administration, big business, the military. Other social interests, especially those connected with the contemplative life, need look for no profitable alliance with the computer. Indeed, I think Mowshowitz is right about the larger things, too, about history and the lust for power. But in order to show history in that light, to show the meaning of technology and the way to resist the lust for power, we need another, quite different, book.

Politics and Class Formation in Uganda by Mahmood Mamdani

(Monthly Review Press; 339 pp.; $16.50)

Anthony James Joes

The aim of the author is "to explain the politics of Uganda in the period between independence [1962] and the Asian expulsion of 1972." More specifically, the Amin coup and the expulsion are to be explained "in terms of the historically created contradiction and struggle between classes" and in an "attempt to trace, at the level of production, the process of the formation of some classes and the decline of others."

The plan of the book is historical: chapters on precolonial Uganda are followed by others dealing with the arrival of the British, the insertion of the Asians, the development of the economy and attendant social changes, the period of independence, and events leading to the Amin coup. Straight historical narrative is interrupted for digressions on the development of particular economic features of Ugandan society.

Mamdani starts out making some good points. "To understand ideology"—and this presumably includes Marxism—"we must know from whose point of view does it explain social reality?" He also makes a cogent criticism of modern growth economists who have (until perhaps very recent times) treated problems of economic growth as if they were purely technical and divorced from political and other conditions and considerations.

Despite the good start the book does not fulfill its promise. It is pedantic, provincial, old-fashioned, and just plain boring. It explains nothing, it just raises clouds of dust—old dust.

There is a great deal of attention to economic esoterica. We are informed, for example, that 20,000 bales of cotton were gathered in 1912-13, but 22,000 was gathered in 1916-17. One also learns that the 1916 meeting of the British Cotton Growing Association in Manchester was attended by, among others, "Bleachers' Association Ltd." In contrast, difficulties between Catholics and Protestants in Uganda receive the scantiest attention. No effort is made to explain why some tribes and regions opted for one religion rather than another, nor why the British Government fielded an army against the Buganda Catholics at one point (Battle of Mengo, 1892). Instead, we are informed that Catholics were displeased with the colonial regime because "the Catholic hierarchy was denied its share of access to the economic surplus."

In addition to these breathtaking imbalancing acts, there are numerous statements whose effect cannot be described; it must be sampled. Thus: "Also, precisely because territorially dominant capital possesses a monopoly base, the premise of its appropriation is not as much an expansion in the productive base as the exchange of unequal values made possible by the same monopoly base." Again: "The alliance with the Indian bourgeoisie isolated the petty bourgeoisie and allowed the governing bureaucracy greater room for maneuver. It [referring to what?] utilized this opportunity to create conditions that would give it greater political freedom in the long run." The Amin coup "represented the failure of the governing bureaucracy to transform itself into a bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie." In Uganda "the provider of arms is imperialism [*sic*]." Additionally, peasants are referred to as "kulaks," references to "comrades" run rampant through the pages, and World War II was "the second imperialist war." The opacity of the prose is matched by the paucity of relevant data. Nor are key terms defined. The book calls to mind nothing so much as that musty smell arising when one opens those old works from the 1930's that "analyze" world events from the official Stalinist viewpoint. Mamdani has given us a Marxist study of Ugandan politics, but not a *good* Marxist study. His "objective historical analysis" is neither very objective, historical, nor analytical.

Ritualistic, as opposed to sophisticated, Marxist analysis suffers from certain weaknesses, which are magnified in this work. Informed that "the thrust of colonial policy was to keep Africans in the agricultural economy," are we to understand "thrust" as "effect" or "purpose"? The confusion of these two notions can cause many difficulties: If taxi drivers make a lot of money during rainstorms, then taxi drivers must make it rain.

It was Kenneth Stamp, I believe, who wanted to know why, whenever an economic motive can be discovered or even imputed, we immediately pounce on it as the "real" motive. Why is the desire for economic gain more powerful, more "real," than racial hatred, religious bigotry, the thirst for applause, the desire to punish? One could make a case that men are just as prone to disguise motives of personal or ethnic malice by draping economic robes over them, as the reverse.

Yet, for Mamdani, only "classes" act. To accept his thesis that the Amin coup and all that has come with it hinges upon the ups and downs of the Ugandan "petty bourgeoisie" certain assumptions must be made. First, everybody must identify himself primarily in economic terms; one is not a Catholic, a Bugandan, or an Indian; one is "petty bourgeoisie" or "bureaucratic bourgeoisie." Second, this self-identification must be "objectively" correct. Gracious, if members of one kind of bourgeoisie run around thinking they belong to some other kind of bourgeoisie, they won't be able to do what History demands of them. Third, members of a given class must agree on what *ends* that class must seek, and finally, on exactly what *means* are to be used to attain those ends. Since, of course, none of these assumptions can hold up under empirical examination,

any analysis based upon them must lead to some bizarre conclusions.

And it does. We are brought through labyrinthine ways to—at last—the book's final sentence and most important judgment: "The struggle against class rule in Uganda is not simply a struggle against the Amin dictatorship; it is principally a struggle against imperialism." That would be news in London—if anyone there was willing to pay the price of $16.50 for this book.

The Overeducated American by Richard B. Freeman

(Academic Press; 232 pp.; $12.00/$4.95)

Thomas M. Iiams

Americans accustomed to thinking of higher education as money in the bank are not going to like the message of this new book by Harvard econometrician Richard B. Freeman. College degrees, like some drug-counter nostrums, are too easily obtainable: "Knowledge is power," Freeman writes, "only if most people do not have it."

Followers of Illich have been trying to get us to see the light for years; not only are our schools costly, but most learning goes on outside them. One reason Professor Freeman's statistical analysis of the academic market place should scare the hell out of us is the endemic criminal waste of human resources tolerated by our society. The key point of Ivar Berg's *Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery* (1970)—that workers have more education than they need—Freeman sees as only the tip of the iceberg. Those social workers and teachers who were already making less than plumbers and professional athletes ten years ago might as well resign themselves to the fact that they are never going to catch up with these better paying categories. They may miss life's little luxuries, like home delivery of the *New York Times*, but nobody ever promised them a rose garden.

In sum, graduate degrees are no longer gilt-edge investments in highly industrialized countries. As the earnings differential between white university and high school graduates dropped to one, the B.A. degree had a positive impact on higher lifetime earnings only for those minority groups singled out for affirmative action in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Meanwhile, the salaries of university graduates in the developing nations like Brazil have doubled in recent years, with young MBAs reportedly earning $25,000 at a time when the real wage of the unskilled worker has been falling. The result—although don't depend on Freeman to tell you—has been to widen still further the huge gap between an educated élite with all the perquisites and an undereducated proletariat paid a minimum wage calculated at a few percentage points under the annual rate of inflation.

In this depressed job market unemployed young Ph.D.s might consider moving to Rio de Janeiro or Kuwait, where the demand for their special skills is greater than the supply. Otherwise there is always the real world of profits and losses, where a Slavic historian might be useful to a firm doing business in an Eastern European country. Since Freeman is an economist, he purposely leaves the psychosocial implications of this type of career mutation to the reader's own judgment. What cannot be ignored, he says, is the 70 per cent drop in new jobs in American colleges and universities since 1965. Furthermore, an oversupply of Ph.D.s generally is causing a cheapening of all graduate degrees measured against what these same individuals might have been making in the time it took to earn a doctorate.

But what about the lucky ones, those who get a teaching position on the college level? Owing to institutional rigidities that guarantee lifetime employment for senior faculty—the notorious tenure system—a new faculty member on term appointment is at a competitive disadvantage: Unless an older colleague dies or resigns, the young assistant professor's chances for