity index on a more general level. If it were possible to develop a more efficient index, i.e. one which accurately reflected

real levels of inequality of access to secondary and higher education, we might still like to know how useful this would be in relation to the class formation debate. It is highly unlikely that the "real" variations in selectivity among students from different occupational backgrounds are very different to those already established. So far, all observers are agreed that the children of the élite have much better relative chances of undertaking secondary and higher studies than the children of manual workers and farmers. But there the agreement ends and theoretical-ideological speculation takes over.

It is clear that ease of access is neither a necessary nor a sufficient index of class formation. It is also clear that longitudinal studies which attempt to analyse changes in selectivity patterns over time are also of little use, the proof being that those longitudinal studies which have been carried out have come to diametrically opposed conclusions (Peil 1965; Bibby 1973; van den Berghe 1968). This again shows the analytical weaknesses of the selectivity index. *different
conclusions*

If present levels of selectivity do not indicate class formation, it is legitimate to ask: what level of inequality of access would have to be reached before it could be said that class formation was taking place? Foster shows (and our data substantiate the point) that the children of unskilled workers are already effectively excluded from the secondary sector. We may conclude that future changes in real levels of selectivity, whatever direction they move in, will have little effect on the class formation/education debate.

As a result, selectivity indexes will only be used in

following chapters in relation to the student sample itself, i.e. they will refer to the school population rather than to the national population. Also, we will be concerned with the factors related to who takes and who passes the secondary school entrance exam and with the absolute performance levels of sample students as measured by test results. In this way we hope to be able to say something original about the selection process, for example, in relation to the question of the existence of class subcultures.

FOOTNOTES

1. The old state apparatus mentioned in the quotation is the Church, and the length and intensity of the struggle varied from country to country. For example, it was particularly strong and drawn out in France after the Revolution, and the quotation should be interpreted in this light. Liberal-bourgeois democrats were as hostile to the remnants of feudal ideological domination as were the working class, so that the struggle between these two and the granting of educational concessions to the working class, should be seen as a separate process to the struggle against the Church. The contrasting American example is discussed at length in Bowles & Gintis(1976).

2. Kahl (1953:2) describes ideological dominance as follows:

"The ruling class, through law and propaganda, would create a whole superstructure of community life that would further its class interests. Thus the rules of property, the laws of family life and inheritance, the schools, and even the churches (sic), were shaped for the benefit of the few who had power. Naked economic interest need not always be in evidence, for the ration-

alizations of men are devious and wondrous. Through their power even a slave can be made to accept slavery and fight for his master." (Quoted by Lopreato & Hazelrigg 1972:23).

For a more literary description of the same process in Britain see "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists" by Robert Tressell (1965:especially pp.82-3).

3. The point is not made directly, but it is clear that education provided by the state represents a huge indirect subsidy to the private sector of the economy. In many countries, including much of Africa, it is also a form of redistribution from the poor to the rich; see Illich (1970).

4. This is also true in Eastern European countries, where cultural transmission is more important than material inheritance in determining class position (Djilas 1957, Yanowitch & Dodge 1968, Parkin 1972, Dobson 1977, Karabel & Halsey 1977).

5. The call for more and better schooling for the masses has often been associated with the threat of economic competition from foreign producers, overcoming the natural ruling class aversion for improved education among the working class.

Foster introduced his 1870 Education Bill thus:

"Upon the speedy provision of elementary education depends our industrial prosperity. ...if we leave our workfolk any longer unskilled, notwithstanding their strong sinews and determined energy, they will become over-matched in the competition of the world...If we are to hold our position among men of our own race or among the nations of the world we must make up the smallness of our numbers by increasing the intellectual force of the individual." (Quoted by Young 1958:34)

A similar fear of being overtaken by foreign competition led

to the Robbins report and the expansion of higher education in Britain. For similar American examples, see Karabel & Halsey 1977:Introduction).

Marx saw that the extension of elementary education in a capitalist economy was not a progressive step; see Critique of the Gotha Programme. Similar criticisms have been made of the 1944 Education Act and the introduction of comprehensive education in Britain and elsewhere (Little & Westergaard 1964).

6. For example, in a 1930 policy statement the Governor General of A.O.F. said:

"There exists so wide a gulf between the traditional life of the native and our European economy that we have to build up from nothing, and this not without difficulty and opposition, a whole system of new industries (sic), a new hierarchy, as it were, and a new conception of labour. The transformation of manpower into an economic force, the economic development of the country, the establishment of new economic and social cadres —these are problems which...can only be solved by education...The school for its part is intimately bound up in every one of these colonial activities for which it paves the way, and for which it stands as a justification."(Quoted by Mumford 1970:99)

7. For example, Lord Lugard considered that schooling in southern Nigeria was producing people with too much or too little skill, and with attitudes which threatened the continuation of the colonial political-administrative structure:

"Education seems to have produced discontent, impatience of any control, and an unjustified assumption of self-importance in the individual."(Quoted by Abernethy 1964:86).



The tension or contradiction between conservation and change

is inherent in the education process itself, and this is well illustrated by the history of colonial education. See Foster 1965.

8. Blau and Duncan (1966) show that the educationally successful from disadvantaged families among white Americans have above-average rates of occupational mobility during their careers. Discrimination makes this less true among blacks.

9. With ever-increasing proportions of students entering higher education and the rise of what Bowles and Gintis (1976) term the "white-collar proletariat" in America, occupational mobility in non-manual grades already depends on which college an individual attended rather than on the simple fact of having completed a college course.

10. Farming is increasingly an activity carried on by different classes, a fact which has its own implications for educational enrolment and performance. See Chapter IV for a discussion of the Camerounian case.

11. Ignoring for the moment the rural stratification tendencies mentioned above.

12. These are arguably class-related factors, depending on the definition of class employed. See pp.21-23.

13. More recently Foster has written:

"Once a monetised exchange economy with its correlative features of increased occupational differentiation begins to spread... its consequences in terms of incipient patterns of class differentiation are almost inevitable..."(Foster 1974:8)

We would subtract the "almost" and take the rest of the statement to be true by definition.

14. In practice, skilled manual workers tend to be less educated than semi-skilled, a result of the stability of the skilled

labour force and the inability of younger school leavers to obtain non-manual or skilled jobs. See Peil (1972) for the Ghanaian case.

15. This is true for occupations on the manual/non-manual border line, but not for other levels of non-manual occupations. See Chapter VII.

16. This is less possible today, though political patronage is often resorted to in order to obtain grants, study leave, etc., leading to higher qualifications which in turn may give access to the élite. This may even become a circular process: see Chapter VII for further details.

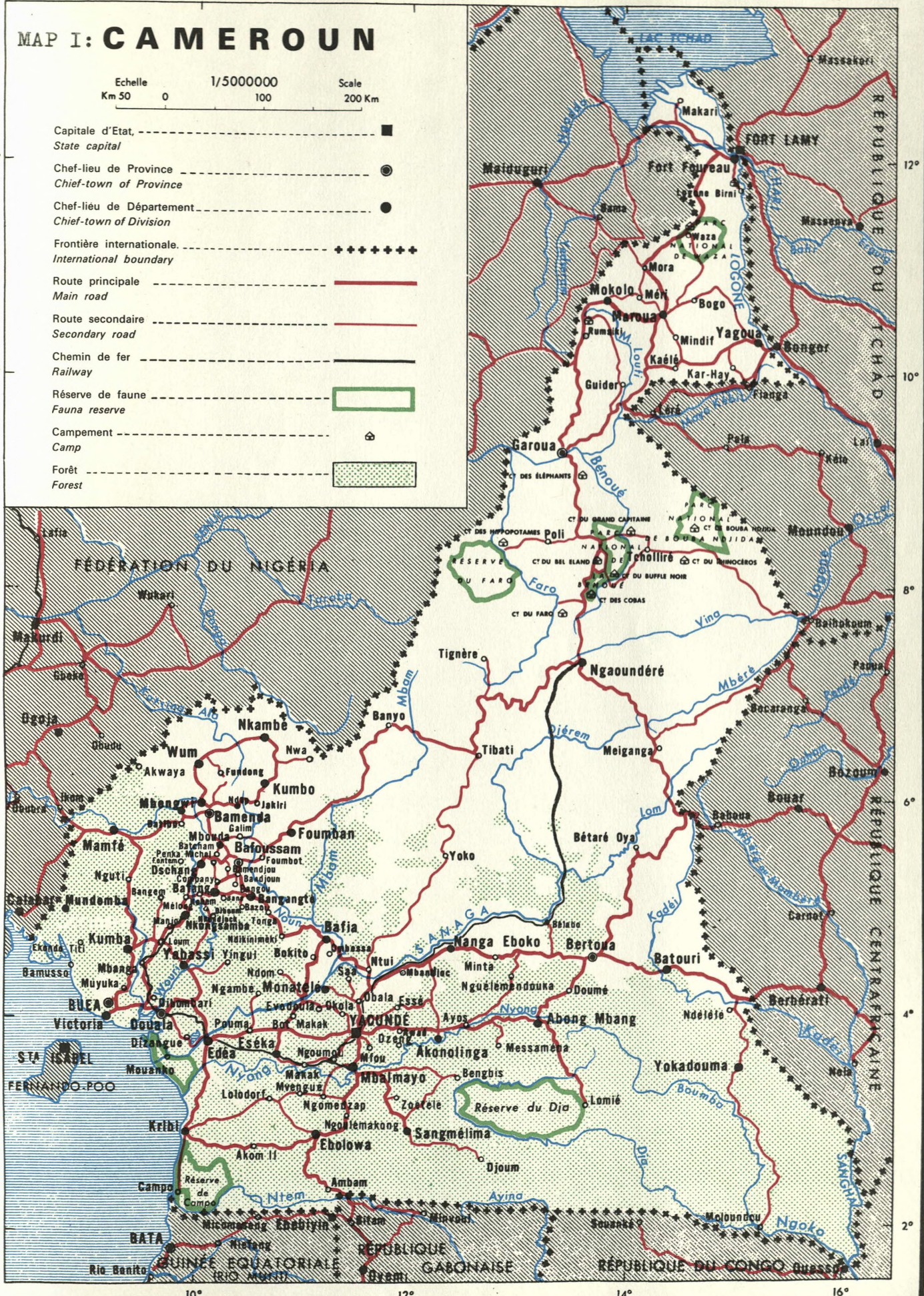
17. An interesting comparative study by Court (1976) shows how contrasting ideologies and development strategies in Kenya and Tanzania have led to the growth of primary and adult education in the latter country and the secondary and higher sectors in the former. The Camerounian situation is described in Chapter III.

18. On a general level, we would expect the African class structure to come to resemble the South American rather than the Western European or North American models. For a discussion of the South American case see Frank "Lumpenbourgeoisie: Lumpendevlopment" (1972).

MAP I: CAMEROUN

Echelle 1/5000000 Scale Km 50 0 100 200 Km

- Capitale d'Etat, --- ■ ---
State capital
- Chef-lieu de Province --- ● ---
Chief-town of Province
- Chef-lieu de Département --- ● ---
Chief-town of Division
- Frontière internationale --- + + + + +
International boundary
- Route principale --- ———
Main road
- Route secondaire --- - - - - -
Secondary road
- Chemin de fer --- ———
Railway
- Réserve de faune --- □ ---
Fauna reserve
- Campement --- ⊞ ---
Camp
- Forêt --- ▨ ---
Forest



Chapter II COLONIAL EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

The preceeding theoretical discussion attempted, among other things, to relate educational expansion in West African colonies to the various forms of incorporation into the colonial economy experienced by the colonised peoples. This chapter outlines the processes of incorporation as they operated in Cameroun and tries to relate them to educational development during the colonial period.

German Colonialism

Cameroun was a formal German colony from 1884 to 1915, when it was taken over by the French and British expeditionary forces. Until 1884, German and other European traders had operated through the coastal middlemen who controlled trade with the hinterland, firstly in slaves, later in palm oil, ivory and rubber. The preemptive signing of a treaty with the Douala chiefs thwarted a tardy British attempt at annexation. The treaty guaranteed the Douala monopoly of trade with the interior, but it was soon broken by the Germans. The clearing of trade routes was a major motive in the military pacification of Cameroun, which led to violence first with the Douala, later with the Boulou, Bakoko and other peoples. Despite stubborn resistance, most of the southern forest, western highlands and northern savanna had been pacified by about 1910.

The pacification process was undertaken with some urgency as the Germans wanted to contain the territorial expansion of the British from the west and the French from the east. The mounted, well-armed Foulbé warriors of the north presented more of a military challenge to the Germans than the tribesmen of the forest, but in set-piece battles the victories of the latter were more decisive than in the south, where guerilla-like

resistance and sporadic outbreaks of violence continued throughout the period of German rule. In the north, the capture or death of the military-political-spiritual leader, the lamido (plural lamibé), usually meant the end of armed resistance. Peace was established with the appointment of a new, more amenable lamido. The important trading centre of Tibati and Ngaoundéré, capital of the central Adamaoua region, were taken in 1899 and 1901 respectively, and the northern town of Maroua fell in 1901.

In the southern forest, where centralised kingdoms and powerful leaders were unknown, things were less clearcut. Moreover, it was the southern peoples who felt the full force of the colonial impact. The German presence in the north served to redirect existing trade away from Oubangui to the east and Nigeria to the west. Neither the Germans nor the French after them found much to excite their commercial passions in the arid north. Cattle raising, which required constant movement to new pastures and markets, was left in the hands of the Fulani. Thus, the German presence did not have a profound effect on the social structure of the north.

In the south things were different. Rubber and oil palms grew wild over much of the forest region, and the soil and climate were favourable to the introduction of coffee, cocoa and other tropical products. The economic geography of Cameroun thus determined the differential penetration of the colonial economy in the north and south of the territory.

In the south, German and other traders moved in to exploit military victory. By 1895, there were seven administrative stations outside Douala: Rio del Ray, Edea, Buea (the future capital), Yaoundé (its successor), Lolodorf, Barombi and Kribi, to which were added Mora and Ngaoundéré for the central and

Banyo for the northern areas. By 1905, there were 826 Europeans in Cameroun, of whom 268 were traders, 110 were officials, 108 were planters, 90 were missionaries, and 73 were connected with the military. By 1912, there were 182 planters and 614 traders (Rudin 1938:116).

The process of incorporation into the market system and money economy took various forms. The coastal Douala prospered during the period prior to the German annexation from their role as intermediaries between European traders and what they called the "bushmen" of the interior. Numerically insignificant, the Douala were by-passed by German traders and eventually swamped by migrants from the interior, particularly the Bamiléké and the Bassa-Bakoko. The Douala have taken advantage of their early contacts with the West and are well represented among Camerounian intellectuals, civil servants and businessmen.

Less fortunate in their initial contacts with the Germans were those who were recruited as porters, particularly on the Kribi-Yaoundé route, as forced labour on the roads, as plantation workers and as produce collectors for the concessionary companies which were set up under the Germans.

Those who suffered most from the excesses of forced labour were the Bassa and Ewondo, through whose tribal territory the Douala-Yaoundé railway passed. An unknown but large number of workers died from overwork, disease and malnutrition in the infamous forced labour camps.

Before motor transport became practicable in the interior, traders were obliged to employ large numbers of porters. It is reported that an estimated 80,000 porters were employed on the Kribi-Yaoundé road in 1913 (LeVine 1964:47). Women and children were often "recruited" to this exhausting work. The

first motor vehicle arrived in Yaoundé in 1913, but portage continued to expand after the First World War.

In 1913, there were an estimated 18,000 workers employed on German plantations. Most of these were in the Victoria area, though plantations were established on a smaller scale in the Mungo, Bamiléké, Bamoun and Boulou areas.

In 1898-99 two concessionary companies were set up to exploit large areas of the Cameroun interior. The Gesellschaft Sud-Kamerun was given total control of an area of 72,000 square kilometers in the south and east of the country, and proceeded to ravage it in the search for ivory and rubber. The other company was granted an even larger area in the north and west of the region south of Adamaoua, in which it undertook similar activities. These companies were ruthless in their treatment of the indigenous population, and frequently came into conflict with traders who resented their control of labour power which they themselves needed. Despite their monopoly (or because of it), neither of the concessionary companies ever showed a profit.

Thus, the first Camerounians to be incorporated into the colonial economy in large numbers were unskilled labourers working for the administration, trading companies and planters. The labour intensive methods of these three groups led to competition and frequent conflict between them for the available labour, those losing out being the men, women and children whose labour power was so in demand. Inevitably, the abuse of the population had a profoundly disruptive effect on local society. Missionaries in the south frequently complained about the brutal treatment of native workers by the traders and the agents of the concessionary companies.

The main device used by the Germans (and later by the French) to force adult males into the sphere of European domination was the head tax, which could be commuted to labour service. This tax was never introduced in the north, where the local peoples continued to pay tribute to their leaders as before the German annexation.

The head tax was also an important source of revenue in a colony which was almost entirely dependent on internal finance. The use of "chiefs" in labour recruitment and tax collection led to widespread abuses of power and constituted another factor undermining the pre-colonial social structure.

Education under the Germans

As in the rest of Africa, it was the missions who assumed the major role of formal educators during the colonial period. Mission schools of sorts already existed forty years before the German annexation of the territory. The Swiss-German Basel Mission, German Catholics, British Baptists and American Presbyterians were the earliest missionary bodies to establish schools in Cameroun. After the German takeover, the Baptists were forced to leave education in the Douala area to the Basel Mission, and withdrew to Victoria. Basel Mission activities expanded north and east from Douala, and by 1887 they had established nine stations and 115 sub-stations in the region between the Mungo and the Sanage (Marchand 1976:45).

American Presbyterians were already operating in Batanga on the southern coast in 1871, and were allowed to expand their missionary work under the German administration into the Boulou region of the southeast.

French Catholic missions were refused permission to start

evangelical work in Cameroun, but the German Catholic Pallotine Fathers were allowed to start such work on the understanding that they would stay out of the areas of Basel Mission activities. The trader Woermann, the most influential of the commercial community, was an enthusiastic supporter of mission activity, and was instrumental in the opening of a Catholic mission in Edea, where he had a trading post (1891).

Both the Basel Mission and the Catholics were refused permission to open schools in Adamaoua, the southernmost area of Fulani (Moslem) domination. The only school established in northern Cameroun during this period was a government school in Garoua.

Few government schools were established during the German period; as elsewhere, the role of the colonial administration was restricted to the (usually unsuccessful) supervision of mission activities and the payment of modest grants-in-aid to those meeting official standards regarding the language of instruction, curriculum content, etc. (Mveng 1960:223). In 1913, pupils in government schools accounted for less than 2 percent of total enrolment. Enrolment figures for 1912 are shown below.

TABLE II:1 ENROLMENT IN VOLUNTARY AGENCY AND GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN 1912

Agency	Enrolment	% of Total
Basel Mission	18,000	41
Catholics	12,460	29
Presbyterians	9,000	21
Baptists	3,150	7
Government	833	2
Total	43,433	100

Source: Marchand 1976:365

By 1914 the Basel Mission had a total enrolment of 22,800 pupils taught by 107 missionaries and 223 Camerounian monitors

(Marchand 1976:576). In fact, most of the early mission "schools" were little more than glorified Sunday Schools where catechism and doctrine were taught in the vernacular, often combined with practical subjects such as carpentry, weaving, dressmaking and modern farming. In 1905, 90 percent of Basel Mission pupils were in such schools.

It is probable that the first Camerounians to be directly employed by the Germans as clerks and interpreters were those who attended government schools, where German was taught and an examination taken after four years. From 1910, grants-in-aid to the missions came to depend on teaching German and taking this exam. The number of pupils passing the exam rose from 1,915 in 1910 to 4,828 in 1911 and to 7,284 in 1912 (ibid. p.370). Unfortunately, we have no information concerning the number and nature of jobs available to these first few Camerounians speaking and writing a European language, so that we can only assume that many of them were absorbed by the colonial administration, the missions (the largest employer) and the trading companies.

The expansion of mission activities during the German period meant that:

"A large part of the Douala, Bassa, Boulou, Bamiléké and Ewondo regions were already covered with mission schools attended in 1913 by more than 50,000 pupils, a few hundred of whom learnt the rudiments of the German language." (Marchand 1976:31)

The ethnic groups mentioned in the quotation are, with the Eton and the Bafia-Yambassa, still the most favoured from the educational point of view.

From the above discussion it can be seen that, during the early colonial period, the need for literate, German-speaking Camerounians was minimal and overshadowed by the need for unskilled labour. The missions themselves were the most important employers of the literate, using them as teachers and catechists. The other major group for whom knowledge of written and spoken German was essential were the intermediaries between the colonial administration and the Camerounian population.

At first, German rule was effected using the chiefs as intermediaries. This was relatively easy in the north and the Bamiléké and Bamoun regions (the Western Highlands), where pre-colonial society had been highly stratified, and intransigent rulers could be replaced by others more favourably disposed towards the Germans. In the essentially acephalous societies of the southern forest, the nearest the Germans could find to chiefs were lineage heads and village elders with little coercive power within traditional society.

Moreover, the role of the intermediary varied between the north and south of the territory according to the extent to which the colonial presence impinged on the inhabitants of the two areas. The southern leaders, including the Bamoun and Bamiléké, were those most directly affected by colonial domination, for it was they who were called upon to collect taxes and provide labour. Chiefs tended to become more and more the direct agents of the colonial administration, and it is not surprising that abuses of power were frequent, both in the Bamiléké "chefferies" and in the less stratified forest regions.

Thus, the Germans came to rule the south through their literate agents and quisling chiefs. Both these groups benefited from colonialism at the expense of the mass of the population. As German rule became more entrenched, however, the position of the southern chiefs began to deteriorate and that of the literate intermediaries to improve. This was the result of the chiefs' unpopularity, their insecurity of tenure and lack of manipulative skills. The wheel came full circle when faithful colonial employees were rewarded with neo-traditional positions. For instance, Charles Atangana, an interpreter and primary school teacher, was appointed chief of the Ewondo, a title and position created for him by the Germans and preserved by the French. Atangana grew to be rich and powerful, largely by abusing his labour recruitment and tax collecting duties.

By contrast, Sultan Njoya, the powerful leader of the Bamoun, systematically obstructed the colonial authorities and was eventually deposed by the French in 1931 for trying to stir up revolt against the new regime.

Administration in the north was quite different. The Fulani princes were more or less left to themselves, as long as they did not collaborate with the British or French or try to further extend the influence of Islam to the south of the territory. The similarities between the northern Nigerian and northern Camerounian social systems and the policies of the British and the Germans are striking. In Cameroun two colonial administrators were appointed to "advise" the sixty or so northern rulers. As in Nigeria, they were expected to show the lamibé suitable respect and to learn to speak Foulbé. Also, missionary activities were forbidden in the areas of Fulani dominance.

It would seem that the official reason for refusing to allow missionary activities in the north—that it would be taken by the northern rulers as an attack on Islam—was only half the story. In fact, any attempt to establish a school system, confessionnal or lay, would have served little purpose in an area in which commercial activity of a colonial kind was minimal. The dominated pagan tribes of the north, the Kirdi, would probably have been quite glad of the chance to escape from Fulani control. But an all-out counter-jihad against the infidels would have been of little use to the Germans, who saw little prospect of economic gain in the north.

Thus, in the absence of commercial incentives, there was no point in establishing a school system which would have trained lower order cadres as in the south.¹ Consequently, new contrasts between the north and the south were added to those—racial, geographical, cultural, political and religious—which existed before colonialism. The areas which suffered most from the imposition of colonial rule were those which at the same time experienced the most infrastructural (and educational) development; the two processes were, of course, opposite sides of the same coin.

The missions, however unwittingly, contributed to the process of incorporation and the breakdown of traditional society in the south. They were the only Europeans who made any consistent effort to protect the local population against the extortions and abuses of the traders and administrators, in spite of which the latter generally viewed mission activities favourably. On the German period LeVine writes:

"...the Germans encouraged the growth of an African social stratum capable of mediating

between the Europeans and the African Camerounians (sic) of the hinterland; in this the administration consciously used education and Christian missionary activity as instruments of penetration and modernisation."(LeVine 1964:36)

The stratum which LeVine identifies (we might also call it a status group, but not a class) is the one from which the educated élite sprang, and which moved from the role of subordinate intermediary to that of the ruling group with the advent of independence. The progress of this stratum, both within the colonial structure and since independence, will be one of the major themes in what follows.

Economic and Social Change under the French

From 1922 to 1945 the major part of Cameroun was administered by the French as a League of Nations mandate territory. The French take-over did not lead to any radical change in the governing or exploitation of the territory. The French were at least as unscrupulous as the Germans in their use of forced labour, taxation and summary justice for the "mise en valeur" of the territory, despite the supposed supervisory function of the League of Nations. The changes which took place, particularly the rapid decolonisation after World War Two, were strictly within the logic of West and Central African colonialism, which was based on the non-settler production of cash crops for metropolitan markets.

The most important development during the French period was the growth of cash crop production by Camerounians. This activity began during the German period: by 1905 Camerounians were beginning to grow cocoa in the Mungo (colonised by the

Bamiléké) and Ebolowa (Boulou) areas. Many Europeans went out of business during the depression and by 1935 indigenous cocoa production was over 21,000 tonnes, coming particularly from the Mungo (later a coffee-producing area), Nyong & Sanaga and Ntem areas. The 1935 report to the League of Nations observed that:

"Many natives who formerly worked in European enterprises have become peasants and both the native peasants and the European colonists employ an ever-increasing number of native labourers."(Quoted by Kuczynski 1939:100).

The employment of labourers became common among Bamiléké coffee growers, facilitated by the monopoly of land enjoyed by the Bamiléké "notables", whose many wives each had their own farm. Cocos growing in the southern forest has remained a family affair up to the present day (Barbé 1964).

Between 1935 and 1938 European-owned plantations increased from nearly 69,000 to about 100,000 hectares, the latter owned by 550 planters (Suret-Canale 1964:332). In 1933, Europeans employed nearly 11,000 plantation labourers, by 1938 this had risen to over 22,000 (Kuczynski 1939:198).

But the European presence did not involve a very important alienation of land. Increasingly, the production of cash crops was left to Camerounians and their families or hired labourers. Control of marketing (mainly by Levantines) and export (by French and British trading companies) was enough to ensure that most of the profits to be made from cash crops did not accrue to those whose land and labour were put into their production.

The growth of forestry and allied industries depended on

significant capital inputs. Accordingly it was, and still is, largely controlled by European firms. Employment of Camerounian workers in this sector was nearly 6,000 in 1933, over 14,000 in 1937 (ibid.p.193).

Cocoa and coffee have been Cameroun's major exports since the 1930s. They accounted for 57 percent of exports by value in 1949 and 66 percent in 1958 (Kom 1971:111). With wood and bananas, they account for three-quarters of the country's exports. In 1946, banana production was still almost entirely in the hands of Europeans, but by 1957 Camerounian planters accounted for about 70 percent of total production (Suret-Canale 1964:450).

Relying almost totally on local resources, the French continued the infrastructural development of the territory, finishing the Douala-Yaoundé railway between 1922 and 1927 and adding a branch line to Mbalmayo and Otélé. Forced labour was used to extend the road network. In 1914 there were only 340 kms of road; by 1936 there were 4,000, including all-season roads to Yaoundé and Fort Lamy. Commuted taxes accounted for 56 percent of the labour used by the colonial administration in 1935 (Kuczynski 1939:100).

The development of the road system did not lead to an immediate reduction in portorage. Nearly a quarter of a million man-days were worked for government and private enterprises in 1933, over half a million in 1935, and still almost a third of a million in 1937 (ibid.p.102). In every sense, colonialism continued to expand on the backs of the African population.

The opening of the Douala-Fort Lamy trunk road did not lead to any immediate change in trade patterns in the north.

The activities of "Hausa" traders and meat dealers slowly increased as the southern towns grew, and a Hausa quarter was established in all the major cities. Cotton, the north's principal cash crop, has become an important export only since the mid-1950s.

To handle the increase in trade, the port of Douala was modernised and expanded, entirely from local resources. This led to the rapid growth of Douala and the relative decline of the other Camerounian ports (Kribi, Tiko-Victoria). The population of Douala grew from about 20,000 in 1926 to 51,000 in 1947 and to 125,000 in 1957 (LeVine 1964:52). It now stands at about a third of a million. In 1947 the Douala still constituted nearly half of the population of the town, but by 1956 this had fallen to 20 percent, a figure almost reached by the Bassa-Bakoko and surpassed by the Bamiléké (over 26 percent)(ibid.p.52).

The French period was also one of increasing public and private foreign investment. Before World War Two, private exceeded public investment, a trend which was reversed after 1945 with the increase in French government grants and loans for infrastructural and social overhead capital investment and for the beginnings of industrial development. Between 1945 and 1950, Cameroun received nearly 16,000 million CFA francs of public and only 2.500 million of private capital (Suret-Canale 1964:359). Since the war, Camerounian-owned business has grown in importance, particularly in the fields of commerce, construction and transport, but foreign companies are still in control of the commanding heights of the economy: banking, import-export and industry.

Education under the French

During the French period the southern half of Cameroun came to have the highest level of primary school enrolment in the whole of French West and Equatorial Africa. This was the result of the open-door policy adopted by the French regarding mission activities resulting from the status of Cameroun as a League of Nations mandate territory.

With the departure of the Germans, the Basel Mission was replaced by the Missions Evangéliques, the Pallotine Fathers by the Pères du St. Esprit, and the American Presbyterians continued as before in the Boulou and Bassa areas. The French opened more schools than their predecessors, and continued the practice of allocating grants-in-aid to the missions if they taught in French and followed an official curriculum. The following table shows how enrolment levels increased during the first half of French rule.

TABLE II:2 ENROLMENT IN GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCY SCHOOLS IN 1920 AND 1937

Agency	Enrolment	
	1920	1937
Catholics	6,000	35,000
Presbyterians	2,200	31,000
Evangéliques	800	18,000
Government	2,200	10,000
Total	11,200	94,000

Source: Marchand 1976:491

The French were opposed to the use of tribal languages for teaching, and went some way towards establishing a common French curriculum and a centralised educational administration. But, as with the Germans, educational provision was of low priority, and consequently central control was never as effective on the ground as the writers of decrees would have hoped. In the mandate period the amount spent on education out of the local budget varied

between 2.6 percent (1933) and 4.6 percent (1945). After 1945, a greater percentage of the (larger) budget came to be allocated to education; in 1948 it was 9.0 percent, and in 1959 14.6 percent (Marchand 1967:95). But of the official French aid budget (FIDES) mentioned above only 2.4 percent was earmarked for education, mostly for technical and secondary school building.

Before the Second World War French assimilationist ideology meant no more in practice than using French throughout primary school in preference to "the vernacular". Only after the war, when it became clear that the colonial days were numbered, did assimilation come to mean the training of an élite of secondary school and university graduates which would facilitate an eventual transfer of power. During the mandate period, policy was more concerned with "adapting education to local conditions" and making sure (or trying to) that nobody got more education than was good for him. Educational goals were laid down in a ministerial directive of 1921:

"Le but principal de l'école est de rapprocher des nouveaux colonisateurs, par une grande diffusion de la langue française, les populations autochtones, de les familiariser avec leurs intentions et leurs méthodes, et de les conduire prudemment au progrès économique et social en leur donnant une éducation soigneusement adaptée au milieu dans lequel ils sont destinés à vivre." Quoted by Bala Mbarga 1962:3.

The general lines of education policy were spelled out by the French Minister for the Colonies in 1923:

"Instruire les indigènes est assurément notre devoir....Mais ce devoir fondamental s'accorde par surcroît avec nos intérêts

économiques, administratifs et politiques les plus évidents. L'instruction a d'abord pour résultat d'améliorer la valeur de la production coloniale en multipliant, dans la foule des travailleurs indigènes, la qualité des intelligences et le nombre des capacités; elle doit en outre, parmi la masse laborieuse, dégager et dresser les élites de collaborateurs qui, comme agents techniques, contremaîtres (foremen), surveillants, employés ou commis de direction (clerks), suppléeront à l'insuffisance numérique des Européens et satisferont à la demande croissante des entreprises agricoles, industrielles ou commerciales de la colonisation." Quoted by Suret-Canale 1964:475).

The élite mentioned above is of decidedly limited dimensions; there was clearly no role in the colonial schema for "indigènes" above the level of routine clerk or overseer. Such were the limits of the French policy of assimilation that by 1945 there was still not one degree-holding African civil servant in the whole of French West and Equatorial Africa. The William Ponty school in Dakar recruited students from all over West and Central Africa, but only trained them to the level of primary school teachers and medical auxiliaries.

In Cameroun, as elsewhere, the French established a two-tier structure of primary schools. Village schools provided the first four years and regional schools the last two of the primary course. Enrolment in government village schools rose from 1,849 pupils in 1922 to 5,904 in 1935, and in regional schools from 1,920 to 2,646 (Marchand 1976:492). In 1935, there were eight regional schools, those in Douala and Yaoundé accounting for half the total enrolment (Suret-Canale 1964:420).

The summit of the official school system until after the Second World War was the Ecole Primaire Supérieure, opened in Yaoundé in 1921. Between 1923 and 1927, this school trained 133 clerk-interpreters, 168 school monitors, 48 post office workers, 10 topographers and 58 nursing assistants (Marchand 1976:495). All these graduates were given jobs in the colonial administration.³

Throughout West and Central Africa the French attempted to establish schools for the sons of chiefs, the hope being that this would facilitate local administration by channeling it through the traditional authority structure. According to the Governor-General of French West Africa (1930): "The advantages of French education must be added to traditional and hereditary authority, in order to strengthen the position of the chief." (Mumford 1970:89). In Cameroun:

"Des le debut de son mandat....l'administration française avait cherché à attirer dans ses écoles les fils de chefs et de notables. Le recrutement scolaire, souvent imposé ou du moins fortement conseillé, s'adressait d'abord à la future élite politique autochtone. En pratique toutefois, il semble que les ethnies politiquement les mieux hiérarchisées n'envoyaient pas toujours leur future élite à l'école française."

(Marchand 1976:344)

Special classes for chiefs' sons were set up in the regional schools as well as entire schools in Yaoundé, Dschang, Bertoua and Garoua. In 1935, there were 250 chiefs' "sons" attending government schools, but in the following year this number fell to only 100.

Throughout the colonies this policy failed to achieve its goal of training a new generation of educated collaborators, partly because of the difficulty of predicting exactly who would succeed to a chieftaincy. The French made this more difficult by their frequent deposition of chiefs, from lamibé to village and township chiefs, for opposition to the administration or for gross maladministration. By 1935, the French had reduced the number of lamibé in the north from 60 to 16.

The policy also failed because, in the long run, the achieved status of administrator became less and less compatible with the ascribed status of traditional leader. The development of a more modern administrative structure, based on bureaucratic rather than ad hoc principles, increasingly showed up the impossible ambiguity of the chiefs' position. When the administration failed to react to complaints of abuses of power, popular violence often resulted. The major example of this is the widespread violence in the Bamiléké region, which stemmed partly from land management and tax abuse on the part of many chiefs. As in the rest of West Africa, the position of the chiefs in relation to the central government was a serious pre-independence issue in Cameroun, and one which was exacerbated by the colonial realpolitik of siding with the largely discredited chiefs against the younger, more educated nationalist politicians and their supporters. The problem of the chiefs' position in colonial society was not solved by independence, and is still a very serious and sensitive issue in the north.

Colonialism encouraged traditional leaders to become reactionary parasites, not modernising innovators. It is not surprising, then, that whatever the nature and extent of

stratification within the societies of pre-colonial Cameroun, the leaders of these societies —many of them appointees of the colonial administration— seem invariably to have been the least willing or able to accomodate western education. Examples of resistance to education on the part of the leaders can be given from the segmentary south as well as from the "feudal" north. It appears that in the south this resistance was often related to the missionaries' opposition to polygamy, a traditional sign of wealth. According to Rudin:

"As a rule, polygamists would have nothing to do with the church that attacked their wealth (women) and that asked them to redistribute it among the poorer people, from whom came the larger part of church membership."
(Rudin 1938:379).

It is rather misleading to talk of rich and poor in such a context, but we can take the point that even mild or incipient forms of stratification did have an effect in determining the reaction of different groups within society towards the introduction of European-type education. In the north it was among the non-Foulbé tribes that enthusiasm for schooling first developed. Those at the bottom of traditional society (slaves from conquest and the tribute payers of the centre and north) are more likely to seek advancement in the alternative society which was slowly developing.

Thus, the majority of the earliest "westernised" Camerounians did not come from the families of chiefs or notables, as the colonial authorities would have liked, but from the most modest backgrounds. We can begin to understand why this was the case by placing educational growth in the general context of colonial expansion and the undermining effect

which this had on pre-colonial forms of social stratification. The growing importance of "an alternative avenue of mobility operating independently of traditional modes of status acquisition" which Foster identifies in Ghana left the chiefs more and more stranded. But the point is not that the chiefs were unable "to perceive the necessity for European education" (Foster 1965:63) in order to safeguard their position; it is rather that their very position was itself being undermined by the colonial administration and the western education which gave access to its lower levels. As Foster puts it:

"...once European political control became effective, there was always the possibility that the locus of power would shift from the chiefs in favour of alternative groups..."
(ibid.)

In the southern forest and western highlands of Cameroun this shift in the locus of power began with colonialism and has continued since independence. In the north the process began more slowly and still has a long way to go. The rise of a national élite with strong centralist tendencies has had the effect of making a delicate political issue out of this differential rate of social change. The consequences of this within the educational structure will be discussed in the next chapter.

The End of Colonial Rule and the First Years of Independence

Cash crops and urban growth were the most important results of colonialism in the first half of this century. More and more southern farmers became dependent on cash incomes to pay their taxes, their debts to traders and produce buyers, to pay school fees and bride price and to buy basic consumer goods. The growth of commercial centres in the south and west

of Cameroun mirrored the spread of cash cropping. In the following chapter school enrolment variations will be discussed in relation to these twin themes. For the moment we may briefly consider the development of the education system during the late colonial period and since independence.

Primary Education: Supply and Demand

The following table shows the phenomenal growth of primary school enrolment since World War II.

TABLE II:3 ENROLMENT IN MISSION SCHOOLS 1947-71

Year	Government	Mission	Total
1947	19,000	100,000	119,000
1951	28,600	112,000	140,600
1955	69,250	177,000	246,250
1959	103,000	228,000	331,000
1964	248,733	327,743	576,476
1971	434,101	320,000	754,101

Sources: Vernon-Jackson 1967:45
Secrétaire d'Etat à l'Enseignement 1972:3

Most of the mission schools were still unrecognised "écoles de catéchisme" after the Second World War; that is, they were not following an official curriculum in French or preparing pupils for the first school leaving certificate (CEPE), and accordingly did not qualify for grants-in-aid. The larger missions followed the official curriculum, and most of these were situated in towns. We may assume that the 14 percent of mission pupils who were attending schools which followed the official curriculum (1944) had a much better chance than the mainly rural children attending the "écoles de catéchisme" of finding employment in the "modern" sector. Rural mission schools have gradually adopted the official curriculum, but even today many of them do not provide the full six year primary course. The fall in mission enrolment

after 1964 represents a take-over of many mission schools by the government.

Grants-in-aid rose from 6 percent of the education budget in 1930 to 11 percent in 1945 and over 20 percent in 1959 (Marchand 1976:429).

There is no doubt that educational expansion after World War II reflects the burgeoning demand for schooling by the population of the urban and rural south. The French authorities reported an enthusiastic acceptance of schools in the areas of greatest colonial activity:

"Les rapports annuels à la Société des Nations et les rapports des chefs de région où il y a une forte présence coloniale (milieux urbains, centres administratifs régionaux, régions de plantations coloniales et des grands travaux) ne cessent de vanter l'engouement des populations locales envers les écoles françaises."
(Marchand 1975:495)

The post-war educational "boom" took place during a period of rapid urban growth. Both phenomena reflect the relatively high prices which Camerounian exports were fetching on the world market.

By independence, two-thirds of primary school children were still attending mission schools. Only in 1968 did government school enrolment overtake that of the missions. The popular demand for schooling has been so great that, in order to minimise costs, both government and missions have been obliged to introduce a shift system in many of their schools, whereby different groups of children use the same classroom for half a day each. In many rural areas the problem is solved by combining two or more classes which are "taught" at the same time by a

single teacher.

The Littoral, Centre-South and Western Provinces of Cameroun have one of the highest levels of primary school enrolment in francophone Africa. Already in 1945, Cameroun had an estimated primary enrolment of 17 percent of 6-14 year olds, compared with a French West Africa average of 3.3 percent and a French Equatorial Africa average of 6 percent (Suret-Canale 1963:490).

Enrolment levels of over 75 percent are given for the south for 1971, and some rural areas seem to have higher enrolment ratios than neighbouring towns (Owono 1974:3). The latter, however, are invariably favoured as regards the financing of school construction and the posting of the most highly trained and experienced teachers.

The enthusiasm of villagers for education has been demonstrated by their willingness to build, equip and maintain schools themselves, through their local governments. But schools in regional administrative headquarters were built entirely with money from the central administration. This rather unfair arrangement was established in 1955, but did not apply to the north, where the state accepted responsibility for the construction and upkeep of all schools.

Apart from building and equipping schools, parents have to pay fees and buy books etc. for their children. Parental contributions accounted for an estimated 30 percent of recurrent expenditure on primary education in 1970 (Labrousse 1975:50).

Popular demand for more schools, which hit a peak in the mid-1950s, forced both government and missions to employ more and more primary leavers as primary teachers, particularly in the rural areas. The missions found it increasingly difficult

to pay their teachers, and brought more and more pressure on the government to assume total responsibility for teachers' salaries. The post-independence government has been forced to pay out ever increasing amounts to foot the missions' bills, and this has been a source of continuous friction between the two sides. The government accused the missions of irresponsibility in opening new schools which they could not afford to run. About 200 schools were taken over by the government between 1960 and 1970 in the Centre-South Province. Between 1968 and 1970, about 15,000 pupils were transferred from the private to the state sector (Marchand 1975:250).

Expansion has been accompanied by high dropout and repeating rates, factors often cited by pedagogues and politicians as proof that the education system is not adapted to local needs, culture and society. For present purposes, it is sufficient to point out that, even in areas of high enrolment, the majority of pupils still do not finish the primary course. Repeat and dropout rates will be looked at more closely in the next chapter.

Promotion to a higher class is determined by examination and class performance. Thus, some pupils will be forced to drop out through poor performance, whereas others who might have continued drop out for other reasons (inability to pay school fees, work obligations, poor health, pregnancy). Labrousse (1970) has estimated that about 80 percent of dropouts are the result of inadequate performance. The relative importance of the two kinds of wastage has not been given much attention by sociologists, and for Cameroun the only refinements of global dropout data available are breakdowns by sex and region (see below pp86-95).

Those who eventually pass the primary school leaving certificate (CEPE) represent only a small proportion of a cohort,

perhaps 20 percent. Nevertheless, the post-war enrolment expansion has meant a gradual devaluation of the CEPE in terms of job opportunities. Between 1959 and 1969 the number of successful candidates rose from 9,096 to 31,549 (Marchand 1976: 399). As elsewhere, secondary schooling has become increasingly necessary for access to jobs in the modern sector.

Whether or not they are adapted to local needs, schools have become an integral part of everyday life for the population of the south. In this area it is now normal for almost all children of both sexes in both towns and villages to spend at least a few years attending primary school.

In summary, a massive popular movement in favour of primary education has developed in the last three decades. This apparently voluntary acceptance of the European school and its ethos (competition, hierarchy, achievement based on performance) has taken place during the culmination of the process of the undermining of rural society based on subsistence farming and kinship organisation which was the inevitable consequence of colonialism. According to Lévi-Strauss, the indigenous population did not really have much choice in the matter:

"Elle (the acceptance of western values, etc.)
résulte moins d'une décision que d'une
absence de choix. La civilisation occi-
dentale a établi ses soldats, ses comptoirs,
ses plantations et ses missionnaires dans le
monde entier: elle a bouleversé de fond en
comble leur mode traditionnel d'existence,
soit en imposant le sien, soit en instaur-
ant les conditions qui engendraient l'eff-
ondrement des cadres existents sans les
remplacer par autre chose. Les peuples
subjugés ou désorganisés ne pouvaient

donc qu'accepter les solutions de remplacement qu'on leur offrait, ou, s'ils n'y étaient pas disposés, espérer s'en rapprocher suffisamment pour être en mesure de les combattre sur le même terrain. En l'absence de cette inégalité dans les rapports de force, les sociétés ne se livrent pas avec une telle facilité."

(Lévi-Strauss 1961:99).

The Growth of Secondary Education

The introduction of secondary and higher education took place much later in French than in British West African colonies. Only after the Second World War did the French begin to practice an assimilationist policy at the post-primary level, and consequently the western educated élite with secondary education or more is of extremely recent origin. Only a minute number of the younger educated Camerounians have parents with anything above primary education. Social reproduction through education is clearly an incipient process in Cameroun, a point which will be returned to in the following chapters.

The missions opened a number of training colleges and seminaries between the two World Wars. The first Camerounians to get any kind of secondary education (and many of the older members of the élite) passed through these establishments. The Presbyterians and French Protestants established training colleges in Foulassi and Ndoungué respectively, and the Catholics a large and a small seminary in Yaoundé and Akono. Many of those who received their initial training in these and other seminaries subsequently moved into the civil service and teaching profession.

After World War II, the government began to establish

secondary schools (cours complémentaires) which provided a four year general course leading to the Brevet Élémentaire (later the BEPC). Entry to these schools was based on a competitive examination (concours d'entrée en sixième) which is still taken by all candidates for places in government, and a few mission, secondary schools. Between 1948 and 1959, 16 cours complémentaires were opened, including two in the Northern Province. These schools were eventually all changed into collèges modernes, teacher training colleges or lycées.

Thus, by 1960 there were 1,986 pupils (including 192 girls) attending government secondary schools (Marchand 1976:545). By the same year, there were 11 Catholic cours complémentaire, though only three of them provided the full four year course. The total enrolment was 854 pupils. Four of the eight Protestant cours complémentaires provided the full four year course; in 1960 the eight had a total enrolment of 777 pupils. Some of the best mission colleges never passed through the cours complémentaire stage, including Catholic colleges in Yaoundé, Douala and Makak and the Protestant college in Libamba. By 1960, three colleges (one state and two Catholic) were providing the full second cycle course leading to the baccalauréat (Marchand ibid.).

All the confessional colleges were fee-paying. The growth of non-confessional, private secondary schooling dates from the late 1950s, when colleges were opened by Camerounians in Douala, Yaoundé, Ebolowa and Mbalmayo. By 1959 there were 14 of these non-confessional colleges, and their subsequent growth is an indication that the demand for secondary education has tended to outstrip the ability of the government and missions to satisfy it.

The administration took the initiative in the provision of secondary education; in 1947 over three-quarters of secondary school pupils were in government cours complémentaires. This fell to 50 percent in 1957 and 34 percent in 1969. After 1970, state schools also lost their lead in the provision of second cycle (from the BEPC to the bac) places (ibid.p.460). The secondary school structure of the Centre-South Province will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter V.

The Growth of Higher Education.

Most of the expansion in the government secondary sector was financed by French aid, and the same is true for higher education. Initially, students were provided with grants for study in France; subsequently, the French built and partially staffed the University of Yaoundé and other colleges for advanced studies. The planned growth of secondary and higher education after World War II was directly related to the policy of investment in infrastructure and industrial development which started with FIDES loans and grants and has continued since independence with the introduction of development planning. Education has not, however, been an important investment sector, either for FIDES or the five year development plans.

In 1953, there were 148 Camerounians studying in France with grants from the colonial administration. By 1962, there were 444 with grants (mostly in France) and about twice as many again with no official support. Since independence, a University has opened, as well as a school of Administration, a medical school, Higher Teacher Training College (Ecole Normale Supérieure), School of Journalism, Polytechnic and Agricultural College. The total enrolment in these is currently about 10,000 students. As in

France, all those with the bac have a right to a university place. This has led to a rapidly expanding first year intake and a high failure rate at the end of the first year.

This rapid survey of the growth of the Camerounian education system shows that Cameroun shares many of the features of other west African states which previous studies have documented. By anglophone African standards, the development of secondary and higher education has been tardy: it is only now that an élite education tradition is appearing, whereas in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone the tradition is already two or three generations old. By francophone standards, enrolment rates are high, particularly at the primary level, for reasons already mentioned.

The ethnic-regional inequalities in educational provision and enrolment are similar to those found throughout west Africa, and reflect different rates of incorporation into world markets and different levels of urbanisation and employment possibilities in non-agricultural sectors of the economy.

A further common feature has been the role played by missions in the initial expansion of primary education and the subsequent trend towards greater state control of educational provision. Increased planning and centralisation have not led to complete state control, and the continued trend for demand to outstrip the supply of school places has led to an unplanned growth of private education in the south and a consequent increase in regional inequalities at the secondary level.

So far, nothing has been said concerning the effect of social differentiation within rather than between ethnic groups and regions on educational inequalities. As with the factors discussed above, this differentiation is the result of the ongoing

processes of social change already outlined: the growth of towns, the spread of market relations, the establishment of an industrial sector and occupational groups based on education, specialist abilities and knowledge, and the rise of a town-based governing and administrative élite. These factors have led to growing inequalities between Camerounians, both between and within regions and ethnic groups. The developing class structure of Cameroun will be looked at in detail in Chapter VII, after the discussion of inequalities in access to schooling and different levels of performance within the school system which are the subject of Chapters III-VI.

FOOTNOTES

1. This was still true in 1945, when a report on education in north Cameroun stated that:

"Le danger serait en effet de donner à l'indigène une instruction rudimentaire qui lui donnerait une fausse idée de sa valeur, qui l'inciterait à se libérer de ses obligations sociales traditionnelles, et qui serait en définitive un déclassé." (Martin 1970:51)

Clearly, the French, like the Germans, were concerned not to disrupt the traditional power structure in the north, as long as it provided no threat to the colonial regime.

2. European commercial enterprises employed 4,400 Camerounians in 1933, nearly three times as many in 1937 (Kuczynski 1939:193).
3. One of the later graduates of this school, Ahmadou Ahidjo, became the first (and, so far, only) head of state at independence.

Chapter III ENROLMENT AND PERFORMANCE INEQUALITIES IN
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Chapter I contained a general discussion of the relationship between the regional-ethnic, urban-rural and class dimensions of educational inequality, which was defined in terms of enrolment and performance variations. It was concluded that educational expansion does not necessarily mean a reduction of urban-rural and ethnic-regional inequalities: over time, the latter are likely to become class inequalities and educational performance is likely to replace access as the major vector of inequality.

In Cameroun, in the areas of low primary enrolment, particularly in the north, it is the fact of attending or not attending primary school which is still the major differentiator of the school-age population, and not, as in the south, the passage from primary to secondary school. This is a measure of the educational gap between the two regions, and reflects the differential penetration of the colonial economy, etc. outlined in the previous chapter. But even in the relatively advanced south, many pupils still do not finish the primary course, let alone try to enter secondary school.

In this chapter the relationship between inequality of access and performance is discussed in the Camerounian context. Primary education is the main focus of interest, but data on secondary and higher education will be included where possible.¹

The first section looks at the distribution of the total population and of primary and secondary school pupils. The recent expansion of the school system is considered on the regional level. Next, enrolment and performance variations based on sex, age and urban-rural factors are discussed in relation to general enrolment levels. Lastly, ethnicity is considered in a similar perspective.

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12°

14°







16°

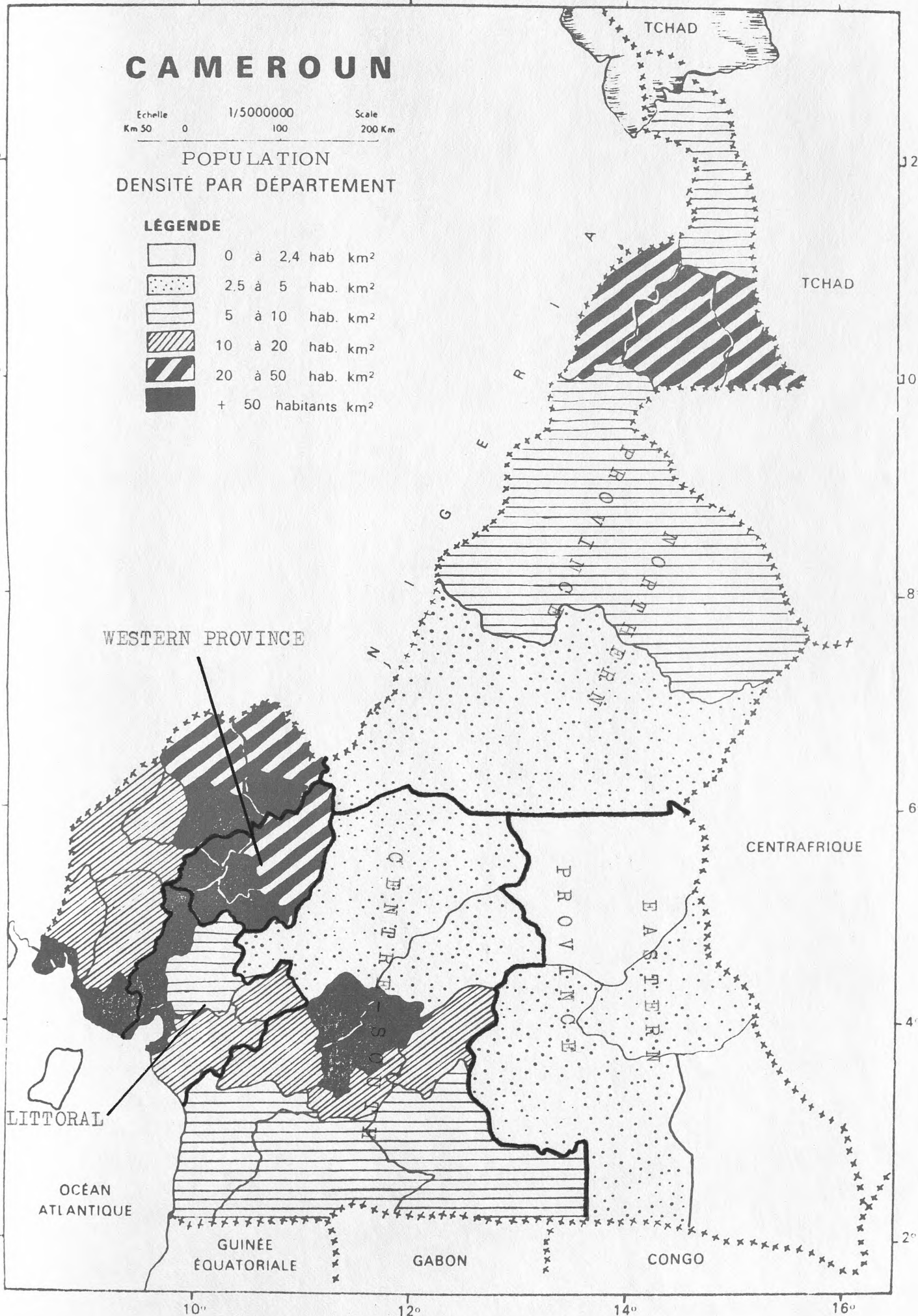
CAMEROUN

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POPULATION DENSITÉ PAR DÉPARTEMENT

LÉGENDE

-  0 à 2,4 hab. km²
-  2,5 à 5 hab. km²
-  5 à 10 hab. km²
-  10 à 20 hab. km²
-  20 à 50 hab. km²
-  + 50 habitants km²



Source : Ministère du Plan et de l'Aménagement du Territoire

MAP 2 POPULATION DENSITY BY DEPARTMENT

Age and sex are treated as intervening variables relating enrolment and performance to birthplace (regional, urban-rural) and ethnicity. Repeating and drop-out rates are considered as aspects of performance.

TABLE III:1 PROVINCIAL DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL AND PRIMARY SCHOOL POPULATIONS (1970)

Province	Density (/km ²)	% Urban ^a	% of Population	% of Primary Enrolment	Selectivity Index ^b
North	9.6	10	34	11	0.32
Centre-South	9.2	22	24	38	1.55
West	71.9	20	22	25	1.16
Littoral	32.1	68	14	19	1.36
East	2.5	11	6	7	1.16
Total	10.9	22	100	100	

^aTowns with 5,000+ population.

^b% of primary enrolment ÷ % of population.

Sources: Labrousse 1975:21

Ministry of Education Statistical Yearbook 1970.

Both the Centre-South and the Northern Province have areas of dense and sparse population. The Eastern Province is a large forest area with very poor communications and a sparse, scattered population. The major part of the Littoral population is centred on Douala, which has nearly a third of a million inhabitants, many of them migrants from the densely populated Western Province (see Map 2 opposite).

Over four-fifths of the primary school population are found in the Centre-South, Littoral and Western Provinces. The Littoral and Centre-South have the highest level of selectivity and are also the areas with the highest levels of urbanisation and longest experience of western education. The Northern Province is low on all these factors.

Enrolment inequalities between provinces are not much smaller now than they were at independence, despite a 147 percent increase

in enrolment over the last 15 years (Marchand 1976). Thus, the three south-western provinces accounted for 85 percent of all primary enrolment in 1960 and for 80 percent in 1975 (Ministry of Education Yearbooks). In the latter year, the Northern and Eastern Provinces, with two-fifths of the total population, still had less than one fifth of all primary pupils. We would expect this share to increase if enrolment levels continue to rise, because enrolment levels in the three educationally most advanced provinces are approaching 100 percent, at least according to official statistics:

TABLE III:2 ENROLMENT OF 6-14 YEAR OLDS BY PROVINCE FOR THE YEARS 1960, 1967 AND 1970 (PERCENT)

Province	Enrolment		
	1960	1967	1970
North	10	22	24
Centre-South	63	86	91
West	50	70	76
Littoral	44	84	85
East	44	67	68
Total	40	64	65

Source: Ministry of Education Yearbooks

The greatest percentage increase between 1960 and 1970 was in the Northern Province, but in absolute terms the high enrolment provinces still took the lion's share of enrolment increases. Thus, more recent data show that between 1970 and 1975 total enrolment increased by over 150,000, but that of this total the Centre-South accounted for about 45,000 whereas the Northern Province, with a larger total population accounted for only 26,000 (Ministry of Education 1976).

Official government policy is to reduce regional enrolment inequalities, but so far they have not been very successful at this. It might be thought that uncontrolled mission expansion is responsible for this situation, but this is not the case: most of the recent increase in school provision has been effected by the government. The major part of enrolment increases in the

south and west result from the expansion of existing schools, mostly through the introduction of the shift system mentioned in the previous chapter. It is thus variations in demand which have so far defeated the government's policy of reducing regional-ethnic inequalities in enrolment levels.

It is not surprising that enrolment inequalities at the secondary level are even greater than those found in primary schooling. This is to be expected if, as indicated above, secondary entrance has become the crucial educational watershed in the south and west of the country.

TABLE III:3 ENROLMENT IN ACADEMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS BY PROVINCE, 1971 AND 1975

Province	Enrolment					1975 S.I. ^a
	1971	%	1975	%	% increase	
North	2,421	5	4,873	5	101	0.15
Centre-South	26,413	44	44,022	46	67	1.92
West	12,154	20	20,174	22	66	0.95
Littoral	15,856	27	21,064	22	33	1.57
East	2,387	4	4,724	5	98	0.83
Total	59,231	100	94,857	100	60	

^a in relation to total population figures of Table III:1

Source: Ministry of Education Statistics.

As with primary education, the greatest percentage increases were for the Northern and Eastern Provinces, but as they started from the smallest bases this had made no appreciable difference to their relative position. Thus, the three "advanced" provinces boast 90 percent of secondary places, and appear likely to keep a substantial advantage over the "backward" provinces for the foreseeable future.

Selectivity is higher at the secondary than at the primary level for the Centre-South and the Littoral, but lower for the other three provinces, especially the Northern. The relative stagnation of the Littoral is probably associated with the

high concentration of secondary schooling in Douala, which accounts for two-thirds of the population of the province?² Clignet and Foster (1966) have shown secondary enrolment levels in Abidjan to be lower than in other major towns in the Ivory Coast, but in both this and the Douala case it is difficult to say why this should be so.³

Figures for the regional origins of students in the Arts and Social Studies Faculty of the University of Yaoundé (1974) show even greater inequalities than at the secondary level. Thus, 95 percent of French-speaking students are from the three south-western provinces. The Western Province improves its position compared with the level of secondary enrolment shown in the previous table: it accounts for 22 percent of secondary students but no less than 34 percent of Arts Faculty students (Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines 1976:6). This reflects the above-average educational performance of Bamiléké students, a finding corroborated by the present study (see Chapter IV).

Thus, provincial enrolment inequalities are higher at the top than at the bottom of the educational ladder, and at the primary and secondary level show little sign of attenuation. Government attempts to reduce enrolment inequalities reflect their concern with the ethnic dimension of educational provision, which will be considered shortly. Primary expansion may eventually lead to an apparent democratisation at that level, but this is unlikely at the secondary level. A comparative study of Ghana and the Ivory Coast showed that Ghanaian northern ethnic groups were less represented in secondary schools than their Ivory Coast equivalents, despite the fact that the Ghanaian secondary system has ten times the enrolment of that in the Ivory Coast (Clignet 1967).

Regional inequalities in enrolment levels are the reflection

of inter- and intra-regional inequalities at a lower level: between sub-regions, between the sexes and between towns and villages. Enrolment levels are also associated with variations in repeating and dropout rates, but less usually with exam performance variations, which are attenuated by differentials in enrolment levels and dropout rates. The association can be represented thus:

HIGH ENROLMENT LEVELS	LOW ENROLMENT LEVELS
1. Low urban-rural enrolment differentials	High urban concentration
2. Girls' enrolment approaching boys'	Low female enrolment
3. Average age near official norm	Predominance of older pupils
4. More repeaters than dropouts	More dropouts than repeaters
5. Exam performance reflects social background	Exam performance reflects ability more than background

The first four points mentioned above are likely to be cumulative in their effect. For example, the lower the level of female enrolment, the higher is likely to be the dropout and repeat rate of girl students. The higher the concentration of schools in town, the higher the repeat and dropout rates in the villages. Some of these relationships can be examined in detail using primary enrolment data.

1. As we would expect, urban is higher than rural enrolment in most areas of the country. Marguerat (1969) has shown that primary enrolment rates in the administrative headquarters of arrondissements (the unit below the département) are generally more than proportionate to the population of the arrondissement living in these headquarters. In other words, the administrative centres, which are usually the largest towns in the arrondissement, have higher enrolment rates than their rural hinterlands. But high rates of migration can reverse this relationship:

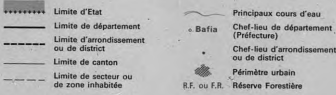
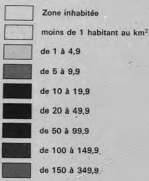
DENSITÉ DE LA POPULATION RURALE

Calculée par canton d'après le recensement administratif de 1967-1968
(Population des chefs-lieux administratifs exclue)

Echelle : 1/2 000 000



LÉGENDE



— Les chiffres représentent le nombre d'habitants au km². —



MAP 3; RURAL POPULATION DENSITY

"... une douzaine de villes voient ce rapport s'inverser et n'ont qu'un faible nombre d'enfants fréquentant leurs écoles vis à vis de la masse de leurs citadins: il s'agit en fait de vraies centres urbains du pays, à l'attraction démographique puissante."
(Marguerat 1969:1)

Of these twelve towns only Garoua is in the north; all the others are in the three most "developed" provinces. Thus, in certain southern areas, rural hinterlands have higher levels of primary enrolment than the towns which they surround. This is only possible in areas of "mature" educational provision, where schools have already become an accepted feature of the social landscape. In the last chapter it was shown how the expansion of cash cropping in the south was associated with a rising demand for schooling. In many northern areas this process has not yet begun or has not advanced very far. Thus, schools are still heavily concentrated in the towns, where the population is most likely to have positive attitudes towards education.

Population density is also important in this context. Ceteris paribus, where rural population densities are low, school provision will also be low, especially in areas of below-average general enrolment. Thus, in the Northern Province, over 22 percent of primary pupils were attending schools in departmental headquarters, compared with less than 17 percent in the Centre-South. These figures hide wide variations in rural population density within the two provinces, however, as can be seen from Map 3. Thus, Haute-Sanaga in the Centre-South has a population density of 4.5 inhabitants per sq. km. and over two-fifths of primary pupils attending schools in the administrative headquarters. At the other extreme, Lékié, with a population density of nearly

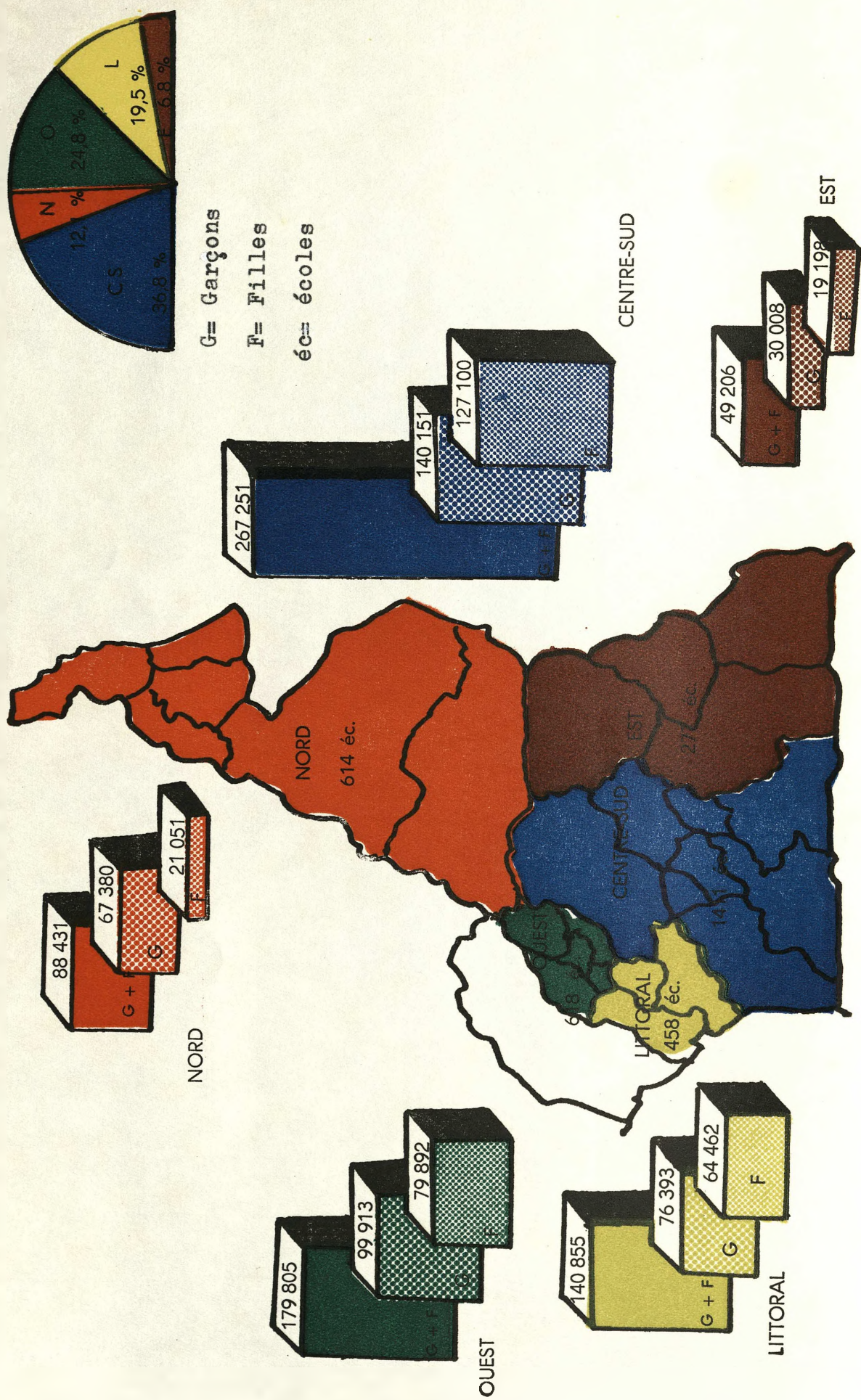
60 inhabitants per sq. km., has only 16 percent of all primary pupils attending these schools. In the Northern Province, the densely populated Margui Wandala département has 20 percent of primary pupils enrolled in schools in administrative headquarters, but the figure for the sparsely populated Adamaoua département is 32 percent (Owono 1974, MINEDUC 1975).

In absolute terms, the rural school-age population in the north is at a greater disadvantage than that in the south and west, because overall enrolment rates are so much lower in the north. But even in areas of high general enrolment, such as the Centre-South, children living in sparsely populated rural areas (which are also likely to be the most isolated and the least involved in cash cropping) are likely to suffer from low levels of school provision. More will be said on this question in Chapter VI, which deals with the transition from primary to secondary school in the Centre-South Province.

There are enough exceptions to the generalisations made above to prove that the relationship between population density, urbanisation and school provision is an extremely complex one, particularly in the north, where ethnic-religious-cultural, political and historical factors complicate the picture even further. The ethnic context of the north will be briefly described at the end of this chapter.

2. As mentioned above, examples can be found in the south of rural enrolment rates exceeding those of neighbouring towns. But, in general, the reverse is more common, and this is usually associated with the differential enrolment of boys and girls. We may take Mateossian's study of enrolment in the Western (Bamiléké and Bamoun) Province as an example of the

Figure 1: SCHOOL ENROLMENT BY PROVINCE (1970): GIRLS, BOYS AND BOTH SEXES
EFFECTIFS DES REGIONS ADMINISTRATIVES



association between urban-rural and male-female enrolment inequalities.

TABLE III:4 ENROLMENT RATES OF 6 TO 14 YEAR OLDS IN BAMILEKE AND BAMOUN DEPARTMENTS (PERCENT)

Region	Male	Female	Total
Bamiléké			
Urban	93	84	89
Rural	85	66	76
Total	87	68	78
Bamoun			
Urban	88	82	85
Rural	68	46	57
Total	80	57	66

Source; Mateossian 1966:211

In both cases, the gap between the enrolment of boys and girls is greater in rural than in urban areas.⁴ The Bamoun departments are predominantly Muslim, and educational expansion is more recent in these than in the Bamiléké departments. It can be seen that the generally lower enrolment levels in the Bamoun departments are associated with greater urban-rural and male-female inequalities than in the Bamiléké case. This again shows that enrolment inequalities are bound to decline after average enrolment has reached a certain point. Girls and villages will catch up boys and towns as the latter approach full enrolment.⁵

The sex dimension of enrolment inequalities is important enough to merit separate discussion. Figure I shows that the gap between the sexes is at its greatest in the Eastern and Northern Provinces, where total enrolment is at its lowest. Girls represented 20 percent of primary enrolment for the five provinces in 1952, 37 percent in 1962 and 43 percent in 1970 (Labrousse 1975:17). The enrolment of girls increased by 160 percent between 1960 and 1970, compared with 67 percent for boys during the same period. The provincial breakdown of female

enrolment increases is as follows:

TABLE III:5 FEMALE ENROLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PRIMARY ENROLMENT BY PROVINCE, 1960 AND 1970.

Province	Percent Girls		Relative Increase ^a
	1960	1970	
North	19	24	16
Centre-South	40	47	70
West	21	44	79
Littoral	41	46	55
East	26	39	54
<u>Total</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>42</u>

^aActual increase + maximum possible increase

Source: Labrousse 1975 (adapted).

The poor progress of female enrolment in the Northern Province is striking: the gap between male and female levels of enrolment fell by less than half the national rate, which means, in effect, that the north fell further behind the rest of the country as regards the provision of school places for girls between 1960 and 1970.

In absolute numbers, the Centre-South and Littoral, with the highest levels of female enrolment at the beginning and end of the period, accounted for almost half the total increase. If the figures are accurate, the increase for the Western Province represents a major change in attitudes towards girls' education on the part of the Bamiléké. This corresponds to popular opinion, but cannot be substantiated by reference to documentary evidence. Whatever the case, it is clear that no such change has taken place in the Northern Province, where the vast majority of girls still receive little or no formal education, except in Coranic schools (Santerre 1974).

As might be expected, female enrolment inequalities are relatively greater at the secondary and higher levels than at the primary level, both within and between regions. For example,

only 7 percent of Arts Faculty students from the Northern Province were girls, compared with 14 percent of those from Western Province and a quarter of those from the Littoral (Rapport d'Activités 1976:6). Moreover, only two percent of all female students in the Faculty were from the Northern and Eastern Provinces combined, compared with 6 percent of all male students. There were over twice as many female students from the Centre-South as male students from the Northern Province.

At all levels, girls tend to have higher dropout and repeating rates than boys, and lower pass rates in the CEPE (See below pp 55-60) and CE (see following chapter). Dropout rates are reflected in the following figures: in 1969 for the country as a whole, there were 100 boys attending school for every 85 girls at age six, but at age 14 this had fallen to 100 boys for every 57 girls. The figures for classes 1 and 6 were 100 boys for 79 and 54 girls respectively (Ministry of Education 1970).

Increased female enrolment accounts for much of the overall expansion in the three south-western provinces in the recent past, but the north shows much slower progress in female enrolment, and it is not impossible that, given the level of population growth, an increasing proportion of girls are not going to school.

As female enrolment levels rise, it becomes increasingly their social background (parental occupation and education) that determines their school performance, as will be shown in Chapter IV.

3. Having discussed some of the urban-rural and sex correlates of enrolment variations, we may turn to age, which is of great importance in the Francophone education system, partly because pupils of 15 and over are not allowed to take the CE for entry into state academic secondary schools. Thus, late entry into primary school and/or too many repeated classes can mean effective elimination from the state system. The following table shows the age at which children enter Class 1.

TABLE III:6 AGE OF ENTERING PRIMARY SCHOOL BY PROVINCE, AVERAGE FOR 1966 AND 1972 (PERCENT)

Province	5	6	7	8	9+	Total
North	17	27	24	16	16	100
Centre-South	26	35	23	11	5	100
West	10	42	30	13	5	100
Littoral	26	40	21	9	4	100
East	10	24	26	17	23	100
Total	19	24	26	17	23	100

Source: Ministry of Education 1975:5

Children start school later in the Northern and Eastern Provinces than in the other three. In the Littoral, only 13 percent of pupils starting Class 1 were 8 years old or older, compared to 40 percent in the Eastern and 32 percent in the Northern Province. In the north, 44 percent of pupils were 6 years old or less compared to 70 percent in the Centre-South. In 1965, Class 1 pupils in the Centre-South had an average age of 7 years 1 month, compared with 8 years 4 months in the Northern Province (Farine 1967:188).

In general, pupils in rural areas will start school later than those in towns, and girls later than boys. Mateossian's study (1966) shows this to be the case for the Bamiléké departments. Urban girls have higher enrolment levels than rural

boys from age 5 to 8, after which higher female dropout rates restore the balance in favour of the rural boys.⁶ By age 15, 80 percent of the rural pupils are boys.

4. So far, the main focus of the discussion has been on variations in enrolment levels. It was asserted at the outset that initial enrolment differentials would probably be associated with drop-out and repeat rate differentials, and data from a study by Labrousse (1970) can be cited to quantify these performance variations on a provincial level. The data aggregate figures for the years 1966 to 1969, and thus do not represent a cohort but simply a movement from one class to the next averaged over a four year period.

TABLE III:7 PASSAGE OF 1,000 CLASS 1 PUPILS THROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL, DEDUCTING REPEATS AND DROP-OUTS (STATE SCHOOLS ONLY)

Province	Class						Passed CEPE	% passed Class 6
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
North & East	1000	346	308	242	203	190	65	34
Centre-South	1000	942	799	632	555	471	98	21
West	1000	912	793	665	634	555	105	19
Littoral	1000	844	817	718	703	699	134	19
Total	1000	782	699	575	524	475	90	19

Source: Labrousse 1970:43

A number of points can be made. First, the dropout rate for the country as a whole is extremely high. If the figures given are more or less accurate, it would seem that the official enrolment rates are highly inflated, even when repeaters are included. Second, the north and east again stand out for their low level of promotion, especially for Class 1 to 2. Over 60 percent of all primary dropouts in the Northern Province occur between these two classes, compared with less than 5 percent in the Littoral (Vaugrants 1967, quoted by Bugnicourt 1971:770).⁷

As repeat rates for a given class do not vary much between provinces, we may take the figures in the table to reflect differential dropout rates. It seems likely that, for a given province, dropout and repeat rates will vary in reverse proportions, although this cannot be verified from existing data.⁸

5. As regards CEPE performance, the above table shows that the few pupils in the north and east who manage to reach Class 6 have higher pass rates than those from the southern and western provinces, where more pupils reach Class 6. There are three possible explanations for this. It may be partly that only the very best pupils in the north and east have any chance of reaching Class 6 in a system exhibiting such draconian selection; they are likely, on average to be more intelligent than the southern pupils who finish the primary course. Clignet and Foster (1966) and Blau and Duncan (1967) have shown those who manage to overcome initial disadvantages of birth are frequently above-average achievers as regards the quality of secondary school attended (Ivory Coast) and subsequent educational and occupational achievement (United States).

Alternatively, it may be that pupils from regions/ethnic groups with low overall levels of enrolment are from atypically high social backgrounds. This possibility will be discussed in the following section on ethnicity.

Finally, the marking of the CEPE may have been, intentionally or accidentally, more lenient in the north. Before 1975, the Northern Province did not follow the same school year as the rest of the country, and consequently northern pupils sat different examinations than those in other provinces. All exams are now national, but it is generally believed that northern

students benefit from a certain degree of discreet positive discrimination. A cursory review of primary and secondary exam results before and since the changeover reveals no pattern of provincial performance, although northern results do seem, on average to be slightly better than those for other provinces.

Many teachers would agree that the relative educational backwardness of the north and its continued isolation from French culture and language of necessity lead to a very low level of knowledge acquisition and assimilation. Given the often random nature of examinations and the possibility of positive discrimination in favour of northern pupils, it is not possible to come to any firm conclusions concerning the relative ability of pupils from different provinces.

Examination results are a useful index of selectivity only in areas with comparable enrolment and dropout rates. Social selectivity, of which educational selectivity is a major aspect, begins before birth and continues into adult life. It is the total process of selection which is important, not any isolated aspect of it. A study of exam and test results in Uganda came to the conclusion that occupational, ethnic and urban-rural background variables had little effect on performance levels. Often relationships were the reverse of what might be expected: children in rural schools had higher test scores than those from urban and semi-urban schools. Highest performance levels were found in schools in the most isolated, least populated areas (Heineman 1975). These findings do not point to a highly democratic education system, but to wide variations in enrolment levels. Thus, performance was negatively correlated with level of school attendance, as with the CEPE results

discussed above.

In summary, the north and east are characterised by high early dropout rates and a consequent concentration of pupils in Class 1; in the other provinces repeating is more common than wastage, and pupils are more evenly distributed throughout the six classes. Differential enrolment and dropout rates serve to minimise variations in exam performance between provinces. Intra-provincial variations will be examined in the discussion of the Common Entrance results for the Centre-South (Chapter VI).

We would expect dropout and repeat rates to vary with sex and birthplace, but unfortunately no data are available to test these relationships. We may use CEPE results, however, to demonstrate provincial variations in the performance levels of the two sexes.

TABLE III:8 CEPE RESULTS BY SEX AND PROVINCE, 1972

Province	Male		Female	
	Candid- ates	% Pass	Candid- ates	% Pass
North	4,515	42	557	39
Centre-South	14,785	55	12,153	41
West	9,613	41	5,505	25
Littoral	8,847	44	5,952	33
East	2,197	54	1,062	49
<u>Total</u>	<u>39,957</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>25,229</u>	<u>36</u>

Source: Direction de la Statistique,
Garoua 1972.

In all provinces girls have lower pass-rates than boys, but the difference between the two sexes is smallest for the two provinces with the lowest enrolment levels, the east and the north. In the north, so few girls take the CEPE that we would expect those who do to be either extremely intelligent or from unusually high social backgrounds, or a combination of

both. Clignet and Foster have shown that girls attending secondary schools in Ghana and Ivory Coast are, on average, from higher socio-economic backgrounds than boys (Clignet and Foster 1966, Foster 1965). We would expect the expansion of female enrolment to lead to a drop in pass-rates, at least in the short run. If the data are to be trusted, this would seem to be the case in the Western Province, where the female pass-rate is at its lowest.

No national data exist on which to base a discussion of family background and exam performance, but it is clear that the relationship is more complex than point 5. (p.90) allows for. Much of the following chapter will be given over to the discussion of the effect of background factors on performance, though on a local rather than a national level.⁹

Ethnicity

Enough has been said to demonstrate the interrelated and cumulative nature of enrolment and performance inequalities on a national level. The regional inequalities cited above are also ethnic inequalities, and this is their social and political significance. Northern educational backwardness, combined with political dominance (the head of state is a northerner) and a post-independence policy of national integration, led to a policy of positive discrimination in education, as in Nigeria. So far, this policy does not seem to have been very successful. The rapid growth of rural and female enrolment in the south and west, brought about by popular demand and financed to a large degree by the local population, has outweighed the modest expansion realised in the north, which reflects political "push" rather than popular "pull".

It should not be imagined, however, that the population of the north is equally hostile to the growth of schooling. Least willing or able to send their children to school are the "pagan" mountain-dwelling tribes of the far-north, equally suspicious of Foulbé or official attempts to disrupt the precarious equilibrium of their subsistence societies. These people (Matakam, Kapsiki, Mofou, Gondé, Fali, etc.) were the last to be affected by colonial rule, urbanisation and cash crops, and have so far managed to frustrate often high-handed attempts at forced modernisation. They represent about a quarter of the northern population, and have estimated selectivity indexes for primary school enrolment varying between 0.18 (Fali) and 0.63 (Gondé)(Martin 1973:18).

Another quarter of the northern population consists of non-Muslims living in the northern plains; these are the Moundang, Toupouri, Guizige, Guidar, Massa, Mousgoum, etc. Less isolated than the mountain peoples, these tribes have been more open to recent government and missionary attempts to introduce schools. Perhaps eager to seek alternatives to Foulbé domination, some of these groups (particularly the Moundang) have taken to schooling with some enthusiasm and are generally more represented in primary schools than the Foulbé. Thus, the Foulbé index is 0.91 whereas for the Toupouri it is 1.32 and for the Moundang 2.21 (ibid.)

The Foulbé themselves constitute about one third of the northern population (a figure which is thought to be declining), but the urban Foulbé (less than half the total) have higher primary enrolment than those in rural areas. The highly stratified urban group had a longer and more intense contact with the colonial administration than the rural Foulbé, and

the colonial impact did not seriously threaten the established social hierarchy. But this latter is increasingly seen as an obstacle to national integration and development, and it is not surprising that it is the more marginal ethnic groups which have taken to schooling with more enthusiasm.

The remaining non-Muslim northerners (Baya, Dourou, Mboum) together make up about 17 percent of the northern population, and are to be found in the sparsely populated part of Adamaoua. They tend to have higher enrolment rates than the Foulbé, but the growth of schooling is hindered by low population density.

Poor communications and a scattered population also impose limits on the expansion of education in the Eastern Province, which seems likely, for the present, to remain an educational backwater second only to the north. Those children born in or near, or prepared to migrate to, the larger towns of the north and east (Ngaoundéré, Maroua, Garoua, Bertoua) have the best chance of going to primary school, but still remain relatively disadvantaged by southern standards.

In contrast to the complex and varied northern picture, the south presents an image of universal acceptance of the school, with the possible exception of the Bamoun, the only large Muslim group outside the north, and northern Muslims living in southern towns. We may assume that negative attitudes towards the education of girls explain, at least in part, the low enrolment levels of these groups. Such attitudes seem to be totally absent among non-Muslim southerners, which does not mean, however, that girls have as good a chance as boys of going to secondary school. In the next two chapters performance differences between the sexes will be discussed in relation to birthplace and socio-economic background.

In the introduction it was stated that ethnic inequalities in access and performance are likely to become social inequalities over time. For Cameroun, ¹⁰ Martin concludes as follows:

"Par la force des choses, ces inégalités ethniques se reproduiront tôt ou tard dans des inégalités de classes sociales, et l'on assistera au Cameroun entre la partie Nord et le reste du pays à ce qui existe déjà entre la Côte d'Ivoire et la Haute Volta, ce dernier pays fournissant au premier la main d'œuvre de base, c'est-à-dire le prolétariat de la nouvelle société." (Martin 1973:24)

Despite government attempts to plan economic growth, capitalist investment tends to be concentrated in the south, reflecting and accentuating urban growth (labour supply, markets, economies of scale) and the distribution of new investment in social overhead capital (schools, hospitals) and infrastructure (roads, railways, port facilities).

The process of democratisation through educational expansion is everywhere more apparent than real. In the West, greater working class access to secondary schools and universities has not led to higher rates of social mobility (Coleman 1966, Jencks 1972, Boudon 1973). In African countries, greater access to education is accompanied by diploma devaluation, with the result that the distribution of relative advantage remains more or less unchanged. Thus, the growth of the Camerounain education system discussed above cannot be equated with democratisation in any real sense. Formally marginal groups such as girls and village children have been drawn into a social space where their life chances are determined and are seen to be determined by educational performance. The newly incorporated

are the least likely to succeed, and their acceptance of the selection process as legitimate, no matter how objectively unfair it may be, is the measure of the generalisation of educational dominance within society.

The implications of this analysis as regards the theory of social reproduction outlined in Chapter I are clear. As primary schooling becomes more generalised, so social reproduction through education becomes more important. This leads to the following paradox: the social role of education rises in importance as the value of primary education falls. This does not mean that primary schooling becomes irrelevant in determining life chances and occupational opportunities, however. It means that we are obliged to look at the social determinants of performance at the primary level, i.e. at the crucial background factors determining the passage of pupils from primary to secondary school.

The high enrolment rates of the Centre-South make it possible to turn from enrolment to performance without raising any methodological problems. The following chapter describes Yaoundé and its school population and discusses the major determinants of CE and CEPE performance variations.

FOOTNOTES

1. Many of the statistical data in this chapter are only approximations, and should thus be treated with caution.
2. Migration from the Western Province accounts for most of the recent growth of Douala, and is reflected in the ratio of primary pupils to the total population: whereas in 1964 the Littoral had 201 pupils per 1,000 inhabitants, by 1968 this had fallen to 191 (Direction de la Statistique 1970:36). Thus, it

seems that population growth has been so rapid that educational provision has not been able to keep up.

3. Girard (1963) shows the same to be true in relation to Paris and the rest of France. Clignet (1974) explains the similarity between France and Ivory Coast in terms of French colonial administrative centralisation, which copied the metropolitan model. But Douala, though an important early centre of education, has never been capital of Cameroun. In the absence of more detailed information there is little point in pursuing the issue, or the details of Clignet's argument.

4. Given that overall rural enrolment levels are lower than those for urban areas, this exemplifies the point that inequalities tend to be cumulative. Moreover, Mateossian shows that differences between the sexes are associated with age: girls tend to start school later and finish earlier than boys, particularly in the rural areas (see footnote 6).

5. In some southern towns, for example Yaoundé, Obala, Eseka, Mbalmayo, there are more girls than boys attending primary school, and even in the rural hinterland there are very low primary school sex-ratios. In Yaoundé, the predominance of girls reflects the demographic structure of the town (see following chapter for details). In the north, girls rarely reach 40 percent of urban primary enrolment, or 30 percent of rural.

6. Enrolment levels for 5 to 7 year olds were as follows:

Age	Rural Areas			Towns		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
5	23	13	18	48	42	45
6	53	32	42	81	65	73
7	72	54	63	99	80	85

Source Mateossian:1966

Complex patterns of enrolment inequalities exist between the

sexes at different ages, between town and village and between larger ecological areas. At the provincial level, southern girls probably have higher enrolment levels than northern boys at all ages.

7. Similarly, in the Centre-South, Littoral and Western Province, between 50 and 60 percent of all primary leavers are from Class 6 (CM2), compared with about 25 percent in the east and north (Ministry of Education 1975).

8. For all provinces, repeat rates are high in Class 1, reflecting the difficulties experienced by many pupils in their first contact with French, and in Class 6, reflecting the high failure rate in the CE. The only exception to this pattern is found in the Northern Province, where only 29 percent of Class 6 pupils repeat, compared with a national average of 41 percent (Farine 1967:221). This probably reflects a combination of both high CE success and low levels of ambition/expectation regarding secondary schooling, particularly among girls.

9. The CEPE has been the only exam discussed in this chapter, but it should be remembered that it is of little intrinsic value, either educationally -it is neither sufficient nor necessary to have passed it to gain entry to secondary school- or occupationally. It has been discussed here as an index of performance with implications for the education system and the wider social context.

10. Even in the north, parental occupation and education are related to enrolment. Thus, an estimated 4 percent of the adult male population of the north are in modern sector employment of all kinds, but over 14 percent of secondary school children have fathers in this sector (Martin 1973:28, figures for two northern departments). Similar figures could be given for parental education and birthplace.

Chapter IV SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE

In this chapter the discussion moves from the general nature of enrolment inequalities on a national level and their evolution over time to a more localised analysis of examination performance in and around Yaoundé, the capital of Cameroun and the Centre-South Province. The first section deals with the demographic structure of the province and the town. This is followed by a discription of the Yaoundé primary education structure and an outline of the Class 6 sample. The final section deals with the factors affecting who takes and who passes the CE, and CEPE and TAS test results are briefly discussed for comparative purposes.

1. The Germans established an administrative post at Yaoundé in 1890, since when the town has grown gradually as an administrative and commercial centre second only to Douala in terms of population and economic importance. Since the French take-over from the Germans, it has been the political capital of Cameroun. As Map I shows, Yaoundé is at the centre of an important road and railway system which links it to the rest of the territory. The Centre-South departments to the south of Yaoundé —Méfou, Nyong & Soo, Ntem and Dja & Lobo— together with Lékié to the north, are the principal cocoa-growing areas of Cameroun, and Yaoundé is the centre of the cocoa trade.

The total population of the Centre-South was approximately 1,130,000 in 1970, and the population density just over 9 persons per sq. km. (ORSTOM 1975). As already pointed out, the population of the province is unevenly distributed, and it can be divided into three ecological zones. The areas of densest population are those surrounding Yaoundé: Mefou (61 inhabitants per sq. km.), Lékié (59) and Nyong & Soo (21). The other two areas are much less densely populated: the southern forest with 5 inhabitants

per sq. km. (Océan) to 12 (Nyong & Mfoumou), and the departments to the north of Yaoundé, particularly the northern (savanna) part of Mbam and Haute Sanaga (4-5 inhabitants /sq. km.). An estimated 22 percent of the population were living in towns of 5,000 or more inhabitants, but Yaoundé alone accounted for two-thirds of these (ibid.p.3).

The population of Yaoundé was approximately 60,000 in 1958, 110,000 in 1965 and over 200,000 in 1974. The growth rate of nearly 10 percent a year is the highest in the country. After Douala, Yaoundé is the most important centre of migration in Cameroun. In 1964, two-thirds of the town's population were classified as migrants (Franqueville 1970:11). Over half of the latter were from the Centre-South, a fifth from the Littoral, 13 percent from the Western Province and 5 percent each from the Northern and Eastern Provinces. (SEDES 1967:90). More recently, migration has increased from the Western (Bamiléké) Province and declined from the Littoral (Direction de la Statistique 1970).

Both Franqueville and Marguerat (1973) maintain that the majority of migrants to Yaoundé are from urban rather than rural areas. According to Franqueville, 56 percent of Yaoundé's migrants (1964) were from other urban areas. Marguerat's more general study shows that short-distance migrations are primarily from rural areas to local administrative headquarters, i.e. the largest local towns, and that longer-distance movements usually take place between these towns and the larger centres of migration, particularly Douala and Yaoundé. Franqueville also shows that the single most important reason for migration to Yaoundé among adult males from the Littoral, Western and Centre-South Provinces was educational (Franqueville 1970:585). Most of the Class 6 pupils sampled were born outside Yaoundé, and their migration patterns

will be described in detail below.

The ethnic composition of Yaoundé necessarily reflects the major migratory currents from the southern provinces, particularly the Centre-South, which is largely peopled by a tribal-linguistic family known as the Béti-Fang. The Ewondo are concentrated around Yaoundé, particularly in the Méfou and Nyong & Soo departments. Closely related to the Ewondo are the smaller Bané, Yébékolo and Mvele groups found to the south and east of the Ewondo. The Eton are a highly concentrated Béti group occupying the Lékié department to the north-west of Yaoundé, and the other important member of the Béti family, the Boulou, occupy the major part of the southern forest, where the Fang and a small number of Pygmies are also to be found (Dugast 1954). The major non-Béti tribes in the Centre-South are the Bassa-Bakoko, who occupy the forest area between Yaoundé and Douala, and the Bafia-Yambassa-Banen who people the southern part of the Mbam department in the north of the Centre-South.

In 1964, the Béti-Fang accounted for an estimated 46 percent of the population of Yaoundé, followed by the Bamiléké (19 %) and the Bassa (9 %) (SEDES 1967:59).¹ Most short-distance migrants are Ewondo from Méfou and Eton from Lékié. Bamiléké migrants arrive in Yaoundé direct from the Western Province, or via Douala and other towns in the Littoral.² Movement out of the five densely populated Bamiléké departments has been the most important migratory current in southern Cameroun; all the major southern towns have communities of Bamiléké traders. The Bamiléké are the largest single ethnic group in Douala and probably in Yaoundé as well, and in both towns they dominate the commercial sector.

To conclude this section, we may briefly consider the occup-

ational structure of Yaoundé. The essential characteristic of the town is its lack of an industrial base. Apart from a brewery, cigarette factory, woodworks, construction and repair firms, Yaoundé has little in the way of manufacturing industries. It is essentially an administrative and commercial town. In 1969, a third of active adult males were in the public sector, a fifth in "modern commerce and transport"³ and only 15 percent were employed in industry (Service de la Statistique 1970:49). The predominance of the tertiary sector well illustrates the character of Yaoundé as a parasitic town dependent on the surplus wealth created by others, for example, the cocoa producers of the Centre-South.

2. No recent data exist on which a reliable analysis of primary school enrolment could be based. The first national census took place in 1976, but the results are not yet available. The data for this survey were collected in 1975-6; the most recent comprehensive demographic data for the population of Yaoundé were collected in 1964, though some data are available for 1969. One of the assumptions on which this study is based is that it would be difficult or impossible to relate data collected in the schools to the total population of Yaoundé, either at the level of children of school-going age (which would yield information concerning enrolment ratios at different ages, between the sexes, ethnic groups, etc.) or for the adult population (which would make it possible to discuss enrolment selectivity in terms of family background).

The validity of this study depends in part on the general level of enrolment of children of primary school age. The reason for this was discussed in Chapter I. The 1964 study of Yaoundé shows high enrolment ratios for both boys and girls. For 6 to

14 year old boys the enrolment ratio was nearly 97 percent, ranging from 90 percent for 6 year olds to 99 percent for 11 year olds. The average for girls was 92 percent, ranging from 86 percent for 14 year olds to 98 percent for 11 year olds. The average for both sexes was 94 percent (SEDES 1967:62). We do not have figures of enrolment by family background, but the ethnic breakdown was as follows:

TABLE IV:1 ENROLMENT OF 6-14 YEAR OLDS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group	Boys	Girls	Total
Ewondo	97	95	96
Eton	98	99	99
Bané	96	96	96
Other Béti-Fang	99	95	97
Bamiléké	97	94	95
Bassa	95	93	94
Hausa	89	71	81
Other	96	86	92
Total	97	92	94

Source: SEDES 1967:63

The "Hausa" figures are significantly lower than those for other ethnic groups, but even so their average of 81 percent seems too high, a conclusion which the authors themselves reach. Even allowing for the possible inflation of enrolment rates, they seem high enough for an analysis of performance to be possible independent of the question of pre-selection by ability/background. Even if there is a degree of pre-selection, it will serve to reinforce rather than invalidate any significant relationships which might emerge between family background and school performance.

The expansion of primary school enrolment in Yaoundé reflects the high rate of in-migration: between 1964 and 1969 enrolment of 6 to 14 year olds increased by an average of over 9 percent a year (Direction de la Statistique 1970:45). In the school year 1975-6 there were over 58,000 pupils attending primary schools in Yaoundé, an increase of nearly 9 percent over the previous

year (Ministry of Education figures, unpublished). Over three-fifths of these pupils were in government schools and over a third in Catholic mission schools.

All but one of these schools were included in the 1975 survey, the exception being a school for English-speaking pupils in which the francophone exams were not taken. The sample covered 54 schools, including a number of government schools using the same buildings on a shift basis, and known as group 1, group 2, etc. Ten schools were peripheral in that they were outside the physical limits of Yaoundé though not outside its administrative jurisdiction. In all, 50,473 pupils attended the 54 schools in the sample, of whom 6,991 were in Class 6 (CM2). These pupils were in 129 classes, 65 of which were sampled, giving a total of 3,197 respondents. Thus, all the schools, half the classes and 46 percent of the Class 6 pupils were sampled.

As well as filling in questionnaires, all sampled pupils were given multiple choice tests in French and Arithmetic. Unfortunately, evidence of collusion between teachers and pupils in some schools made it necessary to eliminate the test results in certain classes. Consequently, 71 percent of test results were retained for analysis.

At the end of the school year, the results of the CEPE were collected for the sample, as well as the results of the more important CE (concours d'entrée en sixième). At the beginning of the following school year (1975-76), all Yaoundé secondary schools were contacted in order to trace those pupils who had found places. Thirty percent of the primary sample were found in secondary schools of one kind or another.

In all, ten indices of performance were used⁴. Over forty items of information were collected concerning background factors likely to affect performance. These ranged from age, sex, birth-

place and migration history to family background (number of siblings, education and occupation of parents) and the cultural and physical milieu in which pupils live (size of household, work obligations, languages spoken at home, encouragement and help with school work, etc.).

The interrelations between independent variables are necessarily complex, and it will be one of the main tasks in what follows to isolate the most important explanatory factors and show the relations between them. The criterion governing the relevance of any particular factor must therefore be: to what extent does it help explain observed variations in performance? The rest of this section outlines the major characteristics of the sampled pupils as a preliminary step to the detailed discussion of performance which is the subject of the next section. That each background factor is discussed equally should not be taken to mean that they are of equal importance in determining performance levels, or that they should all be considered as independent variables, directly influencing (strongly or weakly) performance levels. What is interesting for our purposes is the pattern of interrelationships between factors as well as the relative importance of each one in relation to performance. This will be the subject of the following section and Chapter V. For the moment we are simply outlining the major characteristics of the sample.

Birthplace and Migration

Most of the inhabitants of Yaoundé are migrants, and this is also the case with Class 6 pupils, only 38 percent of whom were born in Yaoundé. Almost as many (34 percent) were born in villages, and the remainder in other towns.⁵

The proportion of sample pupils who were migrants is close

- International boundary
- Province boundary
- Divisional boundary
- District boundary
- Sub-divisional boundary
- District boundary
- State Capital
- State Capital
- Chief town of Province
- Chief town of Province
- Chief town of Département (Prefecture)
- Chief town of Division (Prefecture)
- Chief town of Arrond. (Sous-Prefecture)
- Chief town of Subdiv. (Sub-Prefecture)
- Chief town of District
- Chief town of District
- Nom de Département
- Name of Division

REPUBLIQUE UNIE DU CAMEROUN		UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON	
PROVINCE DU CENTRE-SUD	115 000	PROVINCE DE L'EST	108 000
CENTRE-SOUTH PROVINCE		EAST PROVINCE	
DIA ET LOBO	19 910	BOUMA ET NGOKO	30 620
KEM	17 900	KADEY	15 910
LEKE	5 990	LOMA ET BEM	28 320
MEAN	33 020	HAUT NYONG	30 040
MEYOU	4 770		
NTEN	18 000		
NYONG ET KELLE	6 260		
NYONG ET MOUMOU	2 170		
NYONG ET SO	1 580		
HAUTE SANAGA	11 850		
		PROVINCE DU NORD	184 050
		NORTH PROVINCE	
		ADAMAOUA	63 700
		BEYOU	66 090
		DIAMARE	9 700
		LOGONE ET CHARI	12 130
		MAROU WANDALA	7 130
		MAYO DANI	2 300
		PROVINCE DU NORD-OUEST	17 300
		NORTH-WEST PROVINCE	
		YAKO	2 060
		MAHTU	10 180
		MEME	6 610
		NDIAN	8 160
		PROVINCE DE L'OUEST	13 800
		WEST PROVINCE	
		SAMBOUOS	1 170
		BAMOUN	7 690
		MEYOU	1 380
		MEY	1 170
		NDE	1 520
		HAUT NYKAM	860
		PROVINCE DU SUD-OUEST	24 810
		SOUTH-WEST PROVINCE	
		AKO	2 060
		BIU	4 280
		DONGA MANTUNG	6 080
		MENCHIM	2 870
		MEZAM	1 790
		NDONG	1 790

L'orthographe des unités administratives est conforme au décret N° 72.349 du 24.7.72.
 The spelling used for administrative units is in accordance with décret N° 72349 of 24.7.72.

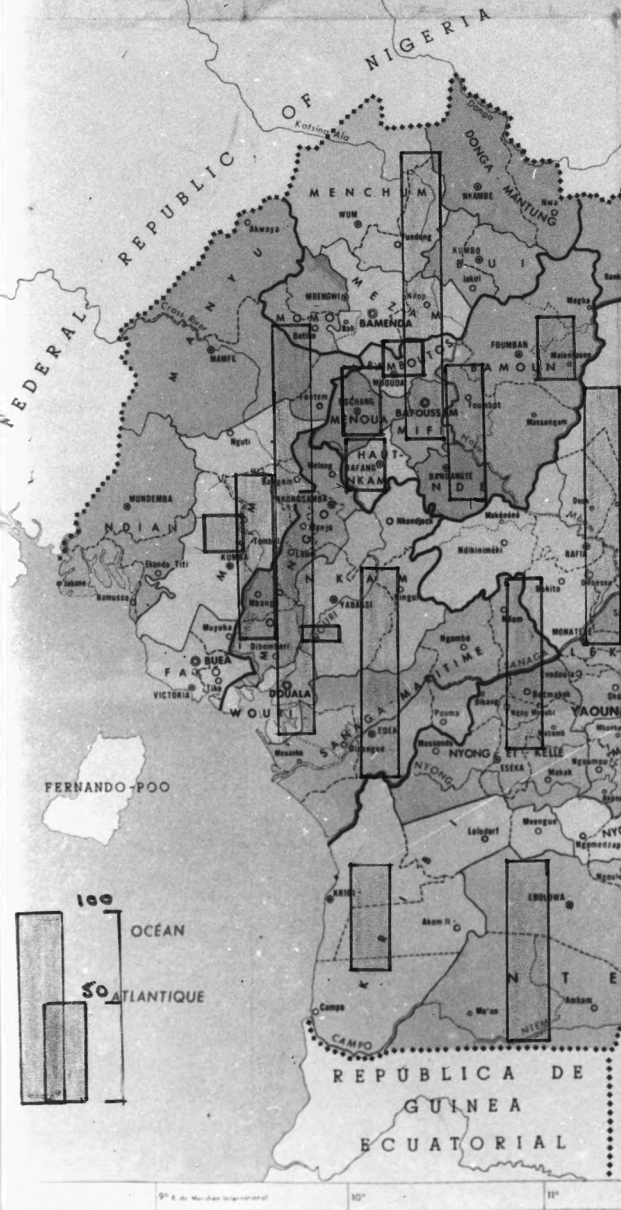
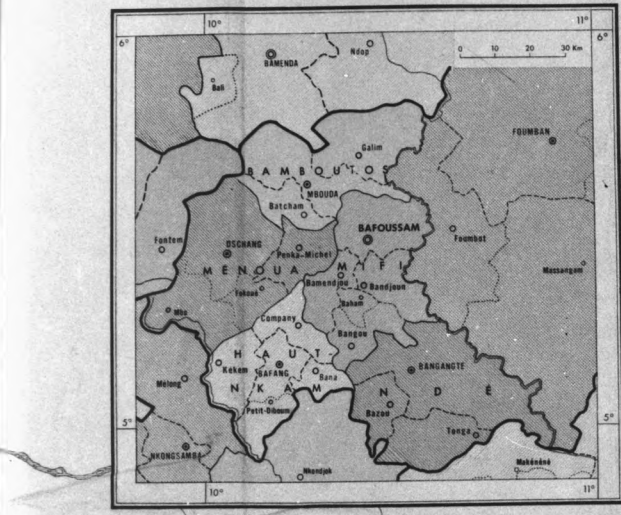
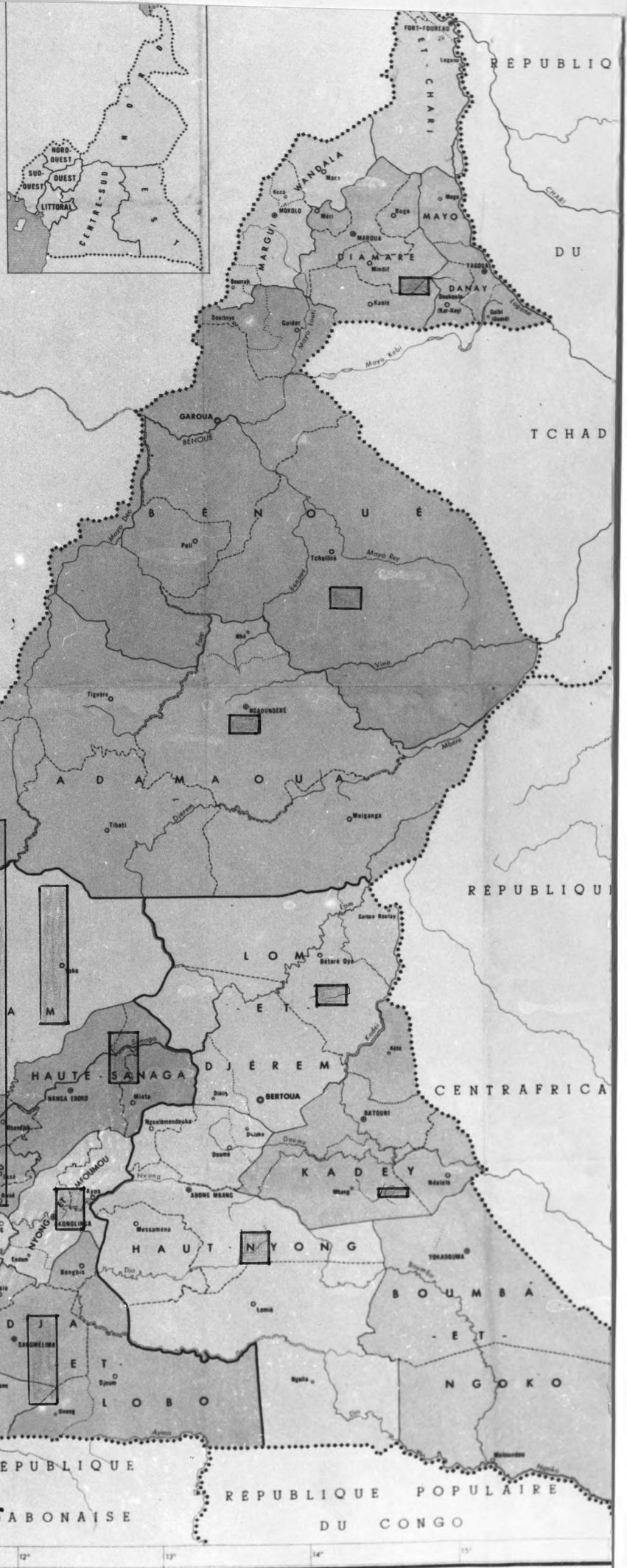


FIGURE II: BIRTHPLACE OF MIGRANTS IN CLASS 6 SAMPLE

to the figure given for migrants in the total population (62 vs 66 percent). Also, step migration is more common than direct movement from birthplace to Yaoundé. Nearly three-fifths of migrants from both towns and villages arrived in Yaoundé by an indirect route. Of the latter, 45 percent had lived in one other place before arriving in Yaoundé, 27 percent in two other places, and 28 percent in three or more.

Figure II shows the departmental origins of migrants. As with the total population, over half the migrants in the sample are from the Centre-South and over a fifth from the Littoral. A fifth are from the Western Province (cf 13 percent of all migrants) and only 4 percent are from the Eastern and Northern Provinces combined.⁶

Nearly as many migrants were from large towns as from all other urban areas. Of those born in large towns, approximately three-quarters were from the three largest (excluding Yaoundé): Douala, Bafoussam and Nkongsamba. Migrants from large towns do not seem to be overrepresented in the sample, however, for the combined population of southern towns with over 30,000 inhabitants exceeds that of all other urban centres combined. But the step migration mentioned above will mean that many pupils born in villages or small towns actually arrive in Yaoundé from other large urban centres. Thus, previous urban experience will be higher than birthplace might indicate. Also, many children with parents living in town will have been born in villages, especially when, as in the case of Yaoundé, parental villages are within easy reach of the town. (This may also lead to the reverse happening, for example, where there are no medical facilities available locally).

Well over two-fifths of those born in villages came from the

three departments surrounding Yaoundé: Mefou, Lékié and Nyong & Soo. High population densities and the proximity of Yaoundé make the town a natural centre for migrants. Marguerat (1973) shows how Yaoundé dominates migratory movements between the Nyong and the Sanaga (see Map I) at the expense of such smaller regional centres as Obala, Mbalmayo and Eseka.

At the outset, birthplace would seem to be a difficult factor to relate to performance levels, given the complex interrelationships between it, migration patterns and length of exposure to urban life. Only a quarter of all migrants can be said to have grown up in Yaoundé, and at least half had some primary schooling before arriving.⁷ It seems that where a child grew up is more important than where he or she was born. In the next section, an attempt will be made to separate these two factors for the discussion of performance variations.

Ethnicity

There are more Ewondo and Bamiléké pupils in the Class 6 sample than in the total population of Yaoundé, but this might simply reflect the age of the total population data. Alternatively, the Bamiléké figure may well reflect above-average migration levels for this group in the recent past.⁸ The disparity in the Ewondo figure may be partly the result of certain Bané and other Bétifang pupils calling themselves Ewondo rather than completing the "other" option on the questionnaire.

TABLE IV:2 ETHNIC ORIGINS OF SAMPLE STUDENTS (PERCENT)

Fathers' Ethnic Group	Percent
Ewondo	28
Bamiléké	25
Bassa	11
Eton	8
Bafia-Yambassa	6
Boulou	5
Other	18
Total	100
N	3,197

Two-fifths of pupils born in Yaoundé were Ewondo and another quarter Bamiléké.⁹ Of the main ethnic groups in Yaoundé, only the "Hausa" were underenrolled in primary schools. In the Class 6 sample, all northern ethnic groups plus the Bamoun, who might also have below average enrolment levels, accounted for only 3 percent of all pupils. For all other groups, we can discount the possibility of pre-selection by ethnic origins.

Occupational Background

TABLE IV:3 OCCUPATION OF SAMPLE STUDENTS' FATHERS (PERCENT)

Fathers' Occupation	Percent
Professional, administrative	16
Other white-collar	26
Large trader	3
Small trader	12
Skilled manual worker	11
Semi-skilled manual worker	12
Unskilled manual worker	3
Large farmer	11
Small farmer	6
Total	100
N	2723

This classification does not distinguish between public and private employment, although most of the white-collar employees (first two categories) will be in the public sector.¹⁰ "Other white-collar" includes all the lower ranks of the armed forces, police and gendarmerie. The large-small trader dichotomy was based on the details of the answer given by pupils to the fathers' occupation question. Performance data seem to indicate that the dichotomy is a fair one, although there is no reason for not including a "medium" category. The same is true for farmers, but in their case the dichotomy was based on the pupils' own estimation of their fathers' standing. This was done because "grand planteur" and "petit planteur" (or "cultivateur") are categories which are used popularly, and can thus be considered as having subjective meaning. Again, the validity of this decision seems

to have been borne out by the results obtained.

As we would expect, most of the children of farmers are migrants, and most of these (two-thirds) were born in villages. But four-fifths of all migrants were children whose fathers had urban occupations, as did nearly two-thirds of those born in villages. Thus, birthplace and fathers' occupation are closely related for farmers' children, but much less so for children whose fathers had urban occupations. The importance of this will be investigated in the following section.

Most ethnic groups were more or less proportionately represented in each occupational category, with one major exception. This was the Bamiléké semi-monopoly of trading. Two-thirds of large and three-quarters of small traders were Bamiléké. Other examples of ethnic over- or underrepresentation will be mentioned in due course.

The major covariant of fathers' occupation was their education; secondary education was the monopoly of the first three groups in the above table. The relationship between fathers' (and mothers') occupation and education and their combined or independent effects on performance will be studied in detail in Chapter V.

Sex

We may conclude this section by looking briefly at the sex and age composition of the sample. In the last chapter it was indicated that enrolment levels are generally lower for girls than for boys, but that these differences were insignificant in the south—particularly in the Centre-South—and in urban areas. The 1964 study gave primary enrolment levels in Yaoundé of over 90 percent for both girls and boys, but we did not expect to find significantly more girls than boys in the sample. In fact, over 54 percent of the sample were girls. The chances of a sampling

error are low, given that less than 15 percent of schools are single sex. Schools with only one Class 6 are slightly over-represented in the sample, and one of these was a girls' school. But if we eliminate this class, the proportion of girls in the sample falls by only 0.7 percent. There is little doubt, therefore, that the overrepresentation of girls in the sample is also found in the total population.

Both demographic and socio-scholastic factors might account for this. The SEDES study (1964:55) gives a sex ratio for the Yaoundé population as a whole of 103.2, but for those under 24 years of age males outnumber females only in the 10-14 age group. This was over ten years ago, and in the meantime it would seem that female migration has continued at an above-average rate. Official statistics indicate that in 1970 there were more 11 and 12 year old girls than boys in Yaoundé primary schools (Direction de la Statistique 1970:45).

It is difficult to imagine what sociological forces could be at work to bring about higher enrolment levels and/or lower dropout rates for girls than for boys. But the data lead us to conclude that there are no special disadvantages attached to being a girl which could affect enrolment or dropout rates. This is a measure of the maturity of enrolment patterns in Yaoundé. It will be shown shortly, however, that very significant differences appear between the sexes when it comes to exam performance.

Age

Sex is unrelated to all important background variables: occupational background, birthplace, ethnicity and migration patterns. But the same is not true for age, the other major intervening variable in relation to exam performance. Thirty-one percent of the sample were between 10 and 12 years of age, 24

percent were thirteen, 21 percent were fourteen and 24 percent were 15 or over. Girls were slightly older than boys, but differences were not enough to "explain" the performance inequalities to be discussed below. There were significant correlations between age and birthplace, age and ethnicity and (particularly) age and fathers' occupation. Age is related to the CE in a number of different ways, only one of which has been mentioned so far. Because of its importance as an intervening variable, the detailed discussion of age variations may be conveniently put off until the next section, in which it will be discussed in relation to the major background factors and CE entry and performance.

3. In the urban context, enrolment is replaced by performance as the main educational arbiter of life chances. At the same time, class replaces birthplace and ethnicity as the main independent variable. We would not expect to find significant performance variations between children from different ethnic groups in the Yaoundé sample, because (a) the major ethnic groups represented in Yaoundé are all from the south and west and have similar levels of involvement in cash crop agriculture and modern sector employment; (b) consequently, the occupational background profiles of children from different ethnic groups are quite similar; and (c) ethnic enrolment levels are uniformly high for all major groups.

The significance of the urban-rural factor also changes. In Chapter VI something will be said concerning the CE performance of children from both urban and rural schools. In the present chapter we are only concerned with performance in the urban context, so that the rural dimension is only relevant to the extent that a third of sample students were born in villages.

Migration patterns have been shown to mitigate the putative disadvantages attached to rural birth, so that we would predict, as with ethnicity, weak association between birthplace and performance. This section is divided into two main parts. The first part discusses the factors determining who takes as opposed to who passes the CE. The second part is concerned with CE performance; at the end of the chapter the CEPE and TAS results are briefly discussed.

Who Takes the Common Entrance?

It has already been pointed out that no pupil over 15 years of age is allowed to sit the CE. This automatically eliminated nearly a quarter of sample students of both sexes. Our first task, therefore, will be to identify these older pupils.

TABLE IV:4 PERCENTAGE OF 15 YEAR OLDS BY FATHERS' OCCUPATION, BIRTHPLACE AND ETHNICITY

<u>Fathers' occupation</u>	Percent	N
Elite	8	447
Other white collar	16	708
Large trader	15	75
Small trader	21	313
Skilled manual	34	294
Semi-skilled manual	30	312
Unskilled manual	34	71
Large farmer	39	347
Small farmer	44	151
Total	24	2,718
<u>Birthplace</u>		
Yaoundé	18	1,196
Town over 30,000	15	405
Smaller town	25	495
Village	32	1,088
Total	24	3,184
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
Ewondo	30	880
Bamiléké	20	806
Bassa	21	339
Eton	25	260
Bafia-Yambassa	30	182
Boulou	15	152
Other	18	163
Total	24	2,872

The percentages above represent the proportion of students in each group whose age prevented them from taking the CE. These proportions are below average among children from white-collar and trading backgrounds and for those born in Yaoundé and other large towns, and above average for those from manual and farming backgrounds and those born in small towns and villages. Of the two major ethnic groups, the Ewondo students are significantly older than the Bamiléké. Age selectivity was lowest in relation to ethnicity, highest in relation to fathers' occupation.

As we might expect, there is considerable interaction between the independent variables. For example, three-quarters of those born in towns with populations of over 30,000 were from non-manual and non-farming backgrounds (sample average 57 percent). Likewise, 62 percent of those born in villages were from farming and manual backgrounds (sample average 43 percent).

Similarly, ethnicity reflects fathers' occupation. For example, 50 percent of Ewondo pupils were from manual and farming backgrounds but only 38 percent of Bamiléké. Thus, the distribution of 15 year olds by birthplace and ethnicity partly reflects occupational background.

The table shows that the CE age limit is an extremely important selection mechanism. Between a third and two-fifths of pupils from manual and farming backgrounds are automatically eliminated from the competition for secondary school places, compared with a fifth or less of other children.

We would expect age in Class 6 to reflect starting age in Class 1 and the number of classes repeated, and these two factors to reflect occupational background. Half the sample started school at 4 or 5 years of age, but this was true for only 37 percent of farmers' children compared with 62 percent of those from élite

backgrounds. Birthplace was more weakly correlated with starting age: 57 percent of those born in Yaoundé started school at 4-5 years of age compared with 44 percent of the village-born.

As regards repeating, one fifth of the sample had never repeated a class, varying from 38 percent of élite children to between 12 and 19 percent of all others. Only one fifth of élite children had repeated two or more classes compared with over two-fifths of children from manual and farming backgrounds. After children from white-collar backgrounds it was small farmers' children who had the highest percentage of non-repeaters, but the three groups with the highest proportions of late starters—unskilled workers and the two farming groups—also had the highest proportions of children who had repeated two or more classes.

Thus, children from white-collar backgrounds are much younger than other children, particularly those of farmers and manual workers, when they arrive in Class 6.¹¹

We may now consider age in relation to pass-marks and pass-rates among those who took the CE. In fact, only two-thirds of those young enough to take the CE actually sat the exam, which means that half the sample failed to compete for secondary school places. Self-elimination is related to age and occupational background:

TABLE IV:5 PERCENT OF STUDENTS TAKING CE BY AGE AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND^a

Fathers' Occupation	Age			Total
	10-12	13	14	
Elite	80 (263)	72 (98)	42 (50)	73 (411)
Other white-collar	76 (254)	64 (188)	49 (152)	65 (596)
Large trader	86 (35)	77 (13)	44 (16)	73 (64)
Small trader	79 (82)	71 (86)	52 (79)	68 (247)
Skilled manual	78 (56)	59 (75)	43 (62)	59 (193)
Semi-skilled manual	74 (67)	52 (73)	45 (79)	57 (219)
Unskilled manual	78 (14)	67 (15)	33 (18)	57 (47)
Large farmer	63 (63)	62 (77)	47 (70)	58 (210)
Small farmer	54 (35)	55 (18)	52 (31)	53 (84)
Total	76 (869)	64 (643)	47 (557)	64 (2069)

^a Numbers in parenthesis are bases on which percentages are calculated.

Overall, it is children from white-collar and trading backgrounds who have above-average rates of taking the CE, and children from manual and farming backgrounds who have below-average rates. But there are interesting variations between age groups. For example, élite children have the equal highest take-rate overall, but the second lowest for 14 year olds. This seems to indicate that these older children are of below-average ability and are generally recognised as such by parents and teachers. They have been unable to capitalise on the advantages conferred on them by background, and have probably failed the CE at one or more previous attempts. By contrast, there is little difference between the take-rates of children from small farming backgrounds in the three age groups. Moreover, the 10-12 year olds in this group have the lowest take-rate and the 14 year olds the equal highest. This seems to indicate that younger pupils from this background consider themselves, and are generally considered, to have little chance of passing the CE.¹² The older pupils, on the other hand, are not thought of as having even lower chances, as we might have expected from the pattern elsewhere. This seems to indicate that children in this age group are not of below-average ability, but are simply late starters who reach Class 6 later than children from other occupational backgrounds. These points are corroborated by the age at which children said they started primary school (see p.122).

The question of self-elimination from the competition for secondary school places is an important one, for if it reflects family background this could be taken as evidence of the existence of class subcultures, as discussed in Chapter I. This argument only holds for the children of urban occupational groups, however, for there is strong evidence in the case of farmers' children

that many of them have been preselected on the basis of shown ability, particularly in the older age groups, and are thus not strictly comparable with non-selected children from urban occupational backgrounds.

But even among the latter comparisons are difficult to make, particularly in respect of older potential candidates. Age of arrival in Class 6 and performance in the CE both reflect occupational background. Thus, a 14 year old from a white-collar background is likely to have failed the CE on one or more previous occasions, whereas a 14 year old from a manual background may well be taking the CE for the first time. In other words, the decision to take or not to take the CE does not reflect a similar level of ability and past performance in both cases.

The same is true to a lesser extent among younger pupils, and in fact there is little variation between the take-rates of children from different urban occupational backgrounds. The distinction to be made here is between urban and rural backgrounds, for if it is true that farmers' children are selected because of shown ability, it is difficult to understand why so few of the younger farmers' children take the CE.

Before looking at performance levels in the CE, we may briefly summarise the combined effect of the age limit and self-elimination on take-rates. Together, they eliminate half the sample. This varies from two-thirds of farmers' children to three-fifths of manual workers' children and between a third and a half of those from white-collar and trading backgrounds. We might ask what difference these variations are likely to make to a study of performance which relies for its validity on high enrolment levels, and, by extension, high rates of taking the CE. Again, the answer seems to be that any social background

effect on performance is likely to be understated, because the lower take-rates are among pupils from manual and farming backgrounds, which we do not expect to confer educational privileges. We may now turn to the performance data.

Who Passes the Common Entrance?

The following table summarises CE performance levels in relation to our three main independent variables:

TABLE IV:6 CE PASS RATES BY OCCUPATIONAL AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS AND BIRTHPLACE (PERCENT)

<u>Fathers' Occupation</u>	Pass Rate	N
Elite	34	301
Other white-collar	18	390
Large trader	28	47
Small trader	19	168
Skilled manual	16	115
Semi-skilled manual	12	127
Unskilled manual	0	28
Large farmer	15	123
Small farmer	22	46
Total	21	1,345
<u>Birthplace</u>		
Yaoundé	21	664
Town over 30,000	26	236
Smaller town	20	189
Village	17	433
Total	21	1,568
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
Bamiléké	23	452
Bafia-Yambassa	20	85
Bassa	19	183
Boulou	19	74
Ewondo	18	377
Eton	16	113
Other	24	88
Total	21	1,372

Again, the range of pass-rates is much greater for fathers' occupation than for the other two variables. Children from white-collar and trading backgrounds have better pass-rates than those from manual and farming backgrounds, with the exception of the children of small farmers, who have a better pass-rate than all other groups except the children of the élite and large traders. Small farmers' children have by far the

highest level of self-elimination (see Table IV:5), and this may be reflected in their pass-rate, which was significantly higher than the 12 percent average for children from manual backgrounds, although it was only average for the sample as a whole.

The self-selection argument does not hold good in reverse: élite and large traders' children had both the lowest rates of self-elimination and the highest pass-rates. It seems, therefore, that pre-selection by ability is a characteristic of farmers' children only, which means that the performance of the latter is not strictly comparable with that of children from urban occupational groups.

In order to pursue the question of performance variations further, it is necessary to say something about the CE exam itself. We may then take up the discussion again by reintroducing age and sex, and by introducing a third variable, Class 6 repeat rates.

The criterion of performance used in Table IV:6 was success or failure in the CE, but this is not a very efficient criterion. Firstly, the exam is a "concours", which means that success and failure depend more on the number of secondary places available in the state system than on actual marks received. Secondly, the exam is taken for entry into a particular school, which means that higher marks are required to enter the more prestigious schools and in the most competitive areas. The importance of this second point will become more obvious in the discussion of secondary school entry in the Centre-South Province as a whole. Thirdly, in some schools a system which discriminates against older candidates is employed. For example, in the largest and most prestigious state secondary school in Yaoundé successful 13 and 14 year old candidates had a minimum pass mark 4 percent above that of younger candidates. This may not appear to be a very

appreciable difference, but its importance will become evident in the following discussion of candidates' age in relation to social background.

Fourthly, the exam consists of papers in French and Maths, each of which counts for 50 percent of total marks. This does not mean that the two papers are of equal importance in determining who passes, however, for it is easier for a student who is strong in Maths to obtain a high score than it is for a student who is strong in French. As total scores in the CE are calculated by adding raw scores on the two papers, this means that good Maths students are more likely to pass than good French students. This fact helps explain the relatively poor pass-rate of girl candidates, for boys are stronger than girls on the Maths paper.

These four characteristics of the CE reduce its value as an objective measure of performance ; but as was the case with the age limit discussed above, they serve to magnify the social selection dimension of the exam. This will be demonstrated by statistical manipulation of the CE results and by comparing them with CEPE and TAS results. The important point to be borne in mind is that CE marks are a relatively poor index of absolute performance, but a good index of social background.

Social Background, Age and Pass-Rates

Age is closely correlated with exam results. Thus, 10-12 year olds had a 27 percent pass-rate in the CE compared with 15 percent for 13-14 year olds. These figures probably understate the "real" difference between age groups, because there are more Class 6 repeaters among older candidates, and repeating is positively associated with pass-rates. On the other hand, it has just been pointed out that younger candidates are sometimes favoured by

the differential pass-mark system used for entry into certain schools. In the Yaoundé case, this system was in use in the school which accounted for well over half the first year places in state secondary schools in the town.

But differential pass-marks account for only a part of the correlation between age and CE pass-rates. Much more important is the relationship between age and occupational background. To begin with, younger candidates are disproportionately concentrated in the higher occupational backgrounds. Thus, 61 percent of 10-12 year old and only 37 percent of 14 year old candidates are from white-collar backgrounds. Conversely, a third of all candidates come from manual and farming backgrounds, ranging from a quarter of 10-12 year olds to 45 percent of 14 year olds.

The corrolary of the above is that the age distribution of candidates varies with occupational background:

TABLE IV:7 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CANDIDATES BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND (PERCENT)

Fathers' Occupation	Age			Total	N
	10-12	13	14		
Elite	70	23	7	100	301
Other white-collar	50	31	19	100	389
Large trader	64	21	15	100	47
Small trader	39	36	25	100	167
Skilled manual	38	38	24	100	115
Semi-skilled manual	40	31	29	100	124
Unskilled manual	41	37	22	100	27
Large farmer	33	40	27	100	121
Small farmer	42	22	36	100	45
Total	50	30	20	100	1,335

Childre from the first three occupational backgrounds are clearly much younger than the others. This reflects differences in starting age and repeat rates, which vary with social background, as indicated above. A child starting Class 1 at 6 years

that younger candidates from manual and farming backgrounds are more able than those from the higher groups, for it will be more difficult for the former pupils to reach Class 6 without repeating a class. This would seem to hold true for small farmers' children, who have the third best pass-rate for 10-12 year olds, but not for those from the other farming and manual backgrounds, among whom only the children of skilled manual workers have a reasonable pass-rate.

The young children of élite fathers have a pass-rate fully 12 percent better than the second group, the children of large traders. At the opposite extreme, none of the 27 children from unskilled manual backgrounds managed to pass, despite a high rate of self-elimination in this group. This is an important finding, because it suggests that lowly urban social origins are a greater handicap than rural origins from the point of view of educational performance, as Hurd and Johnson (1967) maintain. But we should be careful not to jump to over-hasty conclusions, for it has already been established that self-selection by ability seems to characterise many farmers' children who come to town to further their schooling. It is legitimate, however, to compare the poor performance of unskilled workers' children (and, to a lesser extent, those of semi-skilled workers) with that of candidates from other urban occupational backgrounds. From this perspective, it is clear that children from lower manual backgrounds cannot compete with other urban children, particularly those from élite and large trading backgrounds.

As regards older candidates, it is significant that the 14 year olds from the élite and large trading groups have pass-rates as poor as the older candidates from semi- and unskilled manual backgrounds. This confirms our suspicion that older candidates

of age and not repeating a single class will arrive in Class 6 when 12 years old. Thus, a 14 year old in Class 6 must have started school a year or two late, and/or repeated one or two classes. We have already seen that a quarter of Class 6 pupils are even further behind than this, which effectively eliminates them from the state system. These older pupils are primarily from lower occupational backgrounds, and probably of below-average ability (see TAS data p.162). We cannot assume that the 14 year olds in the above table are less able than the 13 year olds, however, for the two groups have identical pass-rates. This point will be developed shortly. For the moment, we may conclude that: (a) the differential pass-mark system favours children from the top three occupational groups, who are on average younger than other children, and (b) the relationship between age and pass-rates is primarily a function of occupational background. We may now investigate the relationship between age, occupational background and pass-rates.

TABLE IV:8 PASS-RATES BY AGE AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND (PERCENT)

Fathers' Occupation	Age			Total
	10-12	13	14	
Elite	42(211)	17(69)	9(19)	34(301)
Other white-collar	21(193)	12(120)	19(75)	18(388)
Large trader	30(30)	30(10)	0(7)	28(47)
Small trader	18(65)	21(61)	17(41)	19(167)
Skilled manual	23(44)	11(44)	11(27)	16(115)
Semi-skilled manual	14(50)	13(38)	8(36)	12(124)
Unskilled manual	0(11)	0(10)	0(6)	0(27)
Large farmer	12(40)	17(48)	18(33)	15(167)
Small farmer	26(19)	10(10)	19(25)	22(45)
Total	27(663)	15(410)	15(262)	21(1335)

We assume that the 10-12 year old candidates are of comparable ability ranges for all occupational backgrounds. But it is possible

from the higher occupational backgrounds are of distinctly low ability. It is also interesting to note the above-average performance of farmers' children in the 14 year old category, which shows that for them low ability is not invariably associated with above-average age. Overall, there is less variation in the pass-rates of older candidates, which suggests that ability is differentially associated with age in relation to social background. This is more evident among 14 than among 13 year olds, as the range of pass-rates demonstrates. In the case of large farmers' children, 14 year old candidates have a higher pass-rate than 10-12 year olds, despite the discriminatory pass-mark favouring younger candidates. We would suspect, however, that older farmers' children have above-average repeat-rates, which might help explain at least part of this atypical performance pattern (see below pp.178-84).

The most important fact to emerge from the data is the dominant position of the younger candidates from élite backgrounds, who represent 16 percent of all candidates but no less than 31 percent of passes. Differential pass-marks can explain only a small part of the educational dominance of these children: material and cultural advantages associated with the home environment are much more important, as will be shown in the next chapter.

To eliminate the effect of age discrimination and the other arbitrary aspects of the CE, the results of the two papers were reduced to standard scores and a new set of "ideal" performance figures was calculated. It was found that the children from white-collar backgrounds had a comparative advantage in the French paper, and those from trading backgrounds in the Maths paper. This is the first indication that language is an important vehicle of

educational privilege, as Bernstein (1960) has shown in the British case. The advantage of traders' children in the Maths paper corresponds to a popular local feeling, namely that the Bamiléké (who make up the majority of traders) are particularly good at figures. Traders the world over are necessarily numerate, and it is not surprising that their numeracy is communicated to their children, many of whom will become traders out of the same necessity that makes traders out of Jews, Ibos, Chinese and Lebanese alike.

The differences which the standardised results would make to pass-rates are as follows: children from white-collar backgrounds would be reduced from 63 percent of all passes to 58, traders' children would remain unchanged (16 percent), and manual workers' and farmers' children would improve from 22 to 26 percent of total passes. In other words, the introduction of a "fairer" exam would do little to reduce educational inequalities based on social background. In any case, this is a hypothetical point: a system which favours the already privileged is unlikely to be tampered with in the absence of strong popular pressure in favour of reform. For the moment, there is no pressure of this kind, for the objectivity of the CE is not generally questioned. The legitimacy of examinations is a function of their apparent objectivity, and it cannot be said that the defects of the CE mentioned above are transparently obvious. The power of examinations in class society is, in part, a reflection of the class content of curricula, which makes it possible to combine apparent fairness and objectivity with highly class-based selection. By Western standards, the age limit on CE entry might be considered "unfair", but it is not thought of in terms of social discrimination in Cameroun. In fact, the third Five Year Plan (1971-6)

envisaged a more rigorous elimination of older pupils from the primary system:

"... il sera donc nécessaire d'assainir (prune, rationalise) les effectifs de l'enseignement primaire par l'élimination systématique des élèves de moins de six ans et de plus de quatorze ans qui représentent onze pourcent de ces effectifs."(Ministère du Plan 1971:54)

Clearly, the target here is the older rather than the younger pupils. The education authorities are concerned to eliminate the many over-age pupils who clutter up the already overcrowded primary school classes, not to reduce social inequalities of educational opportunity.

Educational psychologists have demonstrated the relationship between age and the development of mental processes (Piaget 1970), but the above analysis suggests a stronger correlation of intellectual development with social background than with age. Put another way, whatever the overall relationship between age and mental development, it appears from the above analysis that social background is a very important intervening variable between the two. It may be that the CE tests only "immature" cognitive processes rather than those which might be more highly developed in 14 than in 12 year olds, for example, creativity and logical inference. This is the conclusion reached by Couvert in his analysis of the Cameroun CE of 1963:

"Il est alors aisé de présenter un diagnostic du niveau intellectuel des élèves recrutés ...: ce sont des élèves, maîtres de leurs mécanismes de base élémentaires (sic), très bien conditionnés au verbalisme scolaire, voire au psittacisme (rote learning), mais dont les capacités sont limitées sur le plan de la réflexion et de l'intelligence,

et particulièrement peu aptes à l'
invention créatrice." (Couvert 1964:26)

If this analysis is still applicable to the CE, we might conclude that an even more insidious form of class bias is dissimulated by the exam than that associated with direct age discrimination already mentioned above. We need not speculate as to the fortuitous nature of this (putative) bias, but instead turn to the sex dimension of CE performance, which also involves hidden bias.

Social Background, Sex and Pass-Rates

Sex is not comparable to age as regards its relationship with background factors. In the previous section it was shown that there are more girls than boys in the sample, and this is also true for CE candidates, 55 percent of whom were female. Furthermore, the two sexes have more or less identical profiles on all major background characteristic: parents' occupation and education, birthplace and ethnicity, and on a large number of other variables which reflect these characteristics.¹³ This was true for both the total sample and the candidates' subsample.

Thus, female candidates were not at a disadvantage in terms of background characteristics. Nevertheless, the pass-rate for boys was over 60 percent higher than for girls, suggesting that being female constitutes an independent educational disadvantage. In fact, the disadvantage of being a girl is a function of social background, as the following discussion will demonstrate.

Previous studies in the West have shown that girls usually outperform boys in primary school, and sometimes in secondary school as well (Entwistle & Wilson 1977, Macoby 1967, Frazier & Sadker 1973). In Britain, relative female underperformance is only apparent from "A" level onwards (New Society 17/3/77 anon.).

Girls tend to have an above-average dropout rate after primary school, and to opt for more "feminine" arts subjects at the higher level (Sharpe 1976).

In most African countries it is still enrolment inequalities at the primary level which characterise the educational gap between the sexes. This is not the case in the Centre-South Province, where both sexes have equally high enrolment levels in both urban and rural areas. Therefore, this is a further example of performance replacing enrolment as the major aspect of the selection process. In his Ugandan study, Heineman (1976) found that sex was the second most important determinant of performance variance in the first school leaving certificate. His data were from areas with varying enrolment levels; in the present case we might expect sex to have an even higher independent effect on performance, given the high proportion of girls among CE candidates.

Previous studies have shown that girls in secondary and higher education are generally from higher status backgrounds than boys (Clignet & Foster 1966, Foster 1965, O'Connell & Beckett 1975). We would expect girls from higher socio-economic backgrounds to constitute a higher proportion of successful female candidates than in the equivalent male case. This, rather than primary enrolment inequalities between the sexes, would serve to corroborate the above finding in the case of Yaoundé.

In fact, élite girls represent 44 percent of successful female candidates and élite boys 31 percent of successful male candidates. However, boys outperform girls for each occupational group, except in the case of unskilled manual workers' children (pass-rate zero for both sexes). What is of interest here are the variations between occupational groups as regards the gap

between male and female performance:

TABLE IV:9 CE PASS-RATES BY SEX AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	Male		Female		Male Female
	%	N	%	N	
Elite	37	(132)	31	(169)	1.19
Other white-collar	24	(179)	13	(211)	1.85
Large trader	28	(21)	27	(26)	1.04
Small trader	31	(62)	15	(106)	2.07
Skilled manual	20	(59)	11	(56)	1.82
Semi-skilled manual	13	(53)	11	(72)	1.18
Unskilled manual	0	(15)	0	(13)	0.00
Large farmer	26	(61)	5	(62)	5.20
Small farmer	39	(23)	4	(23)	9.00
Total	26	(606)	16	(738)	1.62

The largest gap is found among farmers' children, as the "sex ratio" in the last column demonstrates. By separating the sexes we find that boys from small farming backgrounds have the best pass-rate of the sample, and their female equivalents the worst (excluding the unskilled manual group). Thus, the average or below-average performance of farmers' children in general is really the combination of a set of very poor and very good results.¹⁴

Given that small farmers' sons outperform even élite candidates, it again seems more than likely that the former are selected by ability, both before arriving in town and when the decision to take the CE is made. It is not obvious, though, why farmers' daughters should not also be selected by ability. We can assume that the decision to send promising sons to town schools is made for cost-benefit reasons by farming parents, but this does not lead to more boys being sent than girls, as we might have expected. If parents look on education as an investment for the future, then we might expect them to concentrate on

the boys, given that there are more occupational openings for educated boys than girls. On the other hand, local folklore has it that farmers are extremely keen to educate their daughters, given the highly inflated levels of brideprice in general, and for educated girls in particular (Owono Mbia 1969).

We may briefly consider two possible solutions to the puzzle. Firstly, girls may be selected for lack of ability, but this seems highly unlikely. As shown above, there are sound cost-benefit reasons for wanting daughters as well as sons to succeed at school. Secondly, and more realistically, girls from rural/farming backgrounds suffer from unfavourable social and cultural conditions in their childhood of a more severe nature than those experienced by any other group of girls. We may test this indirectly by looking at the differentials between the pass-rates of boys and girls from other occupational backgrounds.

The last column in Table IV:9 is a measure of the boys' relative superiority in the CE. This column can be grouped into three categories of degrees of relative male advantage:

High: small farmers
large farmers

Intermediate:

small traders
other white-collar workers
skilled manual workers

Low: élite
semi-skilled workers
large traders
unskilled workers

There might seem to be no pattern to the above list, but one emerges among the urban occupational groups when we consider absolute and relative pass-rates at the same time. The low advantage group is composed of boys and girls with the two highest and the two lowest CE pass-rates. The intermediate group falls between these two extremes as regards pass-rates, but has higher

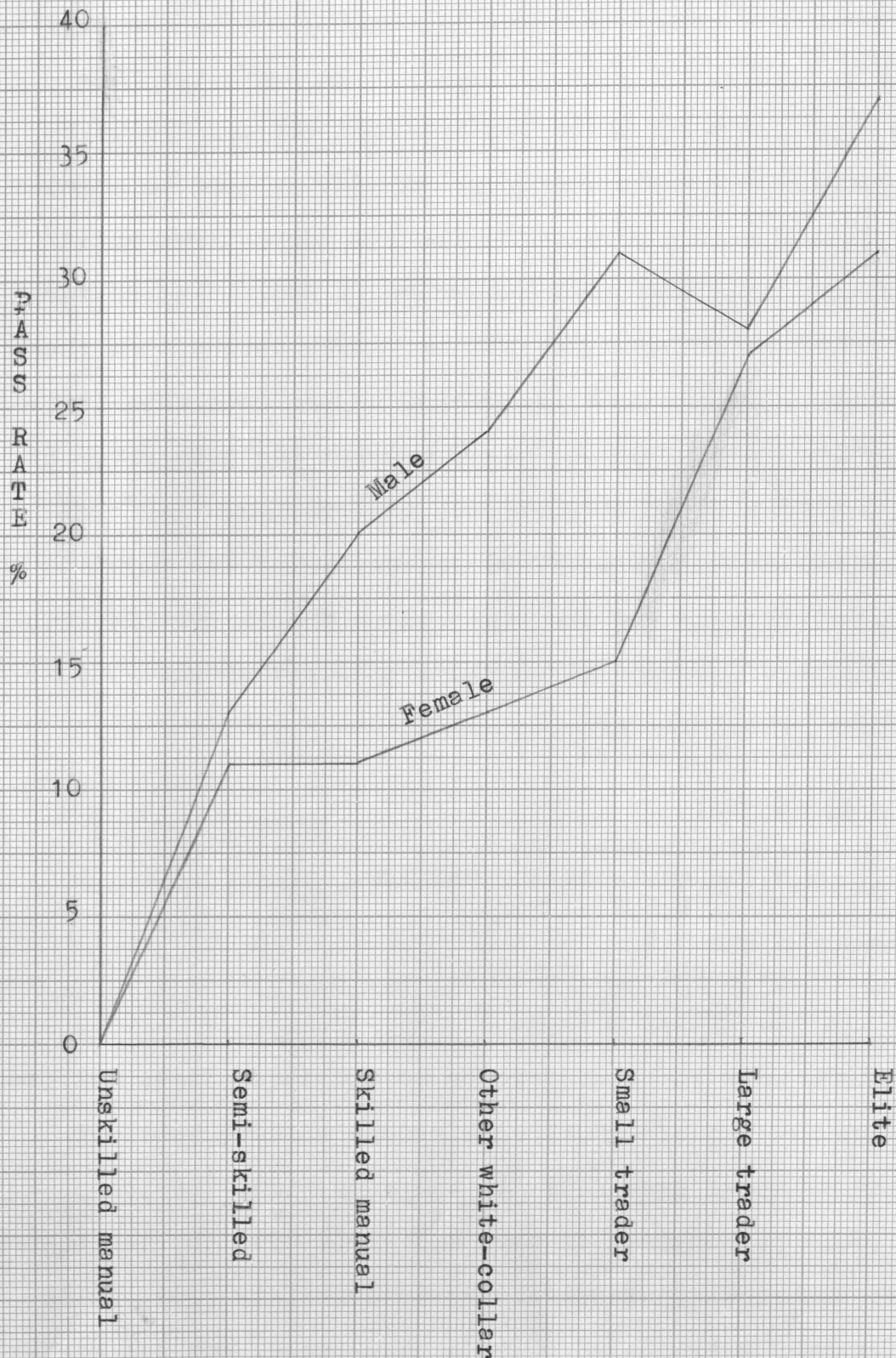


FIGURE III: CE PASS-RATES FOR MALES AND FEMALES FROM URBAN OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUNDS.

levels of male advantage than either of them. This is expressed graphically in Figure III.

Even in the urban context girls are relatively underprivileged, both socially and educationally, but occupational background affects the way in which this is manifested. At the bottom of the occupational ladder neither girls nor boys are educationally competitive: at this level the question of relative female performance is irrelevant. Higher up the social ladder, i.e. at the skilled manual, small trader and lower white-collar levels, better material and cultural conditions lead to better average pass-rates, but a distinct gap is apparent between the sexes, reflecting the general patterns of male dominance which characterise Camerounian —and most other— societies. At the élite and large trading level, high cultural and material standards serve to reduce the performance gap between the sexes, without eliminating it completely. It is clear that social advantage tends to overcome sexual disadvantage at this level: girls from élite and large trading backgrounds have higher pass-rates than boys from all other urban occupational backgrounds. Thus, the negative effect of being female is compensated by the positive effect of social background at the élite and large trading level. At the other extreme, lower class girls suffer from both being female and lower class, which makes their educational failure "over-determined", as it were.

In the village, sexual discrimination may be slightly higher than in town, but the combination of sexual and social handicaps is sufficient to eliminate all but a very few farmers' daughters from the competition for secondary school places. Overall, farmers' children studying in town represent only a small proportion of farmers' children in the total population.

Selection by shown ability explains the high performance of boys from this relatively disadvantaged background. Sexual discrimination explained why farmers' daughters are incapable of benefiting from selection by performance, assuming that there is a degree of this.

Having discussed age and sex separately in relation to occupational background, we may now briefly consider them together. In Table IV:8 it was shown that older candidates had lower pass-rates than younger ones, but this relationship disappears when sex is controlled. In fact, only the older girls underperform compared with 10-12 year olds; younger girls and boys of all ages have very similar pass-rates.¹⁵ We might hypothesise that older girls candidates will be more likely than the younger ones to come from manual or farming backgrounds, so that social background will explain the poor performance of older girls.

The data support this hypothesis: 19 percent of younger female candidates come from manual or farming backgrounds, compared with 39 percent of older girls. Moreover, a higher proportion of female candidates from these backgrounds are in the 13-14 age group compared with the rest of female candidates. This means that the overall pass-mark of older female candidates disproportionately reflects low social background, and the reverse is true for younger girls.

The pass-rate of older girl candidates varies little between occupational backgrounds, which proves that it is the distribution of candidates which matters more than performance in determining the low average female pass-rate. However, there were more older female candidates among the girls: 55 percent were 13-14 years old compared with only 45 percent of the boys. This also serves

to bring down the female average.

The high pass-rate of young girls is more closely related to the high performance of élite girls than is low performance related to low social origins. By removing élite girls, the pass-rate of young female candidates falls to that of girls as a whole. Thus, for both age groups, female pass-rates are closely related to social origins. Even so, there is every reason to believe that the independent effect of sex on pass-rates is less than CE results seem to indicate. Three pieces of evidence lead to this conclusion.

Firstly, the girls' pass-rate in the CEPE is much closer to the boys than is the case with the CE (see below p.157). Secondly, the tests which sample students were given in French and Maths showed a narrower gap between the sexes than the CE results. Indeed, in the French test the girls slightly outperformed the boys. Thirdly, by statistically manipulating the CE results and expressing them as standard rather than as raw scores, we find that the performance gap narrows to that found in the TAS tests. Therefore the CE itself discriminates against girls, and this happens in two ways. First, there are proportionally more 13-14 year old female candidates, which means that more girls than boys have to reach the higher pass-mark in the CE. Second, and more important from the point of view of discrimination, the boys enjoy an "unfair" advantage as a result of having better Maths scores than the girls. This serves to inflate the real aggregate differences between the sexes.

If standard scores were used to determine pass-rates, 12 boys would be successful for every 10 girls: using raw scores, the actual male-female ratio is 16 to 10. The difference is the result of marking convention: it is much easier for a good student in

Maths to receive full marks than it is for a good student in French. Thus, the "real" 20 percent advantage enjoyed by the boys in the Maths paper has been translated into a 60 percent advantage in the CE as a whole.¹⁶

This phenomenon has been known to docimologists for a long time: it is statistically invalid to add raw scores in order to arrive at a single scale of performance. It is highly unlikely that the organisers of the CE are intentionally discriminating against the girls, but it is also unlikely that Ministry of Education policy makers would give their support to a reform of CE marking which would complicate the correcting process and lead to a reduction in male pass-rates to the benefit of girls.¹⁷

Thus, girls do not perform as badly as exam results seem to indicate, but this is only of academic interest from the point of view of selection. What matters to the pupils themselves is the securing of a secondary place, not the amount of luck involved in the process. We have seen that girls would under-achieve even if the CE did not discriminate against them. Social background determines the degree of female disadvantage, but there is little doubt that being a girl is and is likely to remain a handicap from the educational point of view.

Female underachievement is a function of male domination in both Western and Third World countries. Male domination in the economic sphere is reflected in educational structures, and this is particularly clear in countries with low levels of school enrolment. In the West, male domination in technical and scientific occupations is reflected in below-average female enrolment in technical/scientific courses and institutions.¹⁸ Societal images of inherent male and female gifts and weaknesses are reinforced by socialisation practices and conceptions of

"male" and "female" occupations (Rossi 1965:51,127).

Thus, in a male-dominated country like Cameroun we would expect to find a below-average level of female performance in Maths. This was the case, especially in the TAS taken by sample students. A Kenyan study by Somerset (1974) produced similar results in relation to the Certificate of Primary Education.

We may conclude that differential sexual enrolment rates and performance inequalities are universal characteristics of educational stratification in male-dominated societies and are not ultimately reducible to such factors as social class or parental education, although these factors do have an effect on performance within sex sub-populations. Further educational expansion in Cameroun will not of itself reduce sexual inequalities, but merely (as with other kinds of inequality) transfer their manifestation from the enrolment to the performance level. Some further points on sexual inequality will be made in the discussion of the CEPE below.

Social Background, Repeating and Pass-Rates

Age and sex have a direct effect on performance and pass-rates, as well as an indirect effect which operates primarily through social background. There is a third variable about which this can also be said, namely Class 6 repeat rates. Repeating is a very common phenomenon in education systems based on the French model. Only twenty percent of the sample had never repeated a class, and nearly a third had repeated two or more classes. Twenty-nine percent of sample students and 26 percent of CE candidates were repeating Class 6. The pass-rate of repeaters was over twice that of non-repeaters (34 vs 16 percent), so we are clearly dealing with a very important phenomenon.

For the sample as a whole, repeat rates for Class 6 were

highest among large farmers' children (42 percent) and lowest for children of the élite (21 percent), but for children from other occupational backgrounds there was no tendency for high repeat rates to be associated with low social origins, or vice versa. For children from manual and farming backgrounds, repeat rates increased with age, but 15 year olds from white-collar and trading backgrounds had lower repeat rates than 14 year olds. The reasons for these patterns are complex and need not delay us here.

There are two ways in which Class 6 repeating could affect the average pass-rate of children from a given occupational background. First, repeaters may represent a larger or smaller proportion of total candidates. For example, we might expect to find a high proportion of repeaters among candidates from manual and farming backgrounds, reflecting below-average pass-rates in the CE at the first attempt or failure to sit the exam at the first opportunity. Second, repeating a year may be a greater help to some children than to others. For example, children from poor material and cultural backgrounds might be expected to benefit more from an extra year than other children, who are not in need of compensatory education.

Only in two occupational groups were there significant differences in repeat rates between sample students and CE candidates: small farmers and unskilled manual workers. Children from the former group had repeat rates of 34 and 43 percent for the sample and CE respectively, children from the latter 35 and 11 percent. Thus, we would expect the high pass-rate of small farmers' sons to be associated with above-average repeat rates, and the zero pass-rate of unskilled workers' children to reflect low repeat rates.

TABLE IV:10 REPEAT RATE OF CANDIDATES AND PASS-RATES FOR REPEATERS AND NON-REPEATERS BY AGE AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	Percent Repeats	Pass-Rates by Age					
		10		12		14	
		R	non-R	R	non-R	R	non-R
Elite	19(289)	62(24)	40(179)	21(19)	15(47)	18(11)	0(9)
Other white-collar	26(377)	53(34)	14(154)	24(33)	7(83)	33(33)	7(40)
Large trader	30(47)	60(5)	28(25)	25(4)	33(6)	0(5)	0(2)
Small trader	35(161)	45(11)	13(52)	28(25)	18(34)	28(21)	5(18)
Skilled manual	24(111)	43(7)	19(37)	31(16)	0(27)	25(4)	5(20)
Semi-skilled manual	22(121)	28(7)	12(42)	22(9)	7(27)	33(9)	0(27)
Unskilled manual	11(26)	0(0)	0(10)	0(2)	0(8)	0(1)	0(5)
Large farmer	39(119)	15(13)	11(27)	31(19)	7(28)	28(14)	11(18)
Small farmer	43(44)	50(6)	15(13)	20(5)	0(4)	25(8)	25(8)
Total	27(1295)	48(107)	23(539)	26(132)	9(264)	27(106)	6(147)

For children from all occupational groups, repeaters have a higher pass-rate than non-repeaters, though the difference is only marginal for children from large trading and, to a lesser extent, elite backgrounds. As elite children have a low overall repeat rate, we may conclude that repeating makes little difference to the overall pass-rate of this group. The groups with the highest proportions of repeating candidates are the small traders' and farmers' children, and in these cases the gap between repeaters' and non-repeaters' pass-rates was above-average. Thus, repeating has an important effect on the overall pass-rates of candidates from these backgrounds. The largest gap between overall pass-rates of repeaters and non-repeaters was found among children from other white-collar and skilled and semi-skilled manual backgrounds, but in all these cases the repeat rate of CE candidates was (slightly) below-average.

It is noticeable that, as predicted, the oldest repeaters from the most privileged backgrounds have the poorest pass-rates of all

older candidates, excluding the children of unskilled workers. Even among 13 year olds, élite repeaters had a relatively low pass-rate, again indicating that these children are of below-average ability.

Candidates from other white-collar, small trader and large farming backgrounds profit most from repeating: respectively they constitute 20, 9 and 4 percent of non-repeaters (one third of total), but 32, 16 and 11 percent of successful repeaters. But only in the case of other white-collar children was this the result of high pass-rates among repeaters: for the other two groups the advantage of repeating was a function of the proportion of repeaters among candidates. The children of manual workers and small farmers were also more numerous among successful repeaters, whereas the opposite was the case for large traders' and, especially, élite children. The latter accounted for half of successful non-repeaters but less than a fifth of successful repeaters.

If candidates were only allowed to sit the CE once, children from élite and large trading backgrounds would take 55 percent of available secondary school places instead of the 41 percent that they actually obtain, and farmers' and manual workers' children would take 16 instead of 22 percent. Thus, repeating Class 6 and the CE is primarily beneficial to the intermediate and lower occupational groups,¹⁹ which distinguishes this intervening variable from the two discussed in previous sections, both of which tended to favour children from the élite.

Birthplace and Ethnicity

Before looking at the CEPE we may conclude this section by briefly returning to the two secondary independent variables birthplace and ethnicity. Birthplace is important in relation to the urban-rural dimension of educational selectivity, but a

purely urban study can only look at a minor aspect of this question. Information on the CE performance of both urban and rural pupils will be discussed in Chapter VI in the context of secondary entrance in the Centre-South. For the moment we may attempt to find out whether birthplace has an independent effect on the CE take- and pass-rates of sample students.

TABLE IV:11 CE TAKE- AND PASS-RATES BY BIRTHPLACE AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	Birthplace			
	Yaoundé & large towns		Village & other towns	
	Take	Pass	Take	Pass
Elite	69(315)	37(218)	63(123)	25(83)
Other white-collar	59(384)	18(227)	50(323)	18(162)
Large trader	61(51)	39(31)	64(25)	6(16)
Small trader	59(173)	20(102)	46(138)	17(64)
Skilled manual	44(146)	18(65)	34(148)	12(50)
Semi-skilled manual	43(171)	12(73)	38(141)	11(54)
Unskilled manual	41(34)	0(14)	37(38)	0(14)
Large farmer	42(73)	13(31)	33(274)	16(92)
Small farmer	18(17)	0(3)	32(132)	23(43)
Total	56(1346)	23(766)	43(1353)	17(576)

Children born in Yaoundé and other large towns are more likely than children born in villages or other towns to take and pass the CE, but this may simply reflect social origins. For example, children from white collar backgrounds constitute half of those born in large urban areas, but only a third of those born elsewhere. But social origins do not explain all the variations in rates, as a comparison within occupational groups indicates. For all occupational groups except large traders and small farmers, urban-born children had a higher take-rate than others.²⁰ But this makes little difference to the

pattern of social selection. For example, none of the manual take-rates for urban-born pupils equal those of non-manual groups born elsewhere.

For all occupational backgrounds the pass-rates of the urban-born are higher than those for children from villages or small towns, with the exception of other white-collar and unskilled manual workers' children, who had identical pass-rates in both cases.²¹

Given the high degree of interaction between birthplace and socio-economic background, there would be little point in discussing the relationship between birthplace and the three major intervening variables -age, sex and repeat rates. Having established that birthplace has a weak independent effect on CE performance and is strongly contaminated by the effect of occupational background, we may now turn to ethnicity. The discussion of ethnicity will be limited to the Ewondo and Bamiléké, who together make up three fifths of the sample and of CE candidates.

TABLE IV:12 CE TAKE- AND PASS-RATES FOR EWONDO AND BAMILEKE PUPILS BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	Ewondo		Bamiléké	
	Take	Pass	Take	Pass
Elite	65(111)	32(72)	69(78)	44(54)
Other white-collar	55(223)	17(123)	69(93)	19(64)
Large trader	54(11)	17(6)	64(45)	27(29)
Small trader	39(23)	11(9)	57(219)	17(126)
Skilled manual	31(123)	15(41)	43(35)	40(15)
Semi-skilled manual	36(96)	8(35)	40(69)	18(28)
Unskilled manual	33(24)	0(8)	45(20)	0(9)
Large farmer	23(84)	26(17)	47(124)	12(59)
Small farmer	10(31)	0(3)	49(43)	33(7)
Total	43(736)	19(316)	56(726)	22(405)

In all cases Bamiléké students had higher take-rates than Ewondo, and the overall difference would have been larger had it not been for the above-average concentration of Ewondo pupils in the élite category. The largest inequalities in take-rates were among farmers' children, of which more shortly. These differences are largely a function of age: 22 percent of Ewondo pupils were 10-12 years old, compared with 36 percent of Bamiléké, and there were 50 percent more 15 year olds in the Ewondo than in the Bamiléké group.

The Bamiléké pass-rate was higher than the Ewondo for children from all occupational backgrounds except large farmers. Moreover, Bamiléké children of small farmers and skilled labourers have slightly better pass-rates than Ewondo children from élite and large trader backgrounds, which suggests that ethnicity, at least in these cases, is a more important determinant of performance than occupational background. We should not, however, make too much out of this finding. Overall, although there are performance variations between ethnic groups, ethnicity is not significantly correlated with CE pass-rates, and there is a general pattern within each group of white-collar workers' children outperforming traders', and traders' children outperforming those of manual workers.

The high level of performance among Bamiléké candidates reflects the above-average performance of girls, who have a 20 percent pass-rate compared with a female average of 16 percent and an Ewondo female average of only 12 percent. Bamiléké girl candidates are younger than their Ewondo counterparts, but this is true a fortiori for Bamiléké boys, whose pass-rate is only slightly higher than the Ewondo boys' (26 vs 24 percent).

Female Bamiléké candidates did not have a significantly

higher repeat rate than Ewondo girls, and the only possible explanation of the above-average performance of the former seems to lie in their good performance in the Maths paper, which tended to inflate their pass-rate for reasons given above.²²

Before leaving the ethnic dimension of ethnicity, we may consider the performance pattern of farmers' children from the two groups. To do so it is necessary to describe Ewondo and Bamiléké forms of cash cropping and the migration patterns associated with the two groups.

Very few Ewondo pupils from small farming backgrounds took the CE and none was successful, By contrast, half the Bamiléké pupils from this background took the CE, of which one third were successful. Thus, it seems that it is the long-distance (Bamiléké) migrants who are the subject of cost-benefit decisions, not those (Ewondo) living near Yaoundé, for whom moving into town is a more or less casual affair, unrelated to any hope of passing the CE.

The above description does not hold for large farmers' children, who represent nearly three-quarters of all candidates from farming backgrounds, and who seem to have been more the subject of selection by ability in the case of the Ewondo than of the Bamiléké. Overall, there is more evidence of selection by ability among small Bamiléké farmers than among the other farming groups being discussed, but "small" and "large" do not mean the same things in relation to Ewondo and Bamiléké agriculture.

By Bamiléké standards, a large Ewondo cash-cropper is a small farmer. A study by Champaud (1966) of the cocoa growing area around Yaoundé found that only 12 percent of land holdings exceeded 5 hectares (12 acres), and that the average farm size was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ ha. In most cases the nuclear family (2-3 active persons) was the productive unit; only one percent of the labour

force consisted of paid labour. The better-off farmers tend to be polygynists, but only 17 and 11 percent of large and small Ewondo farmers with children in the sample had more than one wife. Moreover, the system of land inheritance among polygynists inhibits the development of a class of rich farmers. According to Weber, in a discussion of the same area:

"...l'héritage matériel est divisée en un nombre de parts égales au nombre des épouses ayant eu des enfants mâles, et les enfants mâles d'une épouse se partagent donc une part. Par ce processus, plus un homme est grand planteur, plus il a d'enfants, et plus on retombe à la génération suivante sur des petits planteurs."
(Weber 1975:97).

In Bamiléké areas (the Western Province and Mungo department) there is more differentiation in the size of holdings (coffee, not cocoa, is the main crop) and much more hired labour. Thus, the average large Bamiléké farmer, who is frequently a "notable" or a chief, has a much higher level of production and income than the large cocoa farmer in the Centre-South (Ewondo, Eton, Boulou). He will therefore be able to send more of his children to study in the major towns, with fewer cost-benefit considerations.

The better-off Bamiléké is, moreover, highly polygynous: over two-thirds of large farmers in the sample had at least two wives, and one third had three or more. Nearly half of the small farmers were also polygynous. In the Bamiléké areas there are still strong (though disputed) traditions of chiefdom associated with land distribution and large scale polygyny, but younger sons stand little or no chance of inheriting any land. It is interesting to note that there are many more youngest children among

sample students from farming than from other backgrounds, and this is particularly noticeable for the children of large Ewondo and small Bamiléké farmers. It would appear that the tendency to select by ability is related to younger sons' low chances of inheriting land.

It seems clear that rural stratification patterns and attendant levels of polygyny and forms of land ownership and inheritance are important determinants of school attendance and success, but to date the research carried out in this field has been negligible. Foster's Ghanaian study (1965) ignores the possible effect on secondary enrolment ratios of variations in parental characteristics (education, farm size, income) among cocoa farmers. Hurd and Johnson (1967), using a crude index of farm size, show that the children of the larger and more educated cocoa farmers are overrepresented in secondary schools compared with other cash crop farmers' children.²³

In our own sample, 70 percent of farmers' children reported that their fathers were large farmers. It would seem that the latter are overrepresented in the sample to the extent that (1) they have more children, and (2) they have greater resources on which to draw, but the weakness of this argument is that it again depends on the terms "large" and "small", which have been shown to mean different things in different areas.²⁴

Bamiléké farmers send more children longer distances in order to benefit from urban schooling than do the local Ewondo. But the latter, given their more limited resources, are more careful in selecting the most promising students. The smallest local farmers do not even enter the picture, and their children are for the most part obliged to take their chances in the local school (see Chapter VI for a discussion of this).

The performance of Ewondo pupils from all occupational

groups is generally poor: they constituted 32 percent of the sample, 27 percent of CE candidates and 25 percent of passes. The Bamiléké trend was the reverse: they were 29 percent of the sample, 33 percent of candidates and 37 percent of successful candidates. This educational success mirrors the economic dynamism and resourcefulness of this ethnic group. But it is a success born of necessity rather than superior ability. Population pressure and unequal land distribution have forced most of the younger Bamiléké to seek a livelihood outside their homeland. It is thus the urban migrant Bamiléké who are most dependent on permanent employment outside agriculture, and for whom educational success is of paramount practical importance.

The Bamiléké did not enjoy any educational advantages during the colonial period compared with other southern ethnic groups, and the primary school enrolment rate is higher in the Centre-South than in the Western Province, the Bamiléké homeland. Thus, Bamiléké success in the education system does not reflect any ethnic proclivity, sui generis, but is rather the result of economic necessity.²⁵

For all major ethnic groups, the range of performance (16-24 percent) was much narrower than the range by fathers' occupation (0-34 percent). This is still true if we exclude the top and bottom of the occupational categories. For all major ethnic groups except the Yambassa-Bafia, élite children have a pass-rate well above the ethnic average. Also, in all cases but two, children from manual occupational backgrounds have below-average pass-rates.

Two smaller ethnic groups show interesting performance patterns, the Douala and the Northerners. These are very dissimilar regarding overall levels of literacy, urbanisation, etc., but very similar as regards school performance.

The Douala have the highest proportion of young pupils in the total sample and the highest pass-rate among candidates. This reflects occupational background; over four-fifths of Douala fathers were in white-collar occupations. Northern pupils were the oldest in the sample, were predominantly male, and had a pass-rate only 2 percent below that of the Douala (24 vs 26 percent). Northern fathers were also from predominantly non-manual occupational groups, though not to the same extent as the Douala.

This illustrates two findings of previous studies. First, children attending school from ethnic groups with low general enrolment levels are from atypically high socio-economic backgrounds. Second, such pupils generally perform well at school because their above-average ability has brought them through early educational disadvantages. Most of the Northern candidates had fathers in the armed forces who were classified as other white-collar workers. Children from this background had a pass-rate of 18 percent, which was well below that of Northern candidates. We may conclude that the latter were of above-average ability.

Birthplace and ethnicity appear to be of minor importance in determining CE performance in Yaoundé, but we do not arrive at this conclusion in order to belittle the overall importance of these factors in the educational process. The stagnation of the rural economy, the progressive marginalisation of the peasantry and the persistence of developmental gaps between ethnic groups and regions are all aspects of class formation which we would expect to be reflected in enrolment and performance levels. For this reason, birthplace and ethnicity are likely to persist as significant vectors of educational ineq-

uality in coming years.

The CEPE

The CEPE is taken at the end of Class 6, but, as already pointed out, is neither a sufficient nor a necessary qualification for entering secondary school. Its negotiable value on the job market is low and getting lower: today, the CEPE gives access to category "D" jobs in the Civil Service (e.g. messenger, office boy) and to the lowest rung of the primary school teaching hierarchy.

The devaluation of primary school diplomas which has resulted from the growth of educational systems in Africa and elsewhere has been widely commented on and need not detain us here (Foster 1965, Illich 1970, Dore 1976). During the colonial period, when very few people could hope to obtain even the CEPE, it constituted a qualification of considerable importance, allowing Camerounians to enter the lower ranks of the administration as clerks, interpreters and school monitors. Numerically more important were those who used it to become teachers in mission schools. Only the continued expansion of primary education, both state and private, has postponed the upgrading of the minimum qualifications required of a prospective teacher. Thus, the CEPE is still the only academic qualification held by the majority of primary school teachers in the country, especially those in missions and rural areas.

Both the diploma and the job have lost the prestige attached to them in the days when they represented the apex of the achievement opportunities open to Camerounians. Increasingly, primary school teaching is seen as an occupation of last resort for those with only the CEPE. The profession is only attractive in terms of salary and promotion opportunities when entered

from secondary school and with teacher training qualifications.²⁶

As the CEPE is not a strategically important diploma either in terms of educational or occupational opportunities, we need not discuss it in too much detail. In the present context, its interest lies in what it reveals about the process of educational selectivity. In particular it will be useful to compare the CEPE with the CE, from which it differs in a number of respects.

First, it is open to candidates of all ages; private candidates of 30 and over are not unknown. Four-fifths of sample students sat the exam, including a third of 15 year olds. It will thus be possible to say something about the performance levels of older pupils, which will be useful in gauging the chances of success of those older pupils who enter private secondary schools.

Second, there is a fixed pass-mark and thus no discrimination in favour of younger candidates, as in the CE. Therefore, the results do not have to be interpreted in terms of the age distribution of candidates from different socio-economic backgrounds, etc. Third, as the exam is of little strategic importance, it is unlikely that any malpractices in its correction occur comparable to those detected in the CE (see pp.161-62).

Fourth, papers are taken in all major subjects studied in primary school. Thus, although the final mark is based on raw scores as with the CE, it is unlikely that certain candidates will be favoured in the way strong Maths pupils are in the CE.

All the above differences between the two exams point to a higher degree of docimological objectivity in the CEPE than in the CE. The CEPE has at least one defect, however, in that marginal candidates are passed or failed on the basis of an oral exam. This clearly introduces a subjective element not present

in the CE.

In what follows, only pass-rates based on raw scores have been considered, as there were too many individual papers for it to be possible to undertake a detailed analysis based on standard scores, and, in any case, the exam is not important enough to merit such an analysis.

Neither age, sex, nor occupational background seem to affect the distribution of CEPE candidates. Most of the 20 percent of sample students who did not take the exam can be assumed to have passed it already, but unfortunately this point was overlooked in the questionnaire.

Age, sex and occupational background are related to pass-rates, but in ways significantly different from the CE. For example, candidates' age and sex are much more weakly correlated with CEPE than with CE results:

TABLE IV:13 CEPE PASS-RATES BY AGE AND SEX

Age	Sex		All
	Male	Female	
10-12	39(394)	41(410)	40(804)
13-14	34(506)	31(642)	33(1148)
15+	33(255)	26(333)	29(588)
All	36(1155)	33(1385)	34(2540)

The slight difference between male and female pass-rates helps confirm the discriminatory nature of the CE discussed above. It is possible, however, that the greater arts subjects content of the CEPE slightly favours the girls. In the TAS tests the overall advantage enjoyed by the boys was greater than that found in the CEPE, but the girls enjoyed a slight advantage in the French paper. It is possible, therefore, that the girls' arts advantage has been magnified by the CEPE in the same way

that the boys' Maths advantage was magnified in the CE. Alternatively, the marginal female candidates may have been favoured by the oral exam. The argument is, in any case, academic, as it makes no material difference to the life chances of the two sexes.

It is clear, however, that Yaoundé girls distinctly outperform their provincial sisters. In 1972, 38 percent of Centre-South candidates passed the CEPE, 41.5 percent of the boys and only 33 percent of the girls. Results for 1966 for the four southern provinces gave the boys a 47 percent pass-rate, the girls 39 percent (Direction de la Statistique 1973).²⁷ This closely follows the previous finding concerning the poor CE performance of girls from rural areas. In the case of the Yaoundé sample, farmers' daughters have a CEPE pass-rate equal to the male average and only slightly below that of girls from élite backgrounds.

In the CEPE, the older pupils (especially the girls) do not underperform to the same extent as they did in the CE. This reflects the discriminatory pass-marks of the latter, but the differences in pass-rates are too large for this to be more than a partial explanation. It is not obvious what other factors might help explain the great apparent improvement in the performance of the older girls.

It is noticeable that in both exams the performance gap between the sexes widens with age. In the CEPE the girls have a slight advantage in the younger age group, but this is reversed at age 13 and over. Western studies have shown a similar pattern of performance regarding age and sex, and girls consistently outperform boys in primary school. It is suggested that primary school is a "feminine" environment (most primary school

teachers are women in the West) which corresponds more with the home life of girls than boys. It is true in general, and especially in Africa, that teachers:

"demand obedience, silence, passivity and conformity from their pupils -all features of traditional female behaviour."

(Sharpe 1976:145)

Accordingly, girls adjust more easily to the authoritarian expectations of the school environment than do boys. This would account for the higher level of female performance in primary school. Subsequently, however, the girls lose their advantage:

"...at some time during their adolescence, girls begin to underachieve in relation to their real capacities. This is often around the onset of puberty, and coincides with the time when both boys and girls are becoming increasingly aware of their sexuality and their future adult roles. For boys, this includes an emphasis on intellectual and practical achievements, and on various strengths of physique and character. For girls, conformity is more appropriate, and achievement may be translated into the context of appearance, social life and popularity. School pressures become ineffective when set against social pressures."

(ibid. p 135, stress in the original).

In Africa, much of this argument would seem to be valid a fortiori. Many boys and girls reach puberty before finishing primary school, and the data suggest that this has a more adverse effect on the girls than on the boys. Two factors are involved. First, the girls reach puberty earlier than the boys, and, second, they are obliged to adopt mature, adult roles at an early age. Both factors would explain changes in relative performance levels, as well as the lower rate of promotion to

secondary school among the girls²⁸ (see Chapter VI).

What is missing in the above discussion is the class dimension of sex and performance, which was shown to be very important in the CE:

TABLE IV:14 CEPE PASS-RATE BY SEX AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	Sex		
	Male	Female	F+M
Elite	47(148)	40(187)	1.17
Other white-collar	41(276)	31(310)	1.32
Large trader	24(24)	27(37)	0.89
Small trader	37(92)	33(156)	1.12
Skilled manual	32(132)	27(121)	1.18
Semi-skilled manual	24(112)	26(137)	0.92
Unskilled manual	40(30)	24(33)	1.67
Large farmer	36(134)	36(140)	1.00
Small farmer	29(59)	36(52)	0.80
All	36(1007)	33(1173)	1.09

The above table differs in many respects from the CE equivalent (Table IV:9). As might be expected from the above discussion, there is less of a performance gap favouring the boys in each occupational group (excluding unskilled workers' children), and this is particularly evident in the small farmers' category. Here a 35 percentage point (CE) male advantage was turned into a 7 point female advantage (CEPE)!

In the CE, minimum male advantage was found in the élite, large trading and semi-skilled groups. In the CEPE girls from the last two groups outperformed the boys, but élite girls did not improve their relative performance, presumably because they have little or no ground to gain compared with other girls.

Equally large absolute and relative variations in pass-rates are evident in relation to the effect of occupational background on performance. Elite and small traders' children keep the same rank order position in the two exams (first and fourth), but in

other groups there are wide variations. For example, large traders' children have the second best CE and the second worst CEPE pass-rate, whereas the children of large farmers and unskilled workers improve their relative positions substantially. There seems to be no coherent pattern to these changes.

One of the problems involved in comparing pass-rates in the two exams is that the two groups of candidates are not the same. The other is that the overall pass-rates are very different in the two cases. We may overcome these problems by comparing only the pupils who sat both exams and by reducing the pass-rate of the CEPE to that of the CE.

Of the students taking both exams, only the children of élite and large trader fathers had lower pass-rates in the (reduced) CEPE than in the CE. Nevertheless, élite children still have the highest CEPE pass-rate, though only marginally. This exercise shows that candidates from élite and large trading backgrounds appear to enjoy advantages in the CE which they do not enjoy in the CEPE. Age-related pass-marks were shown above to constitute one such advantage, but élite and large traders children seem to enjoy another advantage in the CE, that of favouritism in the marking of the exam.

An indication that such favouritism is being employed is contained in another manipulation of exam results. As the CEPE was an easier exam than the CE to pass, it is logical to expect that a high proportion of candidates taking both and failing only one of them would fail the CE. It is much more common to find that a candidate has failed the CE and passed the CEPE than vice versa. For all candidates taking both exams and failing just one, only 12 percent had failed the CEPE and passed the CE; but for the children of élite and large trader fathers this figure was 21 and 43 percent respectively. In other words, it was much more common

for children from these two backgrounds to fail the easy exam and pass the difficult one than it was for children from other backgrounds (0 to 14 percent).

A similar trend was apparent when TAS and CE results were compared. By expressing these as standard scores, the age factor is eliminated from the CE results, which means that this finding constitutes conclusive evidence that corrupt practices favour the élite and (particularly) large traders' children.

Some argue that élite children attending élite schools spend their time preparing for the CE at the expense of other school subjects than French or Maths. This might explain part of the relatively poor CEPE performance of élite pupils, but it cannot explain the TAS results, which also indicate a decline in performance. The following table shows the distribution of the top 20 percent of candidates on the French and Maths TAS combined (standard scores), compared with the actual distribution of new secondary school entrants from the Yaoundé sample. In Chapter VI it will be shown that a certain number of pupils who failed the CE nevertheless managed to find places in state secondary schools.²⁹ These are included below, as are the able 15+ year old students who took the TAS but not the CE.

TABLE IV:15 TOP TWENTY PERCENT OF TAS AND CE^a TAKERS BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers Occupation	TAS	CE
Elite	23	38
Other white-collar	24	25
Large trader	3	4
Small trader	13	10
Skilled manual	8	7
Semi-skilled manual	8	6
Unskilled manual	2	0
Large farmer	14	7
Small farmer	5	3
Total	100	100
N	2238	1598

^aIncluding failed candidates entering state secondary schools.

If the TAS were used to determine secondary school entrance, the proportion of successful candidates from farming and manual backgrounds would rise from 16 to 37 percent, and those from élite backgrounds would decline from 38 to 23 percent. Thus, everything points to the CE being a parody of an objective exam, which adds grist to the mill of those who see certification as a reification of class relationships. The exam is blatantly discriminatory and extremely inefficient as regards selecting the most able pupils, though it is efficient in its function of social selection.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has shown that, even in an urban context characterised by high primary enrolment rates, exam performance is only one of several selection mechanisms determining entry into state secondary schools. The major factors affecting the latter are:

1. CE characteristic:

-affecting take-rate

- (a) Age regulation. Pupils over 15 years of age are not allowed to sit the CE, which excludes a disproportionate number of children from manual and farming backgrounds.

-affecting pass-rate

- (a) Age regulation. Differential minimum pass-marks make it easier for 10-12 year olds to pass the CE than for 13-14 year olds. This favours children with non-manual fathers, who are on average younger than other candidates.
- (b) The docimological fallacy. This favoured candidates who were strong in Maths: boys, Bamiléké/traders children.
- (c) Corrupt marking. This favoured children from élite and large trading backgrounds.

- (d) The "concoirs" nature of the CE. The number of "passes" is determined by secondary school headmasters, in theory as a function of available places. In practice, a varying proportion of places is not filled in this way, which gives headmasters room for manoeuvre when it comes to back-door admissions (See Chapter VI). Again, élite and large traders children are favoured.

2. Sociological factors:

-affecting take-rates:

- (a) Self-exclusion by age/social background. This excludes a quarter of sample students, proportionately more farmers' and manual workers' than traders' or non-manual workers' children

-affecting pass-rates:

- (a) Birthplace. This has a slight independent effect on performance, but generally acts in conjunction with social background.
- (b) Ethnicity. This also has a small independent effect, but one that is difficult to separate from the docimological fallacy (the Bamiléké are good at Maths).
- (c) Occupational background. The major independent variable, though its mode of operating has not yet been analysed. See following chapter.

3. Mediating-intervening factors:

-affecting pass-rates:

- (a) Age. It is difficult to determine the independent effect of age on performance because it is very closely linked to such factors as repeat-rates and (particularly) social background. It seems that memory is the main intellectual requirement of CE candidates, rather than any quality that older candidates might be expected to have in greater quantities than the young.
- (b) Sex. This factor intervenes between social background and performance, but also has an important independent effect on performance. Sexual and class stratification overlap, but are not coterminous.
- (c) Repeat-rates. Class 6 repeat-rates are related to age and social background. Unlike sex and age, repeating helps candidates from manual and (especially) farming backgrounds.

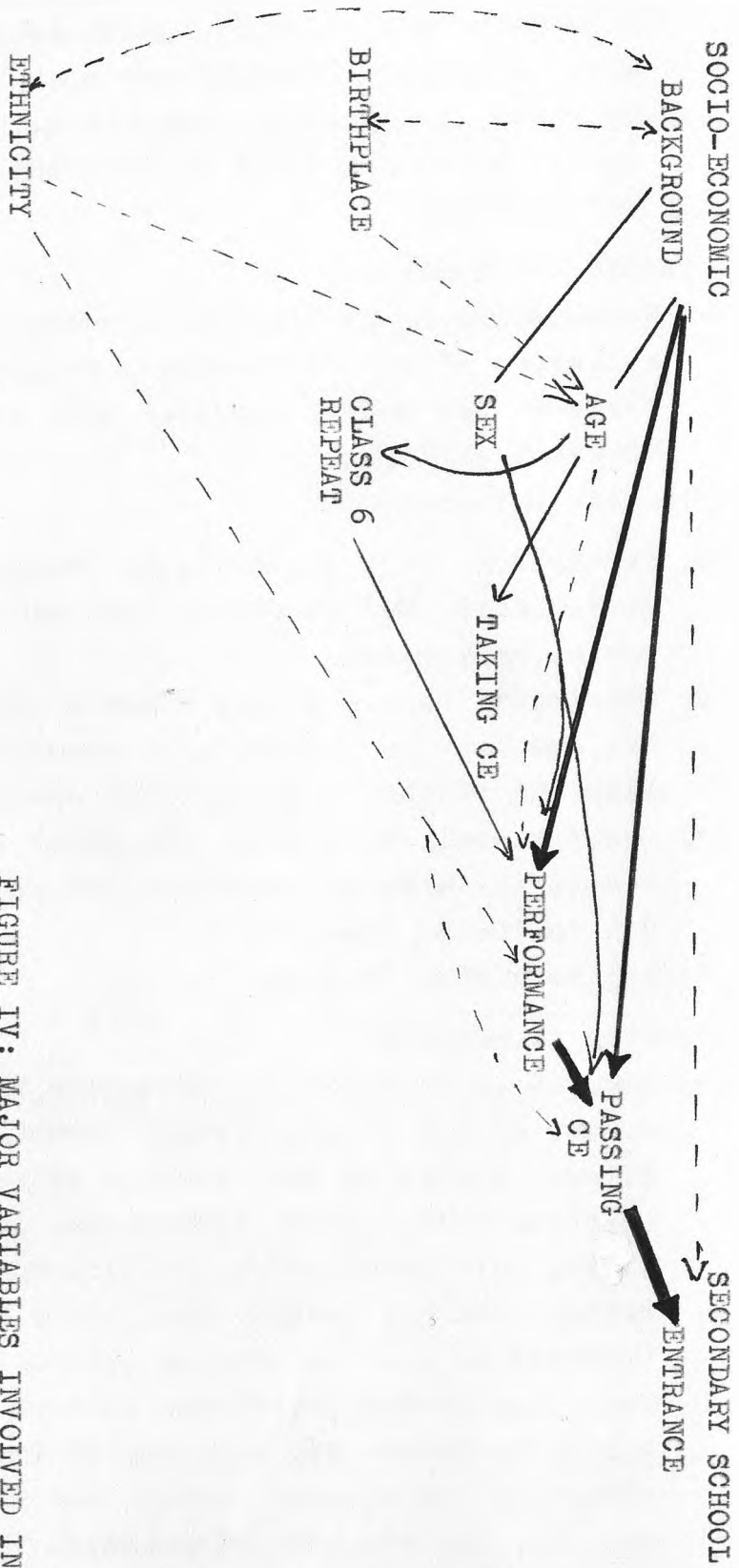


FIGURE IV: MAJOR VARIABLES INVOLVED IN
THE PASSAGE FROM CLASS VI
TO STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

NOTE: The heavier the arrow, the greater
the causal weight of the independent
variable. Two headed arrows denote
covariance rather than causality.

These relationships are represented diagrammatically in Figure IV.

Directly or indirectly, all the factors listed above interact with socio-economic background. Previous chapters have shown that variations in exam performance are not the only, nor necessarily the most important, forms of educational selection. It was hypothesised, however, that in an urban context characterised by high levels of primary school enrolment, CE performance would be the major component of the selection process. This has not proved to be the case: performance is only one of a number of interrelated factors involved in the selection process. The overall effect of the non-performance factors is to magnify the "real" effect of social background on secondary school entrance rates. Thus, to have concentrated on TAS or exam scores to the exclusion of other factors would have led to serious distortion concerning the understanding of the selection process as a whole. A multivariate analysis would have led to such distortions, as can be seen in Heineman's study (1975).³⁰

Most previous studies by sociologists have underlined the importance of occupational background in relation to educational achievement. The present chapter has attempted to analyse the relationships which previous studies have tended to ignore. In itself it does not constitute "proof" of class formation or social reproduction through education, the theoretical starting point of the present study. Cross-sectional studies can do little in this respect. One of the main issues in the class-education debate in Africa concerns the existence or otherwise of class subcultures, and this will be looked at in more detail in the following chapter.

FOOTNOTES

1. The actual distribution was: Ewondo 20%, Eton 10%, Bané 6%, Other Béti-Fang 10, Bamiléké 19%, Bassa 9%, Haussa 2%, Other Camerounians 22%, Foreigners and others 2%. We have separated out the Boulou from the "Other Béti-Fang", and the Bafia-Yambassa from the "Other Camerounians". The "Haussa" group probably contains a majority of other northern ethnic groups. Northern pupils account for less than 2 percent of the Class 6 sample, and very few of them were "Haussa". We have also separated out the Bafia-Yambassa and Bamoun from the "Other Camerounians". A 1968 study of the adult population of Yaoundé found 3 percent Boulou, 7 percent Bafia, Yambassa and Banen, and 5 and 3 percent from the Northern and Eastern Provinces respectively. (Direction de la Statistique 1968:124).
2. The other major migrants from this province are the Bassa-Bakoko, Douala and Mbo.
3. The complete breakdown is as follows: Public Sector 32%, Agriculture and other traditional activities 24%, Industry 15%, Modern Commerce 13%, Transport 7%, Domestic Service 7%, Other 2%. Most of those in the second category are involved in "other traditional activities" which we may assume to mean craftsmen and artisans, and small-scale traders and shopkeepers not included in the "modern" commerce category. According to the above classification, over 60 percent of adult males were employed in the tertiary sector. The sectoral classification lumps together different occupational-income groups, particularly in the public sector, modern commerce and transport, and is not of much use for our purposes. Fortunately, we are not dependent on global occupational data as we are more concerned with performance than with enrolment.

4. These were CEPE (pass/fail), CE (pass/fail), CE standard scores (French & Maths, French, Maths), TAS standard scores (French & Maths, French, Maths), Repeat (Class 6) and Repeat (all classes).
5. Broken down as follows: over 30,000 inhabitants 13%, 20,000 to 30,000 3%, 10,000 to 20,000 7%, and 3,500 to 10,000 5%. In the following analysis large towns have been separated out and the remainder grouped together.
6. This is consistent with Franqueville's finding that less than 5 percent of northern migrants were in full-time education, compared with nearly a third of those from the Western Province.
7. Forty-six percent of migrants had lived in Yaoundé for 4 years or less, 17% for 5-6 years, 12% for 7-8 years, 10% for 9-10 years and 15% for 11 years or more.
8. Population growth in the Bamiléké departments is well above the national average (2.5 vs 2.1%) and out-migration to both the Littoral and Centre-South from urban and rural areas in the Western Province has continued at a high rate.
9. The migrants from the ethnic groups in Table IV:2 are divided roughly as follows:- Ewondo: Mefou, Nyong & Soo departments; Bamiléké: Western Province, Wouri (Douala), Mungo; Bassa: Sanaga Maritime, Nyong & Kélé; Eton: Lékié; Bafia-Yambassa: Mbem; Boulou: Ntem, Dja & Lobo.
10. In subsequent tables and discussion the professional-administrative group will be called the "élite". This is purely a matter of convenience (to avoid tedious repetition) and has nothing to do with élite theory.
11. In France, as in Cameroun, there is a "normal" age for children attending a given class based on starting age and the assumption of no repeated classes. In both countries, but especially in Cameroun, very few children can be called "normal" by the end of primary school. Likewise, in both countries: "l'age atteint au

CM2 est fonction de l'origine sociale."(Baudelot & Estabiet 1971: 67). In France:"L'entrée ou la non-entrée en 6ème, qui est institutionnellement décidée par l'âge de l'enfant, est en fait déterminée par son origine sociale."(ibid.p.69). Those who lament the implantation of irrelevant and unadapted foreign school systems in Africa fail to see that the selection process has also been "inherited from the colonial masters", and that in many cases the selection function of the schools operates in an identical way in both society of origin and implantation. This is an index of the increasingly class nature of schooling in Africa.

12. This is also true for large farmers' children, who have the only other well below average take-rate in this age group.

13. With the exception of age: see below p.140.

14. The boys are of about average age for male candidates but the girls are somewhat older than girl candidates in general. Thus, the higher pass-mark needed by older candidates will have a disproportionate effect on girls from farming backgrounds, but this is not enough to explain more than a fraction of their poor performance.

15. The pass-rate for 10-12 and 13-14 year old boys was 28% and 24% respectively, and for girls 25% and 9%.

16. This also helps the Bamiléké traders children: see below p.150.

17. If standard rather than raw scores had been used to calculate CE results, approximately 20 more girls would have passed the exam, replacing an equivalent number of boys. For Yaoundé as a whole, this would mean 50 boys being replaced by 50 girls; on a national scale the figure would probably be several hundred. For sample candidates, the boys' pass-rate would have fallen from 26 to 23 percent and the girls' would have risen from 16 to 19 percent.

18. In France (1964), 32 percent of students in science faculties were girls compared with 66 percent in arts faculties (Saint Martin 1968:174).

19. Over 60 percent of successful candidates from farming backgrounds were repeaters, and between 50 and 56 percent of those from other white collar, small traders, skilled and semi-skilled manual backgrounds. But only 31 and 21 percent of successful candidates from large trader and élite backgrounds were repeating Class 6.

20. In fact, we should exclude farmers' children from the discussion because selection by ability will affect both their take-and pass-rates.

21. It is noticeable that the village-born children of large traders have the highest take-rate and the second-lowest pass-rate of all rural pupils, whereas the equivalent urban children have the second-highest take rate and the highest pass-rate. Birthplace seems important here, but the group is too small to merit or permit a detailed investigation into the reasons for this.

22. For example, in the Maths TAS 36 percent of Bamiléké girls had (standard) scores falling in the top third of all scores, compared with 22 percent of Ewondo girls and 24 percent of girls from other major ethnic groups.

23. "More than one fifth of the students whose fathers were farmers were living in large towns at the time they gained access to secondary schools." Hurd and Johnson 1967:73. This was also true for one third of the children of large cocoa farmers. But this is an area where a high percentage of farmers live in town for at least part of the year and whose sons therefore go to school in town. (M. Peil: personal communication).

24. Hill (1962) has pointed out that there is no such thing as

the average farm or farmer, and this is clearly the case in Cameroun.

25. It also reflects the (from the Bamiléké point of view) fortuitous accident of the docimological fallacy.

26. Supportive evidence can be quoted from Clignet:

"In the early 1960s only one third of the Yaoundé and Douala teaching force under 35 years of age had a post-primary training. For their counterparts 45 years and older, the corresponding percentage increased to 45 percent." (Clignet 1976:50).

27. As can be seen from the figures, there are wide variations in pass-rates between years. Here we are only interested in the relative pass-rate.

28. A recent study found that, in Douala:

"One quarter of the women gave lack of means as a reason for leaving school (40% of men) but about one third of the women left school because of pregnancy, marriage or parental opposition to education for girls." (Weekes-Vagliani 1976:30ff).

29. Fifty percent of these were from élite and large trading backgrounds.

30. As Bordieu and Passeron put it:

"Le paralogisme consistant à ignorer les propriétés d'une population produite par une série de sélections doit à ce processus ne serait pas aussi fréquent s'il n'exprimait pas une des tendances les plus profondes de l'épistémologie spontanée, à savoir l'inclination à une représentation réaliste et statique des catégories de l'analyse et s'il ne trouvait de surcroît un encouragement et une caution dans l'usage machinal de l'analyse multivariée qui immobilise un état donné d'un système de relations." (Bordieu & Passeron 1970:90). The present study has attempted to avoid the empiricist pitfall by stressing wherever possible the tendencies discernable within the Camerounian education system.

CHAPTER V MIGRATION, THE HOME ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Having established that CE performance is closely related to socio-economic background (as measured by father's occupation), it is now necessary to examine the material and cultural correlates of occupational background which constitute the intervening variables between background and performance.¹

This task is complicated by the fact of migration: nearly two-thirds of sample students were born outside Yaoundé, and nearly half of these had been living in Yaoundé for four years or less at the time of the survey. This means that most pupils are currently living in homes, local communities and educational environments which are relatively new to them, and which are likely to be less significant determinants of performance than those in which they spent their formative year, especially for children from farming backgrounds.

If we accept that it is early environmental influences which matter, then we might feel justified in ignoring the present home environment of migrants and concentrating on the parental characteristics of the sample as a whole. Unfortunately, this procedure cannot be followed. As this is essentially an urban study, very little can be said concerning the effect of the rural home, school and community on the learning process. Furthermore, it has already been demonstrated that children from farming backgrounds are not selected at random for urban schooling. The selection of the most able may invalidate the analysis of family characteristics, even when these are known. This was pointed out in relation to the distinction between enrolment and performance discussed in Chapter I.

This does not mean, however, that we can or should entirely ignore the migration process or the present environment of children from rural backgrounds. The first part of the chapter is concerned with these two phenomena.

The remainder will deal with the cultural and material dimensions of the home environment and their variations within and between urban socio-economic groups. The aims of this section are twofold. First, an attempt will be made to evaluate the comparative importance of various material and cultural aspects of the home. Studies in the West have shown that material considerations are more important than the cultural level of the family in determining the low educational success of children from underprivileged backgrounds (Coleman 1966; Girard & Clerc 1964; Little & Westergaard 1964). Above a certain income, it is cultural level, particularly parents' education, which explains most of the variance in performance (Clignet 1964).² More important for present purposes is the closeness of the fit between educational and occupational background, for we are less concerned with the effect of parental education on performance controlling for occupation than with determining the relationship between the two parental factors. For example, we would expect to find that fathers with secondary education are likely to have children who perform well in the CE, but the importance of this factor depends on (a) the number of fathers who have secondary education, and (b) the degree of concentration of these fathers in particular occupational groups. These questions are important from the point of view of class formation, and it is for this reason that some time will be spent in trying to answer them using the Yaoundé data.

Second, studies in the West have shown that successful working class children are from predominantly atypical families within the working class (Jackson & Marsden 1966). Clignet & Foster (1966) have shown a similar pattern in the case of children from marginal regions and ethnic groups in Ivory Coast. Thus, we will be interested to see if it is possible to isolate factors which differentiate the successful and the unsuccessful pupils within an occupational group, for example, educational variations between working class sub-groups.

Non-family factors which are expected to influence performance are those related to the school and the local community. From the point of view of both enrolment and performance inequalities, it is clearly the urban-rural dimension which is more important than school and community differences within the urban context. The following chapter deals with the important differences found between candidates born and educated in towns and villages in the Centre-South, but the data are inadequate for estimating the relative importance of family, community and school in explaining these differences. Most previous studies, however, have concluded that the independent effect of the primary school attended is of minor importance compared with that of the family in explaining performance variance (World Bank Staff Paper 1974). Both school attended and community lived in are likely to vary with class background.

In the case of Yaoundé, it is not possible to identify class-based "quartiers", although there is one so-called residential (as opposed to "popular") area and smarter areas do exist within the larger quartiers. Ethnicity and date of

arrival are more important determinants of residence than social class (Clignet & Jordan 1969; Franqueville 1969).

Most children attend the primary school nearest their home, but more than a quarter of sample students reported that it took them more than twenty minutes to get to school. Only the two élite schools have a catchment area covering all the major quarters, and, whereas nearly nine-tenths of sample students walk to school, the majority of children attending élite schools are either brought by private car or in school buses run by parents' employers (e.g. the University, the army, large companies).

The two élite schools have a majority of white teachers and the fees in the Catholic school are as high as those in private secondary schools, 36.000 frs CFA a year, compared with 2,500 frs in other mission schools. Candidates from the élite state school had a CE pass-rate well over twice the Yaoundé average, but it is impossible to say how much this reflects the quality of schooling rather than family background or examination irregularities. The importance of this school can be appreciated from the fact that it accounts for no less than a third of all new entrants to the Yaoundé lycée from local primary schools.

Again, migration patterns complicate the analysis of the effect of community and school on performance. For example, only a third of sample students had attended just one primary school; the majority of migrants had begun their education before arriving in Yaoundé. Thus, it will be more useful to consider the scholastic histories of sample students than the quality of the school attended at the time of the survey. We would expect these histories to be related to birthplace and family background.

Migration and Performance

It was expected that performance in the CE would be positively related to length of stay in Yaoundé, particularly for village-born farmers' children, but Table V:1 shows that this is not generally the case.

TABLE V:1 PERCENT PASSING CE BY BIRTHPLACE, FATHERS' OCCUPATION AND DATE OF ARRIVAL IN YAOUNDE

<u>Fathers' Occupation</u>	<u>Date of Arrival</u>		
	Born in Yaoundé	Before 1970	1970-1974
Elite	34(70)	36(104)	35(104)
Other white-collar	19(111)	19(144)	19(101)
Large trader	35(20)	17(12)	25(12)
Small trader	27(62)	17(71)	23(22)
Skilled manual	14(43)	10(50)	19(21)
Semi-skilled manual	14(49)	8(52)	23(17)
Unskilled manual	0(12)	0(10)	0(15)
Large farmer	9(11)	17(36)	17(72)
Small farmer	0(2)	13(15)	28(28)
<u>Birthplace</u>			
Large towns		26(130)	26(96)
Other towns		17(118)	24(101)
Village		15(205)	22(170)
Total	21(380)	18(453)	23(380)

Overall, there appears to be no advantage attached to being born in Yaoundé, except in the case of traders' children. Farmers' children born in Yaoundé have considerably below-average pass-rates, but these pupils constitute only a small proportion of pupils from this background. With the exception of children from white-collar and large farming

backgrounds, it is the most recent migrants who have the best pass-rates, and recent migrants from manual and farming backgrounds generally outscore the Yaoundé born and the earlier migrants.

Early vs Late Migration

The later migrants from trading, skilled and semi-skilled manual and small farming backgrounds have significantly higher pass-rates than the earlier. The white-collar groups show no variations between early and late migrants, and this is reflected in the pass-rates of migrants from large towns, most of whom were from white-collar backgrounds.

We might expect age, sex and repeat rates to be related to pass-rate variations, and we may consider each one briefly (farmers' children will be considered separately).

Age is not related to date of arrival in Yaoundé: there are proportionally as many young pupils among earlier as among later migrants. There are variations within occupational groups but they do not help explain variations in pass-rates between early and late migrants. For example, among traders' children there are more young candidates among the early migrants, which is the reverse of what we would expect if age differences were responsible for performance variations.

Neither is sex an important factor. There were slightly more girls among later migrants from trading and skilled manual backgrounds, but in all cases the differences were not large enough to explain more than a small part of performance variance. In the case of semi-skilled workers' children, there were slightly more girls among later migrants, and it was among children from this background that the advantage of more recent migrants was most pronounced.

Overall, there are only marginal differences between the repeat rates of early and late migrants, and for skilled and semi-skilled workers' children there were more repeaters among the earlier migrants. Thus, the distribution of CM2 repeaters does not help explain the performance differences between the two groups of migrants. The pass-rate of repeaters and non-repeaters is more helpful, however, as Table V:2 demonstrates:

TABLE CE PASS-RATES OF REPEATERS AND NON-REPEATERS BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND AND DATE OF ARRIVAL IN YAOUNDE^a
V:2

Fathers' Occupation	Date of Arrival			
	Before 1970		1970-1974	
	R ^b	NR	R	NR
Elite	27(15)	36(86)	41(22)	34(80)
Other white-collar	30(33)	16(108)	42(31)	10(65)
Large & small trader	24(29)	14(51)	36(11)	17(23)
Skilled & semi-skilled manual	12(24)	7(67)	57(7)	13(30)
All	24(101)	19(302)	41(71)	20(198)

^a Trading and manual groups have been combined because of small cell size in certain cases.

^b R= Class 6 repeat; NR= non-repeat.

The generally higher pass-rate of the most recent migrants is clearly related to the superior performance of repeaters in this group compared with repeaters among earlier migrants. The pass-rate of non-repeaters differs little between the two groups of migrants, and is not very dissimilar to that of locally-born non-repeaters.

It is noticeable that the performance pattern of recent migrants does not at all follow occupational background, unlike that of non-repeaters and early migrants (compare the manual with the élite children's performance). This suggests that a certain amount of selection by ability has

taken place outside the élite regarding the decision to send children to Yaoundé in order to improve their CE chances. This argument is given weight by comparing the pass-rate of recent migrants with the overall pass-rate of children from each occupational background: in all cases but the élite the recent migrants have pass-rates at least twice as high as the average for the occupational group.³ Earlier migrants are unlikely to have been selected on the criterion of ability because most of them will have had little or no schooling before arriving in Yaoundé.

The children most likely to benefit from an extra year's preparation for the CE are those of above-average ability who have previously suffered from poor teaching and a community and home environment relatively remote from the culture communicated by the school. This point was discussed in the previous chapter, and the figures in Table V:2 show that migration patterns are related to the background-repeat-performance syndrome.

To summarise, the poor performance of early migrants from non-farming backgrounds is associated with the performance of repeaters in this group rather than with age or sex, and this holds for all occupational groups. With the exception of traders' children, it was not an advantage to have been born in Yaoundé: migrants, particularly the most recent, have pass-rates generally as good as or better than the Yaoundé-born pupils, repeaters and non-repeaters alike. We may now consider the special case of children from farming backgrounds.

The Performance of Farmers' Children

There are proportionally more recent migrants among candidates from farming than from any other occupational back-

ground, but the pattern of performance among children from small farming families follows the general pattern whereas that of large farmers' children does not (see Table V:1). In the previous chapter it was shown that both farming groups were ethnically and economically heterogenous, that selection by ability was common in both groups, but especially among small farmers' children, and that pass-rates for the two sexes were highly divergent in both cases. We would expect the above-mentioned differences in pass-rates to be related to these factors, as well as, perhaps, to repeat rates, which have just been shown to be important with non-farming groups.

Again, only the later arrivals in Yaoundé can logically have been sent to the town on the basis of shown promise, as only they have the chance to show signs of above-average ability before leaving their birthplace. This argument fits the case of small farmers' children, where the pass-rate of the most recent migrants is over twice as high as that of pre-1970 arrivals, but not that of large farmers' children, where the pass-rates are identical for both groups. If post-1970 migrants in the latter category are selected at least partially on the basis of shown ability, then it follows that (1) pre-1970 migrants enjoy an advantage which compensates for their not being selected on the basis of ability, or (2) in spite of being so selected, post-1970 migrants suffer from disadvantages compared with the earlier group and the comparable group of small farmers' children. Bearing these points in mind, we may briefly consider the performance of farmers' children in relation to sex, age and repeat rates.

A high proportion of girls in the post-1970 group of migrants might explain the performance inequalities being

discussed, given that in all cases girls have a very low pass-rate. A high percentage of girls in the pre-1970 small farming group would have the same effect.

The data do not support these propositions. Among the later migrants there is a slightly higher proportion of girls from small than from large farming backgrounds. Moreover, there were proportionally fewer female candidates among earlier migrants from the small farming group, which has the lowest pass-rate of the four being compared. As the girls pass-rates are low in both cases, the solution to the problem must lie among the boys.

Age partially explains the pass-rate differences among the two groups of recent male migrants: over half the small farmers' sons were in the 10-12 age group, compared with less than a third of the large farmers'. Moreover, the reverse was the case among earlier migrants (a third vs two-fifths of 10-12 year olds for the two groups respectively). Age thus helps explain performance differences both within and between groups. It would seem reasonable that more large farmers' children should be sent to town at an early age, for large farmers have greater means to pay the added costs or meet the reciprocal obligations which sending a child to live with relatives entails. Also, if more small farmers' children are selected by ability —as seems to be the case— then it is probable that later migrants from this group will be of below-average age, having repeated fewer classes than other farmers' children.

Ignoring date of arrival in Yaoundé, we find that younger pupils from small farming backgrounds have repeated substant-

ially fewer classes than those from large farming backgrounds, but that the same is not true for older pupils. About a third of 10-12 year olds from large farming backgrounds had not repeated a primary class, compared with over two-fifths of small farmers' sons.⁴

As regards CM2 repeating, large farmers' children had considerably higher rates than small farmers', both among early and late migrants. For post-1970 arrivals the figures were 50 and 39 percent respectively. As CM2 repeaters generally have significantly higher pass-rates than non-repeaters, this argues strongly in favour of greater selection by ability among small farmers' children, who had lower repeat rates and considerably higher pass-rates than the later arrivals from large farming backgrounds.

No evidence can be found to associate ethnicity with the pass-rate differentials being discussed, although overall performance was related to ethnicity (see Chapter IV). The two most important ethnic groups, the Ewondo and the Bamiléké, had similar proportions of pupils in both groups of farmers, and similar proportions arriving before and after 1970.

Thus, age and repeat rates explain the relatively good performance of early migrants from large farming backgrounds, whilst these two factors associated with selection by ability explain the high pass-rate of ^{late} migrants from small farming backgrounds. Educational histories associated with parental selection thus provide the clues to the understanding of performance variations among pupils from different farming backgrounds.

We may conclude this section by briefly considering the relationship between the performance and material and cultural milieux of farmers' children. A positive relationship between

material and cultural variables and performance was not expected, except, perhaps, in the case of early migrants. Early influences, such as parental education and the age at which pupils learn French, are likely to be more important in explaining performance variance than the immediate material and cultural environment of the pupil. Unfortunately, differential selection among children from farming backgrounds makes it difficult to investigate this. For example, while there is a positive and significant correlation between fathers' education and performance for children of large farmers, the correlation is stronger, but negative for the children of small farmers. This is another indication of the greater propensity of these parents to select the more able children for urban schooling.

A similar relationship was found between pupils' knowledge of French on entering primary school and CE performance: a positive (but weak) correlation in the large farmers' case, a negative (and strong) correlation for the children of small farmers. Moreover, only 9 percent of the latter indicated that they spoke French well on entering primary school, compared with a sample mean of nearly a quarter.

A few points can be made concerning the present home environment of farmers' children, although, as predicted the latter does not seem to influence performance in any consistent way. Less than a quarter of farmers' children said they were living with one or both parents (sample average three-quarters), and most of these were living in villages and attending primary schools on the periphery of Yaoundé. The remainder were split almost equally between parents' siblings and own siblings plus in-laws (e.g. elder sisters' husbands).

For both groups of farmers' children the highest pass-rates were found among those living with male guardians other than uncles (i.e. mostly elder brothers and brothers-in-law). As might be expected, the majority of those living with brothers and brothers-in-law were recent migrants. Those migrating when young are less likely to have elder brothers and married sisters already living in town, and are therefore more likely to be found living with parents' siblings.

The material conditions of the home of the children of urban occupational backgrounds will be discussed later, but the index used may be defined here and related to the performance of farmers' children. Sample students were asked to indicate whether or not the house in which they lived had the following: running water, electricity, an interior toilet, a refrigerator and some form of cooker. Good material conditions were defined as the presence of at least four of these, average conditions the presence of two or three, and poor conditions as the absence of all or all but one of the five items.

No consistent relationship emerged between performance and material conditions, either for all households considered together or for parents, uncles, etc. as household heads considered separately. For both large and small farmers' children, the best CE performance was found among those living in average homes; among large farmers' children the next best pass-rate was among those living in poor conditions whereas for small farmers' children it was among those living in good conditions. Thus, as expected, present living conditions are no guarantee of performance.

Finally, there was an inverse relationship between the

use of French in the home and CE results among small farmers' children, but a direct relationship for those of large farmers. This pattern is identical to that found in the case of fathers' education and pupils' knowledge of French on entering primary school. This seems to indicate that the successful small farmers' sons are relatively highly concentrated among the least acculturated families, both in the village and in the town, and that it is the least acculturated parents among (small farmers who are the most likely to select by ability. Among large farmers' children the tendency is reversed; as with urban children, performance tends to reflect the advantages and disadvantages attached to family background within the occupational group. It is striking that the most successful rural-urban migrants are the latest arrivals, i.e. those who have benefited from no family, community or educational advantages whatsoever. To this group could be applied Blau & Duncan's conclusion (1967) that it is better to have initial disadvantages and to have to cope with them early in the game makes individuals more prone to be successful in later stages. But late migrants from small farming backgrounds are numerically unimportant; they account for only 18 percent of farming migrants and only nine percent of successful candidates among post-1970 migrants. Nevertheless, we would expect this group to have high visibility in that they are likely to do well in secondary school and be influential in encouraging future generations of farmers' sons to enter the educationally stakes despite the heavy odds against them.

Parental Education and Performance

Previous studies have stressed the importance of parental education as a determinant of school performance. Western European and American studies have shown parental education to be the most important determinant of performance variations within as well as between social classes (Leclerc & Gérard 1960; Douglas 1964; Blau & Duncan 1967). This is not to say, however, that parental class and education should be considered independent of one another, which they clearly are not in the majority of cases. Variations in parental education are much more in evidence between than within social classes. The important point is that the educational component of parental class position is a major determinant of children's educational success in educational systems which are not "class neutral". In the Francophone African case this relationship can be more or less reduced to the command of refined, stylised, academic French, as opposed to the variety widely spoken in the street or the bush.

TABLE V:3 FATHERS' EDUCATION BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUP (PERCENT)

Occupational Group	No diploma	CEPE	BEPC	Propatoire	Total	N
Elite	1	11	22	66	100	327
Other white-collar	9	47	35	9	100	521
Large trader	35	31	22	12	100	51
Small trader	61	37		2	100	217
Skilled manual	52	41		7	100	231
Semi-skilled manual	49	48		3	100	238
Unskilled manual	76	24		0	100	62
Large farmer	74	24		2	100	259
Small farmer	82	16		2	100	119
All	38	34		28	100	2025

The first three groups have the virtual monopoly of secondary education and are the only groups who rank below-average in the "no diploma" category. As might be expected, small farmers are the least educated group, a fact which supports

the hypothesis concerning selection by ability in this group. Small traders are of particular interest, as they have lower education levels than other white-collar, skilled and semi-skilled workers, yet their children outperform those from the latter backgrounds. As already pointed out, children from trading backgrounds have above-average Maths scores, which is probably related to the nature of their fathers' occupation than to their cultural or material environment. More will be said about this in the following section.

Nearly three-quarters of sample students had fathers with an educational level of CEPE or less, but 55 percent of successful candidates in the CE had fathers with the BEPC or more. Clearly, this pattern reflects both parental occupation and education; the independent effect of education can be tested by controlling it, as is done in Table V:4.

TABLE V:4 CE PASS-RATES BY FATHERS' OCCUPATION AND EDUCATION^a

Fathers' occupation	Education			
	No diploma	CEPE	BEPC	Probatoire+
Elite	--	10(19)	31(42)	39(160)
Other white-collar	4(22)	16(128)	25(109)	17(29)
Large trader	25(12)	43(7)	--	--
Small trader	16(67)	17(41)	--	--
Skilled manual	14(49)	21(33)	--	--
Semi-skilled manual	6(48)	7(42)	43(7)	
Unskilled manual	0(18)	0(7)	--	
Large farmer	14(65)	21(28)	--	
Small farmer	32(25)	12(8)	--	
All	15(307)	16(131)	25(173)	37(196)

^aCells of five cases or less not included.

Overall, performance improves with fathers' education in most occupational groups, with the notable exception of small farmers, where, as already pointed out, the reverse is the case. Children whose fathers had the CEPE had significantly better pass-rates than the children of those who did not in the case of large traders, other white-collar, skilled manual and large farmer groups. Of the white-collar groups, only the élite children follow the predictable pattern; other white-collar workers' children have average or below average pass-rates at all levels of fathers' education. The rate for the highest education level in this group is less than half the average group, perhaps reflecting a tendency among white-collar workers' children to inflate their fathers' education. Alternatively, the fathers with the Probatoire in this occupational group are under-achievers, incapable of transmitting background advantages to their children.⁵

The only indication that children from working class backgrounds with above-average pass-rates are from atypical families is found in the semi-skilled category, where a quarter of successful candidates have fathers with the level of BEPC. But this pattern is not repeated in the skilled manual category, where all successful candidates have fathers with the CEPE or less. The educated semi-skilled workers are also occupational underachievers, but may well be from more humble backgrounds than the other white-collar underachievers and did not have the contacts necessary for entering non-manual jobs.

Four-fifths of all passes from Probatoire+ backgrounds were from élite families, but this reflects the distribution of education between occupational groups rather than exceptional

performance among élite children with the most educated fathers. Thus, the effect of fathers' education on performance is much more significant between rather than within occupational groups.

Most previous studies have ignored the effect of mothers' education and occupation on performance in the African context. These were expected to have an important direct effect on children's life chances, given the greater intimacy between mother than between father and child, particularly during the formative years. But the narrower range of female education and occupational opportunities among the adult population should limit this effect. For example, the advantage of having an educated mother will be enjoyed by fewer children than in the case of educated fathers.

Secondary education was the quasi-monopoly of élite⁶ mothers; they accounted for two-thirds of all mothers with the BEPC or more and 90 percent of those with the Probatoire or more. Over two-fifths of élite mothers had a secondary school diploma as opposed to less than one tenth of other candidates' mothers. There was little to distinguish between the mothers of candidates from the bottom six occupational groups, only 5-15 percent of whom had any educational certificate.

Elite and other white-collar mothers stood out from the others in their occupational classification. Over three-quarters of élite mothers had the Probatoire or more (élite fathers two-thirds), and over half of other white-collar mothers had the BEPC or more (fathers 44 percent). Table V:5 compares the gross effect of mothers' and fathers' education on pass-rates.

At all levels pass-rates are higher in relation to mothers' than to fathers' education:⁷

TABLE V:5 CE PASS-RATES IN RELATION TO EDUCATION LEVELS OF BOTH PARENTS

Education Level	Pass-rates		Selectivity Index ^a	
	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers
None	15(340)	18(897)	0.7	0.9
CEPE	16(360)	20(229)	0.7	1.0
BEPC	25(199)	29(99)	1.2	1.5
Probatoire+	37(211)	48(44)	1.7	2.4

^aPercent passing divided by percent taking in each educational category.

As in the fathers' case, there was little overall difference in pass-rates of children with mothers who did or did not have the CEPE. Pass-rates are comparable in relation to the BEPC, but in the mothers' case the increase in the pass-rate between BEPC and Probatoire is significantly greater than in the fathers' case. Pass-rates and selectivity ratios indicate that mothers' education has a greater gross effect on performance than fathers' education. But it is probable that there is a strong interaction between mothers' education and fathers' education and occupation, for we would expect that the most educated mothers are the wives of the most educated fathers, most of whom will have élite jobs.

Two-thirds of mothers with BEPC+ educational levels are the wives of élite fathers. Moreover, the combination of élite fathers and Probatoire+ mothers gives a pass-rate 7 percent above the already very high pass-rate associated with all Probatoire+ mothers (see Table V:6). Given that men rarely have less education than their wives, it is probable that most élite men with highly educated wives have themselves passed at least the Bac, and many will have a post-secondary diploma. It is thus possible to identify a small élite within the élite

on the basis of the occupational and educational level of fathers and mothers respectively. Children in this category have a pass-rate fully two-thirds above the élite category children as a whole and two and a half times the sample average.

TABLE V:6 CE PASS-RATES BY FATHERS' OCCUPATION AND MOTHERS' EDUCATION^a

Fathers' occupation	Mothers' education			
	None	CEPE	BEPC	Probatoire
Elite	27(55)	24(55)	36(50)	55(36)
Other white-collar	17(219)	19(79)	19(26)	--
Large trader	26(27)	14(7)	--	--
Small trader	18(123)	46(13)	50(4)	--
Skilled manual	18(92)	0(8)	--	--
Semi-skilled manual	13(99)	15(13)	--	--
Unskilled manual	0(23)	--	--	--
Large farmer	16(108)	0(4)	--	--
Small farmer	29(31)	0(4)	--	--

^aCells of 3 cases or less not included.

As already pointed out, it makes little difference whether mothers have the CEPE as regards performance. In fact, only in the case of small traders' children did performance rise significantly when the mother had the CEPE; for all other urban occupational groups there was a decline (for large traders' and skilled manual workers' children a significant decline) or little difference between the two groups. Thus, there is no consistent relationship between mothers' education and CE performance within occupational groups.

It is not possible to identify an independent influence of maternal education on performance given that (a) mothers' and

fathers' education are positively related to each other, and (b) the average father has a higher education level than his wife. This is particularly clear in the case of the élite, where at all levels of parental education CE pass-rates are higher for a given level of maternal education than for the same level of paternal education. For all urban occupational groups this pattern is found in the majority of cases.

We may finish this section by considering the relationship between mothers' education, occupation and their children's CE performance.

TABLE V:7 PASS-RATES BY MOTHERS' EDUCATION AND OCCUPATION^a

Mothers' occupation	Mothers' education				All
	None	CEPE	BEPC	Probatoire+	
Elite	--	--	--	61(13)	59(17)
Other white-collar	28(7)	30(64)	28(63)	28(13)	29(147)
Trader	13(100)	0(5)	--	--	12(105)
Tailoress	20(114)	33(52)	40(10)	--	25(178)
Housewife	17(524)	7(79)	11(9)	43(7)	16(619)
Farmer	20(119)	20(5)	--	--	20(126)
All	18(864)	20(206)	29(86)	44(36)	21(1192)

^aCells with less than four cases not included.

The 61 percent pass-rate of the children with élite mothers in the most educated category is the highest of any group of children found so far, but it is certain that the mothers in this category will generally have husbands with university education and top élite jobs. Thus, the (very few) children with highly educated parents in the élite have pass-rates nearly three times the sample average.

It is remarkable that education level seems to have no effect whatsoever on performance in the case of the children

of other white-collar workers (e.g. nurses, secretaries, primary school teachers). In the case of fathers in this category, pass-rates were not related to education level in a systematic way, but at least children whose fathers had secondary diplomas had better pass-rates than those who did not. We would expect most white-collar mothers to have élite husbands, and this would explain the above-average performance of the children of less educated white-collar mothers.⁸ But we would have expected mothers with BEPC+ levels of education to have children who outperform the above group. There is no obvious reason for this relatively poor performance, particularly that of the children with mothers in the Probatoire+ category.⁹

The regular pattern in the case of tailoress' children probably reflects a combination of both husbands' occupation and mothers' occupation and education. Three-fifths of tailor-esses had husbands in the first two occupational categories, and it is probable that many of these mothers would be running the larger, more lucrative businesses. The less educated tailoresses are more likely to be from non-white-collar households and to be employed by the more substantial tailor-esses or working on a small scale on their own.

It is interesting to note that candidates who said that their mothers were farmers had a better pass-rate than those whose mothers were housewives or traders. As expected, over half of all candidates said that their mothers were housewives, ranging from a third of the wives of the élite to three-quarters of the wives of unskilled workers. The pattern of performance among children whose mothers are housewives is irregular, perhaps reflecting the tendency to select by ability among

farmers' children. A quarter of all housewives were farmers' wives, and almost all of the latter had no education. This would explain the average pass-rate of the children with mothers who were uneducated housewives.

The overall pass-rate of female traders' children is by far the worst in relation to mothers' education, and only the children of semi- and unskilled workers have lower pass-rates in relation to fathers' occupation. Three-fifths of female traders are the wives of small traders or semi-skilled workers. Ninety-five percent of them have no educational qualifications, compared with 75 percent of all candidates' mothers, including farmers. It is reasonably clear, then, that we are dealing with an extremely lowly group of working women; those who are obliged to supplement meagre household incomes by unrewarding petty commerce.

Thus, as expected, the distribution of mothers' education is more skewed in favour of the élite than is the case with fathers. Few of the wives of non-white-collar workers have even the CEPE, and when they do have it, it does not seem to make much difference to performance. This probably reflects low levels of material welfare among a large section of the urban population, which serve to attenuate the effect of marginal advantages in parental education levels. In the underdeveloped context we would expect material conditions to be more closely related to performance variance than in the West, and we will return to this question in a subsequent section.

Age, Sex and Parental Education

In the last chapter age and sex were shown to be closely related to performance variations, and we may complete this

section by looking at these two factors in relation to parental education. Children whose fathers had an educational level of the CEPE or less were less likely to take the CE than those with more educated fathers, and less likely to pass it if they took it. But whereas 10-12 year olds with the most educated fathers represented nearly a half of successful younger candidates, in the 13-14 age group they accounted for less than 10 percent of passes. This strongly suggests that the older children from élite backgrounds (where 80 percent of fathers with the Probatoire or more are located) are of below average ability.¹⁰

As regards sex, a similar pattern of CE take- and pass-rates exists to that described above: for both boys and girls, pupils with less educated fathers were the least likely to take and pass the CE. But whereas boys with uneducated fathers represent nearly a third of all male passes, girls in this group account for only one tenth of all female passes. Conversely, boys with highly educated fathers represent 28 percent of male passes, compared with 39 percent for girls in this group.

TABLE V:8 CE PASS-RATES BY AGE, SEX AND FATHERS' EDUCATION

Fathers' Education	Male			Female		
	10-12	13	14	10-12	13	14
None	22(74)	28(57)	18(44)	11(45)	6(65)	4(49)
CEPE	22(69)	16(44)	26(35)	15(78)	8(71)	13(61)
BEPC	23(52)	36(25)	29(17)	40(48)	15(41)	14(14)
Probatoire+	44(78)	23(17)	0(4)	46(83)	19(16)	0(13)
All	28(273)	25(143)	22(100)	29(254)	10(193)	9(137)

Table V:8 shows that, for the youngest candidates, boys

have significantly higher pass-rates than girls at low levels of fathers' education, but the reverse is true at the BEPC+ level. For older candidates, boys outperform girls at all levels of fathers' education, with the exception of the oldest candidates with highly educated fathers, where zero pass-rates reflect low levels of ability in both sexes.

In Chapter IV it was shown that older candidates were concentrated in the lower occupational groups and younger candidates were found predominantly in white-collar groups. Thus, the age dimension of the above table is contaminated by occupational background. But in the boys case this seems to make little difference to performance. For the first three categories of fathers' education, there is little or no relationship between age and performance. For the girls, there is a regular pattern regarding the relationship between age and pass-rates as well as, with one exception, between fathers' education and pass-rates.

We would hypothesise that the importance attached to the education of daughters will be a function of parental occupation and education. The occupational dimension of girls' performance has already been discussed at length, and need not detain us here. Also, as the occupational background of candidates from both sexes is very similar, we may ignore the possible confounding effect of occupation in the above table when comparing the pass-rates of the two sexes. In the 10-12 age group, girls whose fathers had an educational level of Probatoire+ had pass-rates over four times higher than girls with uneducated fathers, whereas with the boys the pass-rate of the former group was only twice that of the latter.¹¹ For all age groups, boys with the least educated fathers had a pass-rate over three times

that of girls in the same category, whereas at the Probatoire+ level pass-rates were identical. Finally, boys from the highest educational background have an almost identical pass-rate to boys from élite backgrounds, whereas in the case of the girls, the former rate is 6 percentage points higher than the latter. This demonstrates, perhaps, that the educational disadvantages attached to being a girl are attenuated more by being from a highly educated than from a higher occupational background.

It is not possible to take the analysis any further without using more sophisticated methodology. But the important point is not that education of parents does or does not have an independent effect on performance, but that, whatever the effect of parental education, it varies in direct proportion to occupational background. In this sense, the above discussion of sex and performance mirrors that undertaken in Chapter IV in relation to occupational background. In what follows the material and linguistic environments of children from urban occupational backgrounds will be considered in an attempt to shed more light on the question of which aspects of family background are associated with performance variance.

The Home Environment of Non-migrants

Children from urban occupational backgrounds are less heterogeneous than farmers' children as regards migration levels and living arrangements. Nearly three-fifths of the former were born in Yaoundé or other large towns compared with less than a fifth of the latter, and over four-fifths of the former lived with one or both parents compared with less than a quarter of the latter.

In general, living with both parents does not seem to constitute an advantage from the point of view of CE per-

formance . Children living with mothers but not fathers also had average pass-rates, while those living with fathers but not mothers had somewhat below-average scores (17 percent pass-rate). In what follows the discussion will be restricted to children living with both parents (two-thirds of children from urban backgrounds), unless otherwise indicated.

Language Used in the Home

More than a quarter of sample students declared that French was the first language spoken in the home. The widespread use of French in the urban context sometimes surprises those who are familiar with the rather benign linguistic heritage of British colonialism in West Africa. It is possible that pupils have exaggerated the importance of French as a language used in the home, but variations between occupational groups are revealing: 10 to 20 percent of children from manual and farming backgrounds said that French was the first language used in the home, compared to 20 percent of those with small trading and other white-collar backgrounds and 46 and 55 percent respectively for those with large trader and élite fathers. Thus, as with education, whatever advantages are to be gained from speaking French in the home, they will accrue primarily to those children from the most favoured backgrounds.

Table V:9 shows that it is clearly between children who reported that French was the first home language and all other children that the difference between pass-rates is most noticeable, except in the case of children from manual backgrounds, where performance variations were minimal. Children from commercial and non-manual backgrounds were up to 50 percent more likely to pass the CE if French was the first language of the home. This is a first indication that non-material home

influences are more associated with performance variations at the top of the occupational hierarchy than at the bottom. It is, of course, likely that other background factors such as parental education are reflected in the table.

TABLE V:9 CE PERFORMANCE BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND AND USE OF FRENCH IN THE HOME.

Fathers' Occupation	French:			Total
	1st	2nd-3rd	None	
Elite	45(157)	23(101)	25(20)	36(278)
Other white-collar	28(67)	16(243)	10(31)	18(341)
Large trader	37(19)	19(16)	0(4)	26(39)
Small trader	27(22)	17(97)	22(9)	19(128)
Skilled manual	12(8)	15(74)	12(16)	14(98)
Semi-skilled manual	9(21)	12(73)	12(17)	12(111)
Unskilled manual	0(2)	0(17)	0(5)	0(24)
All	35(296)	16(621)	14(102)	22(1019)

If the language spoken at home has an independent effect on performance, we would expect this to be more pronounced in the case of the French paper, which is more likely to reflect home influences than the maths paper. Here we are more concerned with actual performance than with passing and failing, so Table V:10 is based on standard scores rather than pass-rates.

The table shows that, overall, using French as the first language in the home does not afford an added advantage in the French as opposed to the Maths paper. With few exceptions, the same performance pattern is followed as in the pass-rates shown in the previous table. To check the above results, the same procedure was followed with the French and Maths TAS taken by most sample students, with very similar results.¹²

TABLE V:10 PROPORTION OF CANDIDATES IN TOP THIRD OF STANDARD SCORES BY CE PAPER AND USE OF FRENCH IN THE HOME

Fathers' Occupation	French Paper			Maths Paper		
	1st	2nd-3rd	No	1st	2nd-3rd	No
Elite	60(135)	43(75)	28(18)	55(135)	40(75)	22(18)
Other white-collar	50(54)	42(194)	32(22)	48(54)	33(194)	14(22)
Large trader	47(15)	21(14)	33(3)	47(15)	21(14)	67(3)
Small trader	31(19)	29(80)	43(7)	42(19)	35(80)	57(7)
Skilled manual	28(7)	32(65)	36(11)	14(7)	32(65)	36(11)
Semi-skilled manual	37(16)	28(61)	31(13)	37(16)	34(61)	31(13)
Unskilled manual	0(2)	12(16)	25(4)	50(2)	25(16)	0(4)
All	52(248)	35(505)	32(78)	50(248)	34(505)	32(78)

As the use of French in the home fails to differentiate between performance in French and Maths, we must conclude that the independent effect of the linguistic environment is not as important as it might at first appear. It is probable that other background advantages associated with the use of French in the home, such as parental education, account for the performance variations shown in Table V:9.

Living Conditions

The five items used to evaluate living conditions are listed on page 183. The overall pattern of CE results shown in the following table is similar to that in Table V:10: there is no difference in performance among those living in average or poor material conditions, but those living in good conditions have a pass-rate over twice that of the other candidates. But the overall pattern is not found in all occupational groups: below large traders there is no tendency for children living in good material conditions to outperform others. The most significant performance patterns in the "expected direction" are among

children from élite and large trading backgrounds, which was also the case in relation to home language. But again it is possible that living conditions are not independent of other background variables within occupational groups.

TABLE V:11 CE PERFORMANCE BY FATHERS' OCCUPATION AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Fathers' Occupation	Good	Average	Poor
Elite	39(234)	24(25)	5(18)
Other white-collar	28(121)	12(106)	14(121)
Large trader	36(25)	12(8)	0(7)
Small trader	17(18)	19(43)	21(67)
Skilled manual	18(17)	16(19)	12(64)
Semi-skilled manual	11(9)	8(25)	13(79)
Unskilled manual	0(0)	0(6)	0(18)
All	32(415)	14(232)	14(374)

Thus, there is little to indicate that material conditions are more closely associated with performance variance at the bottom than at the top of the occupational ladder. Material conditions vary more within than between occupational groups, as do most other background variables so far discussed. Thus, the majority of élite and large traders' children live in good material conditions, whereas the majority of those from all other groups except white-collar workers live in poor conditions. Thus, whatever advantage accrues to those living in good home conditions benefits the children of the élite and large traders more than those from other occupational backgrounds.

According to the two indexes used above, both material and linguistic factors are positively associated with performance among children from the top three occupational groups, but it is probable that confounding background variables explain this

association. If this is the case, it follows that white-collar and commercial backgrounds are less homogeneous, both culturally and materially, than manual backgrounds. Parental education is the best example of this: for both parents there is a greater range of educational attainments at the top than at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. The reasons for this are fairly clear.

First, many of the older civil servants were already employed before the post-war expansion of secondary and (later) higher education, and may thus have reached high positions in the administration through promotion rather than through educational achievement. Younger state employees tend to be more highly educated. Over time, it is probable that the educational heterogeneity of the élite will diminish, thus increasing the possibility of élite self-perpetuation.

Second, some large traders are retired civil servants whereas others are self-made men with perhaps little or no formal education. We would not expect this to continue to be the case; i.e. the educational range of large traders is also likely to become less pronounced over time. The reasons for this were discussed in Chapter I. Third, in the recent past it has been more common to find successful men among the uneducated than unsuccessful men among the educated. Again, this is a short-run phenomenon already showing signs of reversal(see Chapter VII).

Lastly, the recent expansion of female education has meant that many of the younger white-collar workers have wives with post-primary diplomas. Among candidates from élite backgrounds, over two-fifths had mothers in this category. We would expect this trend to continue, again

with the result that background advantages are likely to increase in relative importance in determining CE and other academic performance among élite children.

Household and Family Size

Blau and Duncan (1967) have shown family size to have a considerable independent effect on educational and occupational success, but little attention has been paid to this variable in the African context. Table V:12 suggests that pass-rate is inversely correlated with size of household.

TABLE V:12 CE PASS-RATE BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND FATHERS' OCCUPATION

Fathers' Occupation	Household size	
	2-9	10+
Elite	39(175)	26(127)
Other white-collar	21(183)	15(203)
Large trader	27(22)	29(24)
Small trader	23(77)	16(24)
Skilled manual	18(66)	12(48)
Semiskilled manual	13(59)	10(68)
Unskilled manual	0(18)	0(9)
All	25(600)	17(568)

The inverse relationship is found in all but large traders' households, although outside the élite differences in pass-rates are not large. We might expect the richest traders and businessmen to have the largest families as well as the largest houses, so it is reasonable to expect family size not to have an adverse effect on performance in this case.

It is possible, however, that the above table reflects an intervening variable. It may be that family size reflects parents' age, which will itself be negatively correlated with

such variables as education. This does not prove to be the case; fewer of the heads of large households had the BEPC than among the heads of small households (40 vs 46 percent), but differences within occupational groups are small, with the exception of large traders, where those with small households were twice as likely as other large traders to have the BEPC. This is the reverse of what we would expect if fathers' education were related to the performance pattern. Thus, in this case, material conditions seem to be more important than parental characteristics.

The élite case merits particular attention, as it shows a marked tendency for performance to vary inversely with household size. But this does not reflect parental education; 87 and 93 percent of élite candidates from large and small households respectively had fathers with the BEPC or more.

Neither do pass-rates vary with the number of full siblings in the élite group, but they do vary markedly with polygyny. Thus, 41 percent of élite children from monogamous households passed the CE, but only 18 percent of those whose fathers had two or more wives (all candidates: 23 and 18 percent). This reflects parental education: only just over a half of élite fathers with the CEPE were monogamous, compared with over three-quarters of those with the Probatoire or more.

It is reasonable to suppose that the younger members of the élite are more monogamous and more educated than the older.¹³ The wives of the younger members of the élite have as many children as other wives, so household size reflects the number of dependents rather than fertility rates. It is clear that the educational chances of children with older élite fathers

are adversely affected by the incidence of polygyny and large household size. This indicates that élite reproduction through educational achievement is more probable among the "new" élite, whose fathers were not among those who benefited from the one-off gratuitous promotions of the early 1960s, than among the "old" élite, many of whose fathers did benefit in this way. The "new" élite pattern of high educational achievement (plus monogamy?) is likely eventually to become the norm, thus establishing a more homogeneous élite with fewer internal contradictions and common educational backgrounds (see following chapter).¹⁴

Outside the élite, pass-rates varied with polygyny among the children of small traders and skilled workers. Among the former, pass-rates fell from 22 to 8 percent between the children of monogamists and polygynists, but rose from 11 to 33 percent for the latter. In the small trader case, polygyny was unrelated to education, whereas among skilled workers the most polygynous fathers were the most educated, although the differences were too small to explain more than a part of the performance pattern.

The data on polygyny were cross-checked by means of a question which asked whether fathers were responsible for looking after children other than the full siblings of the respondents. There was no overall difference between those answering "yes" or "no" to this question. Again, significant differences were found only in the case of the élite, small traders' and skilled workers' children, and they were in the same direction and of comparable magnitude to the differences found in relation to polygyny.

Home Environment and Sex

Finally, we might expect the home environment to be the major determinant of the CE pass-rate differences between girls and boys discussed in Chapter IV. In this section we consider the amount of housework and homework done by the two sexes, as well as the amount of help they receive with their schoolwork and their own perceptions of their educational chances.

Students were presented with a list of household chores and asked to indicate whether they did each one every day, from time to time, rarely or never. They were then asked to add other chores which they did but which were not on the list (see Appendix I).

As expected, the girls did more housework than the boys, but the differences were not very large. Thus, 14 and 19 percent of boys and girls respectively said that they did all of the listed chores every day; 29 and 22 percent did no housework at all. Boys from élite and large trading backgrounds did the least housework, girls from large farming, small trading and unskilled manual backgrounds did the most. Within occupational groups no pattern emerged, however.

Pupils were asked how often they did homework: every day, from time to time, rarely or never. Given the nature of the question, it is not surprising that two-thirds of the sample declared that they did homework every day. More important, there was no significant difference between the sexes.

Pupils were then asked if they were helped with their

schoolwork, and if so by whom. The answers to this question prove more interesting. Thirty percent of the girls and 36 percent of the boys declared that they received no help with their schoolwork. The sons of skilled and the daughters of unskilled workers received the least assistance, and the sons and daughters of the élite and large traders the most. Moreover, boys in élite families and girls in large trading families were significantly more likely than others of their sex to have private tutors.

We may, however, doubt the usefulness of the help received. In the case of the boys, it was those who received no help who had the best pass-rate, and those who were helped by two or more people who had the worst. Among the girls, 35 percent of those receiving help from two or more people passed the CE, but over three-quarters of these were from élite families.

Boys from élite and other white-collar families with private tutors had significantly better pass-rates than the average for boys in these categories, but this was not the case for boys from other occupational backgrounds. This indicates, perhaps, that the quality of the tutor only reflects the quality of the home and the ability of parents to pay.

For both sexes, parental help with homework was associated with above-average pass-rates, particularly in the case of the girls. Nearly a third of élite girls received such help (female average 19 percent) and these girls had a pass-rate of 39 percent, which was better than all élite boys.

Overall, however, it cannot be said that being helped with schoolwork made a significant difference to performance.

By its very nature, it is impossible to say what difference private tuition made to performance, and it is usually received by children from the top occupational groups, who would be expected to do well in the CE anyway.

Finally, pupils were asked whether they thought they would pass or fail the CE and CEPE if they were to sit them at the end of the school year. In most cases pupils preferred the 'don't know' response, especially in the CE, where 59 percent of the boys and 69 percent of the girls gave this answer (CEPE figures 51 and 62 percent). Of those who offered a 'Yes' or 'No' answer, the overwhelming majority thought they would pass -92 and 92 percent of the boys, 86 and 89 percent of the girls. There was no tendency for levels of confidence to vary with social background. Pass-rates did, however, reflect predictions. Because of the small numbers involved it was not possible to analyse pass-rates by sex, but for all candidates the pass-rate of those who predicted CE success was twice that of those who predicted failure (25 vs 12 percent). Only among the élite was there a reverse trend; those who predicted failure had a 13 percent better pass-rate than those who predicted success. This may reflect bias in the correction of the exam, favouring élite children who would otherwise have failed (see Chapter IV). The numbers involved were, however, small.

Only the housework data above seem to differentiate between the sexes at all strongly as regards pass-rate variations. Both the housework data and those concerned with the amount of help received with schoolwork help explain why the pass-rates of girls from élite and large trading backgrounds are almost as high as the boys'. Neither do much

to explain the poor results of girls from agricultural backgrounds, which are more likely to be related to early socialisation and household chores than to present circumstances.

Conclusions

The distinction between inter- and intra-occupational group variations in home circumstances has been frequently emphasised in this chapter. Parental education, the use of French in the home and material living conditions have been shown to vary more between than within occupational groups. This is another way of saying that background advantages and disadvantages are cumulative rather than independent in their incidence. This does not mean that any given background dimension cannot have an independent effect on performance within an occupational group, as the pattern of élite children's pass-rates demonstrates. Here and in the other white-collar group there was a large enough range in such variables as mothers' education and use of French in the home for one to be able to detect important variations in performance within the occupational group. Elsewhere, background factors were generally too skewed in their distribution for such variations to be statistically meaningful, and it is for this reason that (a) performance patterns did not conform to predictions, and (b) it was not possible to identify sub-groups of exceptional performers from atypical families within lower occupational groups. The only exception to this was among farmers' sons, who will be shown in the next chapter to be atypical of farmers' sons as a whole.

For the reasons cited above, as well as for methodolog-

ical reasons, it was not possible to evaluate the relative impact on performance of material as opposed to cultural factors in the home environment. The comparison of French and Maths scores suggests, however, that the use of French in the home does not confer a differential advantage on candidates in the French paper, although a trading background is conducive to above-average scores in Maths.

The generally inconclusive nature of these remarks reflects the need to consider the whole process of child-rearing and socialisation, rather than just the present manifestation of background inequalities. Only longitudinal studies, none of which have so far been undertaken in the African context, can achieve this.

FOOTNOTES

1. It should not be forgotten that performance is only one of a number of determinants of secondary enrolment.
2. Foster (1965) has shown that in Ghana fathers' education is a better predictor of secondary entry than fathers' occupation.
3. Unfortunately, the data are not very finely classified, so that it is not possible to compare the most recent repeaters/migrants with the rest to see if a pattern of selection by ability emerges. Repeaters from other white-collar, small trader and skilled and semi-skilled manual backgrounds all have higher pass-rates among recent migrants than among the native born. It is possible that this relationship is even more significant in the case of the most recent migrants from these groups.
4. Only 20 percent of sample students had not repeated a class, which means that the youngest pupils from small

farming backgrounds were exceptionally low repeaters.

5. The same might be true for small farmers who have the CEPE.

6. That is, wives of élite fathers.

7. This is possible because the Ns are differently distributed for mothers and fathers. The same is true for selectivity indexes.

8. In fact, over 90 percent of all candidates' mothers in the other white-collar category had husbands who were in the same or the élite category.

9. This follows the fathers' pattern, and it possible that the two groups of candidates overlap somewhat. Both mothers and fathers in this group seem to be underachievers.

10. It was shown in the previous chapter that these children have above-average repeat rates for CM2 pupils. But most of the children with fathers in the BEPC+ category are in the 10-12 age group, which means that the poor performance of the 13-14 year olds does not significantly reduce the pass-rate of the group as a whole

11. The range of scores was 35 and 22 percentage points for girls and boys respectively.

12. The traders' childrens' superiority in Maths is only evident in the small traders' case, where all the Maths scores are significantly higher than the French.

13. This does not mean that élite fathers will necessarily remain monogamous as they grow older. Serial monogamy is more probable than polygyny.

14. The élite tend to marry across ethnic lines much more than other groups (a third vs less than one fifth for the whole sample), and inter-racial marriage is not uncommon among the younger élite.

CHAPTER VI THE PATTERN OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENTRANCE IN
YAOUNDE AND THE CENTRE-SOUTH PROVINCE

The last two chapters were concerned with the passage from primary to state secondary schools in Yaoundé in relation to the CE exam. In this chapter the selection process is considered on the provincial level and the discussion will be broadened to include private and technical education. The aim is to demonstrate the dominant position held by Yaoundé as an educational centre, and to continue the analysis of the social dimension of selection into technical and private schools, particularly in relation to the subculture issues raised in Chapter V.

The CE is taken on a school by school basis. In theory, any Class 6 pupil who is under 15 can sit the exam for any school which selects Sixième pupils in this way, which means all state schools and some of the more élite confessional schools. These latter do not necessarily get the most able primary leavers, but they are highly successful in terms of BEPC, Probatoire and Bac results. This is the combined result of élite recruitment, small classes, dedicated staff (often missionaries), constant supervision and (sometimes) boarding facilities.

In English-speaking Cameroun it is these schools which dominate the secondary system as regards both status and results, and which continue a tradition of élitist, fee-paying, confessional education which has its origins in the period preceeding the annexation of Cameroun by the Germans. In the French-speaking provinces, similar schools exist in Yaoundé, Douala, Makak, Libamba and elsewhere, but they are increasingly overshadowed by the larger state lycées in the major towns. In Yaoundé for example, the élite Catholic boys' college cannot fill its first year classes through the CE, even though successful candidates

are given a government grant to cover the cost of fees. The school is therefore obliged to take girls and day-boys. Its results are still among the best in the country, even though it does not cater for the most able children. Such schools are not numerically important, but many members of the present élite passed through them, and a deminishing proportion of their children continue to do so.

Recruitment and the Distribution of Secondary Schools

Schools recruiting through the CE tend to have a relatively narrow catchment area. One might expect the catchment area of a school to vary in direct proportion to the size of the school, but the opposite seems to be the case, at least in ^{schools in} the Centre-South recruiting via the CE. For example, 90 percent of candidates taking the exam for the largest school in the province —the Lycée Leclerc in Yaoundé— had finished primary school in Yaoundé itself. For many of the smaller, newer state schools local candidates account for less than 10 percent of the total (provincial average 55 percent).

This probably means that many of the newer schools are attracting candidates from villages who would not have attempted secondary entrance if these schools had not been built. Also, as most of the new schools are built in small towns, the urban primary school population will be too small to provide more than a relatively small proportion of all candidates, particularly in towns with densely populated rural hinterlands with (as in most of the Centre-South) high primary enrolment rates. In the larger towns, most of the rurally born candidates have already moved to town and finished their primary schooling there. Private lay secondary schools have much wider recruitment areas, as will be shown below.

The availability of schools is a major determinant of educational opportunity. The ethnic-regional importance of this point in relation to the national distribution of primary schools was discussed in Chapter III; here we are more concerned with the pattern of urban-rural inequalities at the secondary level. Secondary schooling is even more concentrated than primary, particularly in the private sector. The latter tends to reflect the effective demand for school places more closely than the state sector, which reflects political considerations in the establishment of new schools.

The Centre-South accounts for 35 percent of all francophone primary pupils but for 47 percent of those following non-vocational secondary courses in state and private schools. As might be expected, secondary schools are more concentrated in the larger towns of the province than are primary schools. The ten administrative headquarters of the province accounted for 23 percent of all primary pupils (only 8 percent if Yaoundé and its department are excluded), but nearly three-quarters of all academic secondary pupils. Forty-eight percent of state and 58 percent of private secondary schools are found in these towns. In the three "second cycle" (post BEPC) classes, the administrative headquarters accounted for no less than 95 percent of all pupils. Yaoundé itself has one sixth of the province's primary pupils, just under a third of all academic secondary school places and half the places in the top three classes (Ministry of Education 1974).

Currently, thirty-five schools in the Centre-South recruit pupils through the CE, not counting the few private schools which partially fill their first year classes in this way. The CE results of thirty-one of these schools have been analysed.

The state schools are highly variable in size, age, quality of teaching staff, number of years provided and, as will be shown, quality of students. From the analysis of 1975 CE records little can be said concerning the social origins of pupils entering these schools, with the partial exception of those in Yaoundé, who were the subject of a follow-up study based on the primary sample and CE results.

For the moment, we are concerned with the way in which Yaoundé dominates secondary education in the Centre-South. To study this, the pattern of secondary entrance in the capital can be compared with that of the rest of the province. We are particularly interested to see how strong competition is for secondary places in different schools, how the performance of candidates varies from one school to another, and how the candidates themselves differ. For comparative purposes, the towns where the schools are situated have been divided into three groups: Yaoundé, the nine administrative headquarters and the twenty smaller towns.

Competition for Secondary Places

The index used here is the number of candidates per class of sixième. Thus, if there are 100 candidates and two classes, the index of competition is 50. For the province as a whole, there were 118 candidates per class of sixième. The Yaoundé lycée had the highest index with 247 candidates per class, and the average for the three Yaoundé state schools was 191. For schools in the nine other administrative headquarters the index was 156, and for the twenty smaller schools in other towns seventy-seven. Thus, competition is much less stiff in the smaller provincial schools. Sixième classes vary in size, so it is useful to show how many candidates obtained places. For the province as a whole,

23 percent of candidates secured places, ranging from 15 percent in Yaoundé to 19 percent in the other nine headquarters and 28 percent in smaller towns.¹

The Quality of Candidates

The above pass-rates cannot be taken as an index of the relative standard of candidates because pass-marks vary widely from one school to another. These variations are a useful index of the quality of candidates.

Two of the Yaoundé schools had a pass-mark of 100, and the other ninety-two. The two lycées in towns outside Yaoundé for which information is available had minimum pass-marks of 83.5 and 87.5, and the figure for other headquarter schools and those in small towns was 81 and 70 respectively. Headmasters are allowed to adjust the pass-mark in order to fill the available sixième places. The exam is difficult enough for a general lowering of the pass-mark to be necessary, particularly in the smaller schools. (In one school it was lowered to below 50/200). In practice, they rarely lower the pass-mark enough to fill all available places, which is probably a stratagem to allow room to accept some "deserving pupils" who inexplicably failed (or even did not sit) the exam.

The Yaoundé data are instructive in this respect. By comparing CE marks with the composition of sixième classes it was found that 16 percent of new secondary entrants had actually "failed" the CE for the school in which they had taken it. In the three schools, 86, 67 and 39 percent of new entrants had passed the exam. Some of the other new entrants may have passed the exam in another school, and moved to Yaoundé in the meantime. But for the school with the lowest percentage of "passes" among new entrants, fully 50 percent of all entrants were found to have

failed the exam (average mark 71.8, pass-mark for the school 100). This is an extreme example of bending the rules, but it demonstrates the way in which the CE can be manipulated for non-universalistic ends. In general, the headmasters should not be blamed for such practices, for the biggest abusers are those in positions of power who cannot be refused a favour.

The proportion of successful candidates with marks of 100 or over follows the pattern which one would expect on the basis of the above discussion. The two lycées outside Yaoundé had nearly half their successful candidates in this range, and for the remaining schools in administrative headquarters and schools in small towns the figures were 44 and 31 percent respectively. This means that the vast majority of successful candidates in these latter schools would have failed to obtain places had they taken the exam in any Yaoundé school. On the other hand, many Yaoundé candidates who failed the CE would have obtained places in almost any school outside Yaoundé; for example, the sixty-eight thirteen and fourteen year olds who failed to obtain places in the lycée with marks between ninety-two and ninety-nine.

Although there is evidence of widespread abuse in the selection procedure, it is nevertheless highly democratic compared with that operating in, for example, Kenya (Court 1976). As pupils are selected on a school by school rather than a national basis, a large number of pupils obtain places who would have stood no chance in an open competition. It is no exaggeration to say that most of the places available would have gone to urban, particularly Yaoundé, candidates on the basis of a provincial competition. It may be that a certain number of above-average but unsuccessful Yaoundé candidates find their way into other

provincial schools, but their chances of doing this are limited by the number of places which headmasters have reserved for such purposes and by the need to find a kinsman willing to house and feed them.

The other side of the equity coin is, of course, that many pupils of low levels of competence obtain secondary school places which are unlikely to bring them any academic reward at all. This is a good example of the inevitable conflict between the goals of equity and efficiency. But the CE has been shown to be highly inefficient as a selection device, so that not too much should be made of the above point. A nationally-based competition for secondary school places would give a spurious impression of efficiency, disguising the arbitrary unfairness of the examination system with a semblance of rational objectivity.

Age and Birthplace of Candidates

The criterion used for comparing Yaoundé and other candidates by age is the proportion of children born in 1961, i.e those who had reached the maximum age for CE candidates. The three state and two Yaoundé schools had an average of 31 percent of candidates in the fourteen year old category; the figure was 15 percent in the lycée, 38 percent in the two lycées outside Yaoundé (which was also the sample average), and 40 and 43 percent for other headquarters schools and those in small towns. As with the Yaoundé sample, we would expect age to be related to birthplace, so that the smaller schools in smaller towns are likely to recruit from predominantly rural catchment areas.

For all schools, an average of 40 percent of candidates were born in towns with over 5,000 inhabitants and exercising an administrative function. This varied from 65 percent in Yaoundé

to 40 percent in other administrative headquarters and only 18 percent in the small towns, some of which themselves had populations of under 5,000. We may take this to mean that most of the candidates for places in the smaller, newer schools are from farming backgrounds. Moreover, most of these candidates had finished their primary school in the village, unlike many candidates from farming backgrounds trying for places in the more important schools.

To prove this we may compare the proportion of children born in the town where they took the CE with the proportion who were attending CM2 in these same towns at the time of taking the exam. This is a measure of in-migration related to primary schooling. In Yaoundé, 38 percent of all candidates were born in the town, but no less than 91 percent of all candidates were attending primary school there. At the other extreme, only 14 percent of pupils taking the CE in small towns were born in these towns, and only 21 percent of candidates were attending CM2 there. In other words, over half the Yaoundé but only 7 percent of small town candidates were migrants. It is reasonably clear, therefore, that the poor CE performance of candidates in small schools reflects both rural birth and education. Moreover, we have already seen that many of the more able children from farming backgrounds come to Yaoundé (and, probably, other large towns) to prepare for the CE or to sit it a second time. Only 12 percent of Yaoundé candidates from local schools were farmers' children, however, meaning that most migrants were from urban occupational backgrounds. As farmers' children from Yaoundé primary schools had a pass-rate near the sample average, we may conclude that they have little influence on the overall

Yaoundé performance level in the CE. The opposite is the case in the smaller towns, where village pupils make up the majority of candidates and therefore account for most of the relatively poor CE performance in these schools.

As regards the pattern of secondary school entry through the CE, Yaoundé thus stands out from the rest of the Centre-South in the following ways:

1. Competition for each available place is higher in Yaoundé than elsewhere;
2. The average performance of Yaoundé candidates is above that found in all other schools;
3. Candidates are on average younger in Yaoundé;
4. More of them are urban-born in general and locally born in particular;
5. The level of local recruitment from primary to secondary school is higher in Yaoundé than elsewhere.

The smaller state secondary schools clearly cater more exclusively for hopeful pupils from a rural hinterland who have usually completed their primary schooling in the village. Given the very competitive nature of the secondary school exams, it is highly unlikely that many of these pupils will manage to obtain the BEPC, let alone finish secondary school. Repeating and attrition rates are likely to be higher in the new than in the well-established secondary schools, so exam results would not be an adequate index of overall performance. It has already been shown that "second cycle" classes are highly concentrated in the larger towns, which means that small town pupils passing the BEPC will have to find continued material support further from home. For this and other reasons, the passage from troisième to seconde is the most important

bottleneck in the secondary education system.

Given that some of the more able farmers' children are sent to finish primary school in town, we may suppose that those entering small town secondary schools from farming backgrounds are among the most able pupils finishing primary school in the village, but not necessarily the most able of their school generation. They may still be of above-average ability, but this does not necessarily mean that they will be competitive at the secondary level. Ability and performance are two different things, and we would seriously question the possibility of children from farming backgrounds overcoming the cumulative disadvantages of family, local environment and schooling. The most able and/or fortunate can overcome some initial disadvantages of this kind, and we have seen that one way in which this is possible is through leaving the local environment before it is too late. But here we are concerned with all pupils, not just the exceptional. There is no reason to believe that initial disadvantages do not continue to have an effect in the smaller state schools, which are themselves likely to suffer from poor staffing and lack of administrative supervision.

The pass-rate in the Yaoundé lycée of candidates from the town and from outside can be cited as a final piece of evidence concerning the disadvantages attached to rural birth and education. The candidates from CM2 in the town had an average pass-rate of 19 percent compared with only 4 percent for candidates from elsewhere (not all of whom were villagers). It is reasonable to suppose, moreover, that many of the latter candidates were the most promising in their respective schools.

The picture which emerges, therefore, is one of big town

domination in secondary schooling, particularly that of Yaoundé over the rest of the province. To complete the picture we may briefly look at the distribution of state and private secondary schools and the performance of pupils in the different sectors.

Fifty-six percent of secondary students following non-vocational courses in the Centre-South attend private schools, over half of which are ^{run by} missions. The provincial distribution of students is as follows:

TABLE VI:1 DISTRIBUTION OF ACADEMIC SECONDARY STUDENTS IN THE CENTRE-SOUTH PROVINCE (PERCENT)

Location	State	Mission	Lay	Total	N
Yaoundé	25	14	44	26	11,545
Other head- quarters	40	41	52	44	19,077
Small towns	35	45	6	30	13,121
Total	100	100	100	100	
N	19,247	13,123	11,373	43,743	

Source Ministry of Education:1974

It is clear that the mission schools are the most successful in reaching the local populations, and the lay schools the least successful. The latter make little attempt to reach marginal populations; they are more highly concentrated in Yaoundé and other administrative headquarters than either state or mission schools.

As already pointed out, official policy is to decentralise secondary education by building cours d'enseignement général (CEGs) outside the larger towns. Five new CEGs were opened in 1975 in the Centre-South alone, but as this is a fairly recent development, there is still a relatively high concentration of state pupils in Yaoundé. As already pointed out, the Yaoundé concentration of secondary pupils tends to grow as

they move up the system, and this is true in both state and private sectors. This partly reflects differential dropout rates and examination failure in Yaoundé and the rest of the province, but the most important cause is the concentration of both state and private schools providing the full seven year secondary course in the capital. Only 18 percent of state sixième pupils but a quarter of all state pupils in the province are attending Yaoundé schools.

There is considerable movement between the three sectors, particularly at the end of troisième. Many successful BEPC candidates from the private sector enter secondes in the state sector, which explains why many lycées have more pupils in seconde than in troisième, even though about a third of state school pupils regularly fail the BEPC.² Conversely, many state candidates who fail the BEPC enter seconde classes in the private sector in order to attempt the Probatoire.

Overall, pupils in state and Catholic Mission schools have better exam results than those in Protestant or lay schools. For example, in the 1975 BEPC, state and Catholic school candidates had a pass-rate of 62 percent, Protestant and lay candidates 40 and 29 percent respectively (Ministry of Education 1975, figures for southern provinces only). For the Probatoire in the same year, state and both kinds of Mission candidates had about a 50 percent pass-rate, and candidates from lay schools only 26 percent. It is not possible to break down the Bac results because the exam is taken in regional centres rather than on a school by school basis.

It is clear, however, that pupils entering sixième in non-confessional schools have very little chance of successfully finishing the course, despite the high urban concentration

of these schools. The standard of lay schools in Yaoundé seems to be below that in the rest of the province, though the opposite is the case for state and confessional schools. This probably reflects the presence in Yaoundé of considerable numbers of less able pupils who nevertheless find funds to pay for their secondary education. It might also reflect the greater availability of secondary places, for it is clear that the academic entrepreneur establishes his business near the biggest potential market.

It has been pointed out that secondary school entry is the biggest academic hurdle which pupils in the south of the country have to tackle, but this does not mean that from sixième onwards attrition rates fall noticeably. Overall, state and confessional schools have only half as many pupils in seconde as in troisième, and lay schools less than a third. In an average year, two-fifths of Probatoire and Bac candidates pass. Thus, currently only about 1,500 students successfully finish secondary school in the whole of the French-speaking provinces. It is small wonder that the few pupils who finish the course think of themselves, and are thought of by others, as an élite.

In general, then, the provision of both state and private (especially non-confessional) schooling in the Centre-South Province is predominantly an urban affair, especially in the top three classes, for which the nine provincial administrative headquarters plus Yaoundé provide 95 percent of all places, and Yaoundé alone 44 percent. To succeed in one's secondary studies it is clearly advisable to attend a state or a mission school, and it has already been shown that it is children from urban, white-collar backgrounds who are most likely to do this. In the following section the social characteristics of sample

students entering all kinds of secondary school in Yaoundé will be examined.

Secondary School Entry in Yaoundé

This section is primarily concerned with the private sector in Yaoundé, both academic and vocational. The two high-quality confessional schools have been included in the state sector because they both recruit students on the basis of the CE. State technical education has been included with the private sector because too few children enter state technical schools to allow for separate analysis.

The information contained in this section comes from the primary sample data plus a follow-up undertaken at the beginning of the following school year. With these data we are able to discuss the first year intake in Yaoundé secondary schools in broad outline as well as the characteristics of the primary sample pupils in more detail. All new secondary entrants were not questioned in depth, so little can be said concerning their social origins. The main object of the follow-up was to trace CM2 pupils to secondary school. It is also impossible to say anything concerning pupils who left Yaoundé to study elsewhere, who repeated CM2, or who left formal education for good.

In what follows it should be borne in mind that when pupils from the primary sample entering secondary schools are being discussed they are not taken to be representative of secondary students as a whole. To avoid confusion, the two will be dealt with separately.

In the school year 1975-76 there were over 17,000 students in all kinds of secondary school in Yaoundé, not counting

teacher trainees and those in two year vocational courses. This figure is equivalent to over a third of all primary school pupils in the town, which indicates an important influx of students from outside Yaoundé. There were 4,651 students in sixième, which is equivalent to over 60 percent of the previous year's CM2 enrolment in the town. But only four-fifths of sixième students were new entrants; the remainder were repeaters. A third of sixième students in both state and private technical schools were repeaters, compared with 14 and 10 percent of those attending state and academic schools respectively. It is not known how many students were repeating in the same school or the same type of school, but it would seem from the above figures that many of the new entrants in technical schools are dropouts from academic courses.

Sixième students (including repeaters) were distributed as follows: 23 percent were in state academic (including the two Catholic Mission) schools, 35 percent in private (lay) and the same proportion in private vocational schools, and 7 percent in state technical schools.

Of all new entrants, over three fifths had finished primary school in Yaoundé, but there were wide variations between different kinds of school, as the following table shows.

TABLE VI:2 CM2 ORIGINS OF NEW SECONDARY ENTRANTS (PERCENT)

Type of School	CM2 in:			Total	N
	Yaoundé	Other Town	Village		
State academic ^a	88	4	8	100	978
State vocational	65	6	29	100	125
Private academic (lay)	56	10	34	100	1550
Private vocational (Lay and confess.)	43	9	48	100	1081
All	61	8	31	100	3734
N	2275	307	1152		

^aIncluding the two Catholic Colleges.

The highest proportion of new entrants coming from village schools is found in the private sector, particularly in the technical schools. Moreover, nearly half those coming from village schools entered the technical stream, both in the state and private sectors. This was true of 36 and 24 percent of children from CM2s in other towns and Yaoundé respectively. By contrast, the state schools are more exclusively filled by Yaoundé primary leavers, especially in the academic sector. In contrast to the villagers, three-quarters of Yaoundé CM2 leavers enter the non-vocational stream.

This might be taken as an indication of a relative preference for technical education on the part of farmers' children, but this is not necessarily the case. First, it might be that the provision of technical education is more dominated by Yaoundé than the provision of academic schooling, which would mean that village children are more restricted in their choice of secondary school when entering the technical stream. This is not, however, the case, for Yaoundé accounts for identical proportions of both technical and academic places (32 percent of the Centre-South total). Second, a certain number of secondary school entrants from Yaoundé are from farming backgrounds, and these should be counted with the new arrivals from village schools in any calculation of preference for technical education on the part of farmers' children. It is not possible to do this accurately, but a rough calculation may be attempted, using sample data as a base.

For the sake of argument, we may assume that all children from village CM2s are farmers' sons or daughters. On the basis of this assumption, farmers' children account for 16, 40 and 55 percent of state academic, private academic and all

technical places respectively. The nature of our assumption will make these figures overstatements, but the ratios should nevertheless be approximately correct. It seems clear that farmers' children are relatively well represented in technical schools, less so in the academic sector. From the high repeat rate in technical schools we would guess that this distribution of farmers' children is more a reflection of failure in the academic stream than positive preference for technical-vocational education.³

From the point of view of class formation, the degree of choice involved is less important than the overall effect of education on life chances. It would seem that background disadvantages related to rural-farming origins exclude an above-average proportion of farmers' children from academic courses. This means that farmers' children entering the job market with a secondary school qualification will tend to be restricted to skilled manual and routine clerical occupations, though for most farmers' children even such modest occupational achievement is likely to be increasingly unattainable. We may broaden the discussion to include children from all occupational backgrounds by considering the pattern of secondary school entry among sample students.

Table VI:3 shows the occupational background of sample students entering the various secondary streams. The selectivity index has been used rather than the percentage distribution, but the latter can be obtained by multiplying the primary sample percentage by the relevant selectivity index.

First, only the children of small farmers are under-represented in all kinds of secondary education, despite the good performance of the boys in the CE. This reflects the

low take-rate of children from farming backgrounds discussed in Chapter IV.

TABLE VI:3 OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND OF SAMPLE STUDENTS ENTERING VARIOUS KINDS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL

Fathers' Occupation	% of sample	Selectivity Index		
		Academic		All Technical
		State	Private	
Elite	16	2.4	0.9	0.5
Other white-collar	26	1.0	1.2	0.6
Large trader	3	1.3	1.0	1.7
Small trader	12	0.8	1.2	1.2
Skilled manual	11	0.6	1.1	1.2
Semi-skilled manual	12	0.5	1.1	1.7
Unskilled manual	3	0.0	0.7	1.3
Large farmer	11	0.6	0.6	1.4
Small farmer	6	0.5	0.7	0.8
Total	100			
N		332	310	170

Second, the 2.4 index for élite children in state schools stands out from the rest as being over 40 percent better than the next best index. This is mainly the result of the high take- and pass-rates of élite children of both sexes discussed previously. But it also reflects a certain amount of backdoor entrance into state academic schools on the part of élite children who fail the CE. About 16 percent of state academic entrants were of this kind, and two-thirds of these were from élite and other white-collar backgrounds. This represents 18 percent of both élite and other white-collar workers' children entering state schools. Small numbers of children from other occupational backgrounds also entered the state schools in this way, with the exception of small farming families.

Third, children from white-collar backgrounds are clearly underrepresented in technical schools compared with children from trading and manual backgrounds. The latter, together with

the children of large farmers, are correspondingly over-represented in technical schools, and all non-white-collar children have selectivity indexes for technical schools equal to or higher than those for private academic schools. The reverse is the case for children from élite and other white-collar backgrounds, which seems to indicate a strong preference for academic rather than vocational secondary schooling among these students.

Fees and entry requirements are comparable for both kinds of private schooling, so that if we compare the proportions of children entering technical rather than academic schools we obtain a good index of "effective demand" for one or the other.

TABLE VI:4 PERCENTAGE OF PRIVATE SECONDARY ENTRANTS IN TECHNICAL SCHOOLS, BY SEX AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	Percent Technical		
	Male	Female	Total
Elite	17(29)	31(26)	24(55)
Other white-collar	23(61)	18(60)	21(121)
Large trader	37(8)	54(11)	47(19)
Small trader	36(22)	35(45)	36(67)
Skilled manual	43(30)	30(30)	37(60)
Semi-skilled man.	54(33)	36(41)	45(74)
Unskilled manual	67(6)	37(8)	50(14)
Large farmer	52(25)	61(23)	56(48)
Small farmer	54(13)	25(8)	43(21)
All	37(227)	33(252)	35(479)

Over half of the boys from semi- and unskilled manual and farming backgrounds enter technical rather than academic private schools. For all other boys the reverse is the case, and over three-quarters of those from white-collar backgrounds enter academic private schools. There is thus a clear indication that preference for one or other kind of school is related to

socio-economic background.

This is not the case among the girls, however, among whom only the daughters of large traders and large farmers are more numerous in technical than in academic private schools. In the large traders' case it would seem that parents are more able than others to provide a secondary education for some of their less capable daughters, and that their commercial background prejudices them in favour of vocational studies. There is no obvious reason why the female enrolment patterns for large and small farmers' daughters should be so divergent, particularly as the boys' patterns are so similar.

We might expect high CE failure rates to be associated with high rates of academic preference in the private sector, but in fact the opposite is the case. This reinforces the impression that positive preference for technical schooling is expressed in the figures for the lower occupational groups, at least in the boys' case.

There is a more general relationship between sex, background and enrolment patterns which is worth looking into at this point. As we might expect, the sex ratio of new entrants from outside Yaoundé is higher than it is among secondary pupils recruited from local CM2s. This is particularly noticeable in private academic schools, where 54 percent of locally recruited but only 37 percent of all sixième pupils are girls. Female attrition rates are also higher in these schools than in others. For example, only 11 percent of private terminale pupils are girls, compared with 22 percent in state academic schools. Girls fare rather better in technical-vocational schools, where they represent 41 percent of sixième entrants but 46 percent of all pupils. It is possible that girls are more likely than boys to take non-academic courses as a first

choice (reflecting employment opportunities), but we do not have data to test this. It is also likely that girls taking technical courses will be on average from higher socio-economic background than boys, which means that their fees are less likely to run out prematurely. The following table shows the female representation in all kinds of secondary schools.

TABLE VI:5 PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS IN EACH KIND OF SECONDARY SCHOOL BY FATHERS' OCCUPATION

Fathers' Occupation	Academic		Technical	All
	State	Private		
Elite	52(102)	43(42)	61(13)	50(157)
Other white-collar	39(70)	51(96)	44(25)	47(191)
Large trader	54(13)	50(10)	67(9)	56(32)
Small trader	50(32)	67(43)	67(24)	60(99)
Skilled manual	33(18)	55(38)	41(22)	47(78)
Semi-skilled manual	53(18)	63(41)	45(33)	56(89)
Unskilled manual	--(0)	71(7)	43(7)	60(14)
Large farmer	16(23)	43(21)	52(27)	40(67)
Small farmer	10(10)	50(12)	22(9)	31(31)
Total	45(279)	54(310)	44(169)	49(758)

Girls from the CM2 sample do not fare badly as regards secondary entrance. They constitute 54 percent of the original sample and only 5 percent less of the secondary entrants from the sample. As we would expect, it is farmers' daughters who have the lowest overall level of female enrolment, but this reflects their poor CE results rather than below average enrolment in the private sector.

The pattern for children from urban backgrounds is surprising, for it is at the lower end of the social scale that girls have the highest level of proportional representation, while girls with white-collar fathers have the lowest. In the

private sector as a whole, it is girls from farming and white collar backgrounds who have the lowest relative enrolment levels (38-49 percent), closely followed by girls from skilled manual families (50 percent). Small and large traders' daughters emerge as the most highly enroled groups (67 and 58 percent), followed by girls from the two lower manual categories (55 and 57 percent). The small trader group is of particular interest, for only in this group are girls given high preference in both academic and technical schools. This suggests that boys from small trading backgrounds who fail the CE may be leaving school in above average numbers and entering employment, apprenticeships, etc. A look at the sample data shows that this is not the case, for small traders' sons account for very similar proportions of both the CM2 sample and secondary entrants into private schools. We may conclude that small traders attach a high importance to the secondary education of their daughters, both in the academic and vocational streams. This is rather surprising, because the Bamiléké (three-quarters of all traders) are known for their traditional conservatism concerning sex roles. It was shown in Chapter III, however, that enrolment of girls in primary school has increased rapidly in recent years in the Bamiléké areas, and it was suggested that this may reflect changing attitudes. Whatever the case, it is clear that the urban Bamiléké do not share the traditional values concerning sex roles, and see the continued education of their daughters as a worthwhile investment.

Only small farmers send relatively fewer girls to private schools than the élite. This relatively low enrolment of élite girls probably reflects their high level of representation in the state academic schools, where they account for over two-

fifths of the total female CE passes. Of the urban occupational groups, the élite and large traders have both the best level of CE performance and the lowest female enrolment in private academic schools.

In general, the variations in relative female enrolment rates in private schools are not very large, particularly between the urban groups. The important dividing line is between urban and rural occupational groups, and small farmers' daughters stand out as being the only group of girls who are underrepresented in all kinds of secondary school. The normal pattern is for low female enrolment in one type of private school to be more or less compensated by high enrolment in the other.

Preference for technical or academic private education follows a white collar/other occupational group dichotomy, and is only weakly related to the sex of students. We might expect age to be a more significant intervening variable between occupational background and choice of private stream, as age is related to occupational background whereas sex is not. We would hypothesise that older students are more likely than younger to enter technical education, reflecting below-average past performance and failure to enter state secondary schools.

TABLE VI:6 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND (PERCENT)

Fathers' Occupation	Academic					Technical				
	10-12	13	14	15	T	10-12	13	14	15	T
Elite	38	31	24	7	100	0	8	38	54	100
Other white-collar	31	29	28	11	100	4	16	24	56	100
Large trader	30	10	20	40	100	0	0	33	67	100
Small trader	12	25	42	21	100	17	12	33	37	100
Skilled manual	24	39	18	18	100	5	18	18	59	100
Semi-skilled manual	22	24	39	15	100	3	9	26	62	100
Unskilled manual	17	67	0	17	100	0	0	14	86	100
Large farmer	19	24	43	14	100	4	11	22	63	100
Small farmer	25	8	33	33	100	0	0	33	67	100
All	26	28	30	16	100	5	11	26	58	100

It is clear from the table that technical education is overwhelmingly the province of the older pupils. Proportionally, there are nearly as many 15 year olds in technical schools as there are 10-12 year olds in state academic schools. Only small traders' children are proportionally more numerous in technical than in academic schools among 10-12 year olds. Table VI:4 shows that this group has only an average percentage of pupils in technical schools, so we may take it that in this case a genuine preference is being shown for technical education among younger students. By contrast, only older large traders' children enter technical schools; all the 10-12 year olds are found in academic schools. A high proportion of girls with large trader fathers enter technical schools; most of these are older girls who would probably not have entered secondary school had they been from any other social background.

The only group of students in which both sexes preferred technical to private academic education came from large farming backgrounds. The table shows that the age profiles of these children only differ slightly from the average for all students, which indicates a real preference for technical education at all ages.

There is thus a general tendency for all occupational groups to send older students to technical schools rather than to academic schools. As children from manual and farming backgrounds are of above-average age, this means that proportionally more technical places will go to these children. Thus, 58 percent of all technical places (sample) but only 38 percent of private academic places go to children with manual and farming fathers. The corresponding figures for the children of white-collar workers are 23 and 45 percent.

One does not have to resort to subcultural arguments to

explain the distribution of secondary places in the private sector. Even if parents and pupils of all classes have identical attitudes towards technical education, the children of farmers and manual workers will still differ markedly in the proportions going to technical schools because age profiles are so different between occupational groups. The determinants of age differences in CM2 were considered in Chapter IV, where it was shown that they reflect starting age, repeat-rates and CE past performance, all of which are closely related to social background.

Nearly three-quarters of sample pupils failed to find secondary school places, ranging from 65 percent of the élite to 82 percent of unskilled manual workers' children. More fourteen year olds than 13 year olds found places, which suggests that thirteen year olds preferred to repeat CM2 and attempt the CE again. Over three-quarters of fifteen year olds failed to find secondary places, and 85 percent of farmers' children aged 15 and over.

The choice of different kinds of secondary education is important from the point of view of occupational achievement and class formation. Baudelot and Establiet (1971) have shown the essentially class-based nature of the decision to keep a child at school or to send him or her into a particular stream (long or short academic, vocational) when there is a real choice to be made.⁴ In Yaoundé the pattern of secondary school entry is determined by CE performance, ability to pay for private education,⁵ and the choice between vocational and academic private schooling. The subcultural aspect of this choice is less important than the age related aspect, although the two may be interrelated in practice. These three factors account for the following distribution of secondary places:

TABLE VI:7 OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND OF SAMPLE STUDENTS, OF
THOSE TAKING THE CE AND ENTERING SECONDARY SCHOOL
(PERCENT)

Fathers' Occupation	Sample	Taking CE	State Academic	Private Academic	All Technical
White collar	42	51	63	45	23
Trader	15	17	14	17	19
Manual	26	20	13	27	37
Farmer	17	12	10	11	21
All	100	100	100	100	100
N	2,723	1,345	332	310	169

It should be stressed that the secondary entry figures only reflect the movement of sample students between schools, and do not represent the actual background profiles of secondary entrants in Yaoundé. The "state academic" figures are very near the actual profile, however, as most new entrants were attending Yaoundé CM2s. The real profiles of private academic and all technical sixièmes contain higher percentages of farmers' children than those shown above. In relation to the CM2 sample, white-collar workers children are overrepresented in both types of academic secondary school, traders' and manual workers' children in private academic and technical schools, and farmers' children in technical schools only. Little can be said about eventual job placement on the basis of the above figures because many of the new sixième students will drop out without obtaining a secondary diploma of any kind.⁶ But at the very least we can say that white-collar workers' children look like obtaining most of the academic secondary diplomas whereas manual workers' and farmers' children are in general heading for vocational qualifications giving access (perhaps) to skilled manual and routine clerical occupations. There is of course no 1 to 1 relationship between occupational background and

secondary enrolment, but there is enough of a pattern to give plausibility to the idea that class formation is in part a function of schooling.

FOOTNOTES

1. This Yaoundé figure is lower than the 21 percent of sample candidates who obtained places because of lower pass-rates for candidates from outside Yaoundé.
2. Many state candidates who pass the BEPC also have to change school in order to enter seconde.
3. Clignet and Foster (1966) found that most of the pupils attending technical schools in the Ivory Coast were in fact dropouts from the academic stream.
4. Clignet and Foster (ibid. Chapter V) show that in the Ivory Coast the kind of secondary school attended reflects social background, despite the differential selection which takes place at the primary level.
5. Sixième fees are about £100 p.a. at current exchange rates.
6. They may also change stream: see Clignet and Foster (ibid. p.111).

CHAPTER VII EDUCATION AND CLASS FORMATION IN CAMEROUN

The theoretical discussion of Chapter I and the empirical findings of Chapters II-VI can now be used for a broader discussion of class formation in Cameroun. This discussion will not be limited to the educational dimension of class formation which, as pointed out in Chapter I, is only one aspect of the process. The other major aspect of class formation is the occupational differentiation of the population and the attendant growth of group interests and conflicts based on the production and consumption of economic surplus. These conflicts will be discussed in relation to the politics of class formation outlined in the third section.¹

The Cameroun Occupational Structure

Unfortunately, there are large gaps in the available literature concerning the working population of Cameroun which make a full discussion of class formation impossible. Nevertheless, there are enough data available for one to be able to do more than just speculate about the evolution of Camerounian society. Previous chapters have been based on a four-fold occupational classification: manual workers, white-collar employees (including the political-bureaucratic élite), traders, businessmen, artisans and other self-employed groups, and the peasantry. We may briefly discuss the evolution of these groups in the southern provinces, which are the most adequately documented and the most advanced as regards the growth of a class system.

In 1970, there were an estimated 170,000 wage and salary earners in Cameroun, representing about 8 percent of active

20-55 year olds (excluding those in the armed forces). One third of these were directly employed by the state, the remainder by private companies and parastatals. Of the total of 170,000 workers, no less than two-thirds were unskilled or semi-skilled manual labourers (Ministère du Plan 1973). A further fifth were routine white-collar or skilled manual workers and only three percent were higher cadres with a post-Bac academic or technical qualification. But whereas the overwhelming majority of unskilled and semi-skilled workers were Camerounian, more than three-quarters of the higher cadres were expatriates, mostly French. These fall into two main groups.

First, top level management of the major foreign banks, insurance companies, manufacturing and import-export houses and their local affiliates are still the monopoly of expatriates, though the lower administrative, supervisory and routine clerical grades have gradually been "Camerounianised". Second, large numbers of "Assistance Technique" personnel are found in education, the medical service, the Presidency (e.g. computer staff, economic advisors), the military and in other technical posts. For example, 20 percent of state secondary school teachers and half the staff of the University of Yaoundé are expatriates (French Ministère de la Coopération: 1976). This is a measure of the French presence in the public sector.

In spite of the policy of Camerounisation, the foreign presence shows no sign of diminishing in absolute or relative importance. Thus, in 1965, 80 percent of modern sector employees were Camerounian, and 81.5 percent in 1970 (Ministère du Plan:1973). This is a common trend in ex-French

West African colonies; with the exception of Guinée, there are more French public and private sector personnel now than there were at the time of independence.

The top levels of the administration are, of course, more or less completely occupied by nationals, and have been so since independence. This is much less the case in the private sector, although there are pressures to increase the number of national cadres at the top level. Such jobs in private (and parastatal) companies are highly valued because of the high salaries which go with them, although security of tenure is lower and the obligation to earn one's salary is higher than in the civil service.

The Fonction Publique has expanded rapidly in the recent past: between 1965 and 1970 it expanded at a rate of 12 percent per annum, employing over 50,000 people in the latter year. Civil servants' salaries account for no less than two-thirds of the national budget (Bayart 1974). The planned growth of the civil service for the 1971-76 period was a more modest 5 percent per annum, to 65,000 employees in 1976.

New civil service jobs are created in two main ways.² First, expatriates are replaced by nationals. This process accounts for only a small proportion of new jobs (1,950 for 1971-76, or 12 percent). Second, extra posts are created. This much more important process accounted for an extra 5,360 proposed posts for the 1971-76 period.

An important process affecting the internal structure of the civil service is the upgrading of posts. Thus, between 1965 and 1970 the first three grades (A, B and C) of the civil service increased their proportion of posts from 12 to 26 percent of the total, and category D (all menial,

routine and unskilled grades) fell by the same amount. The recent expansion of the civil service has meant that public employment accounts for a rising proportion of modern sector jobs: 32 percent in 1965 and 37 percent in 1970 (Ministère du Plan 1974).

The capacity of the civil service to continue its relative and absolute expansion depends on the ability of the state to increase its revenue. This means the development of more export crops and the growth of imports of finished goods, on which heavy duties are paid.³ Thus, the government actively encourages and often participates in the development of cashcrops and other goods for export. For example, cotton growing and cattle ranching are being promoted in the Northern Province financed partly by the state and partly by Common Market and World Bank loans. In the southern coffee and cocoa growing areas the government encourages the expansion of cashcrop agriculture and increased productivity through the use of fertilisers and sprays, while ensuring greater control of the profits through the expansion of government-controlled co-operatives and marketing boards. This insures the continued exploitation of the farmer by the administration and the continued partial dependence of the Camerounian economy on world commodity prices, which are unpredictable in the short run and tend to fall in relation to those of manufactured goods in the long run. The result is that capital accumulation in the rural areas is impossible even when productivity rises.

The development of the private sector is a condition for the expansion of ^{imports of} finished goods, which means that there is pressure on the government to encourage the inflow of private

capital.⁴ This means the continued dominance of expatriate interests in the commercial and manufacturing sectors at the expense of the "national bourgeoisie", which controls only transport, construction, real estate and medium and small commerce. It also means that the size, location and composition of the labour force will continue to be partially dictated by foreign investment.

Thus, dependence on high levels of foreign investment and bilateral technical assistance, foreign markets and manufactured goods constitute the main defining features of the neo-colonial Camerounian political economy. This dependence cannot fail to have a profound effect on the character, speed and direction of class formation, as the above examples of the peasantry, civil service, manual labour force and private business sectors indicate.

Education and the Job Market

The relationship between educational expansion and job acquisition was discussed in Chapter I, where it was pointed out that the relative growth of the education system and occupational structure determine the rate of change of this relationship. Here we are concerned with the projected growth of job opportunities in the modern sector in relation to the output of the schools. For the 1971-76 period, the following number of school leavers was estimated.

TABLE VII:1 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVERS 1971-76

Sector	During	End	All
Primary	437,710	201,270	
Academic secondary:			
1st cycle	32,360	11,970	
2nd cycle	10,090	1,880	
Technical (all levels)	34,130		
Total	513,560	215,120	728,680

Source: Ministère du Plan 1973

For the same period, it was estimated that about 52,000 jobs would be created requiring some level of secondary or post-secondary qualifications, but that only 27,000 school/college leavers would possess the necessary qualifications. On the other hand, 38,000 jobs would be created for semi- and unskilled workers, or many fewer than could possibly absorb the school leavers wanting such jobs. The current Five Year Plan foresees the creation of 89,000 new jobs at all levels, compared with a total of 1,928,700 school leavers (The Guardian 18/5/77). In other words, only 5 percent of school leavers can expect to find paid employment of any kind in the modern sector.

On any reasonable estimate, this means that a vast pool of labour exists which is growing rapidly over time. The alternatives for this labour reserve are: farming (possible for fewer and fewer school leavers because of, among other things, population pressure), self-employment, apprenticeships (mostly in the informal sector), housework-marriage (for the girls), and unemployment, semi-employment or marginality (crime, prostitution, hustling, etc.).

At the top of the occupational hierarchy, however, there are still more jobs than qualified candidates, and a considerable possibility of expanding the employment of nationals by the replacement of expatriates, should the rate of job creation fall.

These contrasting patterns of supply and demand at the top and bottom of the occupational structure have important consequences from the point of view of the relationship between education and occupational achievement. First, the dividing line between lower white- and blue-collar occupat-

ions is becoming increasingly blurred as growing numbers of secondary leavers with the BEPC or less find it impossible to find white-collar employment. According to Clignet (1976:67): "No less than 69 percent of the younger individuals with a post-primary education are currently engaged in manual work compared with 15 percent of the older." Only 8 percent of public employees are in the 15-25 age group, compared with 16 percent of the self-employed. The figures for those between 26 and 34 are 42 and 29 percent respectively (ibid., figures for the Littoral (including Douala) and Yaoundé).

Second, the gap between higher white-collar and lower white-collar and manual earnings is likely to increase, reflecting the different bargaining powers of the two groups. Third, the downgrading of the BEPC is likely to lead to increased direct recruitment to top posts via the Bac and higher qualifications and less promotion from lower grades. Consequently, the already great pressure on students to stay on at secondary school after the BEPC will increase, at least as long as top-level jobs continue to be on offer.

Fourth, the educational level of the self-employed is bound to rise, given the likelihood of ever-increasing numbers of school leavers not finding employment. There are already more individuals with post-primary education in the self-employed sector than in private firms:

"The particular patterns of educational and political development prevailing in Cameroun have facilitated the emergence of a class of modern entrepreneurs, who tend to have a higher level of schooling

than wage earners in modern private firms."(ibid.p.57)

Our own data have shown distinct educational differences between large and small traders and businessmen. Evidence from Ghana suggests that a secondary education contributes to business success, but in future education level is unlikely to be a major determinant of success as more and more secondary leavers are forced into self-employment (Kennedy 1974).

Fifth, alternative modes of job placement other than that based on educational criteria are likely to appear, or, where they already exist, to increase in importance. The most important of these alternatives is based on ethnicity and birthplace. Clearly, migrants to urban areas are generally disadvantaged by lack of education, but they also often lack kinship contacts which might lead to employment.

"Only 31 percent of the Douala with aggregate scores (schooling plus training) of over seven are currently engaged in manual activities, compared with no less than 56 percent of their Bamiléké counterparts."(ibid.p.69)

In other words, particularism plays a role in obtaining jobs in the modern sector which reduces the education-occupation "fit". But "Ethnic variations in levels of education are less marked among white- than blue-collar workers." (ibid.), and we would guess that this is increasingly true at the top of the occupational hierarchy.

Urban birth is an advantage for access to all sectors of the urban economy, however:

"...the persistence of particularistic orientations in local political struct-

ures enables individuals born in urban areas to have privileged access to the civil service. In addition, these individuals also have a privileged access to the social and economic networks necessary for the perpetuation of self-employed activities." (ibid.pp.53-4).

Some migrants have higher chances than others of finding paid employment, however, depending on the level of "modernisation" of the area of origin. This also manifests itself as an ethnic factor:

"...the effects of migration vary along ethnic lines. Migrants from the most modernised groups (the Douala and the Béti-Fang), tend to be more often employed in the public sector of the economy. Conversely, among people with a marginal involvement in modernising structures, such as the Bamiléke, migrants are most often self-employed but least likely to participate in government service."(ibid.p.55)

Date of arrival is clearly important here. Yaoundé data can be cited which exemplifies the ethnic distribution of employment.

TABLE VII:2 ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE YAOUNDE LABOUR FORCE

Ethnic Group	Public	Private	Traditional
Béti-Fang	46	48	44
Bamiléké	14	20	29
Bafia-Yambassa	8	7	6
Bassa	9	8	5
Douala	4	3	1
Northerners	13	8	11
Others	6	6	4
Total	100	100	100

Source Clignet:ibid.p.54.

Recent arrival, lack of education and discriminatory practices force the Bamiléké into the "traditional" (commercial) sector, which is where their ethnic networks have developed. Continued discrimination against the Bamiléké is likely to restrict their entry into skilled occupations and the routine and medium ranks of the civil service. Ewondo fathers in our own sample were proportionally more numerous in white-collar and manual occupations (45 and 35 percent of Ewondo fathers respectively) than the Bamiléké (23 and 17 percent). Only 5 percent of Ewondo fathers were traders, compared with over a third of Bamiléké.

A third and contrasting pattern was found among the Douala, where no less than 82 percent of fathers in the sample had white-collar occupations (54 percent élite). This pattern shows the advantage of having an early educational advantage over other ethnic groups from the point of view of entering the civil service.

The Northerners in the Yaoundé working population are found mainly in the army and in commerce. Thus, their high representation in the "public" column in the above table is not a reflection of educational advantage, but of the political balance of Cameroun (Northern politicians and soldiers, Southern civil servants).

To summarise, there is no simple one-to-one relationship between education and occupational placement. The relationship between the two is complicated by (1) the relative growth of the various educational levels and occupational sectors, and (2) the effect of birthplace, migration, ethnic solidarity and particularism, age and

political advantage.⁵

We would expect educational achievement to be closely related to occupational placement only at the top of the occupational ladder, and the factors mentioned under (2) above to continue to be of importance at lower levels. We would therefore expect the white-/blue-collar borderline to become increasingly blurred as regards status, income, educational requirements and upward mobility after initial entry.

Clignet (1976) found that non-manual workers had on average over twice as much academic and vocational training as manual workers. Educational development will lead to a reduction of the proportion of workers with less than complete primary education for manual and routine white-collar occupations and an increase in second cycle and post-secondary education for the intermediate and upper white-collar grades.

The vital data which are not available are those concerning the socio-economic origins of the present labour force. Evidence quoted from Ghana and Sénégal suggests that a distinct tendency exists towards occupational inheritance, but that it varies between occupations (see Chapter I). The largest group of active adults showing marked patterns of self-perpetuation are the peasantry, who have so far been ignored in this discussion.

According to Bayart (1974), 93 percent of the active population of Cameroun were employed in the traditional sector in 1965, but only 79 percent in 1970. This would seem to be an exaggeration, but it is clear that the tendency

is in the direction indicated, and that it is likely to continue. There are too many different kinds of farming patterns, inheritance rules, population densities, etc. in Cameroun for an adequate treatment of the agricultural population to be undertaken here, so only a few brief remarks are possible.

The present generation of farmers is obviously more likely to have fathers in the same economic sphere than any urban occupational group, and this is true even though it is the rural-born who are the most eager to leave their class of origin. Conversely, the size of the rural population and the recent growth of urban occupational opportunities of all kinds make it inevitable that, for the moment, there are more urban workers whose fathers are or were farmers than any other occupational group. Educational achievement has played a variable role in the movement of farmers' children from country to town employment, as it has in the process of class formation itself. The educational chances of farmers' children are likely to reflect two processes which affect the position of the peasant.

First, the relative inability of the rural areas to promote their own development and the continued (and increasing) domination of the countryside by the large towns, and, what is the same thing, the consumption of most of the rurally-produced surplus by the urban classes, particularly the élite, will probably mean that, materially and culturally, rural schoolchildren will increasingly fall behind those in the towns (with the exception of the children from the lowest occupational groups). The effect of these urban-rural relations of domination and exploitation are reflected

in school performance, and the findings of Chapter VI support the idea that it will become increasingly difficult for rural children to penetrate urban occupational structures on the basis of educational achievement. The above discussion also suggests that rural individuals will suffer increasingly from their lack of access to privileged networks capable of obtaining employment for them.

The Centre-South can be cited as an example of rural decline. In 1954, cocoa accounted for 54 percent of exports by value, but by 1962 this had fallen to 21 percent. Cocoa has not been replaced by any other cashcrop. Exports were worth 22.3 billion frs in 1969, only 16 billion frs in 1971 (Owono 1974).

Second, the process of social differentiation in rural areas may force many small producers into full or semi-wage employment and bring about redistribution of land ownership benefiting the few at the expense of the many. This process is much less important than the first in determining educational life chances in the Centre-South; as was pointed out in Chapter IV, a class of large scale cashcroppers has not emerged and shows no signs of doing so. The reverse is true in the coffee-growing areas, however, where a relatively buoyant rural economy is already partially organised on capitalist lines. The consequences of this from the educational point of view have already been spelled out: more large farmers' children come to town to attend primary school, and more of them are sent to private secondary schools than is the case with small farmers' or, we would imagine, rural labourers' children. Thus, there are four times as many large as small farmers' children in the Yaoundé sample, and over

two-thirds of farmers' children in private schools were the children of large farmers.

The Yaoundé data are not representative of farming childrens' global progress in the education system. A better idea of this may be obtained by looking at university enrolment figures.⁶

TABLE VII:3 OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND OF STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE

Fathers' Occupation	Faculty						All
	Arts	Science	Ecole Normale Supérieure	Agric-ulture	Medicine	Poly-technic	
White-collar	30	40	30	5	48	28	34
Trader	5	8	17	5	9	13	8
Manual	5	5	15	0	3	4	6
Farmer	40	29	28	77	27	46	34
Other	20	18	10	13	13	9	18
All	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	821	922	485	56	191	54	2,529

Source University of Yaoundé (1972)

Equal proportions of students are from white-collar and farming backgrounds, with national selectivity indexes of approximately 13.0 and 0.4 respectively.⁷ Enrolment variations between faculties are instructive: farmers' children account for relatively high proportions of students in the low status agriculture and polytechnic faculties, but relatively low proportions in the higher status Ecole Normale Supérieure (higher teachers training college) and medical faculty. The table indicates that social origins are important in determining post-secondary academic orientations, which is the reverse of what we would expect on the basis of previous studies. According to Clignet and Foster (1966), educational and occupational orientations of secondary students are more

or less unrelated to social origins. Without more reliable statistics and information concerning students abroad we cannot pursue this point further, although it merits further study.

The Politics of Class Formation

That class formation is not reducible to economic and technological change is demonstrated by the position of the political-bureaucratic élite.⁸ The surplus consumed or disposed of by the élite includes inflated salaries, subsidised housing and health care, and disproportionate use of secondary and higher education.⁹ Conspicuously absent from the sources of surplus are the profits from manufacturing industry which are the basis of the economic power of Western capitalists, although there are signs in Cameroun, as elsewhere, that the élite are in the process of establishing their own economic base through the investment of surplus in business enterprises of one kind or another. Talking of Cameroun, Bayart observes:

"Le fait que la bureaucratie ne soit pas détentatrice des moyens de production ne l'empêche pas d'agir comme si elle l'était. La base du pouvoir ne se trouve pas obligatoirement dans la propriété des moyens de production mais dans le fait d'avoir une position qui permette de disposer de ces moyens."
(Bayart 1974:72)

As a group, civil servants enjoy privileges from which other citizens are excluded:

"Les fonctionnaires, même modestes, sont certainement privilégiés, à la fois socialement et économiquement. Ils

possèdent un statut social fortement valorisé et en usent pour obtenir de multiples avantages."(Ibid.,p.69).

The opinion of the head of state on the same topic is worthy of note:

"Le comportement des fonctionnaires, de loin les principaux bénéficiaires de la décolonisation, à l'égard des masses nous crée les plus vives inquiétudes. Celles-ci ont, en effet, l'impression qu'un colonialisme s'est substitué à un autre. Cette situation est douloureusement ressentie par nos compatriotes. L'ancien colonialisme était une servitude exercée par l'homme blanc sur l'homme noir; le nouveau est une servitude par l'Africain sur son frère.

Dans les villes, les fonctionnaires d'état, les employés des entreprises privées ont créé des castes qui tendent à s'isoler complètement des masses urbaines et rurales.

Il n'est pas exagéré d'affirmer que pour nos masses, ces élites ont remplacé les Européens, non seulement dans leurs fonctions et leurs prérogatives matérielles telle que maisons, voitures, etc. mais surtout ils ont pris pour leur compte des habitudes et des moeurs hier décriées, mais dont les manifestations d'asservissement des citoyens vont aujourd'hui bien au-delà du colonialisme. Pour cette catégorie de Camerounais, l'indépendance s'est traduit par la politique de 'ôte-toi de là pour que je m'y mette'."(Ahidjo 1964: 127-8, quoted by Owono (1974).
Emphasis added.)

The above quotations emphasise a number of important characteristics of the civil service.¹⁰ These are; (1) a common relationship to the power apparatus of the state, (2) high income and opportunity to supplement it, (3) high social status, and (4) consciousness of common interest. These points may be treated in turn.

It is at the level of the relationship to the power apparatus of the state that the bureaucracy becomes confused with the political élite and the party organisation.¹¹ According to Nassara (1975:89):

"Les agents publics utilisent le règlement pour assurer leur arbitraire et à leur profit, ils empêchent la constitution de groupes qui pourraient contester le pouvoir aux catégories dirigeantes, et ils cherchent à se perpétuer au pouvoir par le système de l'enseignement."

Political opposition has been eliminated by force or co-opted into the "parti unique" which has become increasingly an appendage of the administration: "le parti devient en fait l'instrument de la puissance et de la bureaucratie." (Bayart 1974:72).

The state controls the means of violence and of persuasion. Under the banner of national unity, common interest, patriotism and the legitimate right of the administration to lead the development effort, all opposition is eliminated or assimilated, and potential alternative power bases are opposed.¹²

Patronage is also a powerful weapon in the state armoury. For example, sponsored élite entry seems to be a major mode of gaining access to top posts. The process works as follows. An élite aspirant with secondary education is

given a modest post in the civil service. After a few years' work he obtains a university or other college place and is seconded on full salary and/or given a grant. On return, he is assured of promotion comensurate with his diploma.

A second method is to bypass the work part of the process and obtain a study grant straight from school. This method is used by the better placed younger potential élite, who are likely to reach similar positions to the first group (who may still be studying at the age of forty or over) while still relatively young.

The first group exhibits a circular form of occupational mobility; i.e. occupation permits educational achievement which in turn leads to occupational advance, and so on. Apparently, no research has been done into the process of occupational mobility through further certification, but it would seem to be a very important aspect of élite entry.

The acceptance of legitimation through education obliges élite aspirants to justify their present and future position through certification. The legitimacy of the political-bureaucratic élite is in no small measure dependent on educational achievement, of course.¹³ But the eventual achievement of certification plus élite status is often the result of initial patronage and string-pulling. Success in the latter is what distinguishes the lucky élite aspirant from the mass of equally qualified or unqualified hopefuls who are seeking personal advancement.

As competition for élite posts rises, we would expect favouritism in job and scholarship allocation to become more

limited to immediate kin, viz. the sons and daughters of the élite themselves. This advantage, plus above-average educational performance, are likely to be the main means by which the élite attempts to perpetuate itself. For the moment, certification alone can still more or less guarantee access to top posts in the civil service, but this is unlikely to continue indefinitely. When it becomes necessary to employ extra-educational criteria in the allocation of jobs, it is reasonable to suppose that the children of the present élite will be the major beneficiaries.

The education system was described in Chapter I as an ideological state apparatus contributing to the maintenance of continuity and the conservation of existing relationships of dominance and inequality among groups and classes in society. In the final analysis, the legitimacy of the diploma is based on the control of the repressive and ideological apparatus of the state by the élite. In Cameroun as elsewhere, the ideology of élite-led development, based on competence gained through formal education, and refusing any possibility of independent initiative by the masses (especially the peasantry), is the corollary of élite power, which must be continually legitimised in the eyes of those who have minimum access to the state and the benefits which such access confers. In this way, the peasantry is made to feel that it depends on the élite for its welfare, whereas in fact the reverse is the case. As and when ideological persuasion fails, the élite can fall back on the repressive apparatus of police and army.

Common source of income (profits, wages, rent) is not a necessary condition of class interest or membership, and

some (e.g. Nassara) would include in the ruling class big businessmen as well as the top members of the bureaucracy, the armed forces and the party. Nevertheless, most of the financial advantage of élite membership results from high salaries. The opportunity to indulge in bribery, etc. is very varied in the civil service and is one of the criteria determining the desirability of a top post and the "velocity of circulation" of incumbents.

There is an ambivalent relationship between the large traders and the élite, given that most of the former are Bamiléké. It is possible that some of the latter turned to trading having failed (through discrimination) to obtain posts related to their qualifications, or as a result of involvement in the UPC rebellion. Some may have turned to trade to take advantage of existing ethnic networks and as a more remunerative alternative to civil service employment.

The tendency for higher civil servants to invest in productive and/or speculative enterprises (often by means of loans from the Cameroun Development Bank which come automatically with high office) testifies to the concern of the élite to establish an economic base which will protect them against the consequences of dismissal or loss of high position, or political instability. For the moment the latter is not a problem. Considering that Cameroun was one of the least stable French West African colonies, with a self-styled Marxist guerilla underground movement (the UPC), large scale bloodshed and military intervention by the French in the south and west of the country (Bamiléké and Bassa areas), and regional inequalities comparable to

those in Nigeria, the polity has been remarkably stable since independence.

The social status of the élite is a function of its control of the state apparatus outlined above, including the use of patronage. It is also related to the conspicuous consumption of some of its members, but both this and the provision of gifts, jobs, favours, etc. may easily rebound on individuals who flaunt their wealth excessively or fail to deliver the goods of patronage. The élite suffers from internal and external contradictions and this affects its crystallisation into a ruling class. These contradictions may conveniently be discussed in relation to class consciousness.

It may be argued that consciousness of common interest is greater in the élite than in any other sector of society.¹⁴ Elite consciousness stems from a desire to continue to benefit from the advantages of controlling the state and its ideological and repressive apparatus. But many individuals and groups want to enjoy the same privileges: it is the task of the élite to co-opt as many legitimate or potentially dangerous claimants as possible without losing its monopoly of advantage.

Exclusion through lack of educational achievement is one way in which the intendent élite is refused entry, and this involves the control of the expansion of certification. But the élite cannot appear to be opposing educational expansion, and is forced to accept public pressure in this direction. For the moment the élite can afford to assimilate a relatively high percentage of young claimants.¹⁵

But it is in the interest of the élite to make the

educational pyramid as steep sided as possible at the top. The present study has documented the difficulty of passing from primary to secondary school and the subsequent difficulty of staying in secondary school. In a sense, the difficulty of certification enhances the élite's status, so that high failure rates —so often lamented in official circles— are functional from the élite point of view. On the other hand, if certification becomes too difficult, the élite will face the potential threat of increasing numbers of educated failures with a group consciousness of their own.

The internal contradictions of the élite are a function of its heterogeneity and of the external contradiction outlined above. Internally, the élite acts as a cohesive group to the extent that centrifugal tendencies are muted by the counterveiling desire to keep at bay the enemy without. These centrifugal tendencies are based on conflicts of interest between (1) civil servants and politicians, (2) the military and the civil authorities, (3) intellectuals and the rest of the élite, and (4) businessmen and bureaucrats. These four are often exacerbated by, or expressed in terms of, differences in ethnicity, age and educational level.

Popular hostility towards the government can be taken advantage of by one or other élite factions, leading to élite disintegration and reconstruction (i.e. the circulation of élites so common in the Third World). These centrifugal tendencies certainly exist in Cameroun; so far they have been successfully handled, but not eliminated. This has been possible through élite expansion,

astute ethnic balancing by the president and his advisors in the distribution of key posts, the neutralisation of the Bamiléké rebellion (temporarily), relative prosperity, the co-optation of dissidents, the construction of a well-policed one-party state, and continued financial, military and manpower support by the French.

These factors are all favourable, for the moment, to élite crystallisation into a ruling class with a sounder economic base than it enjoys at present. According to Nassara (1975:88):

"On constate la creation progressive de classes dirigeantes entendant exercer le pouvoir au profit d'elles-mêmes et de leurs descendants."

The continued ability of the élite to neutralise or take advantage of internal and external contradictions will determine its crystallisation or non-crystallisation as a class. The alternative perpetual circulation of élites and internal factionalism is not impossible but has so far been avoided.

FOOTNOTES

1. The occupational differentiation of the population is conditioned by the political structure, and vice versa. Class formation is the dialectics of this relationship through time. The economic and political are discussed separately in the following sections, but their interdependence is brought out where possible.
2. Other jobs are vacated by death and retirement; an estimated 2,455 for 1971-76.

3. Customs duties account for about 50 percent of government receipts, compared with about 10 percent from direct taxation.

4. The private sector was expected to expand by about 54,000 jobs in the 1971-76 period (Ministère du Plan 1973:450).

5. We would also expect sex to be an important factor, but no data exist on this question. There was little difference between the proportion of male and female white-collar workers as regards the distribution of secondary diplomas (CE candidates parents). The difficulty for the women is, of course, in obtaining the diploma in the first place, not finding a job afterwards. There is nothing immutable about this situation, however, and the expansion of female secondary education may well lead to increased competition for certain white-collar jobs which are performed by both sexes, e.g. primary school teaching, nursing.

6. The table ignores the relative representation of large and small farmers' children and the probable non-representation of farm labourers' and subsistence farmers'. For adequate treatment of the representation of various groups (including the white-collar workers and the other urban classes) a much finer occupational classification would be required. In any case, the figures given should only be treated as approximations; the "other" category is high and this should be borne in mind when making comparisons with the Yaoundé data, in which this category has been excluded. No data exist concerning the social origins of Camerounian students abroad.

7. In other words, white-collar workers' children have over thirty times the chance of farmers' children of reaching

university. This is over three times higher than the equivalent secondary school figure for Ghana (see p.44). This probably reflects the inaccuracy of selectivity indexes rather than real differences between the two countries as regards access patterns.

The comment of the Dean of the Arts Faculty regarding the social origins of students is worth quoting:

"Parce qu'il^{*} est essentiellement gratuit, l'éducation est démocratisée et ceci permet le nivellement de classes dans la société. Ainsi l'enfant du paysan est-il privilégié et puisqu'ils sont en plus grand nombre dans la société, ils sont plus représentés à la faculté et à l'université." (Mbassi Manga 1976:6)

This statement at least has the merit of accepting the existence of classes in Cameroun society, which does not correspond to official ideology. Apart from that, it could not be further from the truth.

8. In a study of Abidjan, Cohen (1974), following Lenski (1960) and Dahrendorf (1968), defines classes in terms of authority structures, which leads to a rather simplistic ruler-ruled class analysis, and ignores the dialectic interaction between economic and political forces. In relation to education he states that:

"If a substantial share of secondary school places are held by people having administrative connections, educational differentiation then becomes a sub-case of administrative differentiation...with economic and social wealth following from authority relations."(Cohen 1974:51)

This begs the question of the legitimation of the authority

* le système éducatif

structure and ignores the vitally important process by which those with administrative connections obtain secondary places, itself an essential element of the legitimatory process.

9. For example, there are a number of scholarships for boarding facilities in the Yaoundé lycée, many of which go to élite children because of their high CE marks, deserved or otherwise. The same is true for scholarships for foreign study.

10. We would not argue that a ruling class is in the process of establishing itself based on the totality of state employees ("même modestes"). Employment by the state is neither a necessary nor a sufficient criterion for belonging to a nascent ruling class. In a useful discussion, Aron (1960) distinguishes between the social élite, political class and ruling class. The social élite has high income and social status but membership of it does not necessarily mean the exercise of a political function. This is the meaning given to "élite" in previous chapters. The political class (those who govern) constitute a ruling class when there is (1) only one party, (2) a feeling of common interest, and (3) narrow recruitment from the social élite. In Cameroun, the first of these exists and the second and third are discussed in the text. Recruitment was analysed in Chapter I, and, of course, constitutes one of the reasons for examining secondary entrance patterns in Yaoundé schools. The internal élite contradictions discussed in the present section are adapted from Aron's article.

11. The composition of the first post-independence government, in which 21 out of 28 ministers were recruited from

the civil service, is a good example of this political-bureaucratic mix (Bayart:1974).

12. For example, deputies are elected on the basis of a national list to avoid the possibility of their gaining a local power base.

13. For example, very few members of the present cabinet do not have at least one higher education diploma, and a good proportion have two or more.

14. This is especially true in relation to the peasantry which, as Marx noted, has great difficulty in developing and acting on class consciousness.

15. Nevertheless, university students are convinced that the policy of the government is to eliminate as many of them as possible, irrespective of academic level, through tough examinations and what is known locally as "planification".

CHAPTER VIII SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

We may finally summarise the main findings of Chapters II-VII and outline some policy implications and research priorities. The four occupational categories used in previous chapters will be discussed in turn.

Farmers

Less than a fifth of the CM2 sample were the children of farmers, most of them large farmers according to the children's own estimation. But only a tenth of those passing the CE were from these backgrounds, despite the fact that there was a marked tendency for farmers' children in Yaoundé (at least the sons) to be sent there on the basis of scholastic promise. It was shown in Chapter VI that the children of farmers who remained in the village in the Centre-South had much lower marks than the Yaoundé sample farmers' children in the CE, both in their local secondary schools and when trying to enter those in Yaoundé.

The point has been made that rural stratification tendencies have their own effect on educational opportunities, as do the deep and growing economic and cultural cleavages between the urban and rural areas. Continued social differentiation in the rural areas will probably have the effect of redistributing educational opportunities in favour of the children of large cash croppers, while the progressive reduction of the importance of the agricultural sector in the national economy and the changing pattern of social inequality in the urban areas will further serve to reduce the absolute and relative representation of farmers' children

in the secondary schools, higher education and white collar occupations. This will be particularly true for small farmers' children, and for farmers' daughters.

Manual Workers

Less than one tenth of state academic secondary places went to the children of manual workers, who made up over a quarter of CM2 pupils. As this is an urban study, we would expect the national representation of urban manual workers' children in secondary and higher education to be below the Yaoundé total. The university data cited in Chapter VII show that manual workers' children account for only half as many university students as new Yaoundé secondary entrants.

There is a clear tendency for take- and pass-rates to decline between skilled and unskilled workers' children, and the zero pass-rate of candidates from unskilled manual backgrounds is a substantial indication of the effect of urban stratification patterns on the life chances of the underprivileged. From the educational point of view, the advantages generally associated with urban birth and education are not enough to overcome the disadvantages of class background.

Manual workers' children were overrepresented in technical schools, however, where they accounted for over one third of new entrants (sample only). Thus, as in Europe, the secondary stream chosen is important in channelling working class children into schools leading (perhaps) to routine white-collar and skilled manual occupations. The majority of manual workers' children drop out at the end of primary school (especially the girls), but we do not

know what becomes of them. Many of the boys may enter apprenticeships, but even this may be impossible for most of the children of unskilled workers, for whom the entry fee may be prohibitively high. For Kenya, King notes that: "...apprentices may not be from the most indigent households... Some young people cannot afford not to be paid a wage." (King 1977:61). Entry requirements vary, however, and we would also expect ethnic networks to play an important role in determining who undertakes apprenticeships.

Traders

Large traders and businessmen are a separate class from the mass of traders, artisans and small employers who make up the vast majority of the 'informal' or 'traditional' sector, and a substantial proportion of the active urban population. There is no clear dividing line between the various levels of the informal sector, but the arbitrary division into two groups clearly has some heuristic value, as enrolment levels and performance patterns show. Nevertheless, it is likely that the lower levels of the informal sector are not represented in the schools, because most of those in this sector are recent migrants, too young to have children of school-going age. As with the rural population, this underclass reproduces itself primarily through a lack of any feasible or preferable alternative. This does not mean that father-son inheritance is necessarily concerned. New migrants constantly replace the underclass as the latter move into the intermediary group of 'small' traders, etc. who make up a tenth of the fathers in the CM2 sample.

Overall, traders were more or less equally represented

in the sample, among those taking and passing the CE and in both types of private school (15 to 19 percent), but large traders' children outperformed those of small traders in the CE and, as expected, were proportionally more numerous in private secondary schools. One tenth of university students were traders' children, which is less than the secondary entrance figure for Yaoundé. Without a breakdown of the trading category these data are not particularly revealing, however.

The high performance of large traders' children assimilates them to élite children. It was shown in Chapter VII that there are grounds for considering large traders and businessmen as part of the nascent ruling class, materially and culturally capable of ensuring the academic success of their children (both boys and girls). We would expect many of the successful children of large traders (especially the boys) to enter the professions and the higher civil service, as such occupations have more status than business. Also, large traders are highly polygynous, which means that not all of their sons will be able to follow them into the commercial sector.

Both trading groups sent relatively large numbers of girls into private technical schools, but we cannot discuss their future job opportunities because we have no data on the female job market, which is generally ignored by the manpower experts who compile the Five Year Plan.

In general, the performance of small traders' children is quite impressive. It is marginally better than that of the two other intermediate groups, i.e. the children of skilled manual and other white-collar workers. It was shown

in Chapter IV that the above-average performance of traders' sons and daughters in the Maths paper, which was overvalued in the CE total marks, explains all or most of this relatively good performance, rather than any material or other home advantages. It is thus possible that quite a few small traders' children will be able to move out of the self-employed sector (and, again, fathers' polygyny provides a 'push' factor) into both skilled manual and white-collar occupations, although, as we have seen, the possibility of continued discrimination against the Bamiléké in the civil service and big business may perpetuate the poor fit between their educational success and occupational achievement, except at the highest level, where qualifications still, for the moment, speak for themselves.

Nonmanual Workers

It was shown in Chapter V that the 'other white-collar' group is, in fact, two groups: there are as many white-collar workers with the CEPE or less as with the BEPC or more. In general, pass-rates reflect this division, which accounts for the below-average aggregate pass-rate of the children from this group. There are thus many children whose fathers are non-manual employees of the state and private companies whose chances of inheriting this status, at least through certification, are rather poor. It may be, however, that the police and armed forces have their own ethnic-political networks of recruitment which are only partially dependent on educational performance.

In all respects, the children of the élite outperform the rest of the sample, which is not of itself particularly

surprising, given the material and educational advantages associated with élite background. To maintain their position, élite children must, of course, be overachievers by the standards of the majority of school children, and this they certainly are. But it is more or less inevitable that a certain proportion of élite children will be downwardly mobile, given that élite mothers are as fertile as any other group in the sample (even though the élite as a whole is much less polygynous than other occupational groups). Blau and Duncan (1967) show that differential fertility rates affect the pattern of social mobility in the United States. But no class in America has an average of six children per family, which is the average of full siblings in the Yaoundé sample. Thus, the problem of finding suitable employment for children is attenuated somewhat by low levels of polygyny but amplified by the high social starting point of élite children which obliges them to be highly successful at school if they want to avoid downward mobility. It is rather unlikely that three boys from every élite family will also find positions equivalent to their fathers', but it is also very unlikely that many of them will find themselves in the working class or among small traders. It was pointed out in Chapter V that those most likely to be downwardly mobile are the children of the older members of the élite who have the least education and the highest rates of polygyny.

The vast majority of the present members of the élite are the children of farmers. Of the present generation of university students in Cameroun (ignoring those abroad) about one third are from farming backgrounds. The new

dimension of the stratification system is the presence of a growing urban élite, against which the children of farmers and all other classes have to compete in a game in which the rules are not the same for all participants. The present level of stratification (differential incomes, life styles, living conditions, educational levels, etc.) introduces its own restraints on the educational system as regards the competitiveness of children from different social backgrounds, and these have been amply documented in the foregoing pages. In terms of aggregate life-chances guaranteed by family background, élite children are at a great advantage over those from other classes, and this is the essential factor determining class reproduction, not the fact that a (probably diminishing) proportion of individuals from modest or underprivileged backgrounds continue to succeed in the national educational and occupational lottery.

Subcultures

One of the issues raised in previous chapters was the existence or otherwise of class subcultures which might affect enrolment and performance rates. Some argue that material inequalities are sufficient to explain educational inequalities in Third World countries:

"Quant aux pays sous-développés, les conditions matérielles d'accès à l'éducation, fût-elle élémentaire, sont si décisives que les privilèges des enfants de l'élite s'expliquent sans qu'il paraisse nécessaire de prendre en considération d'

autres processus de sélection et d'orientation socialement différenciés." (Perrenoud 1970:7, quoted by Owono, 1975).

According to Foster (1965), the different attitudes of social classes towards education explain why working class children in the West underachieve in school even when there are no material and financial obstacles to overcome. The lack of these subcultural values in Africa explains the presence of large numbers of farmers' children in post-primary education.

Neither of these views is acceptable. The present study has found a number of non-material factors which affect enrolment and performance and which point to the development of class subcultures, a development which is part and parcel of the growth of social classes themselves.

First, it was shown in Chapter IV that 10-14 year olds from different social backgrounds take the CE in very variable proportions. This reflects different expectations of success in the exam, and is an important factor determining the distribution of new secondary entrants. Thus, even though all parents value education highly, they do not all push their children nolens volens until they are eliminated from the school system by examination failure. Material factors affecting past performance (repeating, CE failure at the first attempt) may well be the primary cause of these variations in attitudes, but sub-cultures necessarily reflect material differences.

Second, it was shown in Chapter VI that boys from semi- and unskilled manual and farming backgrounds preferred

technical to academic private education. This reflects the age of children from different occupational groups and the expectation of returns from a substantial educational investment in a less competitive stream. Thus, material differences are again at the origin of important educational decisions.

Third, parental education and the use of French in the home are functions of occupational background. Although it was not possible to demonstrate their direct influence on performance, these non-material factors are inevitably associated with performance variations.

Fourth, the pattern of female performance outlined in Chapter IV is indicative of a higher level of discrimination against girls at the intermediary than at the top levels of the occupational hierarchy. If material conditions alone determine performance (holding constant attitudes towards the education of daughters) we would expect the performance of the two sexes to improve in equal proportions between the bottom and the top of the occupational ladder. The marked narrowing of performance differentials at the top may be indicative of changes in female socialisation and attitudes towards the education of girls. Again, material factors are probably at the origin of such changes.

Thus, subcultural factors affect the level of anticipatory self-elimination, the choice of stream and performance variations.

The urban pupils studied in this thesis (including farmers' children) all indicated high levels of family encouragement and positive attitudes towards education among parents and guardians. It is clear that these alone

are not sufficient to prevent high variations in performance, which are themselves the result of both material and non-material forces.

Policy Implications

In Africa, educational reforms, both during the colonial period and since independence, have not been as effective as policy makers would have hoped. It is generally true that piecemeal reforms come to nothing, except when they are part of a revolutionary transformation in the distribution of power and welfare. Piecemeal educational reforms generally fail because policy makers do not (or cannot) take a broad enough view of education as an institution reflecting the existing distribution of power and wealth in society. If these latter are ignored, any major reform aimed, for example, at the democratisation of educational access or the reduction of social inequalities in performance will come to nothing, or will serve the purposes of groups and classes other than those who were expected to benefit from the reform.

In recent years, the Camerounian government has begun a reform which aims at the ruralisation of primary schooling. This means the progressive introduction of a curriculum adapted to rural life and society and the training and retraining of teachers in line with the new orientation. This constitutes yet another attempt to adapt education to local conditions, to teach children 'useful' things and to halt the rural exodus. In theory, the school is meant to become a part of a combined rural development effort, involving modern farming techniques, a wide rôle for teachers as local agents of development, the participation

of parents and co-operatives, etc. In practice very little has so far been achieved, and at enormous expense.

What is true for educational reforms in general is also true for the Camerounian reform. First, it is clearly in the interest of the ruling élite to maintain the existing system which, as previous chapters have demonstrated, works to their advantage. Investing large sums in a new-style 'adapted' education system makes good political propaganda, but does not necessarily affect the existing unequal distribution of educational advantage.

Second, the introduction of rural curricula could eventually mean the creation of a de facto dual system of primary education; one for the towns and one for the villages. Inevitably, the village system would be considered inferior by parents and pupils if it did not lead to the same examinations as the urban system, and access to the same secondary schools. As long as formal education is seen as the main way out of the 'traditional' sector, no system which has as its principal objective the retention of farmers' children in the rural areas will be acceptable to the mass of the farming population. If rural areas could assume their own economic development things might be different, but the whole point is, of course, that the present power structure is an obstacle to such an eventuality.

Educational policy-making is a political process, and it is necessary to go beyond the professed ideology of governments if one is to understand the full implications of educational policies. In Cameroun, educational policy is an uneasy combination of equality and efficiency:

"Le système éducatif dans son ensemble devra s'adapter aux besoins réels du pays et aux aspirations de l'enfant, les besoins réels du pays étant déterminés en fonction de l'évolution du marché de l'emploi."
(Ministère du Plan 1973:322)

We have already seen that the expansion of secondary and higher education are the principal consequences of this policy, reflecting the élitist and state-controlled development strategy of the present régime. The supply of lower level white-collar and manual workers takes care of itself, as it were.

Also, as was pointed out in Chapter IV, one of the major policy aims in the primary sector is the 'assainissement' or weeding-out of those over fifteen years old. These are in the main the children of farmers and manual workers, so that efficiency in this case means a certain reduction of equality. As the policy is expressed in terms of age, its essential social nature (the elimination of farmers' and manual workers' children) is hidden.

If we could take politicians at their word as regards their desire for social justice, it would be a relatively simple task to increase equality of opportunity (and efficiency) by abolishing the CE as it is at present organised and replacing it by a set of multiple-choice tests similar to those used in Kenya. It was shown in Chapter IV that the tests taken by sample students gave results which were much less skewed in favour of élite and large traders' children and gave a much larger proportion of secondary places to farmers' and manual workers' children. But if the compet-

ition were national rather than school by school a large number of farmers' children who at present find secondary school places (albeit the least promising) would be replaced by urban children from all social classes.

Neither a more objective test nor a nationally based CE would stand any chance of being introduced, however: the first because it would reduce élite educational advantages, the second because it would reinforce urban-rural and regional inequalities, and the latter would be decisive in making the policy unacceptable from the point of view of the political balance of Cameroun.

But whatever examination system is employed can do little to alter overall educational inequalities, which of necessity reflect material and cultural inequalities in the home. This will continue to be the case as long as schools communicate a minority culture.

One would be extremely naive to imagine that an educational policy aiming at real redistribution of opportunity would stand any chance of implementation. The policy of ruralisation has been assimilated by the government because it aims at stabilising the rural population and thus reducing the competition for public sector jobs. It is very likely to fail in this objective, simply because the central authorities cannot directly control the ambitions and movements of the rural population. This means that the policy will not stem the rural exodus, even though it might have an adverse effect on the life chances on the children of poorer cashcroppers, rural labourers and subsistence farmers, i.e. those who are the least likely to be sent to the (eventually) non-'ruralised' schools in

the towns.

Only in the rural areas is it seriously suggested that education should no longer equal certification and competition for scarce jobs. Elsewhere there is no question of 'de-schooling' or radically altering the social rôle of education, which is to integrate the few at the expense of the many.

Given the present orientation of schooling in Cameroun and the political options chosen by the government, it would be a waste of time to put forward policy proposals which radically questioned the status quo ante, and it is for this reason that none have been suggested. In the final analysis, the mass of the Camerounian people will, it is hoped, eventually make the important decisions themselves.

Research Priorities

The decision to undertake and sponsor certain kinds of social science research generally reveals the ideological preferences of researchers and funding bodies. It has already been mentioned that past studies in the sociology of education in Africa have been excessively orientated towards secondary and higher education, élite entry and social mobility. In our view this is too narrow a perspective to take for progress to be made on the research front regarding the wider social rôle of education as an ideological instance affecting and reflecting the developing class structure of contemporary African countries.

Class formation is an historical process with no neat dividing lines (pre-colonial, colonial, post-independence)

to help researchers. In this thesis an attempt has been made to demonstrate the continuity of class and educational developments in the 20th century. In this sense, independence has made an important difference to the development of the educational and class structures, but has not destroyed the socio-political context determining the nature and direction of social change.

We would thus like to see more studies concerned with the historical dimension of education and class formation, the only 'Third World' example which has so far appeared being Carnoy's rather simplistic 'Education as Cultural Imperialism' (1974). In this connection, the work of Bowles & Gintis (1974) stands out as an example of a sustained attempt to relate education to the development and reproduction of class relations. In a sense, this is to advocate the 'de-schooling' of educational research in Africa by taking a broader view of the educational process and its multiple linkages with other social institutions, notably the polity and the work-place.

This is not to suggest that studies of enrolment and performance are of no use, which is clearly not the case. The latter should, however, be concerned with a general problematic, which has rarely been the case in the past.

On a less general level, a number of (related) gaps need filling in the educational literature. First, the educational process in rural areas requires further study as regards its connection with rural stratification and urban-rural inequalities.

Second, the question of urban and rural class sub-cultures has remained more or less totally unexplored,

with the exception of B.Lloyd's now dated study of socialisation of two contrasting groups of Yoruba (1966). Subcultures are an important index of class crystallisation, or an idealisation of material inequalities, and as such are worthy of independent study, preferably of a longitudinal nature.

Third, the 'informal sector' has recently become a popular research area, but so far few educationalists have ventured into it. A notable exception is King, whose recent work on apprenticeships and informal learning in Kenya (1977) provides a useful starting point for the study of educational exclusion and lumpen class formation.

Fourth, another almost totally ignored area of study is the education of girls. In the first section of this chapter it was suggested that attitudes towards female education reflect developing class subcultures, but no direct evidence exists to test this. The question of female education could be included in the first and second research lacunæ mentioned above.

Finally, more research should be undertaken regarding the relationship between education and employment, which is the principal nexus of education and class formation. This relationship has been discussed at various points in previous chapters, but generally in a speculative rather than substantive vein. It has been pointed out that educational exclusion is related to the reproduction of the rural community and the informal sector, and educational achievement primarily to employment in blue and white-collar employment. Non-educational factors affecting job acquisition (ethnic, familial, etc.) should also be studied

more closely, although this is necessarily a difficult research area.

This by no means exhaustive list of research priorities should not be thought of as a sociological preserve. Many of the most interesting recent developments in educational theory have been the result of work done by historians, economists and political scientists, and we would hope that this continues to be the case.

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QUESTIONNAIRE III: ELEVES DE CM2

- 1. Noms et prénoms _____ 2. Sexe: masculin.....1.
féminin.....2.
- 3. Age:.....J'ai 10, 11 ou 12 ans.....1.
13 ans.....2.
14 ans.....3.
15 ans.....4.
16 ans ou plus.....5.
- 4. Lieu de Naissance: (a) Nom du village.....1.
OU: (b) Nom de la ville.....2.
- Nom du Département: - Méfou (Mfouidi).....1.
- Nyong-et-Soo.....2.
- Haute-Sanaga.....3.
- Lekié.....4.
- Mifi.....5.
- Wouri.....6.
- Sanaga-Maritime.....7.
- Mungo.....8.
- AUTRE (Lequel: _____)9.
- Je ne sais pas (_____)0.
- 5. Voici une liste des villages et villes dans lesquels j'ai vécu:
(a) _____ (d) _____
(b) _____ (e) _____
(c) _____ (f) _____
- 6. J'habite Yaoundé depuis: - Ma naissance.....1.
- avant 1961, 1961 ou 1962.....2.
- 1963 ou 1964.....3.
- 1965 ou 1966.....4.
- 1967 ou 1968.....5.
- 1969 ou 1970.....6.
- 1971, 1972, 1973 ou 1974.....7.
- 7. J'habite chez: - Mes deux parents (père et mère).....1.
- Mon père.....2.
- Ma mère.....3.
- Mon oncle.....4.
- Ma tante.....5.
- Un tuteur qui n'est pas mon oncle(QUI?.....)6.
- Une tutrice qui n'est pas ma tante(QUI?.....)7.
- Quelqu'un d'autre (QUI?.....)8.

8. Vous êtes combien à dormir dans la même chambre?:

- Je dors seul.....1.
- Nous sommes 2 ou 3.....2.
- Nous sommes 4 ou 5.....3.
- Nous sommes 6 ou 7.....4.
- Nous sommes 8 ou plus (Combien? _____)5.

9. Combien êtes-vous à la maison? Nous sommes:

- 2, 3, 4 ou 5.....1.
- 6 ou 7.....2.
- 8 ou 9.....3.
- 10 ou 11.....4.
- 12 ou 13.....5.
- 14 ou 15.....6.
- 16 ou 17.....7.
- plus de 17 (Combien? _____).....8.

En voici la liste:

- | | | | |
|----------------|----|----------------------|----|
| moi-même | 1. | _____ oncle(s) | 6. |
| mon père | 2. | _____ tante(s) | 7. |
| ma mère | 3. | _____ cousin(e)(s) | 8. |
| _____ frère(s) | 4. | _____ autre(s). QUI? | |
| _____ soeur(s) | 5. | _____ | |
| | | _____ | 9. |

10. Nous habitons le quartier: _____

11. Maintenant j'indique s'il y a:

OUI NON

- de l'eau courante à la maison..... 1. 2.
- de l'électricité..... 1. 2.
- une toilette intérieure..... 1. 2.
- un frigidaire..... 1. 2.
- une cuisinière à gaz ou
un rechaud à pétrole..... 1. 2.

12. Mon père est:.....vivant1.
mort2.

13. Ma mère est:.....vivante1.
morte.....2.

14. Mon père est/était:.....Ewondo.....1.
Eton.....2.
Bamiléké.....3.
Boulou.....4.
Bassa.....5.
Autre (Lequel? _____).....6.
Je ne sais pas.0.

15. Ma mère est de la même tribu que mon père:.....OUI.....1.
 NON.....2.

Elle est: _____

16. Mon père a/avait:.....une femme.....1.
 deux femmes.....2.
 trois ou plus (combien? _____).....3.

17. Ma mère a/avait:.....un enfant1.
 2 enfants2.
 3 enfants.....3.
 4 enfants.....4.
 5 enfants.....5.
 6 enfants.....6.
 7 enfants.....7.
 8 ou plus (combien? _____).....8.

18. Mon père a le même nombre d'enfants que ma mère.....OUI.....1.
 NON (il a _____ enfants).....2.

19. Je suis -le plus âgé des enfants de mon père.....1.
 -le dernier des enfants de mon père.....2.
 -ni l'un ni l'autre.(Je suis le _____).....3.

20. Maintenant je vais vous indiquer le travail que fait mon père:

21. Ainsi que ma mère: _____

22. Ainsi que mon tuteur/ma tutrice: _____

23. Mon père:.....(a) parle bien le français.....1.
 (b) parle un peu le français.....2.
 (c) ne parle pas le français.....3.

Mon père:.....(a) sait bien lire et écrire.....1.
 (b) sait un peu lire et écrire.....2.
 (c) ne sait pas lire et écrire.....3.

Mon père:.....(a) n'a pas été à l'école.....1.
 (b) a été jusqu'en classe de-
 - SIL (CI), CP, CE I ou II (laquelle? _____).....2.
 - CM I ou CM 2 (laquelle? _____).....3.
 - 6e, 5e ou 4e (laquelle? _____).....4.
 - 3e ou plus (laquelle? _____).....5.
 - je ne sais pas.....6.

Mon père:.....(a) n'a aucun diplôme.....1.
 (b) a le CEPE.....2.
 (c) a le BE ou le BEPC.....3.
 (d) un autre diplôme (lequel? _____).....4.
 (e) je ne sais pas.....5.

- 24. Ma mère:.....(a) parle bien le français.....1.
- (b) parle un peu le français.....2,
- (c) ne parle pas le français.....3.

- Ma mère:.....(a) sait bien lire et écrire.....1.
- (b) sait un peu lire et écrire.....2.
- (c) ne sait pas lire et écrire.....3.

- Ma mère:.....(a) n'a pas été à l'école.....1.
- (b) a été à l'école primaire jusqu'en classe
de:(laquelle? _____).....2.
- (c) a été dans une autre école après l'école
primaire (laquelle? _____).....3.
(dernière classe: _____)

- Ma mère:.....(a) n'a aucun diplôme.....1.
- (b) a le(s) diplôme(s) suivant(s): _____
_____2.

- 25. Mon tuteur/ ma tutrice:.....(a) parle bien le français.....1.
- (b) parle un peu le français.....2.
- (c) ne parle pas le français.....3.

- Mon tuteur/ ma tutrice:.....(a) sait bien lire et écrire.....1.
- (b) sait un peu lire et écrire.....2.
- (c) ne sait pas lire et écrire.....3.

- Mon tuteur/ ma tutrice.....(a) n'a pas été à l'école.....1.
- (b) a été à l'école primaire jusqu'en classe
de:(laquelle? _____).....2.
- (c) a été dans une autre école après l'école
primaire (laquelle? _____).....3.
(dernière classe: _____).....

- Mon tuteur/ ma tutrice.....(a) n'a aucun diplôme.....1.
- (b) a le(s) diplôme(s) suivant(s): _____
_____2.

26. A la maison nous parlons: _____

- 27. Avant l'école primaire:-je n'ai pas fait le jardin d'enfants ou
l'école maternelle.....1.
- j'ai fait l'un ou l'autre (ou les deux).....2.

- 28. Avant de commencer l'école primaire:-je ne parlais pas le français.....1.
- je parlais un peu le français.....2.
- je parlais déjà bien le français.....3.

- 29. J'ai commencé l'école primaire quand j'avais:.....4 ou 5 ans.....1.
- 6 ans.....2.
- 7 ans ou plus.....3.

- 30. Le plus souvent je vais à l'école:.....à pied.....1.
- par d'autres moyens(_____)2.

40. Je puise l'eau:.....tous les jours.....1
 de temps en temps.....2.
 rarement ou jamais.....3.
- Je lave les habits ou la vaisselle.....tous les jours.....1.
 (ou les deux) de temps en temps.....2.
 rarement ou jamais.....3.
- Je garde les enfants.....tous les jours.....1.
 de temps en temps.....2.
 rarement ou jamais.....3.
- Je prépare à manger.....tous les jours.....1.
 de temps en temps.....2.
 rarement ou jamais.....3.

(Autres travaux à la maison: _____)

41. Je fais des devoirs à la maison:.....tous les jours.....1.
 de temps en temps.....2.
 jamais (je n'en fais pas).....3.
 (je les fais ailleurs)..4.

42. A la maison on m'aide à apprendre mes leçons et à faire les devoirs: OUI....1.
 NON....2.

- Si OUI, qui t'aide?.....C'est mon père, ma mère (ou les deux).....1.
 C'est un frère ou une soeur (QUI? _____) 2.
 C'est un maître spécial payé par mes parents.....3.
 C'est une autre personne (QUI? _____) 4.

43. A la maison - on m'encourage à bien travailler en classe..... 1.
 - on ne m'encourage pas à bien travailler en classe.....2.

44. Quand je serai grand, le travail que j'aimerais faire est le suivant:

TESTS FRANCAIS

CALCUL

- CEPE PRESENTE: OUI 1.
 NON 2.
- RECU: OUI 1.
 NON 2.
- ENTREE PRESENTE: OUI 1.
 NON 2.
- RECU: OUI 1.
 NON 2.

Social Class and Academic Performance: A Cameroon Case Study

BRIAN COOKSEY

The debate over educational selectivity in Africa has so far been inconclusive as regards identifying a definite tendency toward the emergence of a class-based selection system.¹ One reason for this inconclusiveness lies in the preference researchers exhibit for studying secondary school and university students over primary pupils. By concentrating on the very few who have survived the selection process we ignore the major features of that process, namely, variations in access to primary school, take-up and dropout rates, and secondary school entrance examination performance.

The growth of primary enrollment levels in Africa makes the transition from primary to secondary school increasingly central in the selection process. A major piece of research in this area found that, in Uganda, the highest levels of performance in the secondary school entrance examination were among pupils from the least developed, traditionally oriented rural areas.² Studies of examination performance at the secondary level have shown similar correlations in the "unexpected" direction.³ Such findings have led observers to conclude that class subcultures which might

¹ Works pointing toward such a tendency include: Pierre van den Berghe, "An African Elite Revisited," *Mawezo* 1, no. 4 (1968): 57-71; J. Bibby, "The Social Base of Ghanaian Education: Is It Still Broadening?" *British Journal of Sociology* 24 (1973): 365-74; Janice Curry, "Has the Die Been Cast? A Study of Ugandan Secondary School Recruitment Patterns before and after Independence," *Rural Africana* 25 (1974): 47-63; Remi Clignet, "Ethnicity, Social Differentiation and Secondary Schooling in West Africa," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 7, no. 26 (1967): 360-75; Philip Foster, "Social Selection and Education in Ghana and the Ivory Coast," in *The Social Sciences and the Comparative Study of Educational Systems*, ed. Joseph Fischer (Scranton, Penn.: International Textbook Company, 1970), pp. 221-39. The opposite tendency is identified by Margaret Peil, "Ghanaian University Students: the Broadening Base," *British Journal of Sociology* 16 (1966): 19-29; D. J. Finlay, R. E. Koplín, and C. A. Ballard, "Ghana," in *Students and Politics in Developing Nations*, ed. D. K. Emerson (New York: Praeger, 1968), pp. 64-102; Pierre van den Berghe and C. M. Nuttney, "Some Social Characteristics of University of Ibadan Students," *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies* 11 (1969): 355-76. Differences of research design and educational systems make it unlikely that international comparisons of cross-sectional studies will ever produce strong enough data to settle the selection debate.

² Stephen Heyneman, "Influences on Academic Achievement in Uganda" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1975); idem, "A Brief Note on the Relationship between Socio-economic Status and Test Performance among Ugandan Primary School Children," *Comparative Education Review* 20 (February 1976): 42-47; and idem, "Why Impoverished Children Do Well in Ugandan Schools," *Comparative Education* 15 (1979): 187-95. A contrary view is expressed by A. Somerset, "Who Goes to Secondary School? Relevance, Reliability and Equity in Secondary School Selection," in *Education, Society and Development: New Perspectives from Kenya*, ed. David Court and Dharam Ghai (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 149-86. The absence of an index of occupational background is a limiting factor in the above studies.

³ See, e.g., J. Bibby and Margaret Peil, "Secondary Education in Ghana: Private Enterprise and Social Selection," *Sociology of Education* 47 (1974): 399-418; D. Shiman, "Selection for Secondary School in Ghana," *West African Journal of Education* 15, no. 3 (1971): 173-77.

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affect performance have not yet emerged in Africa, so that performance reflects ability much more than in Western countries.⁴

We think that the wrong conclusions can be drawn from these findings if they are not placed in a more general context which relates enrollment and performance inequalities to the overall process of social selection. Previous studies have demonstrated that, when primary enrollment levels are low, children who manage to remain in school are either of above-average ability or are from atypically high socioeconomic backgrounds.⁵ Consequently, we would argue that it constitutes a serious methodological error to compare the examination results of pupils coming from areas of highly varying enrollment levels. We have tried to avoid this error by concentrating on an area of high overall primary enrollment. Our findings show that in such a context social background is of overwhelming importance in determining who goes to secondary school, although this is by no means a simple function of performance variations.

The Survey

In this paper we look at the secondary school entrance examination as a social selection mechanism. Our research was based on a sample of Class 6 pupils attending Yaoundé primary schools in the academic year 1974-75. Yaoundé is the capital of Cameroon and of the Centre-South Province. It is primarily a commercial and administrative town with a population at the time of the survey of over 200,000.⁶ Yaoundé and the Centre-South are areas of high primary school enrollment. Official figures show that over 90 percent of 6-14-year-olds were attending primary school in 1970,⁷ and in Yaoundé itself 97 percent of boys and 92 percent of girls were enrolled in 1967.⁸

In the year of the survey there were nearly 7,000 pupils attending Class 6 ("Cours Moyen Deuxième Année") in Yaoundé. A 50 percent random sample of the 130 classes was made, and all pupils in sampled classes

⁴ See, e.g., Philip Foster, "Secondary Schooling and Social Selection in a West African Nation," *Sociology of Education* 37 (1963): 150-71, and Philip Foster, *Education and Social Change in Ghana* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965).

⁵ See, e.g., Remi Clignet and Philip Foster, *The Fortunate Few* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1966); Paul Beckett and James O'Connell, *Education and Power in Nigeria* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1977); Peter Lloyd, *Power and Independence: Urban Africans' Perception of Social Inequality* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974). For a general discussion of the selection process see Brian Cooksey, "Education and Class Formation in Cameroun" (Ph.D. diss., University of Birmingham, 1978), chap. 1, and Kenneth Blakemore and Brian Cooksey, *A Sociology of Education for Africa* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), chap. 3.

⁶ In 1969, a third of active adult males were working in the public sector, a fifth were in modern commerce and transport, and only 15 percent were employed in industry. See Service de la Statistique, *Emploi et Formation au Cameroun* (Yaoundé: Government Press, 1970), p. 49. The Centre-South is the major cocoa-growing region of Cameroun.

⁷ Ministry of Education, *1970 Yearbook* (Yaoundé: Government Press, 1970), p. 42.

⁸ Ministry of Education, *1967 Yearbook* (Yaoundé: Government Press, 1967), p. 63.

completed questionnaires on their home, social, and educational backgrounds. In all, information was collected from 3,197 pupils, that is, 46 percent of the Class 6 population of the town. There is little doubt that this was a highly representative sample of classes and pupils. At the end of the school year secondary school entrance examination results were collected for those pupils who sat the examination (“Concours d’Entrée en Sixième”), and at the beginning of the following school year all secondary schools in the town were contacted in order to trace sample pupils entering the various public and private, technical/commercial, and academic streams.

The Secondary School Entrance Examination

This examination consists of equally weighted papers in French and mathematics and is taken by pupils wishing to enter both state and mission academic secondary schools in the Francophone provinces of Cameroon. Candidates take the examination for entry into a particular secondary school, and pass marks are adjusted to take account of the standard of *candidates* and the level of competition for entry into any particular school. Competition for entry into Yaoundé secondary schools is more intense than anywhere else in the Province, although almost all candidates finished primary school in Yaoundé. This is not the case for entrants to private academic and technical/vocational schools, as will be shown below.⁹

Although competition for secondary places is extremely intense, only half the sampled pupils actually sat the *Concours*. There are two reasons for this. First, there is a national regulation which excludes all pupils of 15 years of age and above from taking the examination. Fifteen-year-olds¹⁰ were highly concentrated in the lower occupational groups, accounting for a third of manual workers’ and two-fifths of farmers’ children, compared with a fifth of traders’ children and only 13 percent of those from white-collar backgrounds. This concentration reflects the age at which pupils started primary school and the number of classes repeated. For example, only 37 percent of farmers’ children started primary school at age 4 or 5 compared with 62 percent of elite children. Also, only 20 percent of elite children had repeated two or more classes, compared with over two-fifths of those from manual and farming backgrounds. The three groups with the highest proportion of late starters—unskilled workers’,

⁹ Francophone secondary education systems are highly differentiated. Mission academic secondary schools are generally high quality, although competition is greater for entry into the major state schools where education is “free.” Private secular schools are generally of a very low quality. For a discussion of secondary school differentiation in the Ivory Coast, see Clignet and Foster.

¹⁰ Although one would expect age to be manipulated by pupils, none of those who declared themselves to be 15 years old or more (25 percent of the sample) sat the *Concours*.

large farmers', and small farmers' children—also had the highest proportion of pupils repeating two or more classes. Thus, the formal criterion of age, used by the Cameroonian authorities to limit competition for secondary school places, is in fact primarily a social criterion.¹¹

Second, many pupils did not sit the examination even though no formal obstacle prevented them from doing so. Self-elimination also reflected social background. Between two-thirds and three-quarters of 10-14-year-olds from commercial and white-collar backgrounds sat the Concours, compared with 53 and 59 percent of the children of farmers and manual workers respectively. In all cases self-elimination increased with age, which means that there is more self-elimination among children from lower social backgrounds, who have a higher average age than other children. Older children from higher occupational backgrounds seem to be of below-average ability, having already failed the Concours at one or more previous attempts. This is less true for other older pupils, who are nevertheless as unlikely to sit the Concours as are the more privileged older pupils.¹²

These two mechanisms eliminate no less than half the sample from the Concours, ranging from two-thirds of farmers' children to three-fifths of manual workers' and between a third and a half of those from white-collar and trading backgrounds. Taken together these two exclusion mechanisms are more important than the Concours in determining the overall pattern of secondary school entrance. We might ask what difference these variations in rates of exclusion are likely to make to a study which relies for its validity on high enrollment levels. Candidates are not typical of Class 6 pupils, and this is likely to attenuate the relationship between social background and performance variations. Thus, the significant relationships which emerge between background and performance are likely to be understatements of the real effect of background on performance.

Who Passes?

Only one candidate in five passes the Concours. Elite children, in spite of their low level of self-elimination, outperform all others, and children from white-collar and trading backgrounds have better pass-rates than those from farming and manual backgrounds, with the exception of small farmers' children who have the third-best pass rate overall. With very few exceptions, young candidates outperform the older, boys outperform girls, and repeaters do better than nonrepeaters. Such factors as ethnicity

¹¹ A similar relationship between age, class background, and selection has been found to exist in France: see C. Baudelot and R. Establet, *L'École Capitaliste en France* (Paris: Cahiers Librés, Maspéro, 1971), p. 67. There are other striking similarities between the selection process in Yaoundé and that of metropolitan France which serve to underline the emergent class nature of the former (see nn. 20, 24).

¹² The pattern among small farmers' children—by far the lowest take rate among young potential candidates and equal highest take rate among 14-year-olds—is of special interest, and helps explain a highly particular performance pattern in this group. See the next section.

and birthplace are not significantly correlated with performance. Repeat rates, age, and sex influences on performance are related to social background in a number of ways.

Younger candidates have a pass rate nearly twice that of their older classmates. This is mainly because younger candidates are disproportionately concentrated in the higher occupational groups. If elite candidates are excluded, the remaining younger candidates have a pass mark of only 20 percent.

It is possible that younger candidates from manual and farming backgrounds are more able than those from other occupational groups, given the generally higher incidence of late starting and repeating among the former. This would seem to hold true for small farmers' children, who have the third-best pass rate among 10-12-year-olds, but not for those from large farming and manual backgrounds, among whom only the children of skilled workers have a pass rate approaching the average. High rates of self-elimination mean that only the most able small farmers' children take the Concours.

Young candidates from urban occupational backgrounds have very similar take rates, which makes them the most comparable candidates. The performance of elite children from this group stands out: they constitute 16 percent of all candidates but no less than 31 percent of all passes. Their pass rate is over twice that of all other 10-12-year-olds. At the opposite extreme, none of the children from unskilled manual backgrounds managed to pass, suggesting that lowly urban origins constitute a greater educational handicap than rural origins.¹³

The poor performance of older candidates from elite and large trading backgrounds (pass rates of 8 and 0 percent, respectively) confirms that these candidates are of distinctly low ability. The same cannot be said for farmers' children, who are likely to have started school late and not to have taken the Concours before.

Girls constitute 54 percent of both the Class 6 sample and the Concours candidates. Although the sexes were almost identical on all major background characteristics, the pass rate for boys was over twice that for girls, suggesting that being female constitutes a major educational disadvantage. Previous studies have shown that girls in secondary schools and universities have higher social origins than boys.¹⁴ In the Concours elite, girls represent 44 percent of successful candidates, whereas elite boys account for only 31 percent of successful males.

In all occupational groups boys outperform girls, but what is of interest is the gap between male and female performance in each occupational

¹³ This was also the conclusion of G. Hurd and T. Johnson, "Education and Social Mobility in Ghana," *Sociology of Education* 40 (1967): 55-79.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Clignet and Foster: Foster, *Education and Social Change in Ghana*: Beckett and O'Connell.

TABLE 1
 CONCOURS PASS RATES OF REPEATERS AND NONREPEATERS, YOUNGER AND OLDER
 CANDIDATES AND BOYS AND GIRLS, BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND (%)

Fathers' Occupation	Repeat- ing Class 6	Not Repeat- ing	10-12 Years	13-14 Years	Male	Female	All
Elite	39 (54)	33 (235)	42 (211)	16 (88)	37 (132)	31 (169)	34 (301)
Other white- collar	37 (100)	11 (277)	21 (193)	14 (195)	24 (179)	13 (211)	18 (390)
Large trader	28 (14)	27 (33)	30 (30)	18 (17)	28 (21)	27 (26)	28 (47)
Small trader	31 (57)	13 (104)	18 (65)	20 (102)	31 (63)	15 (106)	19 (168)
Skilled manual worker	33 (27)	9 (84)	23 (44)	11 (71)	20 (59)	11 (56)	16 (115)
Semiskilled manual worker	26 (25)	7 (96)	14 (50)	9 (74)	13 (53)	11 (72)	12 (127)
Unskilled manual worker	0 (3)	0 (23)	0 (11)	0 (16)	0 (15)	0 (13)	0 (28)
Large farmer	26 (46)	9 (73)	12 (40)	17 (81)	26 (61)	5 (62)	15 (123)
Small farmer	31 (19)	15 (25)	26 (19)	17 (25)	39 (23)	4 (23)	22 (46)
All	33 (345)	17 (950)	27 (663)	15 (672)	26 (606)	16 (738)	21 (1,345)

NOTE.—Numbers in parentheses represent the bases on which the percentages are calculated. Large and small traders and farmers were arbitrarily defined on the basis of the pupils' own estimation of the level of parental activity plus the author's assessment of the description that pupils were encouraged to give concerning the nature and extent of such activity. Such terms as "grand" and "petit planteur/cultivateur, commerçant" are widely used locally and proved to be heuristically satisfactory. All tables are statistically significant at the .01 level.

group. Table 1 shows that boys from small farming backgrounds have the best pass rate of all candidates, whereas small farmers' daughters have almost the worst. It is highly probable that small farmers' sons have been preselected by ability, both before they arrive in town and when the decision is made to take the Concours. It is not obvious why farmers' daughters are not similarly selected. The decision to send promising sons to town schools probably reflects their parents' concern to maximize educational and occupational opportunities, but this does not lead to more boys than girls being sent, as we might have expected. Local folklore has it that rural parents are keen to educate their daughters so as to increase their bride-price.¹⁵ In the absence of direct evidence we may conclude that girls from rural, farming backgrounds suffer during their childhood from unfavor-

¹⁵ An "overeducated" girl may have difficulty in finding a husband, however.

able social and cultural conditions of a more severe nature than those experienced by any other group of girls, unskilled workers' daughters excepted.

At the bottom of the urban social hierarchy, neither boys nor girls are educationally competitive. At the skilled manual worker, small trader, and other white-collar levels better material and cultural conditions lead to better average pass rates, but a distinct gap is apparent between the sexes.¹⁶ At the elite and large trader levels higher cultural and material standards serve to reduce the performance gap without eliminating it completely. It is clear that social advantage tends to overcome sexual disadvantage at this level: girls from elite and large trading backgrounds have higher pass rates than boys from almost all other occupational backgrounds. Lower-class girls suffer both from being girls and from being lower class, which overdetermines their educational failure.

More than a quarter of candidates were repeaters. The pass rate of repeaters was over twice that of nonrepeaters, so we are clearly dealing with a very important phenomenon.¹⁷ Repeating favors candidates from lower occupational backgrounds: if candidates were only allowed to sit the *Concours* once, children from elite and large trading backgrounds would take 55 percent of available secondary school places instead of the 41 percent they actually obtain, and farmers' and manual workers' children would take 16 instead of 22 percent. There were proportionally more repeaters among candidates from lower occupational groups, and they clearly benefit more from an extra year of schooling than do children from more advantageous material and cultural backgrounds.

Preselection by ability, the exclusion of 15-year-olds, self-elimination, and repeating Class 6 all serve to complicate the analysis of performance variations. Nevertheless, there were clear signs among children from urban occupational backgrounds that substantial performance differences exist which cannot be explained simply in terms of the above factors. Having established the importance of home background in the selection process, we may now consider its material and cultural dimensions.

Parental Education

*Previous studies have stressed the importance of parental education in determining patterns of access and performance.*¹⁸ Here we are concerned with the interrelationship between parental education, occupation, and *Concours* results. Two-thirds of elite fathers had an educational level of *Probatoire*¹⁹ or more, and nearly four-fifths of fathers with this educational

¹⁶ Equal to a male advantage of between 82 and 106 percent.

¹⁷ Heyneman and Somerset both show that repeating improves examination performance, although they do not link this to class background.

¹⁸ For the Ivory Coast see Clignet and Foster; for Ghana see Foster, *Education and Social Change in Ghana*; and for Nigeria see Beckett and O'Connell.

¹⁹ The diploma preceding the *Baccalaureate*, roughly between Ordinary and Advanced level standard in the British General Certificate of Education and taken after four years of secondary schooling.

level were in the elite. Children from the most educated elite backgrounds constitute a fifth of all candidates and a third of all passes. One of the major effects of parental education on performance patterns, therefore, is to distinguish the children of the educated elite from all other children.

Table 2 shows that, with the exception of other white-collar workers' and small farmers' children, performance improves with fathers' education in all occupational groups. The small farmers' children are the most likely to have been preselected by ability, and it is probable that preselection is more widespread among uneducated farmers, who may also be the poorest and geographically the most remote. Lower-level white-collar workers with the *Probatoire* are probably underachievers, implying that educational success may reflect parental mobility as well as objective characteristics such as educational level. It is also possible that the children of lower-level white-collar workers tend to exaggerate their fathers' educational level.

Mothers' and fathers' educational levels are closely related. For example, two-thirds of mothers with the BEPC (roughly, Ordinary level in the British General Certificate of Education and taken after four years of secondary schooling) or more were the wives of elite men, whereas only between 5 and 15 percent of women with husbands in the bottom six occupational groups had any educational certificates at all (the BEPC is taken after four years of secondary school). The pass rate of children with elite mothers is nearly three times the sample mean, but it is certain that the mothers in this category have husbands with university education and elite jobs.

Children with mothers in lower-level white-collar occupations show a similar indeterminate performance pattern to those with fathers in similar occupations, indicating that the more educated nonelite mothers are perhaps also occupational underachievers.

Female traders' children have the worst pass rate by far, and only the children of semi- and unskilled workers have lower pass rates in relation to paternal characteristics. Three-fifths of female traders are the wives of small traders or semiskilled workers, and 95 percent of them have no educational qualifications, compared with two-thirds of all other candidates' mothers. It is clear that we are dealing with an extremely lowly group of working women, those who are obliged to supplement meager household earnings through unrewarding petty commerce.

Below the level of BEPC, parental education seems to have little or no effect on performance. Studies in the West have shown that material considerations are more important than the cultural level of the family in determining the low educational success of children from underprivileged backgrounds, and the same seems to be true here.²⁰ In the West, above a

²⁰ For France, see A. Sauvy and A. Girard, "Les Diverses Classes Sociales devant l'Enseignement. Mise au Point des Resultats," *Population* 2 (1965): 205-32; for the United States, see P. Blau and R. Duncan, *The American Occupational Structure* (New York: Wiley, 1963) and J. S. Coleman et al., *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, 1966).

TABLE 2
CONCOURS PASS RATES BY PARENTAL OCCUPATION

Occupation	Education			
	No diploma	CEPE	BEPC	Probatoire +
	Fathers			
Elite	...	10 (19)	31 (42)	39 (160)
Other white-collar	4 (22)	16 (128)	25 (109)	17 (29)
Large trader	25 (12)	43 (7)	...	...
Small trader	16 (67)	17 (41)	...	...
Skilled manual worker	11 (49)	21 (33)	...	...
Semiskilled manual worker	6 (48)	7 (42)	...	...
Unskilled manual worker	0 (18)	0 (7)	...	...
Large farmer	14 (65)	21 (28)	...	...
Small farmer	32 (25)	12 (8)	...	...
All	15 (307)	16 (313)	25 (173)	37 (196)
	Mothers			
Elite	...	...	...	61 (13)
Other white-collar	28 (7)	30 (64)	28 (63)	28 (13)
Trader	13 (100)	...	...	...
Tailoress	20 (114)	33 (52)	40 (10)	...
Housewife	17 (524)	7 (79)	11 (9)	43 (7)
Farmer	20 (119)	...	...	...
All	18 (864)	20 (206)	29 (86)	44 (36)

NOTE.—CEPE is the primary school leaving certificate. Three dots indicate cells of between zero and six cases that have been excluded from the table since they are too small for establishing meaningful percentages.

certain income it is “cultural capital” which explains much of the variance in performance. Good material and cultural conditions are mutually reinforcing in the Yaoundé cases, and it is difficult and potentially misleading to try to separate out the “independent” effect on performance of material or cultural factors.

Language Used in the Home

In investigating the effects of language and material conditions on performance we have excluded the children of farmers, most of whom were migrants, did not live with their parents, and were sometimes preselected by ability. Three-fifths of nonfarmers' children were born in Yaoundé and over four-fifths of them lived with one or both parents. In order to obtain as comparable a group as possible we have restricted the discussion to children living with both parents.

More than a quarter of sample students declared that French was the most frequently used language in the home. Pupils have most probably exaggerated the importance of French, but variations between occupational groups are nevertheless revealing. Whatever advantages are to be gained from speaking French in the home, they will accrue primarily to elite children, over half of whom claimed French to be the first language spoken at home compared with between 10 and 20 percent of those from nonelite backgrounds. The standard of French spoken will also be superior among the elite children, which is likely to help them in the *Concours*.

Table 3 shows that the difference in pass rates is most noticeable between children who reported that French was the first home language and all other children, except in the case of children from manual backgrounds, where variations were minimal and unsystematic. Children from commercial and white-collar backgrounds were up to 50 percent more likely to pass the *Concours* if French was the first language of the home. Thus,

TABLE 3
CONCOURS PERFORMANCE BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND AND THE USE OF FRENCH IN THE HOME

Fathers' Occupation	French			Total
	1st Language	2d-3d Language	None	
Elite	45 (157)	23 (101)	25 (20)	36 (278)
Other white-collar	28 (67)	16 (243)	10 (31)	18 (341)
Large trader	37 (19)	19 (16)	0 (4)	26 (39)
Small trader	27 (22)	17 (97)	22 (9)	19 (128)
Skilled manual worker	12 (8)	15 (74)	12 (16)	14 (98)
Semiskilled manual worker	9 (21)	12 (73)	12 (17)	12 (111)
Unskilled manual worker	0 (2)	0 (17)	0 (5)	0 (24)
All	35 (296)	16 (621)	14 (102)	22 (1.019)

TABLE 4

CONCOURS PASS RATES BY LIVING CONDITIONS, HOUSEHOLD SIZE, AND OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	Living Conditions			Number of Persons in Household	
	Good	Average	Poor	2-9	10+
Elite	39 (234)	24 (25)	5 (18)	39 (175)	26 (127)
Other white-collar	28 (121)	12 (106)	14 (121)	21 (183)	15 (203)
Large trader	36 (25)	12 (8)	0 (7)	27 (22)	29 (21)
Small trader	17 (18)	19 (43)	21 (67)	23 (77)	16 (21)
Skilled manual worker	18 (17)	16 (19)	12 (64)	18 (66)	12 (18)
Semiskilled manual worker	11 (9)	8 (25)	13 (79)	13 (59)	10 (68)
Unskilled manual worker	0 (0)	0 (6)	0 (18)	0 (18)	0 (9)
All	32 (415)	14 (232)	14 (374)	25 (600)	17 (568)

language and performance variations are more closely associated at the top than at the bottom of the occupational ladder.

Living Conditions

Sample pupils were asked which of the following were found in their homes: running water, electricity, an interior toilet, a refrigerator, and some form of cooker. Good material conditions were defined as the presence of at least four of these, average conditions as the presence of two or three, and poor conditions as the absence of all but one of the facilities. There was no difference in pass rates between those living in average or poor conditions, but those living in good conditions had a pass rate over twice that of other candidates. But as with home language, the most significant pattern in the "expected" direction was among children from elite and large trading backgrounds.

Blau and Duncan have shown that in the United States, family size has a considerable effect on educational and occupational success.²¹ Table 4 shows Concours performance to be negatively correlated with family size in all but large traders' households. It was thought that parental education might be contaminating the table, but this proved not to be the case. Neither did household size reflect rates of polygyny: monogamists generally make up in dependents what they lack in children, particularly in elite

²¹ Blau and Duncan, chap. 11.

households. Household size thus seems to have an independent effect on performance, as the relatively good performance of children from small households reflects above-average performance on the part of children with both educated and less educated parents. In the future, the ability to avoid extended family responsibilities may be important in relation to educational performance.

It seems clear that the upper occupational groups are more heterogeneous, both materially and culturally, than the lower groups. For example, the range of educational attainments among both large traders and white-collar workers was wider than among other occupational groups. The former group is composed of both retired civil servants and more or less uneducated self-made men. The older civil servants frequently obtained promotions during the postindependence period of rapid Africanization. In both groups educational levels are likely to become more homogeneous in the future.

The expansion of female education has meant that many of the younger white-collar workers have wives with postprimary education. Among candidates from elite backgrounds, over two-fifths had mothers in this category. This trend is likely to continue, again with the result that background advantages of a cultural nature are likely to increase in relative importance in determining the performance of elite children.

Elite families enjoy overall advantages regarding material circumstances, parental education, the use of French in the home, the size of the households in which they live, and, no doubt, in many other ways. Among elite children, consistent and substantial performance variations are systematically associated with parental characteristics and home circumstances. The relative heterogeneity of the present elite is an index of its recent origins: it is overwhelmingly a first-generation phenomenon. The development of a tightly knit ruling class out of the existing elite cannot, of course, be reduced to an increasing level of educational homogeneity, but we would posit this as one of the necessary conditions as well as one of the likely trends in the near future.

The Pattern of Secondary School Entry

Entry to Yaoundé state and mission academic secondary schools is the quasi monopoly of pupils finishing primary school in the town. Thus, 88 percent of new entrants are from Yaoundé, 4 percent are from other towns, and 8 percent are from villages. Moreover, Yaoundé primary leavers had a pass rate five times that of candidates from outside. Village children are much more numerous in the smaller secondary schools in the province, where competition for places is less stiff. On a provincially based Concours, most of the pupils obtaining places in the smaller schools would be replaced by Yaoundé candidates who failed to obtain places in Yaoundé.

But it is likely that secondary dropout rates and failure in national examinations will serve to minimize the overall positive discrimination effect of the entry system.

Farmers' children take only 16 percent of state and mission academic places, but 40 percent of private²² and 55 percent of all technical and vocational places. From the secondary school qualifications likely to be obtained in the various streams, farmers' children entering the job market will tend to be restricted to skilled manual work and clerical occupations, though for the majority of farmers' children even such modest occupational achievement is likely to be increasingly unattainable.

A quarter of our primary sample was traced to Yaoundé secondary schools of all kinds. Two-fifths entered state and mission academic streams, an equal proportion began private secular academic courses, and the remaining fifth entered technical and commercial schools. The overall pattern of secondary school entry reflects *Concours* performance, the ability to pay school fees, and the choice between different kinds of private schooling. Of all sample pupils only the children of small farmers are underrepresented in all kinds of secondary schooling, compared with their relative importance in the primary sample. This reflects their low take rate in the *Concours* and, one imagines, a lack of money to pay secondary school fees. Children from white-collar backgrounds are heavily concentrated in the academic sector, elite children because of their *Concours* performance, and other white-collar children because they are sent to private academic schools in large numbers. Outside the white-collar and small farmer groups, all children are overrepresented in technical schools compared with the primary sample. This is especially noticeable among the children of large traders, and it seems that a real preference for technical over academic studies is being expressed in these cases.²³

Another way of gauging preference is to compare the proportion of students entering technical as opposed to private academic schools. Table 5 shows that over half the boys from semi- and unskilled manual and farming backgrounds enter technical or commercial rather than academic private schools. For all other boys the reverse is the case, and over three-quarters of those from white-collar backgrounds enter academic schools. There is thus a clear indication that the boys' pattern of preference closely follows socioeconomic background.

In the case of the girls, only the daughters of large traders and large farmers are more numerous in technical than in academic streams. In the large traders' case it would seem that parents are more able than others to provide a secondary education for some of their less able daughters, and

²² These are low-quality private secular schools in which the chances of examination success are very slim indeed.

²³ Fees are similar for both types of school.

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENTRANTS IN TECHNICAL AS OPPOSED TO PRIVATE ACADEMIC SCHOOLS, BY OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Fathers' Occupation	% Technical		
	Male	Female	Total
Elite	17 (29)	31 (26)	24 (55)
Other white-collar	23 (61)	18 (69)	21 (121)
Large trader	37 (8)	54 (11)	47 (19)
Small trader	36 (22)	35 (15)	36 (67)
Skilled manual worker	43 (30)	30 (30)	37 (60)
Semiskilled manual worker	54 (33)	36 (41)	45 (74)
Unskilled manual worker	67 (6)	37 (8)	50 (14)
Large farmer	52 (25)	61 (23)	56 (48)
Small farmer	54 (13)	25 (8)	43 (21)
All	37 (227)	33 (252)	35 (479)

that their commercial background prejudices them in favor of vocational studies. Nonelite white-collar workers' daughters are relatively more highly represented in academic private schools than their elite counterparts. This reflects the poorer Concours performance of girls from other white-collar backgrounds and the probable low ability of elite daughters who fail to obtain academic places in state schools.

Technical education is overwhelmingly the province of older pupils. Proportionally, there are nearly as many 15-year-olds entering technical schools as 10-12-year-olds entering academic schools. Only small traders' children are relatively more numerous in technical than in academic schools among 10-12-year-olds. It appears that in this case a genuine preference for technical education is being shown among younger pupils. By contrast, only older large traders' children are found in technical schools; all the 10-12-year-olds are found in academic schools.

The tendency for all occupational groups to send older children to technical schools means that proportionally more children from manual and farming backgrounds will go to technical schools, given their above-average age. Fifty-eight percent of all technical places but only 38 percent of private academic places go to children with manual and farming fathers.

The secondary stream chosen is very important from the point of view of occupational outlets and class formation. In the West, class background has a strong influence on the decision to keep a child at school or to send him or her into a particular secondary stream.²⁴ On the other hand, "In the Ivory Coast. . . there are no significant variations in the relative representation of the various socioeconomic . . . categories in the secondary, technical or agricultural institutions of the country."²⁵ Our own data suggest, however, that relatively high enrollment levels are associated with differentiation in the type of secondary school attended, which partially reflects a preference for technical education among children from non-white-collar backgrounds.

Conclusions

Some of our findings indicate that subcultural differentiation plays an important role in the overall selection process. First, all parents do not push their children *nolens volens* until they are eliminated by examination failure. This may reflect different expectations of success in the Concours. Material factors affecting past performance may well be the primary cause of these variations in attitude, but subcultures are themselves the result of material inequalities.

Second, as we have just shown, boys from semi- and unskilled manual and farming backgrounds preferred technical to academic private education. This suggests that the kind of secondary school attended and diploma obtained will constitute another link between social origins and life chances.²⁶

Third, levels of parental education and the use of French in the home were closely related to class background and are almost invariably associated with performance variations. In our opinion it is more useful to consider parental education as a subcultural factor than as an "independent" cause of enrollment and performance variations. Parental education is both a major determinant of class position and of children's scholastic performance. This is particularly true at the higher levels of parental education, where the link between the culture of the home and the culture contained in the school syllabus is most strong.

²⁴ See Baudelot and Establet, and A. Girard and H. Bastide, "Orientation et Selection Scolaires," *Population* 2 (1969): 435-72.

²⁵ Remi Clignet, *Liberty and Equality in the Educational Process* (New York: Wiley, 1974), p. 214.

²⁶ Even at the University of Yaoundé enrollment patterns show a close relationship between faculty attended and class background. For example, nearly half the medical students are from white-collar backgrounds, compared with only 5 percent of those in agriculture. Farmers' children constitute over three-quarters of agriculture students and less than a third of those studying science (see F. Mbassi Manga, "Rapport d'Activites," mimeographed, Faculté de Lettres et de Sciences Humaines 1974, Université de Yaoundé 1976).

Fourth, girls' performance patterns are indicative of greater female disadvantage at the intermediary levels of the occupational hierarchy than at the top or the bottom. If material conditions alone determined performance, we would expect the performance of the two sexes to improve in equal proportions between the bottom and the top of the occupational ladder. The marked narrowing of performance differentials at the top may indicate changes in female socialization and attitudes toward the education of girls. Again, material factors are probably at the origin of such changes.

We hope to have demonstrated the importance of studying both enrollment and performance effects on educational progress within the overall selection process. Simply to have concentrated on performance would have given the impression that, for example, boys from small farming backgrounds were disproportionately successful in passing from primary to secondary school, rather than extremely unsuccessful (the correct conclusion). The use of sophisticated techniques in analyzing cross-sectional data is likely to produce such distortions, leading to theoretical conclusions which mystify the nature of the selection process.

Education and Sexual Inequality in Cameroun

by Brian Cooksey, *Lecturer in Sociology, University of Dar es Salaam*

The rise of the feminist movement in the West has served to stimulate serious research on sex rôles and inequalities, and the recent growth in the number of African and female researchers has had an invigorating effect on various arguments about the status of women in Africa. So far, however, the controversy has generated more heat than light, as a result of both the relative paucity of sound research findings and the combined effects of the sex, race, and ideology of researchers.

We believe that the debate currently suffers from a tendency to over-generalise about the position of the African woman, which is deemed to have improved/deteriorated over time. This lack of specificity leads to the over-simplification of a complex and multifaceted reality. In our opinion more attention should be paid to particular social contexts (economic, educational, familial, political), and to particular groups of women (peasants, entrepreneurs, manual and white-collar workers). In this way we may avoid the sexism implicit in reducing African women to one homogeneous, undifferentiated mass, all occupying essentially the same social position.

Sex, School Enrolment, and Performance in Cameroun

This short article is concerned with education as a specific locus of sexual inequality. Like the general issue of female rôles and status, this is an area where little research has been undertaken. A number of studies in the West have looked into the problem of schooling as an example of sexual inequality in action.¹ The under-performance of girls and their concentration in certain 'feminine' streams and institutions have been well documented. These factors, together with early leaving, serve to limit female occupational choice and earnings-potential independently of discrimination in recruitment, promotion, and pay.

These questions have not been adequately treated in Africa. This is because most sociological research in education is undertaken at the secondary and higher levels, which are overwhelmingly male preserves, and also because of a frequent preoccupation with social mobility, which is also considered to be essentially a male domain.

In Africa, it is at the primary level of instruction that the disadvantages of girls are most in evidence. At early stages of educational growth it is usually the boys who are given the first chance of going to school.² This was certainly

¹ See, for example, E. M. Byrne, *Women and Education* (London, 1978); Rosemary Deem, *Women and Schooling* (London, 1978); N. Entwistle and J. Wilson, *Degrees of Excellence: the academic achievement game* (London, 1977); Eleanor Maccoby, *The Development of Sex Differences* (Stanford, 1966); Sue Sharpe, *Just Like a Girl* (Harmondsworth, 1976); and M. B. Sutherland, *Sex Bias in Education* (Oxford, 1981).

² There are exceptions. For example, in the Kweneng District of Botswana, two girls attend primary school for every boy, reflecting the system of male adult labour migration which forces many young boys to become permanent herdsmen. See Caroline Allison, 'The Economics of Household Demand for Children's Schooling: study of the Kweneng District of Botswana', in *Development Research Digest* (Brighton), 4, Winter 1980, pp. 55-7.

the case during the colonial period, when schools were built for the *sons* of chiefs, and both European and African brands of sexism combined to incorporate essentially male labour into the money economy. The latter was frequently achieved through an intensification of women's labour in subsistence agriculture. The few Africans who obtained enough education to be recruited to the lower levels of the colonial service were invariably men. Only since independence have occupational openings for women been created on any appreciable scale which require a certain level of formal education, but they still account for only a small proportion of non-agricultural workers.

In Cameroun, although enrolment levels have risen remarkably since independence, there are still large inequalities between the sexes. These are variously manifested from one region to another, between urban and rural areas, ethnic groups, and social classes. Sexual inequalities can be observed in access to primary education, 'drop-out' rates, and failure to enter secondary school.

In the five francophone Provinces of Cameroun, girls accounted for one-third of primary enrolments in 1960 and over two-fifths in 1970, but regional differences remained large. For example, in 1970 less than a quarter of primary pupils in the Northern Province were girls, as against 44-47 per cent in the Littoral, Western, and Centre-South Provinces,¹ where the high levels of enrolment reflect the influence of Christian religion and education since the late nineteenth century, and the corresponding incorporation of these areas under colonialism (urbanisation, cash-crops, money economy, and infrastructure).

The Northern Province is largely rural and dominated by the Muslim Foulbé. In 1970, less than a quarter of all children aged 6-14 attended primary school, and the vast majority of girls received little or no formal education, except in Koranic schools.² We should hesitate to blame this state of affairs simply on Islamic culture: there is little evidence to suggest that Muslim parents are any less keen than others to educate their daughters.³ Much more important is the sexual division of labour which keeps young girls in the home and the fields, cooking, baby-minding, fetching water, carrying firewood, and cultivating. In Tanzania, Marjorie Mbilinyi found that the need for female labour was the major reason for the non-enrolment of daughters in primary school, and this imperative will clearly be more pressing in the rural context.⁴ In Cameroun, B. Mateossian found that for the Bamiléké and Bamoun Departments in the Western Province the gap between the enrolments of boys and girls was much greater in rural than in urban areas.⁵ The generally low levels found in the

¹ Ministry of Education, *Yearbook* (Yaoundé, 1970).

² Renault Santerre, *Pédagogie musulmane d'Afrique noire* (Quebec, 1974).

³ See, for example, J. M. Hake, *Parental Attitudes toward Primary Education in a Hausa Community in Northern Nigeria* (Kano, 1970); Kenneth Blakemore, 'Resistance to Formal Education in Ghana: its implications for the status of school leavers', in *Comparative Education Review* (Madison), 19, 2, 1975, pp. 237-51; and L. F. B. Dubbeldam, *The Primary School and the Community in Mwanza District, Tanzania* (Groningen, 1970).

⁴ Marjorie Mbilinyi, 'Education, Stratification and Sexism in Tanzania', in *The African Review* (Dar es Salaam), 3, 2, 1973, pp. 327-40.

⁵ B. Mateossian, *La Population du pays Bamiléké et des départements limitrophes: principaux résultats de l'enquête démographique de 1965* (Paris, 1966).

Bamoun Departments are associated with greater urban-rural and male-female inequalities than in the Bamiléké case. Past a certain enrolment level such inequalities tend inevitably to decline: girls and villages will catch up boys and towns, as and when the latter approach full enrolment.

In some southern towns—for example, Yaoundé, Obala, Eseka, and Mbalmayo—there are actually more girls than boys attending primary school, and even in the rural hinterland there are very low primary-school sex ratios. In Yaoundé the predominance of girls reflects the demographic structure of the town. In the north, girls rarely reach 40 per cent of urban-primary enrolment or 30 per cent of rural.

The progress of female enrolment can be shown for a longer period. For the five francophone Provinces, girls represented 20 per cent of primary enrolment in 1952, 37 per cent in 1962, and 43 per cent in 1970. In absolute terms, the enrolment of girls increased by 160 per cent between 1960 and 1970, compared with 67 per cent for boys during the same decade.¹

As might be expected, sexual enrolment inequalities are relatively greater at the secondary and higher levels, both within and between regions. For example, only one-third of all students attending non-vocational secondary schools in the Centre-South Province in 1975 were girls, and in the Northern Province only 10 per cent.² In 1974, only 7 per cent of Arts students from the Northern Province attending the University of Yaoundé were girls, compared with 14 per cent from the Western Province, and one-quarter from the Littoral. Moreover, only 2 per cent of all female students in the Faculty were from the Northern and Eastern Provinces combined, compared with 6 per cent of all male students. There were over twice as many female students from the Centre-South as male students from the Northern Province, a clear index of geographical educational inequalities.³

At all levels girls tend to have higher 'drop-out' and repeat rates than boys, and lower pass rates in the primary-leaving certificate (*Certificat d'études primaires élémentaires*) and secondary-entrance examination (*Concours d'entrée en sixième*). In 1972, male candidates in the C.E.P.E. had a national pass rate of 47 per cent compared with 36 per cent among females, and in all five Provinces boys did better than girls.⁴ The performance patterns for Yaoundé pupils in these two examinations are reported below.

Drop-out rates are reflected in the following figures: in 1969 for the

¹ André Labrousse, *Le Financement de l'enseignement du premier degré au Cameroun oriental* (Paris, 1975).

² Ministry of Education, *Yearbook* (Yaoundé, 1975).

³ François Mbassi-Manga, 'Rapport d'activités', Faculté de Lettres et de Sciences Humaines, Université de Yaoundé, 1974.

⁴ Direction de la statistique et de la comptabilité nationale, *L'Enseignement au nord Cameroun* (Garoua, 1972). In all Provinces girls have lower pass rates than boys, but the difference between the sexes is smallest in the two Provinces with the lowest enrolment levels, the East and the North. In the North so few girls take the C.E.P.E. that we would expect those who do to be either extremely intelligent or from unusually high social backgrounds, or a combination of both. Remi Clignet and Philip Foster have shown that girls attending secondary schools in the Ivory Coast are, on average, from higher socio-economic backgrounds than boys; *The Fortunate Few* (Evanston, 1966). For Nigerian data, see M. Shoremi and F. Mott, 'Characteristics of Expectations of Lagos University Undergraduates', Human Research Unit, University of Lagos, 1972.

francophone Provinces as a whole, among 6-year-olds there were 85 girls attending primary school for every 100 boys, but at age 14 this ratio had fallen to 57. The figures for Classes 1 and 6 were, respectively, 79 and 54 girls per 100 boys.¹

School Performance in Yaoundé and the Centre-South Province

As the above discussion shows, girls are *differentially* underprivileged as regards access to school and subsequent performance. Indeed, girls from the southern part of the country, although disadvantaged at the level of secondary entrance and above when compared with boys from the same areas, have a considerable educational lead over both girls and boys from the educationally backward Eastern and (especially) Northern Provinces. Sexual inequality in schooling is relative, not absolute.

The trend towards more equal enrolments at the primary level results in a shift in the manifestation of inequality to secondary access. There are three ways in which this may occur. First, fewer girls than boys may take the entrance examination for secondary schools. Second, fewer female candidates may be successful. Third, parents and kinsmen may be less willing to pay for private education for their girls than for their boys. We may investigate these points by taking an area of high primary enrolment, namely Yaoundé and the Centre-South Province. According to official statistics, in 1967 no less than 97 per cent of boys and 92 per cent of girls between the ages of 6 and 14 were attending schools in Yaoundé.² Girls accounted for no less than 55 per cent of our Class 6 sample, a reflection of the demographic composition of the young population rather than a higher enrolment of girls in school.³

Most of the following discussion is based on a study of primary-school leavers and secondary entrants in Yaoundé, undertaken during the academic years 1974-5 and 1975-6.⁴ Over 40 per cent of primary-school leavers in this town completed questionnaires on their educational histories and social backgrounds, and over one-quarter of these were traced to Yaoundé secondary schools the following year.

We may dismiss the first potential source of female disadvantages mentioned above: in Yaoundé, 50 per cent of sampled girls took the secondary-school entrance examination compared with 48 per cent of the boys. As girls constitute 55 per cent of the candidates but only 45 per cent of those entering state secondary schools, factors associated with performance in the examination are clearly a major source of inequality.

Examination Performance

The *Concours d'entrée en sixième* consists of papers in French and Arithmetic, and the raw scores in both subjects are added to arrive at an overall total. Male

¹ Ministry of Education, *Yearbook, 1970* (Yaoundé, 1970).

² S.E.D.E.S., *Enquête sur le niveau de vie à Yaoundé* (Paris, 1974), p. 83.

³ Sample data show that only small traders send substantially more girls than boys to primary school.

⁴ See Brian Cooksey, 'Education and Class Formation in Cameroun', Ph.D. dissertation, Centre of West African Studies, University of Birmingham, 1978.

candidates had a pass rate of 26 per cent compared with only 16 per cent for girls, a 62 per cent male advantage. We were interested in comparing performance on the two papers separately, hypothesising that the girls might prove to be relatively strong in French and weak in Arithmetic, and vice versa for the boys. A balance of strengths and weaknesses favouring the boys would help explain performance inequalities for this secondary-entrance examination. To test this hypothesis the results for the two papers were reduced to standard scores, and it was found that the boys had a slight overall advantage in both papers. But this advantage was not enough to explain the 62 per cent gap between male and female candidates.¹

The solution to the problem is quite simple, however, and stems from marking conventions in the two subjects. A good student in Arithmetic can easily obtain a mark approaching 100 per cent, but this is not possible for even the best answers in French because the language examiners mark 'down'. Consequently, good candidates in Arithmetic are at a decided advantage over good candidates in French, and most of the former happen to be boys. In this way a relatively small performance advantage in absolute terms is transformed into a significant asset in terms of obtaining secondary-school places. Most of this advantage would be eliminated if overall marks were calculated on the basis of standard rather than raw scores. One wonders how many girls have had their school careers terminated as a result of this technicality!

Aggregate figures hide large differences in performance and pass rates between boys and girls both within and between occupational groups.² From Table 1 it is clear that the major divide between the sexes is found among the children of, especially, small farmers, where – ignoring those of unskilled workers – boys have the highest and girls the lowest pass rates. The high pass rate of farmers' sons reflects pre-selection by ability and a low take-rate among potential candidates.³ Take-rates among farmers' daughters are also low, so it seems that their poor performance is associated with background disadvantages related to being a girl in the countryside. That rural living and schooling constitute educational disadvantages is demonstrated from the performance of candidates from village schools who, although they were probably the most promising pupils, had a pass rate of only one-fifth that of those from the Yaoundé primary schools. In the absence of direct evidence concerning the material and cultural circumstances obtaining in the rural areas, we can simply conclude that being a girl constitutes an independent and substantial disadvantage from the point of view of educational opportunities.

In the urban context, sex and class background are clearly related, albeit in complex ways. At the bottom and top of the occupational ladder – semi- and unskilled manual, élite and large-trader fathers – the variations in pass rates

¹ C.E.P.E. pass rates gave the boys only an 8 per cent advantage over the girls.

² From our discussion it is clear that marking conventions exaggerate real performance differences between the sexes. Here we are interested in making comparisons across occupational groups, holding the built-in bias constant.

³ For a more detailed analysis of performance variations, see Brian Cooksey, 'Social Class and Academic Performance: a Cameroon case study', in *Comparative Educational Review* (Chicago), 25, 3, October 1981, pp. 403–18, and Kenneth Blakemore and Brian Cooksey, *A Sociology of Education for Africa* (London, 1980), pp. 64–5.

TABLE I
Pass Rates for *Concours d'entrée* by Sex and Fathers' Occupation

Sex	Male		Female		Percentage Male Advantage
	N	%	N	%	
Fathers' Occupation:					
Élite	132	37	169	31	+ 19
Other white-collar	179	24	211	13	+ 85
Large trader	21	28	26	27	+ 4
Small trader	62	31	106	15	+ 107
Skilled manual	59	20	56	11	+ 82
Semi-skilled manual	53	13	72	11	+ 18
Unskilled manual	15	0	13	0	—
Large farmer	61	26	62	5	+ 420
Small farmer	23	39	23	4	+ 800
Total	606	26	738	16	+ 62

between boys and girls are low, although the average differs radically. At the intermediate levels – other white-collar workers, small traders, and skilled-manual workers – the gap between male and female pass rates is much larger. It would seem that social disadvantages at the bottom of the occupational ladder exclude both boys and girls from competition for secondary places. At the intermediate levels, improved material and cultural conditions bring about better overall performance,¹ but the boys go ahead of the girls, indicating the importance of non-material factors in the under-achievement of girls. At the top level, girls almost catch up with their brothers, indicating that non-material factors have only a residual effect on female performance, all or most of which can be accounted for by unfair marking conventions. These are rough impressions based on less than perfect evidence.

Parental education seems to play a more important rôle in relation to performance among girls than boys. For both sexes, pupils with less-educated parents were the least likely to take and pass the *Concours d'entrée*, but whereas boys with uneducated fathers represented nearly one-third of all male passes, girls in this group accounted for only one-tenth of all female passes. Conversely, boys with highly educated father represented 28 per cent of male passes compared with 39 per cent for girls in this group.

Table 2 shows that, for the youngest candidates, boys have significantly higher pass rates than girls if their fathers have little education, but the reverse

¹ Between 14 and 35 per cent of candidates from these three groups live in good material conditions, compared with zero and 8 per cent of unskilled and semi-skilled workers' children, and 62 and 84 per cent of those from large-trader and élite backgrounds. We found that 72 per cent of unskilled manual workers had no educational diploma compared with none of the élite.

TABLE 2

Pass Rates for *Concours d'entrée* by Age, Sex, and Fathers' Education

Sex	Male						Female					
	10-12		13		14		10-12		13		14	
Age												
Number in Sample	<i>N</i>		<i>N</i>		<i>N</i>		<i>N</i>		<i>N</i>		<i>N</i>	
Percentage of Passes	%		%		%		%		%		%	
Fathers' Education:												
None	74	22	57	28	44	18	45	11	65	6	49	4
C.E.P.E.	69	22	44	16	35	26	78	15	71	8	61	13
B.E.P.C.	52	23	25	36	17	29	48	40	41	15	14	14
<i>Probatoire</i>	78	44	17	23	4	0	83	46	1	19	13	0
Total	273	28	143	25	100	22	254	29	193	10	137	9

is true for the *Brevet d'études du premier cycle* (roughly equivalent to 'O'-level in the General Certificate of Education) and above. When aged 13-14, boys outperform girls whatever the education of their fathers, unless the latter had reached the level of *probatoire*, in which case both sexes did equally well or (when aged 14) badly.

Older candidates are concentrated in the lower occupational groups, whereas those aged 10-12 are found predominantly in white-collar groups. Thus, the age dimension of Table 2 is 'contaminated' by occupational background. But as regards boys, there is little or no relationship between age and performance for the first three categories. For the girls there is a regular pattern regarding this relationship, as well as - with one exception - between fathers' education and pass rates.

We may hypothesise that the importance attached to the education of girls will be a function of parental occupation and education. In the 10-12 age group, girls whose fathers had achieved the level of *probatoire* - the qualification preceding the *baccalauréat*, somewhere between 'O'- and 'A'-level G.C.E. - had pass rates over four times higher than those with uneducated fathers, whereas for boys the pass rate of the former group was only twice that of the latter. For all age groups, boys with the least-educated fathers had a pass rate over three times that of girls in the same category, whereas at the level of *probatoire* the pass rates were almost identical. Finally, boys from the highest educational backgrounds had an almost identical pass rate to boys from élite backgrounds, whereas in the case of the girls the former rate was 6 per cent higher than the latter. This demonstrates, perhaps, that the educational disadvantages attached to being a girl are attenuated more by being from a highly educated than from a higher occupational background.¹

¹ Philip Foster, *Education and Social Change in Ghana* (London, 1965), and Paul Beckett and James O'Connell, *Education and Power in Nigeria* (London, 1977), among others stress the importance of parental education in determining patterns of selectivity, but do not stress the sexual dimension.

Western studies have shown that the performance of females in school declines relative to males in their middle and late teens.¹ A similar phenomenon seems to be evident from our data in Cameroun, since when aged 10–12 both girls and boys have very similar pass rates, whereas when they reach 13–14 years of age, boys have much higher pass rates than girls.² But this pattern somewhat reflects parental background. Only one-fifth of the younger female candidates were from manual or farming backgrounds, compared with two-fifths of the older girls. Also, a higher proportion of females from these backgrounds are aged 13–14, compared with the rest of the girls. This means that the overall pass rate of older female candidates disproportionately reflects low social background, and the reverse is true for younger girls.

The pass rate of older girls does not vary greatly between occupational groups, however. In the primary-school leaving examination, older girls also under-perform compared with boys of the same age. At age 10–12 girls have a slightly higher pass rate than the boys (41 *versus* 39 per cent) which is reversed at age 13–14 (31 *versus* 3 per cent). Female candidates of 15 years and older have only a 26 per cent pass rate compared with 33 per cent for the boys. These figures are not 'contaminated' by occupational background. Both age and sex seem, therefore, to be related to performance inequalities.

Western studies suggest that girls routinely out-perform boys in the 'feminine' environment of the primary schools, which corresponds more with the home life of girls than boys, since most teachers are women. It is true in general, and in Africa in particular, that teachers 'demand obedience, silence, passivity and conformity from their pupils – all features of traditional female behaviour'.³ Accordingly, girls adjust more easily to the authoritarian expectations of the school environment than boys. This would help account for the higher level of female performance in primary school. Subsequently, however, the girls lose their advantage:

at some time during their adolescence, girls begin to *underachieve* in relation to their real capacities. This is often around the onset of puberty, and coincides with the time when boys and girls are becoming increasingly aware of their sexuality and their future adult roles. For boys, this includes an emphasis on intellectual and practical achievements, and on various strengths of physique and character. For girls, conformity is more appropriate, and achievement may be translated into the context of appearance, social life and popularity. School pressures become ineffective when set against social pressure.⁴

In Africa, much of this argument would seem to be valid *a fortiori*. Many boys and girls reach puberty before finishing primary school, and the data suggest that this has a more adverse effect on the girls than on the boys. Two factors are involved. First, the girls reach puberty earlier than the boys; and second, they are obliged to adopt mature sexual rôles at an early age, especially those who come from working-class backgrounds. Both factors would help explain changes in relative performance levels, as well as the lower rate of promotion to secondary schools among girls – in the Centre-South Province, only one-third of academic secondary students are girls. A recent study found that, in Douala, 'One quarter of the women gave lack of means as a reason for leaving school (40 per cent of men) but about one third of the women left

¹ For example, Sharpe, *op.cit.*

² The pass rates for boys aged 10–12 and 13–14 were 28 and 24 per cent, respectively, and for girls 25 and 9 per cent.

³ Sharpe, *op.cit.* p. 145.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 135.

school because of pregnancy, marriage or parental opposition to education for girls.¹

In summary, both sociological factors associated with age and sexual maturity, and the effect of occupational background on performance, help explain the performance of girls relative to boys overall and older girls relative to older boys in particular. All girls suffer from age-related disadvantages, but working-class girls especially. As these and (probably also) girls from farming backgrounds already suffer from their material and cultural environment, it is not surprising that (i) Class 6 girls from these backgrounds are older than girls in general, and (ii) they have the lowest pass rate of any age, occupational or sex group. In the case of older girls from élite backgrounds, poor performance probably reflects the low ability or motivation of these girls rather than the effects of differential sexual socialisation.

Patterns of Secondary-School Entry

In this section we are principally concerned with secondary-school entry patterns for boys and girls leaving primary schools. A minority of those who enter the Yaoundé secondary schools are from outside the town, and they are predominantly boys. This is particularly the case in 'private' academic schools, where 54 per cent of the locally recruited students are girls, compared with only 37 per cent of *all* Form 1 students.²

Forty-five per cent of the primary sample of pupils entering the state secondary schools in Yaoundé were girls, but official figures show that by the end of their secondary education the girls account for only just over one-fifth of all students.³ They fare rather better in technical-vocational schools, where they represent two-fifths of Form 1 entrants, but 46 per cent of all pupils. It is possible that girls are more likely than boys to take non-academic courses as a first choice, thereby reflecting employment opportunities, but we do not have data to test this. It is also likely that girls taking vocational courses will be, on average, from higher socio-economic backgrounds than boys, which means that their fees are less likely to 'run out' prematurely. Over one-fifth of the primary sample of girls who entered technical schools are from élite backgrounds compared with only one-tenth of girls entering private academic schools.

Table 3 shows the female representation in all kinds of secondary schools. Overall, girls from the Class 6 sample do not fare badly as regards secondary entrance: they constitute 54 per cent of the original sample, and only 5 per cent less of the secondary entrants. As we would expect, it is the daughters of farmers who have the lowest overall level of female enrolment, reflecting their poor *concours d'entrée* performance and generally below-average enrolment in the private sector.

The pattern for children from urban backgrounds is interesting, for it is at

¹ W. Weekes Vagliani, *Family Life and Structure in Southern Cameroon* (Paris, 1976), p. 32.

² Over 40 per cent of new entrants into this kind of schooling were from outside Yaoundé, but only 15 per cent of those recruited from outside were girls.

³ Girls account for only one-tenth of the final-year students in private academic secondary schools. See Ministry of Education, *Yearbook, 1975*, p. 45.

TABLE 3
Proportion of Girls in Each Occupational Group Entering Yaoudé
Secondary Schools

Type of School	Academic State		Academic Private		Technical		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fathers' Occupation:								
Élite	102	52	42	43	13	61	157	50
Other white-collar	70	39	96	51	25	44	191	47
Large trader	13	54	10	50	9	67	32	56
Small trader	32	50	43	67	24	67	99	60
Skilled manual	18	33	38	55	22	41	78	47
Semi-skilled manual	18	53	41	63	33	45	89	56
Unskilled manual	0	—	7	71	7	43	14	60
Large farmer	23	16	21	43	27	52	67	40
Small farmer	10	10	12	50	9	22	31	31
Total	279	45	310	54	169	44	758	49

the lower end of the social scale that girls have the highest level of representation in academic private schools, while girls with élite fathers have the lowest—no doubt this reflects their relatively high representation in state academic schools. For different reasons, élite and farming daughters are under-represented in the private secondary sector as a whole, closely followed by girls from skilled-manual families who share private education evenly with their brothers. The daughters of traders enjoy the highest preference; no less than two-thirds of the children of small traders entering private schools are girls. This is the only group in which girls are given high preference in both technical and academic schools, which suggests that boys from this particular background who fail the *concours d'entrée* may be leaving school in above-average numbers and entering employment, apprenticeships, etcetera. In fact, the sons of small traders are under-represented in both Class 6 and the secondary-entrance examination, indicating that they are entering the job market before other boys, and that their sisters are being given the educational opportunities, both academic and technical.

In general, variations in relative female enrolment rates in private schools are not large, particularly among those from urban class backgrounds. The important division is between urban and rural occupations, and the daughters of small farmers stand out as being the only group of girls who are under-represented in all kinds of secondary schools. The majority pattern is for low female enrolment in one type of private school to be more or less compensated for in the other.

About two out of every three entrants in the private sector chose academic rather than technical or vocational courses. Over four-fifths of élite boys who failed or did not sit the *concours d'entrée* for secondary-school places preferred academic to technical and vocational courses, whereas a majority of boys

preferred the latter. Among girls, no such class division is apparent; the daughters of élite/large traders are much more likely than their brothers to take technical or vocational courses. This helps explain the social composition of these schools, as well as the relatively high completion rate among females in non-academic secondary schools.

Conclusions

To what extent are girls discriminated against in the process of secondary selection in the urban centres characterised by high overall primary-enrolment rates? The short answer is: less than our *a priori* intuition gave us to believe. No doubt, selection at primary entry and during primary schooling is an important eliminating device for girls in general, but it seems that in Yaoundé it is *at the secondary level itself* that the greatest degree of specifically female – as opposed to general – elimination takes place. Even then, this is only true in academic courses: girls more than hold their own in technical and vocational education at the secondary level. It is clear that the future secretaries and typists are from higher social backgrounds, on average, than the future electricians and motor mechanics. The fact that girls under-achieve in the academic streams indicates that they suffer from the effects of differential socialisation during their teens. This is especially striking, since those who enter the academic streams are of higher average social origins than boys.¹ For example, from élite families, girls constitute 44 per cent of successful female *concours d'entrée* candidates compared with 31 per cent for boys. At some point, therefore, social advantages become counterbalanced by sexual disadvantages.

The rôle of females in the process of class formation and reproduction has been almost completely ignored by students of contemporary Africa. Elsewhere we have shown the importance of maternal education in *concours d'entrée* performance.² Mothers and other females are the major socialising agents during formative years, as well as the earliest purveyors of both sexual stereotyping and class sub-cultures. Barbara Lloyd's pioneering study has pointed out the rôle of mothers in the development of class identification.³ If both class and sexual sub-cultural values pass through the mother, then the learning of these by daughters (and sons) simultaneously contributes to the reproduction of both sexual and class inequalities. Such an important linkage between sex and class deserves closer attention, both from the academic seekers-of-truth and activists working for women's rights. By examining a specific context in which sexual inequality is produced (and reproduced), we believe it possible to gain insights into the essential character of male domination, and the correct strategy to adopt in order to overcome it.

¹ If the quality of primary schooling and teaching affect performance levels, then this finding is not surprising: élite children may begin to under-perform at the secondary level, and the effect of this will be more noticeable among girls since those in this category form a higher proportion of the total number of students than boys.

² Cooksey, 'Social Class and Academic Performance'.

³ Barbara B. Lloyd, 'Education and Family Life in the Development of Class Identification Among the Yoruba', in P. C. Lloyd (ed.), *The New Elites of Tropical Africa* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 163-83.