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## **TANZANIA ZAMANI**

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and  
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## EDITORS' NOTE

Once again, the editorial team is delighted to invite the esteemed readers of *Tanzania Zamani* to this new release, being the final issue for 2021. In its outlay, this release significantly resembles the last two issues. It upholds the recently adopted policy on the minimum number of articles, which is five per issue. Accordingly, the present release consists of five articles and one book review. Additionally, in common with the previous two issues, this release consists of articles that differ widely in terms of thematic scopes and temporal settings. Thus, the scholarly interests pursued in the five articles span over diverse fields of historical scholarship, including historiography, colonial political economy, colonial labour migration, plantation forestry and the history of independent African churches in Tanzania. In terms of temporal settings, the majority of the articles focus either on the colonial or post-colonial period. Only one contribution focusses on a wider temporal scope spanning from the colonial to the post-colonial period. Yet, despite the diversity of themes and temporal settings, the articles included in this issue share in common a similar basic theme and the same spatial scope. They all focus on human historical experiences in the area presently known as Mainland Tanzania.

In the first article, Maxmillian Chuhila takes a critical look at historical research and the teaching of History in post-colonial Tanzania. Focusing on scholarly research in history

and History curricula in Tanzanian secondary schools and universities, the author wonders whether six decades after the end of colonial rule it can be said that Tanzanians and Africans generally have made notable efforts towards the decolonization of the production and dissemination of historical knowledge. In a deeper probing, the author wonders whether there is strong evidence in sight at this moment which can be used to argue against Hugh Trevor-Roper's infamous observation that Africa had no history. His conclusion is that little has been done to overcome the colonial approach to African history. He derives this conclusion from two tendencies that still characterize historical research and History teaching in Tanzanian schools and universities. According to the author, historical research and teaching of History in Tanzania still largely focusses on the colonial period at the expense of the pre-colonial and post-colonial histories; and that there is a general emphasis on abstract Africa-based themes rather on concrete experiences of people especially in Tanzania.

The second article by Edward Mgaya discusses the impacts of colonial labour migration in Njombe District. Capitalising on the fact that most literature on labour migration has tended to focus on the negative effects of this phenomenon on socio-economic and political developments in migrants' rural communities, Mgaya claims that the originality of his approach lies in his initiative to put emphasis on the positive outcomes of migrant labour for the migrants themselves and



their families. The thrust of his argument is that, despite its problems, labour migration resulted in relatively significant economic achievements to the migrants. In substantiating this claim, the author points at available empirical data and oral testimonies indicating that a considerable number of migrant labourers were able to invest some of the money they obtained from participation in plantation labour into agriculture and other entrepreneurial activities. Through such initiatives, argues the author, some of the migrant labourers eventually managed to contribute significantly to the transformation of life in their families and rural communities, both economically and socially. The author is however alert to the fact that not all positive transformations that took place in Njombe during the period under discussion were due to contributions by migrant labourers.

In the third article, Jonas Shashen contests the frequently stressed argument that negative environmental changes in rural colonial settings largely emanated from poor use of environmental resources by local communities due to ignorance. He instead joins other scholars in shifting the blame to policy makers and government in general. Focusing on colonial Maswa District as an example of areas where government development policy resulted in notable environmental changes, the author examines the effects of two state-sponsored projects, namely tsetse fly clearance and rural resettlement schemes. He uses evidence drawn from archival and oral sources to illustrate the negative environmental outcomes of these project, including

shrinking of the natural forest cover, decline of biodiversity, damage on water sources, degradation of soils and heightening of arid conditions. In the final analysis, the author concludes that negative environmental changes in colonial Maswa and similar rural settings largely emanated from poor conceptualization of development projects and use of state power in implementing such ill-conceived policies.

The fourth article by Ashura Jackson gives an account of the rise and development of African Independent Churches (AICs) in Tanzania's Mbeya Region. It traces the history of these churches from the 1920s all the way to the postcolonial period. The author stresses that the story of the AICs in Mbeya is essentially a tale of prolonged struggles and constant search for survival strategies on the part of the church members. AICs struggled against historical churches due to their exclusion of Africans' traditional beliefs from their religious teachings; and they opposed the colonial state because of its exploitative and oppressive nature. By opposing these strong institutions, AICs prompted resilient opposition from the institutions. While this opposition resulted in the weakening of the churches in other parts of the country, in Mbeya it became a source of motivation for AICs search for viable survival strategies. Through adoption of approaches such as addressing individual people's psychological problems, deployment of cultural principles in faith propagation and giving women leadership

opportunities, AICs in Mbeya have managed not only to survive but also to register notable growth.

In the fifth article, Andrea Kifyasi reports and discusses a historical paradox exemplified by the Sao Hill Forest Plantation (SHFP), one of the major development projects undertaken by government in post-colonial Tanzania. Kifyasi refers to the SPHP as a typical case of state failure to fulfil promises it often makes to citizens when negotiating for establishment of a major project in their area. Such promises often centre on the idea that people in respective areas would benefit substantially from the project. The author uses data from oral and written sources to show that, like people in areas that border on major development projects, the people of Mufindi have hardly benefitted from the mega forest plantation established in their area, and that the lack of satisfactory returns has been a source of “great despair” among the people concerned. He explains this eventuality in terms of weak local people’s bargaining power and lack of political will on the part of government authorities.

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## **Whose History is our History? Six Decades of the Production of Historical Knowledge in Tanzania.**

Maxmillian Julius Chuhila

*Department of History, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*

### ***Abstract***

*This paper examines the historical significance of the histories we research, publish, and teach in Tanzania in the past six decades of active historical scholarship. By using a qualitative approach, it looks at curriculums and education policy documents to see what patterns were emerging in the teaching of history, with a particular focus on secondary schools and university histories. The main argument is that little progress has been made to teach our history in Tanzania at all levels. Schools and universities place greater emphasis on the colonial content than on the pre- and post-colonial contents, and on general African issues at the expense of issues particular to Tanzania. History instruction would be more significant if it demonstrated African-centred history rather than European-centred history or the impersonal impact of western capitalism. If this is not done adequately, Hugh Trevor-Roper's observations in the 1950s that Africa had no history will still be valid today. As we consider the topics and methodologies of historical scholarship in Tanzania during the last six decades, the question of whose history is 'our history' becomes crucial. As pacesetters, rather than passive victims of global trends and actions, we should write and teach our own history.*

**Key words:** Knowledge decolonisation, African history, Tanzania, Teaching curriculum.

## 1.0 Introduction

In 2018 I published an article questioning the intellectual process into the writing and learning of what is considered an African history.<sup>1</sup> The article dwelt with the general trends of knowledge creation and consumption with reference to African history. Historical knowledge is by its nature a negotiated reconstruction of some selected aspects of the past that pass through intellectual, ideological, political and socio-economic filtrations.<sup>2</sup> As what E.H. Carr points, no history comes in its pure form but rather as a hybrid product of the historian's choices, his intellectual architect and portion of what really existed in the past.<sup>3</sup> Historians have a duty to define the process of the production of historical knowledge that in the end may be used for learning and teaching. In the 1990s Henry Slater and Isaria Kimambo provided reflections of the journey towards the thirty years of the production of historical knowledge at the University of Dar es salaam.<sup>4</sup> They based on the thematic and

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<sup>1</sup> For further debate, see Maxmillian Chuhila, "Who Writes and Reads African History and Why? Locating African Voices in the Twenty-First Century, From 1960 to the Present", *Utafiti* 11, no. 1-2 (2018), 67-83.

<sup>2</sup> Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba, "How is historical knowledge recognized?", *History in Africa* 13 (1986), 331-344; Edward H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Penguin, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> Carr, *What is History?* 7-30.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Slater, "The production of historical knowledge at Dar Es Salaam: thoughts on two recent histories of Tanzania", *Tanzania Zamani* 1, no. 2 (1992), 114-132; Isaria Kimambo, *Three decades of production of historical knowledge at Dar es salaam* (Dar es salaam: Dar es salaam University Press, 1993); Bertram Mapunda, "A critical examination of Isaria Kimambo's ideas through time", *History in Africa* 32 (2005), 269-279.

methodological strengths, weaknesses and what would be the way forward in historical scholarship in Tanzania. Since then, historical research has expanded in different directions with new thematic areas coming in and the number of local historians and Universities teaching history increased.<sup>5</sup>

The teaching of history in Tanzanian secondary schools and universities is contextualized in this study. The conceptualisation of this article began with the realization that there had been little effort put towards teaching Tanzanian-centred history, with the focus instead being on subjects that were less relevant to local and continental contexts. This comes at a time when the political landscape of Tanzania seems in favour of teaching African/Tanzanian centred contents at all levels. On 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the late president Dr. John Magufuli sworn in newly appointed leaders and made an impassioned appeal concerning the way he thought history should be taught as a compulsory subject at all levels of the education system in Tanzania. The current president too has reiterated the need for curriculum review in general and that of history of Tanzania in particular. Subsequently there has been considerable public debate on the question of what Tanzanian history is and whether it

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<sup>5</sup> See for example a summary of one of the conferences of the Historical Association of Tanzania in Immanuel Rafael Harisch, "Reflections on Post-Colonial History of Tanzania 'Ein Tagungsbericht zur Annual Conference of the Historical Association of Tanzania an der Universität Dar es Salaam, 17-18 November 2016'", *Stichproben, Vienna Journal of African Studies* 32 (2017), 133-142.



necessitates a completely new subject or a modification of the existing curriculum to add more Tanzanian content. This brings history as a discipline and historians in general to a self-reflection on our relevance to this move. In this article I concentrate on the thematic and methodological reflections of the history of Tanzania. It is hoped that, the current contribution will enhance attention on the debate on what should be ‘our history’.

*Tanzania Zamani* has remained a leading local platform for shaping debates on historical scholarship in Tanzania. In 1993, in the first volume of a revived *Tanzania Zamani* Wamba-dia-Wamba echoed on the teaching of history in Tanzania.<sup>6</sup> Three years later Yusufu Lawi – Wamba-dia-Wamba’s student elaborated further on the subject by focusing on the mechanics, motivations, relevance and incentives of history teaching in Tanzania.<sup>7</sup> There was then a long hiatus before this thematic discussion resumed. It was in 2018 when Oswald Masebo came back to this subject in the journal while in 2019 Lorne Larson articulated another view of historical scholarship in Tanzania, expanding on

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<sup>6</sup> Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba, “African history and teaching of history in Dar es Salaam”, *Tanzania Zamani* 1, no. 3 (1993), 1-19; see also the evaluation by Gregory Maddox, “The Dar es Salaam School of African history”, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History* (2018).

<sup>7</sup> Yusufu Q. Lawi, “Towards an understanding of the basic problems in the teaching of history in post-colonial Tanzania”, *Tanzania Zamani* 1, no. 4, (1996), 1-9.

Masebo's approach.<sup>8</sup> The current article builds on those previous theoretical debates to contemplate on the research and teaching of history in Tanzania.

## **2.0 The Starting Point: Africa without History**

In the 1950s there were general academic arguments in regard with the existence and relevance of history in Africa. What triggered the debate was a remark made by the Professor of History at Oxford University who categorically said there was no history in Africa. He was quoted saying 'perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none; only the activities of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness'.<sup>9</sup> This statement sparked criticisms and brought the development of African history in the spotlight of the day. Critiques accused Trevor-Roper as racist and ignorant of the African history. Since then, scholars in European and American institutions have been engaged in the study of Africa in a more scholastic way

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<sup>8</sup> Oswald Masebo, "New thematic directions in history at the University of Dar es Salaam, 1990s to 2017", *Tanzania Zamani* 9, no. 2 (2018), 1-67; Lorne Larson did not publish his article in any scholarly journal. Still, it is useful in understanding the dynamics of history teaching in Tanzania. See Lorne Larson, "The making of African history: Tanzania in the Twentieth century", (2019), at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333644117\\_The\\_Making\\_of\\_African\\_History\\_Tanzania\\_in\\_the\\_Twentieth\\_Century](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333644117_The_Making_of_African_History_Tanzania_in_the_Twentieth_Century) accessed on 8.07.2021.

<sup>9</sup> See Zeinabu Badawi, "One of Africa's best kept secrets – its history", (2017) at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40420910> accessed on 1.12.2021.

to refute Trevor-Roper's comments.<sup>10</sup> In the 1990s a Norwegian historian Finn Fuglestad returned to Trevor-Roper's remark suggesting that there was no need to attack Trevor-Roper because what he said based on his own worldview about Africa.<sup>11</sup>

Finn Fuglestad noted that, '... it seems to me that while Africanists have negated Trevor-Roper's central contention – Black Africa has no history – they have seldom questioned his premises or the chain of reasoning which led him to draw the conclusion he did'.<sup>12</sup> Roper's statement remained a reference from the 1950s until the 1980s when the UNESCO programme endeavoured to write African history.

An upsurge of Africans who got scholarships to study abroad after the Second World War provided a mechanism for future directions of scholarship in the continent. Coming back home they formed the first generation of historians of African origin and participated in the writing of nationalist historiography. Nationalist historiography radicalized intellectual activity and critiqued assumptions that Africa

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<sup>10</sup> Kenneth O. Dike, "African history twenty-five years ago and today", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 10, no.3 (1980), 13-22; Paul T. Zeleza, "Academic freedom in the neo-liberal order: government, globalization, governance, and gender", *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, (2003), 149 – 194; Ian Brown, *The School of Oriental and African Studies: imperial training and the expansion of learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> Finn Fuglestad, "The Trevor Roper trap or imperialism of history: an essay", *History in Africa* 19 (1992), 309-326.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 310.

was ahistorical continent. This was a movement anticipated to provide a framework for studying African past on its own merits in addition to how that same past was both shaped and re-shaped by the interactions with others.

The aftermath of the Second World War saw establishment of education institutions in Africa, Europe and America that became baselines for research and writing about the continent. University colleges like Ibadan (1948) and Makerere (1949) were first centres of African studies in the continent while others followed later. On a negative note, the colonial emphasis on the teaching material continued long after independence and this formed the colonial heritage of knowledge landscape. It predisposed the interpretation of African past that was taught as an integral history of the continent. Little has changed in the past sixty years of postcolonial historical scholarship. In a way, political independence meant the beginning of intellectual decolonization – which has remained a hard nut to crack. Six years after the independence of Ghana – President Kwame Nkrumah in his famous book *Africa Must Unite* criticised colonial legacy in African education systems by saying;

We were neither fish nor fowl. We were denied the knowledge of our African past and informed that we had no present. What future could there be for us? We were taught to regard our culture and traditions as

barbarous and primitive. All this must be changed. And it is a stupendous task.<sup>13</sup>

Nkrumah's observations were followed by the emergence of nationalist historians in the 1960s, themselves being products of western institutions were well equipped with western perspectives and approaches. Nationalist historiography therefore came to present both nationalist and patriotic historiography as the main purpose was to demonstrate that Africa had history.<sup>14</sup> The innovative use of oral sources in the 1960s was a breakthrough in nationalist historiography because it targeted pre-colonial history.<sup>15</sup> When Trevor-Roper suggested that there was no history in Africa he was probably right because; there was little interest among Europeans to study Africa which in turn provided less material to be used in teaching African history in Europe. In this period Europe was advanced in the art of archives and documentation where historical analysis derived evidence from. In Africa similar institutions came later; the Tanzania National Archives for example, opened in 1964.

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<sup>13</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa must unite* (London: Heinemann, 1963), 49.

<sup>14</sup> Terence Ranger, "Nationalist historiography, patriotic history and the history of the nation: the struggle over the past in Zimbabwe", *Journal of southern African studies* 30, no. 2 (2004), 215-234.

<sup>15</sup> Jan Vansina, *Oral tradition as history* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Isaria N. Kimambo, *A political history of the Pare people of Tanzania, c.1500 to 1900* (Nairobi: EAPH, 1969).

The 1980s UNESCO-sponsored study of history in Africa, was another watermark in scholarship.<sup>16</sup> The whole of its first volume is dedicated on methodology and sources on African history. In the first chapter, the editors begin the volume with the statement, 'Africa has a history'.<sup>17</sup> This is too bold. It is a self-affirmation to the existence and misrepresentation of history in Africa. The volume then goes on to provide the sources and methods of African prehistory and awakening scholars to be open minded when doing historical scholarship. However, it is now more than half a century since Trevor-Roper gave his opinions but what was criticized about him is what goes on in historical scholarship of the continent. It is an unpleasant fact that for the past half a century scholar interested in studying history in Africa have turned to study colonial activities in the continent while side-lining other aspects of that history. It has become an accepted normative that the colonial past is synonymous with history as it provides reliable sources compared to the postcolonial counterpart. This has allowed the use of colonial archives to reproduce and teach the activities of the colonial enterprise in the continent. What is researched takes a big chunk of what is taught at all levels of education. Emphasis on writing about colonial history influences the teaching of colonial activities that leads into representing a

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<sup>16</sup>Consider the eight volumes produced under the auspices of UNESCO with the sub-title *UNESCO General History of Africa*.

<sup>17</sup>J. Ki-Zerbo, "General Introduction", in *UNESCO General History of Africa Vol. I: Methodology and African prehistory* edited J. Ki-Zerbo, (California: Heinemann, 1985), 1–9.

dichotomy of inferior and superior participants in history. More often than not, this is 'their history' in Africa than 'our history'. Therefore, what is our history as a people?

### **3.0 History Teaching in Tanzanian Universities**

The first higher education Institution in Tanzania was Dar es salaam campus of the University of East Africa being established only months before the Independence Day of Tanganyika, on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1961. This means it only takes us six decades to talk about university education in Tanzania. The university started with the establishment of the faculty of law. Several more academic units and programmes followed later and made the University of Dar es salaam the leading university in Tanzania for a long time. The department of history was established three years after the university was established together with other departments like languages and linguistics, education, political science, literature and economics.<sup>18</sup> This marked the importance that history was to serve during the formative days of the nation. The liberalisation of education sector and the establishment of more universities in the 1990s and 2000s did not escape the University of Dar es Salaam effect. They were influenced through recruitment of academic staff from UDSM to start new programmes in newly established universities or through imitating what was taught at UDSM. In the long

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<sup>18</sup> Isaria N. Kimambo, "Establishment of teaching programmes", in *In search of relevance: a history of the University of Dar es salaam* edited by Isaria N. Kimambo, Betram B. Mapunda and Yusufu Lawi (Dar es salaam: Dar es salaam University Press, 2008), 109.

run, curriculums in the later universities look more or less with the same format and content with that of the University of Dar es Salaam.

Doing history like other humanistic counterparts in Tanzania was difficult in the formative days as they lacked the developmentalist agenda to a postcolonial nation.<sup>19</sup> At the department 'history research seminars' later in 1985/86 named 'History Evening Seminars'<sup>20</sup> from 2015 it changed again to Isaria Kimambo History Seminars providing avenues for enhanced discussions and contestations of historical ideas, philosophy and thoughts relevant for history research and teaching. Writing, teaching and learning of history in Tanzania in the 1960s and 1970s were not a simple thing or something to be done with pride. Students and government authorities placed the subject in the margins. While students with high entry qualifications opted to study other disciplines, those with low grades went for history.<sup>21</sup> Adding difficulty and lack of interest to learners, colonial materials remained in schools, as little was available from nationalist scholars.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Wamba-dia-Wamba, "African history", 5-8.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Yusufu Qwaray Lawi, "A history of history teaching in post-colonial Tanzania, 1961 – 1986", (MA Diss., University of Dar es salaam, 1989), v-vi; Wamba-dia-Wamba, "African history", 8; Lawi, "Basic Problems in the Teaching of History", 1.

<sup>22</sup> Some of the books that were used in teaching history include: Reed Brett, *Europe since the renaissance, 1789 – 1914*, (London: Murray, 1967);



Frederick Cooper notes that the end of colonialism paralleled the rise and development of colonial studies from the 1970s.<sup>23</sup> Colonial subjects became under systemic scholarly interventions making colonial societies recipients of western interpretations about themselves. In the long run, such scholarship has not only remained in the Western tradition but has also shaped self-interpretation in Africa. In his book, Cooper with convincing rigour, narrates the western influence on global understandings and processes that come through historical strides. Connections through slave trade and slavery and colonization have shaped relations that always regard other parts of the world as peripherals and extensions of western empires.<sup>24</sup> The end of formal colonization did not end such relations because at the apex of colonialism they had become cultural and accepted standard practices.

Decolonization of knowledge is nothing new but has recently revived into a buzz word. It has been both a radical process in the 1960s to 1970s and coming to a somehow passive phase in the 1980s. Steven Feierman notes that 'historical writings in Tanzania had highly serious goals from the early days of the history department at the University of Dar es salaam',

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Laurence Ernest Snellgrove, *The modern world since 1870* (Essex: Longman, 1981)

<sup>23</sup> Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in question: theory, knowledge, history* (London: University of California Press, 2005).

<sup>24</sup> Cooper, *Colonialism in question*; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: postcolonial thought and historical difference* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008).

he goes on to say, ‘historians have aimed at decolonization of intellectual life, the construction of a national historical identity and the achievement of a just society’.<sup>25</sup> The only challenge to this movement, he observes, is the localization of the effort and blockage of knowledge circulation to and from African academics. What is produced in Tanzania is not well communicated with other scholars in the discipline internationally.

In 1992, the editorial to the first volume of *Tanzania Zamani* made a bold statement and shouldered the Historical Association of Tanzania (HAT) by saying; ‘the objectives of the Historical Association of Tanzania are to encourage the study, writing and teaching of history throughout the United Republic’.<sup>26</sup> The only weakness of this otherwise well thought pathway was a failure to specify the future thematic scope. Such a silence was a disadvantage to ‘our history’ for what continued to be researched and written was colonial activities in Africa and Tanzania in particular (See Table I below for details). HAT became active from its establishment in 1966 by organising research and writing sessions. Under its auspices up to 1985 there were four major publications targeted at secondary school and college use.

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<sup>25</sup> Steven Feierman, “Writing history: flow and blockage in the circulation of knowledge”, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 37, no. 1 (2019), 3.

<sup>26</sup> See editorial section in *Tanzania Zamani: A Journal of the Historical Research and Writing* 1, no. 1 (1992).

The publications included; *A history of Tanzania*, edited by I. N. Kimambo and A.J. Temu (1969, reprinted in 1997), *Tanzania under colonial rule*, edited by M.H.Y. Kaniki (1980), *Landmarks in South-African history*, edited by J.R. Mlahagwa, L. Sago, F. Lutatenekwa and G.T. Mishambi (1985), *Zanzibar under colonial rule*, edited by A. Sheriff. These publications had little about Tanzanian history but mainly focused on the colonial history in Tanzania. Whatever followed after this productive phase of the Association were individualised efforts largely pre-determined and informed by similar mentality that equated history with colonial activities. Decades away since these volumes were produced; no similar effort has been done especially with a focus on what I consider 'our history'. Tanzanian history needs a fresh look that avoids overemphasis on the impact of empires and its western manifestations under the rubric of globalisation. While there are global trends and forces, still it is important to understand local dynamics and actors of history than simply side-lining them for any excuses.

**Table I: Postgraduate Research at UDSM**

<b>Master of Arts and PhD in History, 1970 – 2021</b>				
Year	Dissertation s Produced	Dissertations with colonial elements	Dissertation s with African elements/ theories	Percentage of Dissertations with African elements
1970 - 1980	35	3 <sup>1</sup>	04	13
1981 - 1990	20	18	02	10

1991 - 2000	06	04	02	33
2001 - 2010	25	23	02	08
2011 - 2018	44	37	07	16
2019 - 2021	6	04	02	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13.5</b>

**Table II: Examples of Dissertations/Thesis with colonial and African elements**

<b>With colonial Elements (content)</b>	<b>With African elements (content)</b>
A Historical Survey of Banyambo Economy in Karagwe District, 1860-1960 (1975)	Building Socialism in a Post-Colonial State: The Case of Rombo District, Tanzania (1977)
Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Unyanyembe ca. 1900—1960 (1975)	A History of History Teaching in Post-Colonial Tanzania, 1961-1986 (1988)
A History of Colonial Production in the Songea District, 1871 – 1961 (1977)	A History of the Kagera War: Social and Economic Impacts on Kagera Region, 1971-1990 (2017)
Colonial Education in Tanganyika, 1920 – 1950: A Historical Critique of Agricultural Education (1977)	The Role Played by Tanzania in the Liberation Struggle of Southern Africa: The Case of Mozambique, 1961-1974 (2003)
Soil Erosion Crisis in Dodoma Region, in the Inter-War Years, 1930-1950 (1980)	The Role of the University of Dar es Salaam in the Development of Ujamaa in Tanzania (1967-1991) (2010)

#### **4.0 History Teaching in Tanzanian Schools**

History carries forward past memories and experiences particular and useful to a society intended to maintain identity of a small group, nation or even national sovereignty. Teaching of history in the Tanzania school context has been a protracted and negotiated endeavour from independence to the present. Methodological, ideological and nationalistic challenges have been central to the process. Such challenges are coupled by the status of history in relation to other humanities disciplines. History seems to be a lesser brother that makes it lack acceptance and relevance to students and the society at large. While it is noted to be used as a nationalist and nation building tool in the 1960 and 1970s, after that period it became irrelevant and faced threats of extinction from the national curriculum.<sup>27</sup> This was a period when the nationalist movement and national building initiatives were intense. A type of nationalist historiography was employed to explain and establish relevance of an African society and define past evils in relation to probable future making. At this time history operated in line with the political tune that saw the first President Julius K. Nyerere officiating the African Congress of Historians at the University of Dar es Salaam in 1966 and in the same year agreeing to be the first patron of the Historical Association of Tanzania.

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<sup>27</sup> Lawi, “Basic Problems in the Teaching of History”, 1.

The teaching of history has been obstructed from institutional designs and the thematic selections of what needs to be taught in our school system that questions our curriculum review processes.<sup>28</sup> Yusufu Lawi notes that the history taught up to 1990s lacked local experiences that made the subject less appealing thematically. History was instead, ‘...universalistic and developmentalist...’ which lacked the touch of local specificity and experiences.<sup>29</sup> More than twenty years later now we might see little change in this characterisation. History has remained synonymous with colonial activities and the education system functions with a syllabus largely based on colonial topics.<sup>30</sup> The late President John P. Magufuli, wanted this kind of decolonisation where an African centred story could be taught in our school systems.

For almost three decades, the teaching of history in schools remained a struggle between seeking relevance to political and developmental contributions and on the other hand

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<sup>28</sup> The current curriculum has categorized history as a compulsory subject for secondary school education. Although commendable, the question is whose history are we teaching to Tanzanian children? Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, *Curriculum for Ordinary Level Secondary Education in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam: TIE, 2007), 19.

<sup>29</sup> Lawi, “Basic Problems in the Teaching of History”, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Consider both O-level and A-level history syllabuses. their contents are more of colonial activities and glorification of the same, than a specific African experience. Take an example of form six topics, nearly all of them are colonial and imperialistic topics. Very little is said as a linkage with Tanzanian Socialist experience. Form three topics are all colonial experiences without linkage to whatever African experience of the time.

maintaining it as a discipline with basic research inclinations.<sup>31</sup> The developmentalist supporters probably were right given that what was being taught in schools still concentrated on colonial perspectives with little to do with our societies. 'In explaining this situation, it is argued that throughout history the status of this subject has been a function of class struggle and class rule'.<sup>32</sup> However, the other side of the narrative might centre on it not as a result of 'class struggle and class rule' but a struggle between establishing developmental relevance and maintaining its rules of the thumb as a discipline of study.

Commenting on colonial history teaching Lawi notes that '... colonial history teaching denied the colonised of their history placing them outside the humanity or making them understand themselves as inferior breed of human race'.<sup>33</sup> This tendency continues with new publications that focus on colonial encounters and general African survey. General discourses exist with little details on the role of the common people in making history. Where a postcolonial history is mentioned for example, it is about what the government has done over time or what rulers have done. This is also a colonial mentality. Colonialism belittled its subjects and the government occupied a central patron role to shape whatever could take place.

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<sup>31</sup> Lawi, "History of history teaching", v-vi.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, v.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

History teaching as a national project needs a strong focus on the national values that we want our current and future generations not to miss. Yet, in some incidences, as Toyin Falola puts it, colonial hangover has limited how to define which histories should be regarded as national or ethnic in the continent.<sup>34</sup> To achieve this, an endless decolonisation process of the curriculums and the teaching methods is necessary. It should reach a time when teaching and learning of African history in Africa becomes African, enjoyable and relevant to African local contexts. Wamba-dia-Wamba notes that ‘as the kind of history taught had increasingly no relevance to the problems, needs, interests, politics of the lives of the popular masses of the people, it become {sic} less and less exciting’.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, students and teachers who considered history as less interesting had little interest to teach and learn it in the 1980s, 1990s and 2010s.<sup>36</sup>

Little might have changed on state bureaucratic perspective about the applied utility of historical knowledge. But the persistence on colonial history takes the subject far away from relevance and makes the threats to it become lively today. Teaching relevant history by itself makes it more attractive than teaching colonial activities or that of societies

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<sup>34</sup> Toyin Falola, “Writing and teaching national history in Africa in an era of global history”, *Africa spectrum* 40, no. 3 (2005), 505.

<sup>35</sup> Wamba-dia-Wamba “African history”, 9.

<sup>36</sup> Lawi, “Basic Problems in the Teaching of History”; A. Namamba & C. Rao, “Teaching and learning of history in secondary schools: history teachers’ perceptions and experiences in Kigoma Region, Tanzania”, *European Journal of Education Studies* 3, no. 3 (2017), 172-195.



far from the immediate learners.<sup>37</sup> Even at the time when the fashion is to go global, other scholars have maintained the need for continued research, writing and teaching of national and continental histories.<sup>38</sup> This is not to suggest however that global historical approach is irrelevant but that it should not be used to silence local and continental histories.

The teaching of history in lower levels determines the nature of heritage that a society wants to transmit from one generation to another. In this way, if what are taught are colonial activities, the danger remains transmitting colonial heritage and strengths from one generation to another perpetually eroding the novelty of historical scholarship to its society. In the 2000s, the Historical Association of Tanzania in collaboration with the Department of History at the University of Dar es salaam embarked on a project to produce sources for school history. This was a praiseworthy initiative. Despite the noble intentions of the initiative, it

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<sup>37</sup> To observe what is taught in schools in history syllabus see United Republic of Tanzania (hereafter URT), *History syllabus for secondary education I – IV* (Dar es Salaam: Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2005); URT, *History syllabus for advanced secondary education, V – VI* (Dar es Salaam: Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2009).

<sup>38</sup> Barbara Johannesson, “The writing of history textbooks in South Africa”, *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 24, no. 1 (2002), 89-95; Falola, “National History in Africa”, 519; Felisa Tibbitts, “Learning from the past: supporting teaching through the facing the past, history project in South Africa”, *Prospects* 36, no. 3 (2006), 295-317.

ended up producing colonial and imperial histories for schools in Tanzania.<sup>39</sup>

Imagine a 21<sup>st</sup> century African peasant society learning about the 15<sup>th</sup> century British transition from feudalism to capitalism. No African contemporaries were covered in this discussion to draw some similarities and differences. Out of such unimaginable initiative, history becomes nothing but a glorification of western capitalism, civilisation and its all-colonial instruments like mentality and education. Similarly, such type of history is not only irrelevant but colonial and boring to both teachers and learners all the same. Oral texts projects in the 1960s would bring more relevant and interesting histories than teaching colonial histories making African history synonymous with colonialism and the evils of capitalism. For how long should Africa wait to produce its own history? For the context of oral histories, the only documentations available serve palliative undertones to the big challenge of decolonisation though they are not used in teaching school history.<sup>40</sup>

The document *Transition from Feudalism* is colonial by itself as it is based on western perspectives. In the 2000's, the references used are Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*, Christopher Hill, *The Century of*

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<sup>39</sup> HAT, "History manual for Tanzanian secondary schools – Transition from feudalism to capitalism and the rise of capitalism" (2003).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Kimambo, *History of the Pare*; Gregory Maddox and Mathias Mnyampala, *The Gogo: history, customs, and traditions* (London: M.E Sharpe, 1995).

*Revolution 1603 – 1714*, Rodney Hilton et al, *The Transition to Capitalism*, E. Mandel, *Marxist Economic Theory*, Vol.1, Chapter IV and Karl Marx, ‘The Secret of Primitive Accumulation’ in Capital Vol.1. From these sources, what else could be expected from the manual? What is the relevance of these sources and what is produced as a result into an African society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? At least in the same year another manual called ‘Non-Alignment’ was produced and stands a comparative advantage to an African context than the one dealing with the development of western capitalism.<sup>41</sup> Curriculum reviews over time have insufficiently paid attention to the inclusion of relevant issues of the history of Tanzania. Major reviews happened in 1967 – socialist ideology, 1979 – self-reliance, 1997 – multiparty politics, 2005 – competence based, crosscutting issues and Tanzania Development Vision 2025.<sup>42</sup> By implication, the current syllabus has undergone several changes but little content specific to Tanzania is a common manifestation (see Table III below).

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<sup>41</sup> HAT, *History manual for Tanzanian secondary schools – ‘Non-Alignment’* (2003)

<sup>42</sup> Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (hereafter JMT), *Mfumo wa Elimu ya Tanzania, 1980 – 2000* (Dar es Salaam: Wizara ya Elimu na Utamaduni, 1982); JMT, *Maboresho ya mitaala toka mwaka 1961 hadi 2010* (Dar es Salaam: Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania, 2013), 7-19; see also the evaluation of curriculum developments in Peter S. Kopweh. “Curriculum development in Tanzania: an investigation of the formulation, management and implementation of the 2005 curriculum reform in selected disadvantaged districts” (PhD diss., University of Glasgow, 2014).

The thematic coverage of secondary school history education in Tanzania is much of a general survey of history with little interest on Tanzanian issues in particular. Tanzania appears by passing when discussing general African issues. Little content is devoted to Tanzanian experiences at large that make Tanzanian history merge within the continental narratives. The move towards teaching Tanzanian history would mean therefore a more effort to include issues specific to the history of Tanzania and reducing those of inferential importance. One of the major aims of education in Tanzania is; 'to promote the acquisition and appreciation of the culture, customs and traditions of the people of Tanzania'.<sup>43</sup> This can only be met by a detailed analysis of historical makings of such developments. While this is one of the general goals of education, the general subject objectives remain too broad where it focuses on understanding African historical processes with insignificant mention of Tanzania as an example of particular processes. This makes the study of history less relevant to the immediate society as it becomes a subject of others than us.

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<sup>43</sup> URT, History syllabus for secondary education, iv; also repeated in URT, History syllabus for advanced secondary education, iv.

**Table III: Content of History Syllabus at Secondary School Education**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Colonial</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>Other</b>
Form I	Meaning and Importance of History			Provides theoretical introductions to the study of history in general
	Evolution of Man Technology and Environment			Central to African pre-colonial history, the emergence of human civilisation and development
	Development of Economic Activities and their Impact			General overview of economic development in Africa with emphasis on environmental variations
	Development of Social and Political Systems			Pre-colonial development of African political systems. General overview.
Form II	Interactions among the People of Africa			General overview of African development and interactions
	Socio-economic Development and Production in Pre-colonial Africa			Pre-colonial production relations in Africa. General overview.
	Africa and the External World			Pre-colonial African

				interactions with the external world, trade, slave trade etc.
	Industrial Capitalism	Development of European capitalism with emphasis on development of capitalism in Britain.		
Form III	Establishment of Colonialism	Colonial encounters in the imposition of colonial rule in Africa. General overview.		
	Colonial Administrative Systems	Establishment of colonial rule in Africa. General overview.		
	Colonial Economy	Colonial enterprises in Africa. General overview.		
	Colonial Social Services	Colonial enterprises with special focus on social services. General overview and character.		
Form IV	Crisis in the Capitalist System	Influence of western capitalism on		

		colonial encounters in Africa. General overview.		
	Nationalism and Decolonisation			General overview on African responses against colonial enterprises. African reorganisation against colonialism.
	Changes in Political, Social and Economic Policies after Independence			The negative mirror image of colonialism. General overview of African effort to nation building. Several examples drawn from Tanzanian experience.
	Africa in International Affairs			Continental and regional co-operation of independent African states. General overview.
Form V	Pre-colonial African Societies			General overview of topics covered in form one. Provides reflections of African development before colonialism.

	Africa and Europe in the 15 <sup>th</sup> Century			Expands an O'Level topic on Africa and the external world. Provides a general overview of Africa's development up to the 15 <sup>th</sup> century compared to Europe.
	People of African Origin in the New World			General survey of the legacies of slave trade and how the remnants of slave trade re-organised for their rights in the New World.
	From Colonialism to the First World War (1880s – 1914)	General overview of the influence of colonialism and western capitalism in Africa		
	Colonial Economy and Social Services after the 2 <sup>nd</sup> World War	Colonial enterprises in Africa. This is an extension of issues covered in form three. General overview.		
	Influence of External Forces	General overview on		



	and the Rise of Nationalism and the Struggle for Independence	the impact of colonialism and the rise of nationalist movements.		
	Political and Economic Development in Tanzania Since Independence		Postcolonial political and economic development with special focus on Tanzania. Abridged overview of Tanzania's history.	
Form VI	Rise of Capitalism in Europe	European capitalism. Focus on European industrial development with a single subtopic on its relations with Africa.		
	Rise of Democracy in Europe	European democratic developments. Revolutions and the making of states in Europe. Detailed coverage.		

	Imperialism and the Territorial Division of the World	Development of European capitalism and its impact on the ultimate colonisation of Africa. Detailed coverage.		
	The Rise of Dictatorship in Germany, Italy and Japan	Part of political development of Europe and Asia. Provides a detailed coverage of European's political systems and emergence of political superpowers.		
	The Rise of Socialism	The influence of Soviet Socialist theory, its practices and implementation. Detailed coverage on how it shaped relations with the capitalist systems.	A single subtopic covers Tanzania's Socialist Experiment, 1967 – 1985 in brief.	
	Emergence of the US as a New World Super Power	Development of US capitalism and its influence on world order.		

		Decline of European dominance and ascendance of US dominance.		
	Threats to World Peace after Second World War			Covers how global powers shaped relations after the second world war. Detailed coverage of competing interests of global powers of the time post 1945.
	Neo-Colonialism and the Underdevelopment of Third World Countries			General overview on the influence of neo-colonialism on third world countries.

**Source:** Compiled from O-Level History Syllabus (2005) and A-Level History Syllabus (2009).

## 5.0 What to Decolonise

This is a central question in the decolonisation narratives. What has it been so difficult that half a century later we are still indulged in a debate about coloniality in African history? Decolonisation is a process, a process that needs commitment, resources and cooperation from different actors. The first-generation historians of Tanzania did a

reasonable job but as time went on their direction was overtaken by global trends in disadvantage of local initiatives. Western scholars have set research and writing about Africa from which makes local initiatives of rare importance. There have been various movements to include the study of Africa into the expanding frontiers of scholarship but not much is achieved. African scholars have remained perpetrators of western perspectives in African history because they do not set the agenda.<sup>44</sup> Toyin Falola, has for instance asserted that national history is an unfinished agenda, propelling us into global history approach is silencing national initiatives and indirectly propelling western contemporary dominance.<sup>45</sup> Clapham contends 'a genuine decolonisation of knowledge production for Africa must return to its roots within the continent itself'.<sup>46</sup>

To decolonise African history is to write African history that puts focus on people and their daily struggles. The thematic position of historical research and writing has more frequently been colonial than African for the past six decades. It is impossible to decolonise when historical writing has always been colonial than African in its theory, themes and methods. It is impossible to decolonise when

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<sup>44</sup> Chuhila, "Who writes".

<sup>45</sup> Falola, "National History in Africa", 503; Christopher Clapham, "Decolonising African studies?", *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 58, no.1 (2020), 137-153.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 137.

historical writing has always been liturgical than innovative in taking up new themes and approaches. A cursory survey of the research done in Tanzania (see Tables I above & IV below) suggests that colonial history is well represented than Tanzanian history; meaning history of people and their encounters.<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately this time, African scholars who ought to be leaders in the decolonisation movement produce this type of colonial history; their history. Our themes have been, colonial labour, colonial administration, colonial health services, colonial infrastructure, colonial environmentalism name all, you will find that African participation is treated as passively responding to colonial functions and activities.

In the 1960s efforts were underway to quickly decolonise western approaches in African history. A reasonable work of its time was done and shortly after the 1970s and 1980s scholarship came to be webbed in universalisms – trying to underscore African localities from theoretical approaches used to understand circumstances in other areas. Apart from the economic hardships of this period, scholarship was also tempted thematically where the influence of Marxism and underdevelopment schools became widespread.<sup>48</sup> The

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<sup>47</sup>For an overview of research in the department for the last thirty years see, Masebo, “New Thematic Directions in History”.

<sup>48</sup> Martin H. Kaniki ed., *Tanzania under colonial rule*, (London: Longman, 1982), Walter Rodney, *How Europe underdeveloped Africa* (Nairobi: EAHP, 2003).

danger of this shift was continuation of colonial and capitalist narratives in our history.

It would be facile to speak of underdevelopment for example without reiterating the influence of western capital and colonial enterprise. In these narratives, the themes based on state or cooperate coordinated activities and the way local people were affected/adjusted as a result.<sup>49</sup> By doing this, the type of nationalist histories initiated in the 1960s almost came out of fashion as little interest continued in its favour. Again, from the 1980s to 1990s to the present, thematic development has been copious of western agenda obviously for known reasons. African scholars have remained passive in setting research agenda.

For decades now, the research agenda was set in the west and then African scholars tuned in, in the name of new 'scholarship' or 'new scholarly trends'. In this way, what Hopkins and Austin warn about running away from African circumstances in favour of western scholarship becomes more realistic.<sup>50</sup> This trend has and will in the future cement

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<sup>49</sup> James Giblin, *The politics of environmental control in Northeastern Tanzania, 1840-1940* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992); Gregory Maddox, James Giblin & Isaria N. Kimambo eds., *Custodians of the land: ecology and culture in the history of Tanzania*, (London: James Currey, 1996); James Giblin & Blandina Giblin. *A history of the excluded: making family a refuge from state in twentieth-century Tanzania* (London: James Currey, 2005).

<sup>50</sup> Anthony Hopkins, "The new economic history of Africa", *The Journal of African History* 50, no. 2 (2009), 155-177; Gareth Austin, "Reciprocal comparison and African history: tackling conceptual Eurocentrism in the

coloniality in studying Africa and erode completely the trace of African history. Academic fashion makes African scholarship faint and copious of whatever comes in the name of 'new trends'. In the end, it makes us forget that we have a duty to write a history based on local dynamics and demands. To understand this well, the table below provides a summary of what has been researched and published in the *Tanzania Zamani* journal – the main outlet for Tanzanian historians.

Colonial history in this case entails all articles written on or starting from the colonial period and the colonial period taking a considerable share in the analysis. African history entails the history that has covered typically African history such as theory, pre-colonial period and postcolonial history.

Decolonisation should also proceed methodologically. The themes produced so far are determined by the methodological approaches used. In the 1960s and 1970s the dominant methodology was oral history and archaeological methods. Conversely, they were able to reconstruct both pre-colonial and colonial histories. It is surprising however that those collaborative projects no longer exist at the peril of marginalising a complete grasp of our history. Historians and archaeologists work on different fronts though at the dawn, they produce histories entirely from historical or archaeological approaches and perspectives. It is also

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study of Africa's economic past", *African Studies Review* 50, no. 3 (2007), 1-28.

unfortunate that there are no records of oral histories in Tanzania after half a century of scholarship.

**Table IV: Summary of research publications in *Tanzania Zamani***

<i>Tanzania Zamani</i>	No. of articles published	No. of articles with colonial history	No. of articles with African/Tanzanian/Theoretical history	Percentage of African content %
Volume I, 1992,1993,1994	10	7	3	30
Volume II				
Volume III, 1997	4	4	0	0
Volume IV, 1998	2	0	2	100
Volume V, 2008	2	2	0	0
Volume VI, 2009	7	4	3	43
Volume VII, 2010	4	2	2	50
Volume VIII, 2016	7	5	2	29
Volume IX, 2017	8	0	8	100
Volume X, 2018	8	3	5	63
Volume XI, 2019	8	1	7	88
Volume XII, 2020	9	2	7	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>57</b>

**Source:** Compiled from *Tanzania Zamani* journal issues, 1992-2020.

One can record Kimambo's Oral Text on the Pare deposited with his courtesy at the University of Dar es Salaam main library. Also, another traceable oral text is Steven Feierman's Oral Text of the Arusha and Meru, deposited at the Department of history at the University of Dar es salaam.



One may wonder what is wrong? After decades of using oral history still few transcripts exist. This tells us that, methodologically, it is becoming more challenging to deal with pre-colonial histories. Without an enhanced collaboration with archaeological approaches, what is produced out of the existing historical methods will remain to be colonial history.

Oral history does not only present histories of illiterate societies but also provides histories not covered in official historical documentations. While it has become fashionable in recent decades to depend on colonial documents as reliable sources of our history, revival efforts are underway to go back to using oral histories and mythologies intensively. Albertus Onyiego, one of the adherents of oral articulations, has demonstrated that through careful analysis of mythical traditions we can learn history devoid of colonial overview.<sup>51</sup> This is not a new invention by the author because oral historical methodology was applied in the 1960s and 1970s, what is encouraging is its application today.<sup>52</sup>

Archival research is the most traditional method in historical research. But what are we likely to get from these sources? They are statist narratives and documentations. It is widely

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<sup>51</sup>Albertus K. Onyiego, "Symbolism and Gender among the late pre-colonial Luo people in northern Tanzania: lessons on how to interpret African mythical traditions", *Tanzania Zamani* 11, no.2 (2019), 1-29.

<sup>52</sup> Kimambo, *A Political history*; Israel Katoke, *The Karagwe Kingdom: A History of the Abanyambo of Northwestern Tanzania c.1400-1915* (Nairobi: EAHP, 1975).

accepted among historians that archival sources are central in historical research. Topics that fall without enough reliable archival accounts are skipped for there is little evidence to make conclusions. In this way, we have ended up producing colonial histories and mainly British colonial history, as few in Tanzania are able to use German sources. Consequently, this makes a huge chunk of British colonial history in our schools, universities, libraries and in scholarship in general. Are we capable and equipped enough to write African history from colonial sources? Should we avoid colonial sources entirely? This is not the point.

All sources stand equal chance with conscious intentions to understand African dynamics from within. Archival research in Tanzania benefits colonial period and activities in Tanganyika as no single local historian has made a good use of German documents. Again, little exists on the postcolonial statist history, as little archival documents are available. Although archives do not represent a history of the people, at least use of postcolonial documents would produce something of an African making. With this methodological strand, it is possible for a self-reassessment on whether for the last half a century, African historians have done enough in responding to the claim that Africa had no history but what exists are colonial activities in Africa.

Whether they have managed to crystallise the existence of African history or confirmed existence of colonial activities in the continent requires more debates. To what seems

obvious, the latter have been worked more than the former and hence affirming that what exists in Africa is a history of colonial presence. This is to say, without colonialism and the evils of western capitalism, African historians would have nothing to write about. To decolonise history teaching would mean a herculean undertaking that will revise even the existing scholarship. While following universalised standardisations, local African centred initiatives on the creation of historical knowledge needs to be in the active move. They should consider local realities and demands on the ground to produce a history of an African flavour.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

History must be appealing to the current era's society. This can be achieved in part by teaching pertinent topics that are important to the learner's society as part of a national effort to spread best practices and learn from past mistakes. Colonial histories, capitalism's history, and her sister globalisation have less to give to a rural Tanzanian youngster. There is a lot that can be taught as part of 'our history project' because history does not happen in a vacuum. Teaching societal history awakes students' interest to study other societies in comparison to their own. What is currently taught in schools reflects the nation's postcolonial ideological and political roles after independence to the present, which is only a small section of our history. The on-going arguments about history curriculum revision can be utilised to determine the type of history we wish to have as a nation.

A history that focuses largely on colonial themes enslaves current and future generations to colonial thinking and mentality, making them second-class global citizens. Alberto Rosa considers history as a tool for identity construction, "... history is a way of producing values and inoculating them via discourse."<sup>53</sup> It is critical to teach a history that has social and national ideals that can be passed down through generations. History has been given the green light as a strategic nation-building weapon by the political push of the last three years. We must reinterpret the topics and approaches employed in order to use it as a tool. Today's history research and teaching includes a little portion of our own past, rendering history obsolete.

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<sup>53</sup> Alberto Rosa, "What History to Teach? Whose History?" in *History Education and the Construction of National Identities* edited by Mario Carretero, Mikel Asensio and María Rodríguez-Moneo (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishers, 2012), 63.

# **Development Implications of Labour Migration for Origin Societies: The Case of *Manamba* of Njombe District, 1900 - 1960s.**

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## ***Abstract***

*For decades, labour migration scholarship in Africa has focused on social-economic and political problems instigated by colonial labour migration in the origin societies. Very little is available regarding migrants' transformational agency. This paper discusses the role that migrant labourers (manamba) played in economic development in Njombe district, Tanzania from 1900 to the 1960s. The paper argues that, apart from the apparent complications, labour migration also facilitated the development of the district in some ways depending on variations in the economic environment of the migrants' homes and the areas they worked. Deriving from primary and secondary evidence the paper links labour migrants to cash crop production, agricultural innovations and entrepreneurial activities. It concludes that using the knowledge, experience and capital the migrants got in various workplaces, added with creativity, the labour migrants contributed considerably to the wider transformational process of bringing economic development to their places of origin.*

**Key Words:** Labour migration, Migrants, *Manamba*, Rural Development, Bena, Njombe.

### 1.0 The Context

By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Africa experienced the direct intrusion of an alien colonial economy. The new economy became the origin of wage labour which necessitated labour migration in Africa.<sup>1</sup> In Tanzania, the regional distribution of wage employment opportunities during the colonial period best explains the essence of labour migration. Most colonial investments and settlements were in the belt running north from Dar-es-Salaam and Morogoro to Tanga and from the inland to the Usambara Mountains and the slopes of Mounts Kilimanjaro and Meru.<sup>2</sup> The semi-arid plains of central Tanzania were less favourable for production. The southern highlands (including Njombe), with relatively favourable climatic conditions as north-eastern, were excluded as they received only sporadic colonial investment.<sup>3</sup> The favourability to the North-Eastern zone was because the area was entrenched by the world capitalist economy earlier than other parts of Tanganyika. The northeast was, therefore, far developed in transport, communication, markets and other facilities. Europeans preferred jurisdiction over such areas

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<sup>1</sup> Abebe Zegeye and S. Ishemo eds., *Forced Labour Migration: Patterns of Movements within Africa*, (London: Hans Zeu Publishers, 1989), 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Richard H. Sabot, *Economic Development and Urban Migration in Tanzania, 1900-1971*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 24.

<sup>3</sup> James Giblin, *A History of the Excluded: Making Family a Refuge from State in Twentieth Century Tanzania*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2005), 1.

with which they were already familiar.<sup>4</sup> The concentration of employment and cash cropping opportunities in the same area, coupled with the introduction of taxation, were essential reasons for the development of the colonial labour migration system in Tanzania.

The regional differences experienced provided the basis for the establishment of labour reserves which started with the coming of the Germans in the 1880s.<sup>5</sup> After the First World War, the same structure of investment, production and trade was reinforced by the British as it was a characteristic of the colonial pattern of development.<sup>6</sup> To obtain enough and reliable supply of labour, labour reserves were deliberately created in some regions of the colony.

Njombe was marginalised even as it was incorporated into the colonial economy. As such, Njombe people considered themselves as excluded from agricultural markets and other economic opportunities. Disregarded as they were, Bena people could not escape the trap of being migrant labourers; as people, who could not earn money from cultivating their

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Rodney, "The Colonial Economy", in *General History of Africa Vol. VII: Africa under Colonial Domination 1880-1935* edited by A. Boahen (1985), 333.

<sup>5</sup> Milline J. Mbonile, "Towards Breaking the Vicious Circle of Labour Migration in Tanzania", *UTAFITI* 3, No.1 (1996), 91.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Mgaya, "Acquiring Human Capital Skills through Labour Migrancy: The Case of Colonial Njombe District, 1900-1960s", *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences* 5, no. 1, (2016), 51-70, 54.

fields, sought cash elsewhere. One can, therefore, think of such migration as migration for 'survival.' To use D. Papademetrious and P. Martin's words, such survival migrants were mostly 'pushed by the lack of alternatives at home'.<sup>7</sup> Although no record exists to show exactly when labour migration began in Njombe district, it is documented that by the mid-1920s long distance travelling for wage labour had become regular.<sup>8</sup> During the interwar period, labour migration by Njombe people increased. The increase was in part due to the demand for labour in the sisal plantations of north-eastern Tanzania. It was during British rule that the Bena Migrants were transported by trucks and Lorries as *Manamba*.<sup>9</sup> The plantations employed about one-third of the country's wage-labourers and earned a large part of its foreign exchange. During the same period, most of this

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<sup>7</sup> Dimetrious Papademetrious and Phillip Martin eds., *the Unsettled Relationships: Labour Migration and Economic Development*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 5.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher M. Lwoga, "Seasonal Labour Migration in Tanzania: The case of Ludewa District", in *Labour Circulation and Labour Process* edited by G. Standing (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 124-128.

<sup>9</sup> The term *Manamba* came from the English word numbers. The labourers had to stand in queues while being registered. They had to be counted every time as the food was distributed to them, and in the arrangements for accommodation in transit centres. In plantations, they were given numbers and were known by those numbers when registering their daily tasks.



industry's unskilled workers were peasant migrants from the southern and western parts of the country.<sup>10</sup>

Njombe District being part of Southern Tanzania has its historical experience of migrant workers which is broadly illustrative of that of many thousands of peasant migrants from other areas of the country. Such a process was necessitated by the need for money. From the 1930s through the 1950s the magnitude of labour migration in Njombe district was high, and there was little economic development.<sup>11</sup> However, not all colonial district officials accepted that areas under their administration remain underdeveloped and continue to be regarded as labour reserves. But, due to the prevailed contradictions inherent in colonial production, there was little they could do to change the status of labour reserves.

The failure to change the status of labour reserves was mainly due to two reasons. First, the district commissioners' local interest in economic development of the areas under their jurisdiction was against the interests of their superiors, plantation owners and financial interests in Europe. For example, the Njombe District Commissioner Mr E.I. Lee tried hard to get some economic development underway in

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<sup>10</sup> James D. Graham, "A Case Study of Migrant Labour in Tanzania", *African Studies Review*, 13, No. 1 (1970), 25.

<sup>11</sup> Christopher M. Lwoga, "Labour Migration and Rural Development in a former Labour reserve in Tanzania", (PhD Thesis, Cambridge University, 1985), 73.

Njombe district between 1958 and 1959. But he seemed to be working at cross-purposes with the department of labour which still considered Njombe district as one of Tanganyika's largest suppliers of plantation workers.<sup>12</sup> The colonial contradiction was based on the labour and development demands of the local administration on the one hand and the colonial economy centred on plantations on the other.

Berman and Lonsdale suggest the possibility of the colonial state being able to cope with such conflicting requirements of the peasant and settler political economy by distancing itself from the production processes.<sup>13</sup> However, F.J. Kaijage argues that in the case of Tanganyika the colonial state was not a monolithic phenomenon as there were within it different tendencies which defined the manner of its interventions.<sup>14</sup> Despite its being a subordinate agent of the metropolitan bourgeoisie, the colonial state in Tanganyika also intervened in response to local demands as presented by District Commissioners. In attempts to aid the efforts of

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<sup>12</sup> Tanzania National Archive (hereafter TNA) 178/L1/5/IV: Labour Recruiting Permit Returns Contracts: Labour Returning, (1952-1960).

<sup>13</sup> John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman, "Coping with the Contradictions: The Development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895-1914", *Journal of African History*, 20, No. 4, White Presence and Power in Africa, (1979), 487-505, 489.

<sup>14</sup> Frederick J. Kaijage, "Labour Condition in the Tanzania Mining Industry", *Boston University Working Papers in African Studies*, no. 83. (1983), 17.

District Commissioners, such as E.I. Lee of Njombe district who sought development for the areas under the jurisdiction, the colonial state periodically passed legislation to regulate labour migration. Such efforts were, however, not very successful in Njombe district.

Second, labour migration became an economic issue for peasants in labour reserves. Peasants from these districts were obliged to go and earn money through wage labour in distant areas. It followed, therefore, that imposing restrictions on labour migration would have meant forcing the peasants to use different alternatives of production for cash within their fields which were already marginalised. Although such attempt would sound like efforts to stabilise the labour force, it would also be at the expense of profit maximisation for the plantation owners. However, as time went on, with various internal and external administrative and individual efforts, opportunities for economic development began to open in the district, but most of the people of Njombe were not receptive to such opportunities.<sup>15</sup> They still considered labour migration as an opportunity to utilise. Such a passive response by the Bena was not expected by colonial officials. The interest of the Njombe district officials to develop the area was also hampered by the lack of basic economic infrastructures in the area. There were no reliable communication systems and markets in Njombe.

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<sup>15</sup> Such opportunities included: cash crop production and small businesses.

## 2.0 Literature Gap

Labour migration in colonial Tanzania has mainly been viewed as a strictly one-way process, only draining the rural areas of male labourers who never came back to share the fruits of their toil with their families. Looking at labour migration from this perspective has eased most scholars to ignore the creativity and initiatives of Africans to manipulate whatever little capital, ideas and experience they acquired, to transform their livelihoods. Africans have, therefore, been portrayed as passive, always being vulnerable to the situation. For instance, James Graham argued for the negative and anti-progressive character of male labour migration due to their long-term absences from their in-need families. He also argued that labour migration deprived rural economies of needed labour and their communities. Referring to Njombe, he pointed out that there were a high proportion of men who left the district for the sisal estates or to the mines of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia, leaving their villages heavily weighed by women and children.<sup>16</sup> C. Lwoga, in his study of labour migration in Ludewa, which was by then part of Njombe District, also argued that the labour migration of men to sisal plantations caused a shortage of labour within the district and in the province. He shows that between 1945 and 1946 there were severe labour

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<sup>16</sup> John D. Graham, "Changing Patterns of Wage Labour in Tanzania", (PhD Thesis, Northwestern University, 1968)

shortages in Iringa, leading to employment of women and children.<sup>17</sup> In his studies of Ngoni, Ndendeuli and Nyakyusa, P.H. Gulliver also revealed that the absence of young men from their villages had depressing effects on the rural economy as the most active labour force was away for over one year. In Consideration of the peasant family as an independent family unit, Gulliver concluded that there was serious labour difficulty at home when men were away.<sup>18</sup> The victimisation of migrant labourers and their areas of origin was based on scholars' reliance on archival information as presented by missionaries and anthropologists who themselves took a negative view of labour migration.

Contemporary studies on Tanzania's colonial labour migration have also followed the same pattern. With few exceptions, most scholars still emphasised on the negative impact of labour migration on agricultural production. For instance, D.F. Bryceson indicated the detrimental effects suffered by labour providing societies citing increased poverty.<sup>19</sup> T. Sunseri in his *Vilimani* argues that labour migration led to social consequences such as divorce,

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<sup>17</sup> Lwoga, "Seasonal Labour Migration", 126.

<sup>18</sup> Phillip H. Gulliver, "Report on the Migration of African Workers to the South from the Southern Highlands", *Tanganyika* (1954), 12.

<sup>19</sup> Deborah F. Bryceson, *Food Insecurity and the Social Division of Labour in Tanzania 1919-1985*, (Oxford: Macmillan, 1990), 211-216.

household dissolution and decline of childbirth.<sup>20</sup> Abortion and infanticide are also reported by Sunseri to have become commonly widespread practices due to labour migration. He argues that abortion was due to immoral behaviour of women because of long absences of their husbands.<sup>21</sup> He further shows that typically the migrant labourers were made artificially cheap and were super-exploited.

However, being highly exploited does not necessarily mean that these migrant workers were not paid at all. That being the case, it is still imperative to explore on how the little gain they got was channelled into rural communities and to what effect. Such kind of analysis lacks in these studies. The intention of this paper is not to deny the detrimental impacts of labour migration but rather to show that the resultant transformative agency of migrant labourers using whatever small capital, knowledge and experience they obtained from their being labourers in colonial economic ventures should not be neglected.

### **3.0 Theory and methodology**

Fundamental to this study was the understanding of the labour migration-transformation relationship. To create such connections, this paper draws on two approaches: Political

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<sup>20</sup> Thaddeus Sunseri, *Vilimani: Labour Migration and Rural Change in Early Colonial Tanzania*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 166.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

economy and transformational approaches as they relate to the rural context. The paper considers the fact that labour migration embraces all dimensions of social existence and, therefore, demands an interdisciplinary approach. The political economy framework is embedded in the new economics of migration and considers human beings as industrious and enterprising people with economic sense (*Homo Economicus*). Being *Homo Economicus*, individuals readily respond to market impulses and other opportunities available by allocating their labour power where the best return is promised.<sup>22</sup> This approach allows us to see African labour migration during the colonial period, despite its being in most cases a result of colonial coercion, a function also, in some instances of African calculation of the relative effort price between local production and migrating for wage labour. Understanding labour migration this way provides room for examination of the advantages the labour migrants got from their participation in wage work and how the opportunities they got were manoeuvred for the benefits of their communities. Nevertheless, the political economy framework adopted for this study seems to be more helpful in pinning down motivations for migration than assessing the consequences of the process. Following the flaw embedded in political economy theory, the transformational

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<sup>22</sup> Oded Stark, "Tales of Migration without Wage Differentials: Individual, Family, and Community Contexts", *Conference Proceedings on African Migration in Comparative Perspective* (2003).

approach has been used as a supplemental framework. It appears that the transformation model is best for assessing the consequences of labour migration.

The transformation approach developed by Stephen Castles provides the basis for a new understanding of the links between human labour mobility and rural change. In this paper, social change is taken as a fundamental shift in the way society is organised that goes beyond the continual processes of incremental social changes which were always at work. It implies a step-change in which the existing social-economic patterns are re-configured. Rural transformation is linked to major shifts in dominant economic, political and strategic relationships. Castle's argument that, in developing countries forms of social change include intensification of agriculture, changes in education, politics and religion<sup>23</sup> is of relevance in this case study.

The information for this study was obtained from both written sources and field work. Written sources encompassed both primary and secondary materials. Primary written sources were mainly sought from Tanzania National Archives (TNA) in Dar-es-Salaam in September and October 2012. The study benefited from the University of Dar es

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<sup>23</sup> Stephen Castles, "Understanding Global Migration: A Social Transformation Perspective", *Conference Proceedings on theories of migration and social change*, St Anne's College (Oxford, 2008), 11.



Salaam Library (East Africana section) for published and unpublished sources. Field work involved conducting oral interviews in Njombe District from October to December 2012.

#### **4.0 Returned Migrants and Agricultural Innovations**

Although Njombe was regarded as a labour reserve, pockets of cash crop growing began to evolve in the 1930s.<sup>24</sup> Coffee was a popular cash crop in the district until the arrival and commercialization of tea production in the region in 1926.<sup>25</sup> However, cash crop production was dominated by European settler farmers. By the 1950s Njombe district had a substantial number of men who had been out on wage employment. They had money and were exposed to some technological knowledge while in workplaces.<sup>26</sup> Such accumulated knowledge featured even in various stories they exchanged. Among stories preferred to be told by those in the colonial Njombe generation was the one concerning Njombe's transition from labour migration to farming of marketable produce between the mid-1940s and 1960s. Referring to his transition from being a migrant labourer to a large-scale cabbage producer, Penseli Mwajombe said:

It was a very successful project for me. In the beginning I did not know that cabbage farming

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<sup>24</sup> Lwoga, "Seasonal Labour Migration", 82.

<sup>25</sup> John Baffes, "Tanzania's Tea Sector: Challenges and Constraints", *Africa Region Working Paper Series No 69*, (2004), 1.

<sup>26</sup> Graham, "Changing Patterns of Wage Labour in Tanzania", 110.

would yield as much as it did for the Greeks for whom I was working as a *Shamba* boy in Iringa. It was an incredible experience for me. As I was walking around streets, I could hear people talking about my success in farming. Farming is what got me out of travelling as a migrant labourer again.<sup>27</sup>

Stories as the one told by Penseli were, however, being told by men who placed stories of such transformation in a well-organized genre. A more obvious danger in such type as identified by Giblin was their obscuring of the role played by women in such agrarian transition. Because of such danger, Giblin suggests a need to carefully deliberate the purpose of those who tell the stories.<sup>28</sup>

One of the reasons for such stories being told by men was that men had much easier access than women to a genre that made stories of farming meaningful to outsiders and other men. Men travelled to towns and various distant working places. After several trips to these workplaces, their view of the world changed. Referring to Zambia, Alfeyo Chilivumbo argued that gradually, migrant labourers formed a reservoir of people who were less traditional but more receptive to innovations. These individuals became instrumental in

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Penseli Mwajombe, Igosi, 12.11.2012

<sup>28</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 156

agricultural development.<sup>29</sup> Following the same trend, Njombe migrant labourers travelled to towns, rode bicycles, practised carpentry, assembled steel ploughs, trained oxen and made diesel engine sputter into life. As Giblin argues, because these people did things that signified modernity, they could readily translate their experience into a genre which had undoubtedly become popular even before villagers began frequently dealing with development-oriented administrators and agronomists during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>30</sup> The stories of these people were of course stories of becoming modern of which the topic of farming became worth talking about.

Njombe women on the other hand, lacked means of acquiring the skills and implements that signified modernity in agriculture as it was for men counterparts. However, this does not eliminate women's participation in agrarian transformation. In fact, women fully participated in the process, only that they did so by using old skills and technologies. For example, while some men learned to run diesel-powered mills, almost all Bena women continued using mortar and pestle.<sup>31</sup> From such a scenario, it was evident for women to have felt they lacked the authority to speak on matters which agronomists, government officials,

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<sup>29</sup> Alfeyo Chilivumbo, *Migration and Uneven Rural Development in Africa: The Case of Zambia* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985), xiv

<sup>30</sup> Giblin, *A History of the Excluded*, 156

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Alex Nyalukolo, Igosi, 22.11.2012.

researchers and male villagers regarded as matters of development and progress. Women tended to defer discussion of such agrarian modernization to men.<sup>32</sup> These women, therefore, were handicapped regarding a socially valued genre in which to present themselves as farmers. Nevertheless, Bena women were not always submissive to men. As time went on, they found an ingenuity way of surviving and challenging the patriarchal system that existed in Njombe. Most women interviewed for this study revealed that in their husbands' absence despite increased burdens, they also played a greater role in family decision making. Practicing of such roles during their husbands' absence, suggests that these women were able to overcome societal norms which tended to exclude women from leadership and decision making. Increased Bena women autonomy underscores the importance of putting any study of women's contribution to the household economy in its historical and socio-economic perspective.

Njombe villagers who between the 1940s and 1950 seized the emerging opportunities to make money by farming were those who had in one way or another already acquired a variety of resources and skills. In addition to cash, cattle and other material resources, these people had also learned mechanical know-how, Kiswahili, literacy, arithmetic,

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<sup>32</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 157.

knowledge of the roads, markets and towns that, together, knitted the colonial economy. They, also, had attained some familiarity with peculiarities of Europeans. Most of them had participated in labour migrations to the coastal sisal plantations. Migrant labourers who worked on settler farms, for instance, learned through practice the new methods of farming. They brought their new knowledge and skills into their home district. These included contour ridging, crop rotation and the use of composite manure in growing vegetables near streams.

Penseli Mwajombe of Makoga worked for four years for the Greek settlers in Dabaga. His working as a '*shamba* boy' allowed him to learn and accumulate knowledge especially on vegetable growing. Recalling those days, Penseli remembered the skills of growing cabbage which he learned while practising it in Iringa. He did, of course, discover how to produce a variety of vegetables but he hastily remembered cabbage simply because of the way such skills made a meaning in his life even after his return home. Immediately after returning home at Makoga, Penseli made a quick use of the skills he had obtained. He dug a very long irrigation channel which enabled him to establish a big garden where cabbage was grown. He became a successful person in his project. He mentioned to have built a house in 1957, bought a sewing machine and a bicycle using money earned out of selling cabbages. Above all, the garden became a model from which several other villagers learned cabbage growing skills.

The use of cans in irrigating vegetables was another innovation that was brought by returned migrant labourers in Ubena.<sup>33</sup>

Around 1943 the government placed Second World War's Polish internees at Kidugala Lutheran Mission. The camp was said to have housed more than 1000 internees who brought a substantial amount of money to nearby villagers as they were given money for their expenditure. These internees also increased the supply of European vegetables by distributing seeds to nearby villagers who responded by practising horticulture. They began producing cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, onions, turnips and tomatoes. As time went on, the Bena of these areas became experienced in new varieties of vegetables. Agricultural officers were also aware of such efforts by the villagers. In 1945 one agricultural officer expressed his appreciation of natives' experience in growing plants. He said:

These days, the residents of Ubena understand well how to farm for profit. Very many have cultivated large plots and have planted lots of

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<sup>33</sup> Penseli Mwajombe in Giblin, *History of the Excluded*.

European vegetables to sell and get a lot of money.<sup>34</sup>

The bringing of vegetable seeds by Poles at Kidugala cannot by itself explain the spread and cultivation of those vegetables and other new crops in all other parts of Ukena. The way these seeds and knowledge of production of these crops spread in the district, to a larger extent, remained in the hands of ex-migrant labourers within and outside Njombe district. These labourers were particularly on the lookout for knowledge that could help them with farming and trade in their future lives. Dalton Stambul, a villager from Parangavanu who worked on sisal estates, described himself to have always pondered on which crop would put him in an advantageous position. After a long time of thinking and investigating the prices of most products grown in the territory, he concluded that he would grow grapes.<sup>35</sup> A few other farmers in Njombe would try growing grapes as well, some successfully and others not.

Other new food crops brought by migrant labourers in Njombe were fast growing yellow maize and Irish potatoes which were first grown by Njombe farmers in the Uporoto

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<sup>34</sup> TNA 178/12/A: Julius Watson Mtango (agricultural instructor at Wanging'ombe) to Bwana Shamba (Iringa), 30.06.1945, TNA/ 178/P.4/6/i: Njombe District Annual Reports, 1944, 1954 and 1946.

<sup>35</sup> TNA 178/D.3/55: A letter by Dalton E. Stambul (Kwamkoro Estates, Amani) to Chief Secretary (Dar es Salaam), 16.06.1958.

Mountains during the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>36</sup> It is interesting to note that round potatoes have become, up to now, an important crop that is used by Bena both for own consumption and commercial purposes. Currently, the potato is a crop that every villager in Ubena would be eager to cultivate in large number as possible.

Although a few farmers were using ploughs by the late 1930s, it was during the late 1940s and early 1950s that ploughing became widespread.<sup>37</sup> A colonial administrator once commented in 1951 on the increased use of ploughs by the Bena. He said 'the Wabena are making greater use of cattle for draught purposes, in fact, it is reported that over one hundred ploughs were sold at Mtwango in 1951.'<sup>38</sup> The adoption of ploughs was not quite simple and straightforward as imagined by the British proponents of ploughing. The process involved, among other things, enticing farmers into sisal labour to earn cash for ploughs and oxen. Elimia Longolela of Katenge explained the way he began the process by making money from his working on sisal plantations: 'I would come home and buy an ox, and return and buy another. Later I purchased a plough, and

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<sup>36</sup> Jens A. Anderson, 'Potato Cultivation in the Upoloto Mountains, Tanzania,' *African Affairs* 95 (1996), 91.

<sup>37</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 166.

<sup>38</sup> A.E.G Markham, "Report on Tuberculosis Survey of Southern Highland Province, Tanganyika from Nov 1949 to Dec. 1951", 35.



after that, I concentrated on farming.'<sup>39</sup> Longolela's recollections underscore the extent to which migrant labourers played an invaluable role in initiating agricultural innovations in colonial Njombe district.

Apart from getting cash for ploughs and oxen, the process of using animals for farming also involved experimentation and diffusion of ideas and techniques. Labour migration provided the Bena with such opportunities. In Palangavanu village it was introduced by Mahuna who saw cattle under traction while working for Europeans in Mufindi.<sup>40</sup> Explaining the way through which most people got ideas about training oxen, Jimu Kilima said:

There was a European in Mufindi who taught oxen to plough. Individuals who went there learned to plough with oxen and they returned home to train the cattle here. In those days, it was hard to train oxen. You had to fasten a log on its neck, and then you would make the ox run here and there until it was tired and accepted the plough.<sup>41</sup>

The use of few oxen was a major step in the process of learning how to plough on the part of the Bena. Such a development made ploughing feasible for most farmers. When ploughs were introduced, six oxen were used at once,

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with Elimia Longolela, Igosi, 30.11.2012

<sup>40</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 167.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

but by experimenting, farmers gradually learned to plough with only two oxen.<sup>42</sup> However, the use of ploughs to some extent caused difficulties in obtaining adequate land. The shortage was because farmers increased their acres under cultivation.

Agricultural innovation was further aided by improvement in transport. From the 1950s an improved transportation system became an additional motivation for many returned migrant labourers to participate in peasant farming and stay at home much longer before going on another trip for wage employment. The decision to stay was because it became remunerative to invest in agriculture. With motor transport, they conveniently carried their surplus crops to the markets within and outside Njombe district. Returned migrant labourers came home with a fundamental mode of transportation, 'the bicycle.' The bicycle revolutionised the transport system and boosted agricultural production. To carry more goods on the bike, the Bena improvised with a larger carrier made from hardwood. Some even bought two bicycles, one for hire and the other for their use.<sup>43</sup> Buying bicycles became necessary even for non-migrant labourers. Many of non-migrant labourers bought bikes from Indian

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with Petro Mpingwa and Simon Mgaya, Igosi, 19.11.2012

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Petro Mpingwa and Simon Mgaya, Igosi, 19.11.2012

shops in Njombe Township or from migrant workers who had more than one.

Overall, the struggle for knowledge, innovation and diversification produced a substantial increase in crop marketing. The new agricultural skills practised by some of the returned migrant labourers showed increased yields. As a result, such skills were gradually adopted by some non-migrant villagers. The new skills ultimately began a new era in the history of farming among the Bena. It was an era where some peasant farmers were defined as agricultural producers selected by the government for settlement in indeed designated farming schemes. These became relatively wealthy villagers who were even willing to leave their village gardens to take up farming on virgin soil elsewhere. These were more progressive and advanced individuals in the communities, a group to which many Bena migrant labourers belonged. However, labour migration was just one of the reasons for these transformations. In fact, there were more forces at play in shaping agricultural innovations in colonial Njombe. The innovations were also related to broader colonial campaigns such as grow more crops, a creation of progressive farmers, anti-erosion, restocking and another post World War II modernization drives in

Tanganyika and beyond. These constituted what Illife referred to as the 'second colonial occupation'.<sup>44</sup>

### **5.0 *Manamba* and entrepreneurial activities**

The colonial Njombe society did not restrict itself to farmer's accumulation of knowledge and experience. They went further to other social processes that involved embracing of business knowledge both within one generation and onward to the next.<sup>45</sup> In most of their stories about entrepreneurship, it was common to see a description of personal improvement without much reference to others. For instance, trader's development could be traced about things which one's business made grow in number. These included among other things, shops, motor vehicles, sewing machines and bicycles.<sup>46</sup> However, a critical scrutiny of those stories reveals that such businesses were forms of social interaction in which one's achievements were through communication, travel and networking.

As it was to other aspects of development, the people of colonial Njombe were excluded from commercial

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<sup>44</sup> John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

<sup>45</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 178.

<sup>46</sup> Edward Mgaya, "Acquiring Human Capital Skills through Labour Migrancy: The Case of Colonial Njombe District, 1900-1960s", *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences* 5 no. 1, (2016), 53.

opportunities. The exclusion included a near-absence of currency and spending power among the Bena. They were also excluded from agricultural markets and banks. Their unfamiliarity with those opportunities left them severely handicapped in competition with those who had fuller knowledge and access to those opportunities particularly the Indians. The problem was predominantly before the 1940s when the government-imposed market controls and rationing.<sup>47</sup> The attribution of business to the migration experience does not stand to deny the fact that the Bena engaged in trade as early as pre-colonial times. Trade has always been an integral part of village life in Njombe even before the 1940s. But, the colonial government market controls prevented villagers from using their inheritance of trading knowledge to business in the formal economy.<sup>48</sup> In Njombe, such opportunities in rural trade were left to be dominated by Njombe's Indian community who were concentrated in Njombe Township. In fact, Africans were not allowed to make such trade in competition with Indians.

Njombe people could not always accept a state of exclusion. They continuously tried to break out of it. For example, villagers who wished to get out of state exclusion chose to operate in the shadow of the formal economy. To avoid government controls, these people opted for the use of black

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<sup>47</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 179.

<sup>48</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 179.

markets.<sup>49</sup> However, it was not easy to operate in those shadow opportunities as there were no easily available chances within Njombe. Such opportunities, therefore, increased with the European establishment of mines and plantations in the southern highlands. These had, of course, set in motion the flows of migrant labourers across the region. It followed, therefore, that the needs for provisions and accommodation by the travelling workers provided an opportunity for entrepreneurial villagers. Giblin argues that, as they filled such shadowy niches and moved on to parallel markets, rural entrepreneurs now turned to family relations. As a result, the family was made both the means of organising activity across space and of accumulating and transmitting knowledge of commercial affairs through time.<sup>50</sup>

Apart from government controls, trading locally for monetary profit among the Bena was virtually impossible before the 1940s. The difficult was because much of the insufficient cash that happened to be in the hands of villagers was collected for taxes. Such collected tax appears to have absorbed most of the cash brought home in Ubena by migrant labourers. For instance, the maximum amount possible to be saved by a sisal worker during a regular nine-

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with Mzee Lunodzo Mwalongo, Igosi, 16.11.2012.

<sup>50</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 179.

month term employment was Shs.45/- with a standard tax of 8/- in 1837.<sup>51</sup> The tax was in addition to the cash that workers spent on buying goods in Tanga before returning home.

Although such expenditures reduced the power of Bena migrant labourers to invest in local trade and despite the local business in Njombe district being predominantly an Indian activity, there were, however, some African (Bena) individuals who began engaging in trade in Njombe. In 1937 Njombe District Officer, despite his declaring that 'trade, as such, is practically non-existent', he noted 'several small Indian-owned shops and many native *'dukas'* [small shops].<sup>52</sup> Since there was little profit from trading within Njombe, for most Bena trading for high profit came to mean travelling long distances. However, not anyone could make such long-distance trade if unfamiliar with various routes and destinations where such business could be profitable. It followed, therefore, that those who had at one point, travelled outside the district as migrant labourers were relatively advantaged to carry out such trade quickly. For example, some men would take hides from Njombe to Iringa and proceed to Tanga when prices in Iringa were not satisfactory. At the coast, they could expect to earn no more

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<sup>51</sup> TNA 23544: The Estimates of Maximum Savings by Sisal Workers is found in F. Longland, 'Report on Labour Matters in Sisal Areas, No.1', 29.03.1936.

<sup>52</sup> TNA 178/1/4: N.F. Burt (DO, Njombe), 'Handling over Report' (July 1937).

than Shs.4/- per trip.<sup>53</sup> All the same, some sisal-hands took up trade in Tanga. Recalling how he started a business, Charles Kilumile of Uwemba described:

After working in sisal for a while, we began doing business. We'd go and buy fish which we'd bring back and sell in the worker's camps. We bought the fresh fish and dried it ourselves. We had to keep drinking a lot of tea so we couldn't fall asleep while we were drying the fish all night. We'd send the fish to our friends to the camps by a train, while we remained behind.<sup>54</sup>

Smart men were those who returned home with money to buy cattle. Buying animals was a valued accomplishment by migrant labourers because, with cattle, one could easily pay the bride price and sell it for cash when in need. The sisal region, particularly Korogwe in Tanga Province, was the common destination of cattle before the emergence of Mbeya market during the Lupa gold rush of the 1930s.<sup>55</sup> Traders ranged over vast areas to assemble herds before departing for Korogwe. The challenge in getting the animals was because few cattle owners were willing to sell their cattle

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<sup>53</sup> TNA 178/28/21/58: Reports on Njombe District for quarters ending 30 June and 30 September 1930.

<sup>54</sup> Charles Kilumile as quoted in Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 181.

<sup>55</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 181.



at the prevailing prices unless in a time of difficulties, such as food scarcity at home.

The period during and after the Second World War was the beginning of improved commercial activities in Njombe. The war period witnessed increased consumer demand for various goods. As a result, sisal workers now chose to bring home larger proportions of their earnings in cash because consumer goods were not only scarce but also expensive.<sup>56</sup> Administrators were slow to recognise that Njombe was changing but eventually came to realise the extent of wartime transformations. The rise in the circulation of money roused commercial ambition among the people of Njombe. They realised that huge demands for foodstuffs existed in towns and plantation regions. Unfortunately, they were denied the opportunity to do business both by government controls of crop marketing and by a rationing system that gave the monopoly of distribution of many consumer goods to the Indian business community.

Njombe villagers responded to such restriction by forming cooperatives. Such cooperatives in Njombe began with the Ukena Welfare Society (U.W.S), operating from 1946 to 1955.<sup>57</sup> The U.W.S was created by traders who wished to mobilise their resources to be able to compete more efficiently against Indian merchants who dominated trade.

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 182.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 254.

More wealthy merchants provided leadership in such cooperatives. However, because of the anticipated advantages of the society, smaller peddlers (*wachuuzi*) also joined it. Breaking the monopoly of trade by Indians over the wholesale of consumer goods became their primary goal. John Mhavile, one of the founders of U.W.S recalled their struggles with Indians:

We were struggling against the Indians. All the businessmen joined to buy their goods wholesale from Dar-es-Salaam and bring them to Njombe. Then all the traders operating in Njombe came here to get their products to sell retail. Truthfully, it was above all competition with the Indians.<sup>58</sup>

The move by Njombe traders implied their efforts towards developing an industrial economy in the private sphere. The U.W.S was also trying to break the current dependence of Bena traders on Indian transporters. It did so by acquiring its vehicles.<sup>59</sup> It was unfortunate that U.W.S collapsed in 1955 due to corruption and inexperience in financial management.

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<sup>58</sup> John A. Mhavile was quoted in Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 254

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

Bena traders also campaigned for access to the rationed goods such as sugar and cloth which the government had placed under the monopoly of Indian merchants. Fearing discontent among Africans, in addition to the intention to reduce parallel markets, the government in Njombe began to include some Africans in the rationing system. Giblin points out that in December 1944, they gave the first African share in the sugar allocation to an important trader of Northern Njombe called Andreas Mpingwa. A few months later Kasimu Mtalusito was given a share of one gunny bag per month.<sup>60</sup> The two traders were ex-migrant labourers who got the opportunity to trade in their home place. In 1948 the rationing of goods was put to an end although Njombe African traders still found it difficult to obtain products from Indian wholesalers. As a result, dedicated Bena traders continued to operate in parallel markets. For instance, they were heavily involved in unsanctioned trading in foodstuffs during the famine of 1949 and other periods of food shortages.<sup>61</sup>

Improvement in the transport system by the 1950s gave traders opportunity to operate outside officially sanctioned markets. Rural business operators found ways of improving

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<sup>60</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 183

<sup>61</sup> John Graham, "Changing Patterns of Wage Labour in Tanzania: A History of the Relations between African Labour and European Capitalism in Njombe District, 1931-61", (PhD Thesis, Northwestern University, 1968), 110.

their situation; some returned migrant labourers got employed to run a business on behalf of Indians who set up shops in the district. After some time, several of them got enough money and built their small shops. However, the majority of the Bena businessmen did not own shops but roamed the district as hawkers.

Andrea Mgya (Lunguja) who for years worked in sisal plantation became one of the big *Mchuuzi* (pedlar) in Usalaule. He could use the money he obtained from his wage work to buy various goods which he then sold to other villagers on cash or credit. As his business grew, he could employ other people as sub-pedlars distributing different products in different nearby villages.<sup>62</sup> His *Shajara* (Diary) of 1960 shows names, items and amounts he owed various people in his business. Most of those goods were clothes and domestic requirements that he had brought from employment centres. The increasing demand for products to satisfy the strong consumption appetite of migrant labourers often led to similar behaviour on the part of non-migrant workers as the later tended to emulate the former.

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<sup>62</sup> Interview with Victory Mgya, Igosi, 20.11.2012

**Table 1: Part of names, items and amounts Lunguja owed as per 13 January and 5 May 1960**

<b>Name</b>	<b>ITEM/AMOUNT</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Mdzlutwa	10 shillings	repaid
Tanuli	6 shillings	repaid
Mdzlutwa	40 cents	repaid
Ereni	15cents	repaid
Jamsumile	50 cents	repaid
Msindutwa	5 cents	repaid
Pilimuhate	25 cents	repaid
Magunila	50 cents	repaid
Hagumtemi	20 cents	repaid
Jalembutwa	40 cents	repaid
Lwimiko	40 cents	repaid
Stenala	10 cents	repaid
Havisimuvanga	3 shillings	repaid
Tulisane	20 cents	Not repaid
Nzeulile	20 cents	Not repaid
Mwembelutwa	20 cents	Not repaid
Kahaba	1 shilling	Not repaid
Havisimuvanga	5 shillings	Not repaid
Likemelo	8 cents	Repaid
John	20 cents	Not repaid
Melimeli	6 shillings	Not repaid
Gifata	3 shillings	Repaid
Msilim	1 shilling	Not repaid
Muhibu	9 shillings	Not repaid
Hendeli	38 shillings	Repaid
Jumula	11 shillings	Repaid

Jemsi	2 Madulufu (piece of cloths), 16 shillings, 6 cloths (30 shillings), 8 vests (8 shillings), 1 match box (2 shillings), 2 khangas (38 shillings),	Not repaid
Ndema	55 cents	Not repaid
Sinati	20 cents	Not repaid
Mdzulutwa	20 cents	Repaid
Ndema	6-50 shillings?	Unrepaid

**Source:** The late Lunguja's personal diary, now under the custodianship of his son Victory Mgayu

**Figure 1: An extract of a diary page showing items and amounts Lunguja owed as per 13 January and 5 May 1960**

HABARI ZA KILA SIKU 13-1-60		HABARI ZA KILA SIKU 5-5-60		HABARI ZA KILA SIKU	
Mzalutwa	Sh 100	Tulidhane	Senti 20	Jemsi	Madulufu 2 Sh 16
Tumid	Sh 40	Ngeudile	Senti 20	Malohani	2 Sh 12
Mzalutwa	Senti 140	Mwembuletwa	Senti 20	Nguo	Sh 30
Erani	Senti 60	Kuhamba	Sh 1	Fulani	4 Sh 8
Tamamula	Senti 50	Karimuranga	Sh 5	Paketi kibiti	1 Sh 2/100
Mzalutwa	Senti 20	Kukamelo	Senti 20	Kunga	2 Sh 20
Pilimhote	Senti 20	Johni	Senti 20	Mandaga	2 Sh 20
Majumala	Senti 20	Merimeli	Sh 50	Mandaga	4 Sh 20
Dagumtemi	Senti 20	Gipata	Sh 50	Malohani	2 Sh 10
Talambutan	Senti 40	Merimeli	Sh 1	Ndema	Senti 50
Lwiniko	Senti 40	Mhibu	Sh 90	Sinati	Senti 20
Stenola	Senti 10	Kendani	Sh 30	Mngertwa	Senti 20
Karimuranga	Sh 30	Tumid	Sh 40	Ndema	Sh 6-50

At Makambako, one of the early entrepreneurs was Musa Malipula.<sup>63</sup> He began his trading career at Idofi, some few kilometres east of Makambako. He obtained such awareness of business opportunities and saved start-up capital while working as a domestic servant for a European in Iringa. He opened a shop at Idofi in the 1930s selling clothes. He after that made the rounds of nearby villages buying crops which he then sold to the Iringa-based Unga Ltd., the Amy camp and to Fazar Murad, who provisioned the Chunya gold mines. Hamis Chang'a, describing how his father Athuman Chang'a learned to do business, he said: "While working for Sudanese soldiers garrisoned by Germans at Iringa during the hunt for Mkwawa, he witnessed how they carried on trade between Iringa and the Kilosa caravan stop."<sup>64</sup> He was also lucky to have lived with the Nubians of Sudan (who he described as traders of the past) whom he worked for while in Iringa. That is how he learned how to do business.

To Malipula, as was the case with Lunguja and other early Bena traders, wage employment became a preparation for entering the business. Penseli Mwajombe became an entrepreneur at Makoga after his long-term work with Greeks in Iringa.<sup>65</sup> Thomas Nguku made his trip to Tanga in 1960 with the purpose of raising money to start a business.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> See Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 195.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Penseli Mwajombe, Makoga, 12.11.2012

<sup>66</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 196.

He went to do plantation work but with awareness that such employment could lead to a more rewarding occupation (business). His knowledge grew out of living with his grandfather and uncle whose example suggested alternatives to migrant labour and unprofitable farming that had been the livelihood of his father. After five years of his working as a migrant labourer on sisal plantations, he had saved Shs. 1500. The money acquired enabled him to begin a business at Makambako. Many other people commenced business that way.

The other area in which returned Bena migrant labourers invested was in the field of small businesses like carpentry, masonry, grain mills and bicycle hire. People with bikes specialised in transporting goods for small retailers from Indian traders to their shops far away in the district.<sup>67</sup> Money lending business also became a significant enterprise for some returned migrant labourers in Njombe. People borrowed money for various reasons including bride price and school fees payments. Lunguja, for instance, was famous in money lending in Usalaule area.<sup>68</sup>

### **6.o *Manamba* and imported assets**

Labour migration among the Bena, despite its being in most cases a result of colonial coercion, was a function also, in

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with Penseli Mwajombe, Igosi, 12.11.2012

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Victory Mgya, Igosi, 16.11.2012



some instances, of African calculation of the relative economic advantage of wage labour. Among other things there were personal effects the Bena wanted to obtain out of their labour migrancy. It is thus imperative asking questions as to what did they bring back home from the centres of wage employment, and how significant it was to the development of their area of origin. Answers to these questions will add a point in understanding their motivation for labour migration.

While returning home with new knowledge and experience was certainly part of *kupagala*,<sup>69</sup> it was still imperative for migrant labourers to come back with material wealth and assets. It was these elements that could quickly determine whether one was successful or not in his *kupagala*. Having this in mind, most migrant labourers strived to make sure that they brought home assets that signified the success of their employment far away from home. Things that migrant workers could buy to take home depended on some factors among which were the availability of items on the market, the amount saved for those items and sometimes the technical knowledge about the new items one wanted to buy. Knowledge was an important factor not only in determining the level of savings but also what to buy that would be of extended use at home. Discussing the effects of migrant labourers on 'tribal' life, Margaret Read pointed out

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<sup>69</sup> Kupagala is a word from Bena language which refers to searching for wealth especially from somewhere far from home.

that, migrant workers with some knowledge and experience tended to invest their money in durable goods.<sup>70</sup> In the same vein Jonathan Chengula and Petro Mpingwa revealed that although Bena migrant labourers were not educated as such, there were smart men who were determined in their search for wealth. Such people spent their money on productive endeavours like buying cattle, sewing machines, bicycles and grain mills.<sup>71</sup> However, men of this nature were comparatively few.

The items that migrant labourers brought back to their places of origin can be divided into three categories: money, consumable items and strong assets. The focus on these possessions varied with time and between people. The first two were introduced as early as Bena labour migration began while the last one was more evident after the 1940's. These imported materials reached the Njombe district mainly through returning fellow migrant labourers carrying them to their villages.<sup>72</sup> Most of the Bena migrant labourers interviewed, mentioned things like Bicycles, hammers, lanterns, *koroboi* (small lantern), shoes, candles, modern hand hoes and knives to have been brought by them while

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<sup>70</sup> Margaret Read, "Migrant Labour in Africa and its Effects on Tribe Life", in *International Labour Review* 14 (1942), 630.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Jonathan Chengula, Kidugalla, 22.11.2012; Petro Mpingwa, Igosi, 16.11.2012

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Simon Mgaya, Igosi 16.11.2012

returning to the district as early as the 1940s. Other things brought back during this period were wooden chairs, mattresses, wood stoves, and medicines for treating sores. Torches, radios, guitars, shaving kits, wrist watches and whistles were also of importance to them.<sup>73</sup>

Grain mills and sewing machines began to enter the district after the 1940s. These items differed in importance to transforming the Bena way of life. For instance, bicycles enabled them to travel faster and trade quickly. Bikes also facilitated the spread of news within chiefdoms and villages. Migrants also brought clothes which a segment of Bena community to abandon their traditional garments made from animal hides. Wristwatches helped in transforming traditional African ways of time telling that was based on events and accomplishment of arranged tasks. Wood stoves added a new mechanism in cooking while grain mills which entered the district in the 1950s slowly replaced the traditional use of stones to crush grains for flour. It should, however, be noted that durable items like sewing machines and grain mills could be brought in the district by very few migrant labourers. For example, at Igosi, Ramboni Mgaya is well remembered to have owed a food mill.<sup>74</sup> These items were not only difficult to carry but also seemed unprofitable to use in remote areas where people were not familiar with

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with Simon Mgaya, Victory Mgaya and Scondina Mgeni, Igosi, 19.11.2012

<sup>74</sup> Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 126.

such things. Also, such articles were expensive to most labourers. A village could have only one person owning a grain mill while other villages did not have one.

To manage bringing the acquired items home was not an easy task. Migrant labourers returning home with their earnings were at risk of being robbed. Giblin points out the danger of becoming separated from one's party. He quotes a description made in 1929 by a robbery victim whose fruits of seven months' employment were stolen:

I was travelling on the road alone and carrying my box. I met the accused on the road about midday. He came up to me and said, 'let me see your goods, I want to buy clothes.' I refused, saying, 'I don't want to sell.' He then pushed the box off my shoulders and ordered me to put it down. He attempted to stab me with a spear. I jumped aside. Having done this, he returned and picked up the box and went into the bush.<sup>75</sup>

Among the stolen items were a cap, shirt, a pair of trousers, coat, whistle, knife, soap, *kitambi* (a piece of cloth often used as a head wrap) and Shs.17/- cash. It was evident that dangers like these made walking journeys a challenging test of courage and purpose. Support from companions and

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<sup>75</sup> Mwangane s/o Mwakawange as quoted in *Ibid*.

*Wanyapara* (foremen) was the only way labourers could safely reach home with whatever earnings they had accumulated. D. Papademetriou and P. Martin suggest that migrants do use their gains in a manner consistent with their reasons for migrating.<sup>76</sup> For Njombe migrant labourers, improving their living standards and enhancing their overall social and economic status was part of their reasons to migrate. However, their spending behaviour had intended and unintended economic and social consequences. Assets that were brought by migrant labourers were those considered significant in their rural setting.

There were also some irresolute migrant labourers from Njombe who spent a big proportion of their incomes on counterproductive endeavours like alcohol and prostitution. With emphasis, Simon Mgaya, one of long established labour migrant said ‘smart men were those who could buy cattle and other valuable things but those who returned empty-handed were the ones who drank and ate chicken gizzards’<sup>77</sup> The scenario was also confirmed by Ludzabiho Mwalongo who once went to Tanga to fetch his poor brother, the empty-handed who ‘loved going to a hotel.’<sup>78</sup> There was a category of Bena migrant labourers who were lured by the

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<sup>76</sup> Papademetriou and Martin, “Labour Migration and Development”, 19.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Simon Mgaya, Igosi, 16.11.2012.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Ludzabiho Mwalongo, 30.11.2012; Hotel in this context refers to a place where various food and drinks are sold. The site also serves as a guest house.

pleasures of urban life which would divert them from frugal living, an ethic embodied in *kupagala* and which enabled most of the Bena migrants to accomplish their goals.

It was the undetermined Bena migrant labourers that the *Wanyapara* came to their aid. The *Nyapara*, in most cases, intervened to make sure that these novices did not give way to temptations that would get them fail to accumulate and bring wealth home. For instance, worried about how Mwamgongolwa would spend his money, his uncle took and kept the money for him to make sure he only bought items of value. Mwamgongolwa testified:

My uncle took away my money and kept it. That's what kept me from wasting my money in useless ways. If I wanted to buy something, I told my uncle, and he would consider whether this was something that would help me. When we were ready to leave Tanga, we went together to buy things.<sup>79</sup>

Listening to their *Nyaparas* became an important thing that every labourer from Njombe had to take into consideration if he wanted to be successful in obtaining valuable assets. However, not all the *Nyaparas* were remembered fondly by migrant labourers. Some were blamed for having confiscated

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<sup>79</sup> Lujabiko Mwamgongolwa quoted in Giblin, *History of the Excluded*, 129

their companion's money. Clothing was an aspect that almost all migrant labourers managed to bring home. It is not surprising to see Dalton Stambul writing on his fellow Wabena that 'they save their clothes until they go back, so their fiancées, grandmothers and other relatives know they did go to the coast.'<sup>80</sup> Most of these migrant labourers, after their return home, walked around showing their tightfistedness.

## 7.0 Conclusion

The history of participation in labour migration by colonial generations of Njombe district was intricately tied to the uneven development of the capitalist economy during the colonial period. Labour migration was a function of an economic compulsion rather than a result of migrants having been bored with life in villages. They did not crave for bright lights and big cities either. In fact, they were not narrow-minded. Instead, after their being excluded from colonial crop markets, labour migration was their only way of obtaining various life necessities and money for tax as demanded by colonial governments. The victimisation of labour migrants and their areas of origin have mostly been argued by compassionate colonial paternalists and anthropologists. However, the evidence coming out of this study has revealed that labour migration in Njombe district, despite its problems, provided opportunities for rural

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<sup>80</sup> Letter of Dalton Elias Stambul (Korogwe), in *Twende Pamoja*, no. 72 (October 1962), 2.

inhabitants to acquire capital with which they transformed their society. They invested their money in household materials and entrepreneurial activities that eventually improved their standards of living. One can, therefore, argue that labour migration produced groups of relatively wealthy individuals in Njombe district with relatively common characteristics based on their acquired incomes and exposure to the environment of the employment centres. This conclusion, however, does not stand to claim all development that happened at the time were due to labour migrants. It rather stands to argue that labour migrants had a contribution in the wider process of the transformation process that was on stage in Njombe during the colonial period.



# **Development Interventions and Environmental Change in Maswa District, 1920 to 1960**

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## **Abstract**

*Negative environmental changes have been a major problem in Maswa District and their causes have been perceived differently in the existing literature. Some scholars have viewed environmental changes as human-induced phenomenon others have perceived it as a product of natural processes. Yet great emphasis has been placed on the failure of local people to adhere to the principles for modern environmental conservation. This view portrays local people as harbingers of environmental destruction. It fails to give due attention to political power as a contributing factor. In that light, this paper offers an alternative perspective which explains the causes of environmental changes beyond the existing explanations by considering the historical interaction between state developmentalism and environmental changes. The paper focuses on two major state interventions during the British colonial rule in Tanganyika, namely tsetse fly control projects and settlement schemes. Drawing from oral and archival information and working within the framework of political economy theory, this paper shows that development interventions introduced by the British colonial state in Maswa led to irreversible environmental changes, such as shrinking of natural forests, disappearance of fauna and flora species, destruction of water sources, increase in land degradation and heightening of arid conditions.*

**Key words:** Environmental change, political economy, colonial state, development intervention, Maswa.

## 1.0 Introduction

The period between 1920 and 1960 was dominated by the introduction and implementation of various Development interventions in Maswa District and elsewhere in Tanganyika. These interventions were part of the British colonial state's impositions. Some scholars have termed these interventions as the "Modernization Campaigns" or "Colonial Development Policies."<sup>1</sup> Development interventions here included a variety of approaches such as settlement schemes, tsetse fly eradication programmes and agricultural schemes.<sup>2</sup> The British colonial authority considered these interventions as inevitable and necessary means of achieving rapid economic progress and maintaining environmental sustainability in the territory, thus fulfilling the motives of colonial economy. Although these interventions were aimed at achieving economic progress in the colonies, yet their implications on the environment were not considered. That being the case, it is imperative to examine how development interventions introduced by the British colonial state between 1920 and 1960 influenced environment change. Maswa District

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<sup>1</sup> James Scott, *Seeing Like State How Certain Schemes to Develop Human Conditions Fail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 2-4

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

provide better context to which such schemes were implemented and their environmental impacts felt. Maswa was selected as the case study due to the fact that the area was highly affected by environmental degradation. On the other hand, the district was highly involved in colonial projects compared to other parts of Sukumaland. In this district the British colonial administration launched cotton production in order to get raw materials. Cotton production went hand in hand with the introduction of various development interventions such as tsetse fly clearance campaigns and settlement schemes. Therefore, it is better to examine the implications of these projects on the environment in Maswa.

In examining the implications of development interventions on the environment in Maswa, this study used information from archival records and oral testimonies collected from different archives and through oral interviews. Archival information was collected from the University of Dar es Salaam Main Library, Tanzania National Archive in Dar es Salaam and Dodoma Record Centre. The archival materials surveyed include government reports, policies, circulars, official correspondence, regulations and ordinances which were adopted by the British colonial administration in addressing economic and environmental problems in Tanganyika. These sources provided key information pertaining to economic and environmental change, tsetse fly clearing campaigns and settlement schemes. Archival information was supplemented by oral testimonies collected

from various villages in Maswa District. Oral testimonies provided qualitative information pertaining to memories of colonial economic policies, tsetse fly eradication campaigns, settlement schemes and environmental change.

## **2.0 Implications Tsetse fly campaigns on the Environment**

The presence of tsetse fly (*genus glossina*) in Tanganyika was a serious threat to the lives of people and domestic animals. Tsetse flies were responsible for the transmission of trypanosomes that causes sleeping sickness in human beings and trypanosomiases to the animals from the infected hosts to other hosts such as people, cattle and wild animals. The British colonial administrators viewed tsetse flies as a threat to the functioning of the colonial economy. Thus, from the mid-1920s to the late 1950s, the British colonial government instituted a widespread tsetse fly control campaigns in various parts of Tanganyika including Maswa District to limit further spread of tsetse flies in order to establish a fly free colony. The British colonial administration viewed the presence of tsetse flies in the territory as a threat to the existence of the British colonial economy which depended on the exploitation of African natural resources and human labour.<sup>3</sup>

The incidences of tsetse flies increased markedly from the mid-1920s in South and South East of Sukumaland including

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<sup>3</sup> Juhani Koponen, "Tsetse and Historians: Ecological Collapse in Tanzania Reconsider", *Tanzania Zamani* VI, No.1 (2009), 42.

Shinyanga, Maswa, Bariadi and Meatu.<sup>4</sup> Helge Kjekshus, James Giblin and Gregory Maddox attributed such increase to the destruction of pre-colonial socio-economic system brought by the colonial economy.<sup>5</sup> According to them, the introduction of capitalist colonial economic system in Tanganyika by the German and later by the British colonial states caused African to lose control over their ecology and as the result tsetse flies encroached on areas which were previously under their control.<sup>6</sup> Schuknecht also added that by the mid-1920s, approximately two thirds of Sukumaland was infested with tsetse fly and the fly belts were advancing to other areas by mid 1930s.<sup>7</sup> In the related incidence, in 1926, the Provincial Commissioner of the Shinyanga Province reported that the advance of tsetse flies threatened the existence of people and livestock in Sukumaland.<sup>8</sup> In Maswa District, the first incidence of trypanosomiasis was recorded in 1922, and within five years 500 cases of human infections were diagnosed.<sup>9</sup> Trypanosomiasis and sleeping sickness

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<sup>4</sup> TNA, Provincial Commissioner Annual Report of Lake Province, 1928; Dodoma Record Centre: Sleeping Sickness Service Annual Reports, File No. T5/9

<sup>5</sup> Helge Kjekshus, *Ecological Control and Economic Development in East African History: The Case of Tanganyika, 1850-1950* (London: James Carrey, 1995); James Giblin, "Pre-colonial Politics of Disease Control in the Lowlands of Northeastern Tanzania" in *Custodian of the Land: Ecology and Culture in the History of Tanzania* edited by G. Maddox, J. Giblin and I. N. Kimambo (London: James Currey 1996), 127-148.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> R. Schuknecht, Op.cit

<sup>8</sup> Annual Reports of the PC of Shinyanga Province, 1926, 21

<sup>9</sup> Dodoma Record Centre: File No. T5/9, Sleeping Sickness Services: Annual Reports.

spread and killed many people and livestock. For instance, by the early 1930s, about 2000 people in the Lake Province, including Maswa had died due to sleeping sickness.<sup>10</sup> Also large areas of Sukumaland were unoccupied as many people left their areas in response to the threats posed by tsetse flies. For instance, the Sukuma people concentrated their settlements in few areas specifically in the northern and central parts of Sukumaland, leaving the rest of their former territory unoccupied.<sup>11</sup>

Tsetse flies were generally considered to be the greatest menace to the development of colonial economy in the territory. They threatened the lives of people who were considered to be the source of human labour in various colonial production units. They also weakened cash crop production and other colonial developmental activities.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, colonial administrators considered sleeping sickness as a brake on development that had to be addressed. It was in this context that, tsetse fly control measures became inevitable under the British colonial rule.

From the late 1920s the British colonial administration launched ambitious tsetse fly eradication campaigns in

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*; Provincial Commissioner's Annual Report of Shinyanga Province, Op.cit.

<sup>11</sup> Hans Cory Paper No. 331, "Report on Land Utilization in Usukuma, 1938" See also TNA, Acc. No. 215 File No. 13/1 Tsetse fly Maswa District 1923-1931.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Worboy, "The Comparative History of Sleeping Sickness in East and Central Africa", *History of Science* 32 (1994), 89-103

Tanganyika to limit the spread of the flies in the territory. This campaign continued throughout the British colonial period. During this period, tsetse fly eradication campaigns became a vital activity in all British colonial development plans. Evidently, the launched campaigns were not directed towards the pathogens but rather to the vectors responsible for the transmission of the disease. To control the spread of the flies, untested methods such as destruction of tsetse fly habitats, killing of the host animals, evacuation of people from tsetse infested woodlands and extermination of the flies were implemented by the British colonial government.<sup>13</sup> These methods were preferred by the colonial government because they were cheap in terms of administrative cost.

The tsetse fly control campaigns were mostly driven by economic imperatives. The need to eradicate sleeping sickness in Tanganyika and Maswa in particular was rooted in the labour question.<sup>14</sup> The British colonial authorities considered loss of human labour and animals through trypanosomiasis and sleeping sickness in Maswa and other areas of the territory as an obstacle to the development of colonial economy.<sup>15</sup> The need for the British colonial

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<sup>13</sup> John M. Mackenzie "Experts and Amateurs: Tsetse, Nagana, and Sleeping Sickness in East and Central Africa, in *Imperialism and the Natural World* edited John Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 197.

<sup>14</sup> Thaddeus Sunseri, *Wilding the Axis: State Forestry and Social Conflicts in Tanzania 1820-2000* (Athens: Ohio University Press 2009), 104.

<sup>15</sup> TNA Acc. No. 302, File No. 34282, International Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis: Report on Inter- colonial conference held at Lourenco Marquez, 26 to 31 August 1946.

government to protect people against the flies emanated from the fact that Africans were the source of money, markets and labour. The continued existence of people guaranteed commodity production in both households and production centres. On the other hand, domestic animals were protected as a source of government revenue, trade and meat in urban and production centres. Generally, tsetse fly eradication campaigns were aimed at protecting Africans against sleeping sickness so as to maintain their contribution to colonial production, either as labourers or independent cash crop producers.

Apart from protecting people and animals against trypanosomiasis, the tsetse fly campaigns were also aimed at opening up more areas for human settlements, cash crop production and grazing.<sup>16</sup> This idea was put forward in the Tsetse Fly and Reclamation Memorandum No. 162 of 1946, which stated that, in many areas where land became increasingly scarce, tsetse fly eradications would be a requirement for settlement and initiation of new and extensive development schemes.<sup>17</sup> Unpredictably, most of the areas which were earmarked for clearing were those which offered ideal conditions for agricultural expansion.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> J.F. Hill, *Tanganyika: A Review of its Resources and their Development*, edited by J.P. Moffet, (Dar es Salaam: Government Printers, 1955), 533.

<sup>17</sup> TNA, Acc. No. 302 File No. 68/A, Memorandum No. 162 for Territorial Committee: Tsetse Survey and Reclamation: Reclamation of Land for Tsetse Control 1946.

<sup>18</sup> TNA, File No. 3/6/13/391 Tsetse fly Clearance General



Therefore it is not surprising that, in many areas of Maswa and elsewhere in Tanganyika, tsetse fly clearance was followed by cultivation of cash crops to produce raw materials for the colonial enterprises.

In Maswa, the commonly used method to eradicate the flies was one based on destroying the habitat and breeding ground of the flies. In these campaigns, villagers were required to clear large areas of woodlands and bushes that served as reservoirs for the trypanosomiasis vectors.<sup>19</sup> Not surprisingly, the campaign was warmly welcomed by the Sukuma of Maswa who regarded the project as a golden chance for opening up new areas of land for farming and grazing.<sup>20</sup> In 1931, vegetation clearing activities were carried out at Mwagala, Meatu and along the Masindi River in Sengelema (Malampaka). In these areas, 4 square miles were cleared in that year.<sup>21</sup> Vegetation clearing activities were supervised by the staffs from the Tsetse Research Department. The Maswa Native Authority recruited large numbers of Sukuma men aged 18 years and above to attend vegetation clearing activities for ten days.<sup>22</sup> For instance, in

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<sup>19</sup> TNA, Acc. 215 File No 68/3, Tsetse Fly Clearing Annual Report Maswa District, 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1948; TNA, Acc.No.215, File No. 568 Tsetse Fly Ordinance, 1938-1958.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Sospeter Kulengwa, Bupandagila, 17.5.2018; Majebele Simba, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018; Shoshi Magege, Luguru, 7.6.2018.

<sup>21</sup> TNA, 'Report by his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Council of the League of Nation on the Administration of Tanganyika for the Year 1932'.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Senga Samaki, Luguru 7.6.2018; Charles Kapama, Sola 18.6.2018.

the Masindi clearings, 7,200 labourers armed with axes, bush knives and hoes offered their labour power to clear bushes and woodlands.<sup>23</sup> In 1934, about 3,500 men offered their labour to clear the Migumo-Simiyu River corridor. Within the same year, more clearing was carried out at Mwamwita in Itilima chiefdom where 7,500 men were involved to clear bushes to open up the Wida Mbuga for cattle grazing.<sup>24</sup>

From 1940 to 1945 vegetation clearing works slowed down due to the impact of WWII. Many Africans were taken to serve as carrier corps and cooks while others directly participated in the war. The involvement of Africans in the war created shortage of labourers for the tsetse fly clearing work.”<sup>25</sup> After the Second World War, the British colonial government once again embarked on intensified tsetse fly campaigns. The campaigns in this period were facilitated by the Sukumaland Development Scheme which was launched in 1947. Through the scheme, the government carried out tsetse fly clearings campaigns with the aim of opening up and establishing new settlements for people and expanding land under cultivation.<sup>26</sup>

From the early 1950s onwards, the tsetse fly eradication campaign speeded up and spread to various places within Maswa District. A series of clearing expeditions were

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<sup>23</sup> TNA, ‘Report by his Majesty’s Government, Op. cit., 22.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 35, Tanganyika Tsetse fly Annual Report, 1928 to 1958.

<sup>25</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History*, 270.

<sup>26</sup> TNA, Acc. No. 215, Sukumaland Federal Council Minutes, Vol. II.

organized to clear tsetse fly infested bushes and woodlands for the purpose of opening and expanding the areas for settlement and cotton cultivation. In 1954, about 13,658 men turned out and cleared 2,830 acres of bush at Kahila East of the Simiyu River.<sup>27</sup> In 1956 the clearings were extended to the north of Mwaswale whereby 11,903 men participated in clearing 2,380 acres of bushes and woodlands for ten days.<sup>28</sup> Other areas cleared at this time included Ngesha in Itilima chiefdom and Luguru in the Ntuzu Chiefdom together totaling 5,981 acres cleared by 17,504 labourers.<sup>29</sup> From 1957 onwards, more clearings took place in the north and west of the Duma and Simiyu Rivers, Shishiyu and Sapiwi. In this clearing 42,000 men attended the work and cleared 8,490 acres.<sup>30</sup> Further clearing was conducted south of Shishiyu where 37,253 men were involved in clearing 4,790 acres.<sup>31</sup> Generally, tsetse fly clearing campaigns in Maswa continued regularly up to the end of the colonial period to control the spread of tsetse flies while expanding the arable land for grazing and agricultural production.

The removal of bushes and woodland to control tsetse fly had far reaching positive impacts to the people of Maswa. The removal of bushes and woodland had opened up new areas for human settlement as well as expanded land for

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<sup>27</sup> Tanganyika Tsetse Fly Annual Repots, 1954.

<sup>28</sup> Tanganyika Tsetse Fly Annual Repots, 1956, 5.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 6; TNA, Acc. No. 215 File 530, Tsetse Reclamation in Maswa District, 1947- 1959.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 1957.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*.

cultivation and grazing.<sup>32</sup> Consequently, the opening up of tsetse infested areas enabled the indigenous people to concentrate in crop production in areas where they could not produce before tsetse eradication campaigns become successful. In these new areas people began to produce cash crops for sale and food crops for subsistence. The main crops cultivated were cotton, groundnuts, millets, sorghum and maize. This practice has become a major factor for the transformation of the forest land into cropland. Despite of such benefits, the process of transforming the cleared land into cropland and settlements has subjected the environment of Maswa to further deterioration. For instance, incessant cultivation of cotton to produce raw materials and earn cash made the land of Maswa vulnerable to serious degradation, chiefly the decline of soil fertility.<sup>33</sup>

Apart from expanding land for human settlement and grazing, tsetse fly clearing campaigns in Maswa caused the number of cattle and people to increase due to the control of the spread of tsetse flies which transmit the above-mentioned diseases. For example, the number of cattle in Maswa increased from 342,545 in 1930 to 687,716 in 1956.<sup>34</sup> The increase number of cattle in Maswa increased the

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<sup>32</sup> Interview with Laurent Msolyamilya, Somanda, 11.5.2018; Shoshi Magege, Luguru, 7.6.2018.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Mageme Ndongo, Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018; William Majebele, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018.

<sup>34</sup> TNA, Maswa District Book Vol. 1: Cattle Censuses 1931; Dodoma Record Centre, File No V/29 Vol. I Cattle Census Maswa District, 1955

production of manure which was important for the restoration of soil fertility. Similarly, the number of people who lived in Maswa increased from 211,865 in 1928 to 345,382 in 1948.<sup>35</sup> This increase was due to the decline of death following ecological control and migration of people from central parts of Sukumaland such as Geita, Sengerema and Kwimba. Such kind of migration reduced population congestion on the central part of Sukumaland and hence reducing environmental degradation in the areas. The increase of population in Maswa stimulated excessive forest clearance due to the need for crop and grazing land, fuel woods and woods for building materials.

Despite its obvious health and economic benefits, tsetse fly clearing campaigns in Maswa and other areas in Tanganyika turned to be a major cause of environmental changes some of which threatened ecological sustainability. In Maswa, one of the evident outcomes of tsetse fly clearing campaigns was the destruction of natural habitats of animals whose immediate and long-term effects included a decline in and sometimes total disappearance of game.<sup>36</sup> Oral and archival sources point out that, prior to tsetse fly clearing campaigns, the natural landscape and vegetation cover in Maswa provided a good shelter for a variety of wild animals. Observations by labourers who participated in clearing

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<sup>35</sup> TNA, Maswa District Book: Population Census on Natives in Maswa District, 1928 and 1948.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Shoshi Magege, Luguru 7.06.2018; Barnabas Nindi, Luguru, 7.6.2018; Nono Saguda, Nyakabindi, 15.05.2018; Lameck Masaga, Bunamhala 14.5.2018.

works around Simiyu and Duma rivers in 1954 present the fact that they regularly met with wild animals such as leopards, impala, lions, waterbuck, zebra, hartebeests and warthogs in the midst of tall bushes and trees.<sup>37</sup> The presence of game in Maswa forced the colonial government to employ game scouts to protect labourers against attacks by game. In the course of time, wild animals were either killed or forced to retreat into Serengeti National Park, Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Maswa Game Reserve.<sup>38</sup> Eventually, the continued clearing of vegetation and bushes turned most of the cleared land into settlement and farm lands. As a result, wildlife disappeared completely in many areas of Maswa.<sup>39</sup> Equally, the disappearance of wildlife in Maswa affected hunting activities which provided game meat for subsistence to the people of Maswa.

Clearing of vegetation for the sake of eradicating the flies in Maswa resulted into the destruction of several tree species.

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<sup>37</sup> Interview with Laurent Msolyamilya, Somanda, 11.05.2018; Balili Nyehu, Bariadi, 1.6.2018; Sospeter Kulengwa, Bupandagila, 17.05.2018; Helena Ng'wanangwa, Sima, 1.6.2018; Boniface Jilala, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018; Manyanya Masuka, Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Mageme Bulugu, Old Maswa, 12.6.2018; Majebele Simba, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018; Elias Masunga, Sola, 18.6.2018; Samuel Nyanza Bunamhala, 14.6.2018; Lameck Lukumbi, Bunamhala, 14.6.2018; Nkuba Mbogoshi, Sima, 1.6.2018; TNA Acc No. 215, File No. 533, Game General, 1943-1953.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Gibuyi Kitalagwa, Bunamhala 14.5.2018; Milya Ntogolo, Old Maswa 15.5.2018; Mageme Ndongo, Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018; Lameck Masaga Bunamhala 14.5.2018; Joshua Ntogwadede, Nyakabindi, 4.6.2018.

Tree species locally known as *masindi* (*acacia seyal*), *miale* (*isoberlinea brychstegia*), *mirundarunda* (*acacia abbreviate*) *mtunduru* (*dichrostachys gromevata*) and *mkoma* (*grewia bicola*) which regenerated easily, were cut down and their stumps uprooted, piled together and burned.<sup>40</sup> The uprooting and burning of vegetation caused disappearance of many tree species in Maswa. For example, in areas along the Simiyu and Duma Rivers, tree species such as *malula* (*brychstegia edulis*), *ilula* (*acacia fomicurum*), *migunga* (*acacia spiracarpa*), *milugala* (*acacia nefasia*) and *mihushi* (*acacia fischeri*) disappeared due to tsetse fly clearings.<sup>41</sup> The disappearance of trees caused shortage of firewood and building materials such as timber and poles to the inhabitants of Maswa. Additionally, burning of vegetation also led to the destruction of micro-organisms which were responsible in facilitating the decomposition of organic matter in the soil and maintaining soil fertility.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, removal of vegetation covers deprived soils of the humus matter originating from leaves and other remains of vegetation, thus causing drastic decline in soil fertility.

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<sup>40</sup> Tanganyika Tsetse Fly Annual Reports, 1928-1958; Interview with Shoshi Magege, Luguru 7.6.2018; Lameck Masaga, Bunamhala, 14.6.2018; Elias Sibaba, Sola, 18.6.2018; Mageme Bulugu, Old Maswa, 12.6.2018; Charles Kapama, Sola, 18.6.2018.

<sup>41</sup> TNA Maswa District Book Vol. I: Department of Tsetse Research Tanganyika Territory, List of Kisukuma Names of Plants, Interview with Mahega Saneda Mahega, Nyakabindi, 15.5.2018.

<sup>42</sup> Edward Clive A "The Impact of Pesticides on the Environment" in D Pimentel and H Lehman, eds. *The Pesticides Question Environment Economics and Ethics*, (New York: Chapman and Hall, 1993)

Moreover, the removal of vegetation which according to scientific explanation protects soils against wind and water erosion, exposed many areas of Maswa to various forms of land degradation. Oral informants and archival information from Maswa revealed that soil erosion become a common phenomenon in many parts of Maswa especially in areas where vegetation was cleared.<sup>43</sup> In the district, soil erosion continued to get worse year after year resulting into the formation of gullies and decline of soil fertility. Evidence from Oral testimonies and archival sources reveals that gullies developed in areas such as Itilima, Igaganulwa, Bunamhala, Giriku, Mwamapalala and Nyakabindi villages due to the impacts of soil erosion resulted from vegetation clearance and increase in human and animal population densities.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, soil erosion caused the decline of soil fertility in Maswa resulting into the decline of crop yields. The decline of crop yields due to soil infertility forced many people in Maswa either to use manure or migrate to areas that were less affected by environmental degradation.<sup>45</sup> The practices of migration increased the rate of vegetation clearance, overpopulation and overgrazing in

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Mageme Ndongo Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018, William Majebele, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018; TNA, Acc. No. 215 File No. 331 Vol. I, Agricultural Reports Maswa District 1932-1939.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Manyanya Masuka, Mwamapalala 4.6.2018; Balili Nyehu, Bariadi 1.6.2018; Sospeter Kulengwa Bupandagila, 17.5.2018, Charles Kapama, Sola, 18.6.2018.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Senga Samaki, Luguru 7.6.2018; Charles Zakaria, Bunamhala 15.5.2018; Laurent Msolyamila Somanda 11.5.2018.



the new settlements and hence increased environment deterioration in areas such as Ngulyati, Luguru, Duma River and Sapiwi.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, soil erosion and decline of soil fertility were some of the negative impacts observed in the newly settled areas

Tsetse clearing campaigns in Maswa were obviously accompanied by the opening up of more land for grazing and human settlement. The land that was cleared was then occupied by the Sukuma pastoralists and crop cultivators. According to Madulu, large numbers of people from Mwanza and Kwimba Districts moved to Bariadi, Maswa and Meatu where they occupied cleared areas. By the early 1950 about 30,000 new families had moved into Maswa District.<sup>47</sup> This demographic increase exerted pressure on land. They intensified deforestation by opening up more land for cotton cultivation and grazing. Oral sources avow that by the mid-1950s many parts of Maswa District had become bare and the size of the forested landscape had been reduced and in some places forests had disappeared completely.<sup>48</sup> In an extreme case an entire forest called Mwaswale forest in Bariadi virtually disappeared.<sup>49</sup> This was due to the fact that the land

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with Barnabas Nindi, Luguru 7.6.2018; Helena Ng'wanangwa, Sima 1.6.2018; Majebele Simba, Nyalikungu 12/6/2018; TNA acc. No 215 File No 33, Agricultural Reports Maswa District, Vol. II, 1939-1943.

<sup>47</sup> TNA, Acc. No 215, File No. 136, Migration of Natives in Sukumaland.

<sup>48</sup> Interview Madete Mabubu, Bariadi, 18.5.2018; Shoshi Magege, Luguru, 7.6.2018; Lameck Bulele, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018; Manyanya Masuka, Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Shoshi Magege, Luguru 7.6.2018; Lameck Masaga, Bunamhala 14.6.2018; Mahega Saneda Mahega, Nyakabindi, 15.5.2015.

under cultivation expanded four times and heads of cattle increased and in turn caused a tremendous rise in the rate of deforestation and soil erosion.

Tsetse clearing campaigns also contributed significantly to the loss of quality and quantity of water in the affected areas. This was partly because the clearing campaigns targeted, among other places, river sources and river banks. Such areas were considered favourites for the growth of thick bushes, trees and undergrowth that provided excellent breeding grounds for tsetse flies. Decision to clear these areas disregarded the need to protect water sources both for the present and future generations of communities surrounding the areas. Ironically, the random cutting of trees and other vegetation during tsetse fly clearing activities contradicted Order number 8(f) of the Native Authority Regulation of 1937, which prohibited destruction of trees near water sources.<sup>50</sup> The long-term impacts of such clearings were reduction of water flow in the existing rivers which eventually dried up the rivers. For example, from the mid-1950s Rivers such as Simiyu, Bariadi, Duma, Ibulyu, Senani and Ndoba, which according to local memory had never dried before, started to dry out. The rivers are reported never to have returned to their original state from that time.<sup>51</sup> The drying of these rivers has increased water problems for both

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<sup>50</sup> TNA, Acc. No. 215, Sukumaland Development Rules and Order Enacted by the Native Authorities.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Shirika Malugu, Mwakibuga, 17.5.2018; Edward Magese, Luguru, 3.6.2018.

domestic and livestock keepers. Such problem has forced livestock keepers to dig temporal wells along rivers to get water or walk long distance to find water for their livestock.

The tsetse fly eradication campaign then had a tremendous contribution in influencing environmental change in Maswa District. Available evidence indicates that before the introduction of tsetse fly clearing Campaign between 1920 and 1960, natural environmental conditions in Maswa were not seriously altered hence the pace of environmental change was slow. Thus, the implementation of tsetse fly clearing campaigns in Maswa between 1920 and 1930 increased the pace of environmental change in the areas. Evidence encountered from this discussion indicates that tsetse fly eradication campaign increased vegetation clearing which resulted into the disappearance of fauna and flora species, loss of water sources, increase of land degradation and arid conditions as well as total loss of natural forests in Maswa.

### **3.0 Impacts of Settlement Schemes on Environment**

Tsetse fly eradication campaigns in Maswa were accompanied with the launching of settlement schemes. The British colonial administrators viewed resettlement of people as a means of protecting people and livestock against sleeping sickness.<sup>52</sup> The administrators held the perception that once peasants were moved from woodlands into concentrated settlements intensive agriculture would beat

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<sup>52</sup> TNA, File No. 31351 Compulsory Resettlement of the Natives 1947-1957; Sunseri, *Wielding the Ax*.

back the tsetse fly-infested woodlands that endangered people and cattle.<sup>53</sup> Creation of concentrated settlements was also intended to simplify and facilitate internal development and bring the rural population under easier government control.<sup>54</sup> They were also intended to modernize agriculture and improve the availability of human labour.<sup>55</sup> The British colonial officials held the view that dispersed settlements undermined agricultural modernization and deprived the state of labour for deployment in other economic sectors.<sup>56</sup> In the perspective of the officials, once peasants were placed in concentrated settlements, it would be easier to introduce new methods of farming and animal husbandry.<sup>57</sup> Hence, people would be able to grow cash crops, provide wage and communal labour, and thus be able to pay taxes. In short, settlement scheme was intended to make African people function properly as colonial subjects. It is in this sense that colonial settlement schemes were ultimately meant to stimulate the development of colonial economy.

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Hans Cory Paper No.244 Sukumaland Development Scheme, 1947; Philip Raikes, *Op.cit* 128; Idris Kikula, *Policy Implications on Environment: The Case of Villagisation in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press Limited 1996), 18.

<sup>55</sup> TNA, Acc No. 215, File No. 337, Minutes of Malya Conference: Sukumaland Development Team, 1948; Sunseri, *Wielding the Ax*.

<sup>56</sup> TNA, Acc No. 215, File No. 337, Minutes of Malya Conference: Sukumaland Development Team, 1948.

<sup>57</sup> TNA, Tanganyika Territory: Department of Agriculture Annual Report 1947, 4.

More specifically, settlement scheme in colonial Tanganyika and Maswa in particular were devised in order to reorganize, control and supervise simple commodity production with a view to alleviating the general crisis of capitalism which was then facing the United Kingdom.<sup>58</sup> It was also one of the strategies used by the colonial state to bring the rural population under control in order to maintain their contribution to colonial production either as labourers or cash crop producers. Writing on rural development in colonial Tanganyika, Nestory N. Luanda emphasizes that, “settlement schemes were intended to increase surface area under cultivation, to settle potential producers together with serving other capital inputs on new husbandry methods as a way of widening and deepening the fundamental exploitation of agricultural raw materials on African land”<sup>59</sup> In general, settlement schemes in Maswa, like elsewhere in Tanganyika, were devised to make African producers respond to the needs of capitalist accumulation of profits through increased production of industrial raw materials.

In Tanganyika, settlement schemes were accordingly established in various parts of the territory, most elaborately in Ukiriguru, Mbulu, Kingolwira, Uzinza, Usambara and Maswa. The colonial government approved £900,900 from the Colonial and Welfare Fund to be used in the settlement

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> N.N. Luanda, “Rural Development in Colonial Tanganyika 1930-1950: the Kingolwira, Ukiriguru, Uzinza, Usambara and Mbulu Settlement Schemes,” *Tanzania Zamani* (199 )12.

schemes.<sup>60</sup> In Maswa, settlement of people was taken as a part of the programme of the Sukumaland Development Scheme of 1947. This scheme was a comprehensive plan whose major objective was to maximize productive use of land by redistributing what was considered to be surplus population of human and livestock.<sup>61</sup> To achieve this objective, the British colonial government made efforts to convince the people living in the overcrowded areas of Northern and Central Sukumaland to move into the new opened areas. In the beginning the programme was conducted on a voluntary basis. The colonial government used the Native Authorities in Maswa to persuade people to join new settlements such as Mbiti, Zagayu, Giriku, Bunamhala, Mwamwita, Ngulyati, Gingilanyi, Nyakabindi, Masela, Sayusayu, Bukundi, Chinamali, Ng'wasule and Luguru.<sup>62</sup>

However, people in Maswa were at first hesitant to move into new areas due to various reasons. First, many of them were not aware about the importance of moving to the new

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<sup>60</sup> TNA, Tanganyika Territory: Provincial Commissioner's Annual Reports on Native Administration Lake Province, 1947.

<sup>61</sup> TNA, Acc. No 215. File No. 115, Development Agenda and Minutes of Sukumaland Development Team, 1946-1948 also see Andrew G. Maguire, *Towards 'Uhuru' in Tanzania: The Politics of Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 27.

<sup>62</sup> TNA Acc No 215 File No. 149, Minutes of the Meeting of the chiefs of Sukumaland held at Malya from 3.12.1947 to 4.12.1947; Interview with Mageme Ndongo, Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018; Majebele Simba, Nyalikungu 12.6.2018; Lameck Lukumbi, Bunamhala 14.5.2018.

settlement.<sup>63</sup> Second, they feared the dangers of living in areas with heavy bushes or places that were close to game habitats.<sup>64</sup> Third, they disliked the new areas due to the fear of contracting sleeping sickness. Forth, the people of Maswa were hesitant to leave their land based on their traditional land tenure system. According to Sukuma traditions, people acquired land through inheritance from their parents and grandparents.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, the Sukuma were reluctant to leave their areas due to the fear of losing foothold on their ancestral land.

In addressing peoples' hesitance, the British colonial government, in collaboration with the Maswa Native Authority, took a number of measures that ensured people joined concentrated villages. In the first place, the British colonial government intensified bush clearings in Maswa to open up and expand areas which had hitherto been uninhabited to make more land for settlement, grazing and cultivation.<sup>66</sup> As discussed above, the removal of these bushes and woodlands in Maswa motivated people to settle and cultivate land to produce various crops in the newly cleared areas. According to oral and written information,

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with Samuel Nyanza, Bunamhala 14.5.2018; Balili Nyehu, Bariadi 29.6.2018; Minza Mabubu, Bariadi 29.6.2018.

<sup>64</sup> TNA, Maswa District Book: Settlement after Bush Clearing by B.J Hartley District Agricultural Officer, 1931; Interviews with Manyanya Masuka, Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018; Majebebe Simba, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Laurent Msolyamila, Somanda, 10.5.2018; Sospeter Kulengwa, Bupandagila, 17.5.2018.

<sup>66</sup> TNA, Acc. 215 File, No. 530, Tsetse fly Reclamation in Maswa District 1947-1952.

between 1948 and 1957 many immigrants from Kwimba and other areas of Sukumaland migrated and settled in Maswa District as a result of this motivation.<sup>67</sup>

Although settlement schemes in Maswa and other areas in Tanganyika expanded areas for human settlements and cultivation, they also increased the rate of environmental deterioration. Similar to tsetse fly interventions, settlement schemes in Maswa and elsewhere in the territory played a substantial role in bringing about major environmental changes, some of which had negative implications. In this regard, McLaughlin comments that, the rapid influx of human and livestock population in the areas where people were resettled led to the increased population pressure which in turn caused both immediate and long-term changes in the environment.<sup>68</sup> Oral testimonies point to the fact that, settlement schemes in Maswa brought about rapid increase in population in the newly settled areas, causing increased pressure on the environment and its resources.<sup>69</sup>

According to Awiti and Kikula, the increase in pressure on the environment in Tanzania motivated land use practices

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with Shoshi Magege, Luguru, 12.6.2018.

<sup>68</sup> P.F.M. McLaughlin, "Agricultural Development in Sukumaland" in *Experiences with Agricultural Development in tropical Africa: Case Studies* by J.C. De Wilde et al. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1967).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*; Interview with Majebele Simba, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018; Elias Masunga, Sola, 18.6.2018.



which eventually increased the rate of deforestation.<sup>70</sup> In the study area, natural vegetation which covered the area prior to settlement scheme was cleared and some of the vegetation began to disappear from the mid-1950s. The vanishing of vegetation cover followed the opening up and establishment of new farms and settlements.<sup>71</sup> Information on Land Tenure and settlement in Sukumaland reveal that the Sukuma peasants cleared vast tracts of land because their farming system had no restriction on the amount of land to be cultivated.<sup>72</sup> They cleared vast areas to ensure sufficient supply of food, which dictated the amount of land to be cultivated.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, the removal of natural vegetation in the district due to the expansion of human settlements and farms resulted in the denudation of some areas in Maswa, thus accelerated the formation of gullies. According to oral testimonies, these gullies became difficult to control especially in areas such as Kanadi, Luguru, Ngulyati, Bunamhala and Majaida villages.<sup>74</sup>

Moreover, pressure on land negatively affected the Sukuma traditional environmental management practices. A report on land utilization in Sukumaland by Malcolm revealed that,

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<sup>70</sup> A. Awiti, "Ismani and the Rise of Capitalism" in Lionel Cliffe et al. *Rural Cooperation in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam: TPH, 1975), 53-54; Kikula Op.cit.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Charles Kapama, Sola, 18.6.2018; Nkuba Mbogoshi, Sima, 1.6.2018.

<sup>72</sup> TNA Acc. No. 216, File No. 132. Land Tenure and Settlement in Usukuma with Special Reference to the Kwimba and Maswa Districts.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Silya Gilya, Mwakibuga, 5.6.2018; Sospeter Kulengwa, Bupandagila, 17.5.2018.

prior to the launching of settlement scheme the Sukuma of Maswa practiced fallowing and shifting cultivation as a way of maintaining soil fertility.<sup>75</sup> The report says, “it was not common for the Sukuma to cultivate the same land constantly for more than seven years before abandoning it or leaving it to naturally improve.”<sup>76</sup> Similarly, Allan, Cory and Kjekshus noted that shifting cultivation and fallowing practices were considered by African peasants to have an “environmental conservation value” as it gives enough time for the soil to regenerate after several years of cultivation.<sup>77</sup> In Maswa and elsewhere in pre-colonial Africa, shifting cultivation was possible because of very low population density and scattered settlement in most areas.<sup>78</sup> However, with the concentration of population under the new clustered settlements, the traditional system of managing environments in Maswa became impractical. This was partly because people in clustered settlements exerted pressure on land permanently through farming and other land use activities. They were locked into small areas and in due course began to exert unprecedented pressure on soil and natural vegetation. Thus, such kind of pressure forced them

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<sup>75</sup> TNA, D.W. Malcolm, “Report on Land Utilization in Usukuma, 1938”

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

<sup>77</sup> EAF 244/Cory Collection: Development of Sukumaland, 1947; Helge Kjekshus, *Ecological Control and Economic Development in East African History: The Case of Tanganyika, 1850-1950* (London: James Carrey, 1995).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*.; Interview with Elias Masunga, Sola, 18.6.2018.

to abandon shifting cultivation and fallowing.<sup>79</sup> The abandonment of shifting cultivation in turn resulted in gradual decline of soil fertility in various parts of Maswa. This negative impact was repeatedly reported by the Provincial Commissioner of the Lake Province in the period from the mid-1940s to 1950s. Among other things, these reports noted a decline in crop yields in the province due to poor soil fertility.<sup>80</sup>

Opening up of farms and new settlements together with tsetse clearing campaigns were associated with massive deforestation. Miombo woodlands, which dominated landscapes in Maswa prior to the execution of settlement schemes in areas such as Nyakabindi, Bunamhala, Luguru, Malampaka, Shanwa and Itilima, were cleared due to high demand for building materials, firewood and the opening up of more land for human settlements, agriculture and grazing.<sup>81</sup> As the result of these practices, tree species such as *acacia nefasia*, *isoberlinea brychstegia*, *brychstegia edulis*, *alfezelia quanzesis*, and *acacia pterocarpus* steadily disappeared particularly in the cultivated and settled areas.<sup>82</sup> Oral testimonies and archival sources reveal that, the

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<sup>79</sup> Interview with Sospeter Kulengwa; N.V. Rounce, *the Agriculture of the Cultivation Steppe of the Lake, Western and Central Province*, (Cape Town: Calvin S. Ltd, 1949).

<sup>80</sup> TNA, Tanganyika Territory: Annual Reports of the Provincial Commissioners: Lake Province from 1945 to 1957.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Majebele Simba, Nyalikungu, 12.6.2018 and Shoshi Magege, Luguru, 7.6.2018.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Sospeter Kulengwa Bupandagila 17.5.2018; Elias Masunga, Sola, 18.6.2018.

disappearance of these species altered the vegetation composition in the eastern parts of the district from savannah woodlands to semi-arid land cover; and in some areas the land became bare.<sup>83</sup> Only scattered thorn trees and woody shrubs remained in the newly settled areas. The emergence of arid conditions also contributed to the deterioration and ultimate disappearance of water sources in various parts of Maswa. Local narratives indicate that water sources such as springs, which were hitherto found in the area throughout the year, disappeared due to increases in arid conditions.<sup>84</sup> Additionally, some of the areas selected for the establishment of settlements had formally been inhabited by wild animals. Clearance of miombo woodlands to establish settlements and expand farms gave way to the disappearance of wild game within Maswa District, especially big mammals such as lions, Buffaloes and many others.<sup>85</sup>

In brief, the process of opening up the area for settlement of people and livestock by the British colonial government greatly affected the social and economic wellbeing of people. The process also contributed to the environmental changes in various ways. Most importantly the opening up of various

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<sup>83</sup> TNA, Acc. No.215 File No. 28/1, Forest Annual Reports and General Correspondences Maswa District, 1946-1957; interview with Helena Ng'wanangwa, Sima 1.6.2018; Balili Nyehu, Bariadi 1.6.2018.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Buzengwana Budodi, Mwakibuga, 5.6.2018; Senga Samaki, Luguru, 7.6.2018.

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Manyanya Masuka, Mwamapalala, 4.6.2018; Shirika Malugu, Mwakibuga, 17.5.2018.

parts of Maswa resolved the problem of overpopulation in neighbouring areas and facilitated the cultivation of cash crop and acquisition of new settlement by peasants. This however resulted into the negative environmental changes as discussed above.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

This paper has presented the historical interconnection between development interventions and environmental change in Maswa district during the British colonial rule. The evidence indicates that development interventions driven by imperialist economic interests of the colonizing power as implemented in Maswa District stimulated a series of negative environmental changes in the respective areas. The implementation of development intervention in Maswa district from 1920 to 1960 increased the rate of vegetation clearance due to opening up of new farms, resettling of population into new areas and driving away tsetse flies. These practices of vegetation clearance had tremendous impacts on the environment as explained above. This discussion concluded that environmental changes in Maswa district were not only shaped by local people's activities as perceived by most government official, state Bureaucrats and elites, but also was a result of development interventions introduced by the state.

# **Opposition and Survival Strategies of African Independent Churches in Mbeya, Tanzania, 1960s–2000s.**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper focuses on the opposition to, and survival strategies of, African Independent Churches (AICs), which emerged in Mbeya region in the 1920s. These churches were against historical churches and colonialism because historical churches would not incorporate African traditional beliefs in Christianity and the colonial government exploited Africans, which led to the AICs experiencing opposition, resulting in their decline in other places in Tanzania. In Mbeya, AICs remained and continued to flourish in the post-colonial period, contrary to people's expectations, which prompted the researchers to carry out this study, drawing on oral interviews, archival documents and secondary sources. This article examines the opposition to the growth of AICs and their various strategies for surviving the opposition. It argues that post-colonial opposition emerged from different spiritual doctrines, the disturbance to historical churches' economy, the failure to abide by government laws and the lack of direct impact on the community in areas with established AICs. Regardless of the opposition, AICs spread their teaching intensively, which comprised giving people the opportunity to overcome some psychological problems; combining faith and culture; and women being given opportunities in the churches that operated independently. Hence, AICs flourished in Mbeya and Christianity kept on growing.*

**Key words:** Independent Churches, Opposition,  
Survival Strategies, State, Historical Churches

## 1.0 Introduction

Mbeya region is among the regions in Tanzania with many Christian denominations. In 2016, 450 were reported by the Mbeya District Office. This was also reported by different sources including internet source.<sup>1</sup> This evidence of many denominations is well seen in town landscape, especially in areas with high population within the town, like Simike and Sae. Proliferation of religious denominations was first seen in Mbeya before colonialism. This unique characteristic has distinguished Mbeya from other regions. Taking the example of the Nyakyusa ethnic group, in the late pre-colonial period the group had about a hundred chiefs, each with religious power.<sup>2</sup> This shows that the Nyakyusa area had about 100 priests for religious activities. Wright has noted that these persons catered for both the spiritual and material wellbeing of their people.<sup>3</sup> This feature influenced the nature of religious affiliations in the area. Some of the evidence for this comes from early missionary accounts, which show that the people in Mbeya were very religious in the pre-colonial period.<sup>4</sup> Sundkler and Steed, for example, noted that “in

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<sup>1</sup> <http://mrnoma.blogspot.com/2016/12/mbeya-ndo-mkoa-unaoongoza-kwa-kuwa-na.html>

<sup>2</sup> Mbeya Southern Highland Zonal Archive (MSHZA), History of Diocese of Mbeya Part I: Social and Political Background 1825-1898.

<sup>3</sup> Marcia Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika, 1891-1941: Lutherans and Moravians in the Southern Highlands* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 31.

<sup>4</sup> Benght Sundkler & Christopher Steed *A History of the Church in Africa*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 535.

coming to the Nyakyusa, the missionaries soon found that they had entered a highly religious area where the cults of “Kyala” and “Mbasi” had many devotees.”<sup>5</sup> Hence, before the establishment of Christianity in Mbeya, proliferation of religions was already evident in the area.

In the 1890s, Christianity penetrated Mbeya region and interrupted the dynamics by which ingenious religions were being propagated. Many people were converted into Christianity and started to adopt western culture. In Mbeya, as elsewhere, Christianity comprised not only the teaching of and belief in Jesus Christ, but also entailed accepting western ways of life some of which were contrary to the word as it originally came with the Bible.<sup>6</sup> With the help of the colonial government and missionaries, Christianity spread spontaneously.<sup>7</sup> For instance, Moravian missionaries demanded assurance and security from the German government in order to proceed.<sup>8</sup> By the 1920s, Christianity had expanded throughout the region. Schools were set up as training centres where Africans were converted. The disruption brought about by Christianity was noticeable in the structure of the community, marriage, land and property

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<sup>5</sup> Sundkler and Steed, *Church in Africa*, 535.

<sup>6</sup> See 1 Corinthians 9: 20-23 in the *Bible: The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982).

<sup>7</sup> Angetile Y. Musomba, *The Moravian Church in Tanzania Southern Province: A Short History* (Nairobi: IFRA, 2005), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Musomba, *Moravian Church*.



ownership, religious leadership, laws, taboos and use of the vernacular.<sup>9</sup> Africans loved Christianity, especially the kind that could accommodate some aspects of their culture.

Three decades after the introduction of Christianity in Mbeya region, some Africans reacted against the activities of historical churches, after becoming aware of the western culture embedded in their teachings. Africans wanted to continue with polygamy, drink their beer, live a communal life, and preserve their languages and way of dressing. Thus, during the British colonial period Africans in Mbeya found a platform for expressing their misgivings on the teachings of historical churches. They formed AICs to challenge historical churches.<sup>10</sup> Dissatisfaction also centered on issues such as control over income, institutional identity, banning of the use of alcohol, discrimination in churches, struggle for power and the failure of historical churches to relate Christianity to traditional African culture.<sup>11</sup> As a result, all the historical

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<sup>9</sup> David B. Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements* (London & Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968), 116-130.

<sup>10</sup> M.B. Akpan, "Liberia and Ethiopia, 1880-1914: the survival of two African states", in *General History of Africa Vol. VII* edited by A. Adu Boahen (California: Heinemann, 1985), 282.

<sup>11</sup> C.K. Omari, C.K., "The Making of an Independent Church: The Case of the African Missionary Evangelical Church among the Meru of Tanzania," in *East African Expressions of Christianity* edited by I. N. Kimambo and T. Spear (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 1999); R.O.O. Ositelu, *African instituted Churches: Diversities, Growth, Gifts, Spirituality and Ecumenical Understanding of African Initiated Churches*, (London: Lit Verlag Munster, 2002), 47.

churches inevitably produced AICs after large numbers of their followers joined the new religious platform. With time, some AIC leaders split off as a result of conflicts with fellow leaders. As a result, new AICs continued to emerge with different names and leaders.

In 1984 it was estimated that there were about 12,000 AICs on the African continent, with a total membership of about 30 million.<sup>12</sup> Barrett reports that at the beginning of the 1980s the AICs claimed thirty-one million adherents throughout the African continent.<sup>13</sup> Some authors have named the new churches the new centers of universality.<sup>14</sup> Extant literature indicates that all countries in Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa have AICs. Country-wise, South Africa offers a more striking example because it has more AICs than any other country in Africa.<sup>15</sup> AICs were connected to the resistance movement against political and cultural imperialism in Africa through the agents of Western colonialism and missionary activities.<sup>16</sup> In order to survive,

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<sup>12</sup> G. Oosthuizen, "The African Independent Churches," *Centenary, Africa Insight* No.15 (1985), 70.

<sup>13</sup> Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa*, 815.

<sup>14</sup> K. Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995), 111.

<sup>15</sup> D. Venter, D., *Engaging Modernity: Methods and Cases for Studying African Independent Churches in South Africa*, (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 20.

<sup>16</sup> Elia S. Mligo, *Jesus and the Stigmatized: Reading the Gospel of John in a Context of HIV/AIDS-Related Stigmatization in Tanzania* (California: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2011), 193-197.

AICs adopted different strategies. This article examines the historical processes by which AICs emerged and struggled for their survival and development. Because the colonial chapter of this history is fairly well covered by the existing literature, this article concentrates on the postcolonial period. It focuses on ALCs' efforts to survive opposition from the historical churches and the postcolonial state.

## **2.0 Geographical Context of AICs in Mbeya**

Early AICs in Mbeya region include the Watch Tower under Hanoc Sindano located in Mbozi, the African National Church under Paddy Nyasulu in Rungwe, the Last Church of God and His Christ under Ben Ngemela in Rungwe and the Little Flock Church under Sem Mboma in Mbeya District.<sup>17</sup> In the region, AICs first appeared in Mbozi, Rungwe and Mbeya districts, where the development of historical churches and economic transformations were more notable. In the post-colonial period new ALCs emerged and developed. The Last Church of Tanzania, Restoration Bible Church, the Evangelical Brotherhood Church, the Tanzania Forward in Faith Church and the Winners Church were some of the most prominent among these.<sup>18</sup> Many AICs were established in town centres where the population was dense and more prone to new cultural influences. However, some AICs operated on a non-institutional basis, and so their

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<sup>17</sup> Anthony Makunde, *Yafahamu Makanisa Yaliyoko Tanzania* (Songea: Benedictine Publications Ndanda-Peramiho, 1997), 13, 93, 107 -144.

<sup>18</sup> Mbeya District Office, List of Churches in Mbeya.

activities took place in areas not designed for religious institutions. Patric Mbao notes that this happened when AICs failed to acquire land legally and were not prepared to wait.<sup>19</sup> Under such circumstances AIC leaders ended up buying or renting houses, or using their own houses for services. However, many AICs in Mbeya succeeded in buying or renting houses in slum areas such as Simike, Nzovwe, Iyunga, Mama John and Ilomba.<sup>20</sup> Some AICs operated near people's homes, causing disturbances. Examples of these were the Faith Church, Calvary Church of Tabernacle and the House of Freedom Church.<sup>21</sup> AICs positioned themselves in strategic areas to get followers. Most members in slum areas were poor, while those in the town centre were rich, especially big traders and some workers. It would however be incorrect to attribute the propagation of ALCs to economic status only, as people were attracted to these churches by a wide range of interests.

### **3.0 AICs in Mbeya, 1920s to 1950s.**

During colonialism, AICs were believed to have been founded for political reasons to resist colonial domination through religion. Ranger points out that "a very different and more constructive answer to the political and social problems of colonialism was given by the African National

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with Patrick Mbao, Sabasaba, 15.09.2014.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Frank E.P. Mwaitebele, Tunduma, 25.09.2014.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

Church.”<sup>22</sup> AICs were against colonial rule and the historical churches. Missionaries encouraged African people to work for the colonialists to earn their living. Sometimes, African Christians were required to work on missionary farms for low wages.<sup>23</sup> Emmanuel Mwasile stated that AICs emerged for political reasons, because the British government dominated Mbeya and the church was in the hands of foreign missions.<sup>24</sup> In Tanzania, and Mbeya in particular, the early forms of independence struggles were ethnically based rather than national. Among the instruments used were AICs, youth movements and elitist associations.<sup>25</sup> In this way, AICs inevitably became a liberation tool. In relation to political issues, Gunner explains that in the African context AICs as a whole seemed to have played little part in the bitter nationalistic struggle, because AICs only emerged when African countries started to become independent.<sup>26</sup> However, the role played by AICs cannot be so belittled, as they were a notable political tool. They exerted economic, social and cultural demands. AICs survived and succeeded in accommodating some African traditions, which is why the colonial state saw them as a threat to its interests and

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<sup>22</sup> Terence O. Ranger, *The African Churches of Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam: The Historical Association of Tanzania, 1972), 16.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Mwasile, Iwambi, 24.09.2014.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Akpan, “Liberia and Ethiopia, 1880-1914”, 279.

<sup>26</sup> Elizabeth Gunner, *The Man of Heaven and the Beautiful Ones of God* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 6.

responded accordingly. Hence, AICs experienced opposition from both the historical churches and the colonial state.

From the beginning, two recurrent themes in the history of the western missionary movement, both at home and in Mbeya, were those of nationality and ecclesiastical character.<sup>27</sup> Wherever western missionaries went in different parts of the world, they needed health facilities, funds and protection, which meant that they depended on the nation, organisation and individuals. This dependence determined the nature of the message, and the relationship between groups. The characteristics of missionaries who penetrated Africa were no different from those of the colonialists they were related to, because, as E. Okon explained, colonialism aided missionary work in Africa.<sup>28</sup> Michael Crowder also insisted that early missionaries in West Africa had the dual purposes of promoting legitimate trade between Africans and Europeans and converting Africans to their own religion.<sup>29</sup> E. Ayandele argued that Christian missionaries were the spiritual wing of secular imperialism.<sup>30</sup> Mbiti

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<sup>27</sup> Wright, *German Missions in Tanganyika*, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Etim E. Okon, "Christian Missions and Colonial Rule in Africa: Objective Contemporary Analysis," *European Scientific Journal* 10, No. 17, (2017), 192-209, here 198.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), 111.

<sup>30</sup> E.A. Ayandele et al., *The Growth of African Civilization: The Making of Modern Africa. Vol.2* (London: Longman, 1968), 135.

quoted the Gikuyu proverb that says, “there is no Roman priest and a European, both are the same.”<sup>31</sup> Walter Rodney contended that missionaries were agents of imperialism.<sup>32</sup> Although there is a glaring absence of scholarly consensus on the role of missionaries in colonizing Africa,<sup>33</sup> Christian Missionaries did play a major role in the establishment of colonialism Africa. Thus, AICs in Southern, Central and East Africa met with opposition as they were regarded as anti-colonialist. Allowing their growth in a colony meant creating opposition to the state that could finally lead to decolonisation.<sup>34</sup> For this reason, the colonial government confront them verbally and with force, as well as by denying their leaders economic support they often needed. At a point in time, AIC members found themselves excluded from positions of power and influence.<sup>35</sup> For example, Paddy Nyasulu, who had been educated and became a leader of an AIC, was employed as the mission storekeeper and later on

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<sup>31</sup> John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 23.

<sup>32</sup> Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: L'Ouverture, 1972) 277.

<sup>33</sup> Okon “Christian Missions and Colonial Rule in Africa”

<sup>34</sup> TNA, File No. 25/8: Rungwe.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Mwasile, Iwambi, 24.09.2014; Interview David Nicholas, Simike, 14.09.2014; interview with Juma Jacob, Nzovwe, 18.09.2014; Interview with Sheria Segerea, Tunduma, 25.09. 2014; interview with David Mwambingila, Rungwe, 23. 09. 2014; Njeru Wambungu & John Padwick, “Globalization: A Perspective from the African Independent Churches”, in *Journal of African Instituted Church Theology*, Vo. II. No.1, (2006), 6.

as a government clerk in Malawi and Tukuyu in Tanzania. He was dismissed from his position in 1923 due to his involvement with the AICs.<sup>36</sup>

However, this did not lead to the collapse of all the AICs that emerged during colonialism. They continued to survive in Mbeya region, with the exception of the Watch Tower Church. Hanoc Sindano, its leader, preached that “the authority of chiefs, administrators and historical churches were anti-Christ, they should be ignored and disobeyed, taxes should not be paid and fields did not need to be cultivated by Watch Tower followers”. He added that the colonialists made Africans work very hard and were given low wages, and so he insisted on praying that Europeans would be forced to return to their own countries to enable Africans to control their resources.<sup>37</sup> Sindano used pamphlets published by the Watch Tower Bible Society in South Africa in propagating his opposition against the colonial state.<sup>38</sup> The Watch Tower Bible Society was not itself an AIC, but their publications were highly influential.

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<sup>36</sup> Interview with Angolwisye Malambugi.

<sup>37</sup> Quotation from Ranger, *African Churches*, 14-15.

<sup>38</sup> T. O. Ranger (1972), 13-14. Watch Tower Bible Society with an African headquarters in Cape Town, was not a church, African workers could find attractive interpretation of the Bible through pamphlets prepared by this society, through reading those who discovered its truth were free to go and spread it, to organise the congregations and even the church, this how AICs emerged, 13-14.



Because Sindano believed that the whites' system was oppressive, he decided he must fight it through religion.<sup>39</sup> As a result of his influence, some people in Zambia and Mbozi were converted and became members of the Watch Tower. Thus, there was widespread response to Sindano's teaching that soon brought him into conflict with the British colonial administration.<sup>40</sup> In the late 1930s the Watch Tower's presence in Tanzania was restricted<sup>41</sup> because Sindano refused to obey the orders of the colonial government, which is why it could not stand by as this would undermine its authority. However, at the end of the colonial period in Tanzania, the Watch Tower was no longer regarded as being opposed to the colonial government. This is because it had changed its name to Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs) as well as their church policy. This happened when they developed a close relationship with JWs in America. In the age of independence, they refused to salute the flag and regarded politics as the agency of Satan. As a result, JWs were seen as incompatible with the maintenance of peace, order and good

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<sup>39</sup> Ranger, *African Churches*, 13.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>41</sup> T. O, Ranger, "Christian Independency in Tanzania", in D.B. Barrett (ed), *African Initiatives in Religion*, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971), 126; Tanzania National Archival (TNA), File No. 1733/27, Control of Nyasa Workers Suspected of Watch Tower Believers.

governance. In due course, Watch Tower AIC declined while JWs as a nun-church association developed.<sup>42</sup>

#### **4.0 AICs from the 1960s to 2000s**

In the post-colonial period, AICs established themselves so firmly that they were no longer just protestant movements. They established themselves theologically and defended their discourses as genuine expressions of the Christian faith from the African perspective. They also added African traditions to the Christian faith.<sup>43</sup> The word of God which was taught was not different from that of global Christianity, except that it contained African traditions. In the 1960s, some of the beliefs of the AICs were modified. For example, the AICs allowed polygamy during colonialism, but in the post-colonial period men were not allowed to take another wife, although they could keep the wives they already had. Similarly, the use of drums in church and the ways of singing and dancing were modified.<sup>44</sup> Antoni Makunde argues that the growth of AICs in postcolonial Mbeya was partly stimulated by the fact that in this period the historical churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church, were trying to integrate African culture in Christianity, just as the AICs

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<sup>42</sup> C. G. Baeta (ed), *Christianity in Tropical Africa* (Oxford: International African Institute, 1968), 356.

<sup>43</sup> O. Kealotswe, "The Nature and character of African Independent Churches in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Their Theological and Social Agenda," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 40 (2), 2014, 229.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Mwasile, Iwambi, 24. 09. 2014.

were doing.<sup>45</sup> Ian Linden has shown that, in the 1960s, the Roman Catholic Church articulated the benefits of the theology of enculturation, and declared that the gospel had to be proclaimed in a manner that respected local cultural values.<sup>46</sup> The 1960s was also a period when the historical churches across Africa were re-evaluating their role in the newly independent countries.<sup>47</sup> The old certainties of the historical churches, based on their identification with European culture, were fast being eroded in the 1960s.<sup>48</sup> In this situation the AICs stood a good ground as they maintained a close tie with local cultures.

In the 1970s, AIC operations were based on how African Christianity was to be expressed by carefully discussing their beliefs concerning the major doctrines of Christianity, such as the sacraments of baptism, Holy Communion and marriage. In the 1980s, AICs emphasised that their followers should be ethical, because AICs leaders associated the period of crisis with punishment from God. It is important to note that AICs reflected the changes that occurred in the community, and so they struggled to bring about spiritual

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<sup>45</sup> Interview with Antoni Makunde, Mlowo, 26.09. 2014.

<sup>46</sup> Ian Landen, *Global Catholicism: Diversity and Change Since Vatican II*. (London: C Hurst & Co Publishers, 2009).

<sup>47</sup> Brian Stanley, "Christianity and the End of Empire," in *Missions, Nationalism and the end of Empire* edited by B. Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1-15.

<sup>48</sup> David Maxwell, "Decolonization," in *Missions and Empire* edited by N. Etherington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 285-306.

changes there. For example, revivalist groups gained momentum during this period in the whole of East Africa.<sup>49</sup> They organised seminars and evangelical meetings which took place in different cities in East Africa. In addition, the emergence of Pentecostalism in the 1980s, with its distinct beliefs, led to the growth of AICs.<sup>50</sup>

In the 1990s, the growth of AICs coincided with the rapid growth of economic disparity caused by privatization and poor social services, and so they continued to meet people's spiritual needs.<sup>51</sup> Thus, in the post-colonial period AICs kept on growing. They did not die out in Mbeya as the Malakite Church in Mwanza did. In 1953, the Church of Holy Spirit was formed amongst the Haya by seceding the Evangelical Lutheran Church, but by 1962, half of its members had been won back. In 1956, the Tanganyika African Church was formed among the Gogo by seceding from the Church Missionary Society, but the majority of its members returned to the Anglican Church in the early 1960s. In 1958, some Nyamwezi seceded from the Moravian Church, but in 1960

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<sup>49</sup> J.R. Mlahagwa, "Contending for the Faith Spiritual Revival and the Fellowship Church in Tanzania," in *East African Expressions of Christianity* edited by I.N. Kimambo and T. Spear (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota 1999), 296-306.

<sup>50</sup> Päivi Hasu, *Prosperity Gospels and Enchanted World Worldviews: Two Responses to Social-economic Transformation in Tanzanian Pentecostal Christianity* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Frank Mwaitebele, Tunduma, 25.09. 2014.

the majority returned.<sup>52</sup> In Mbeya, the AICs, which emerged in the colonial period, continued to exist and new ones were established at different times.

### **5.0 State Opposition to African Independent Churches**

In Mbeya, these churches emerged during colonialism, except for the Watch Tower; and those that emerged in the post-colonial period expected support from the government, as in their operations they emphasised African initiatives. However, David Nicholous has revealed that the AICs were not supported by the state as expected. Opposition by the state continued in different ways, because most leaders in different positions in the government were members of the historical churches. These AICs were seen as a problem to the nation, run by uneducated people, who were not prepared to change, and their followers were seen as backward people. The government took no notice of these churches because they were weak economically, and so it failed to support them with social services like education and health, unlike the historical churches.<sup>53</sup> David Nicholous adds that opposition was not direct in Mbeya, but government leaders had inherited colonial tendencies and were not prepared to change, advise or support AICs, but spoke negatively to them all the time,<sup>54</sup> because AICs had far

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<sup>52</sup> Ranger, "Christian Independency", 124.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with David Nicholous, Simike, 14.09.2014.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with David Nicholous, Simike, 14.09.2014.

less to offer than the well-endowed historical churches.<sup>55</sup> The government demanded religious institutions to register so that they could enjoy various rights, including owning land for religious purposes. Some AICs were not registered as the government demanded. One member of an AIC revealed that, when they wanted to register their church, they faced hindrances, which resulted in their church remaining unregistered. The barriers caused by people in power and failure to abide by the law governing religious institution resulted in AICs being blamed for not abiding by the procedures.<sup>56</sup> The Government opposed those AICs which were not prepared to follow procedures and it was intolerant, which caused some churches to start their services without being registered. For example, in 1964, the government refused to allow the International Pentecostal Holiness Church from Zambia to continue with services in Mbeya district without being registered.<sup>57</sup> Some AICs were opposed to the policy as they were usually formed without a clear plan and could not properly follow orders and abide by some procedures. One AIC informant claimed that when they wanted to register their church, they faced various

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<sup>55</sup> David Maxwell, "Post-colonial Christianity," in H. McLeod (ed), *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianity, C. 1914-C. 2000*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 412.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Frank E.P. Mwaitebele, Tunduma, 25. 09.2014.

<sup>57</sup> Southern Highlands Mbeya Zonal Archives (SHMZA), File No. MDC/M.40/21, *Maombi ya Kuandikishwa kwa Makanisa na Mahubiri*.

barriers, and so they ended up running their services unregistered.<sup>58</sup> These barriers caused by people in power resulted AICs being blamed for not abiding to the procedures.

Various AICs were running their activities in areas not designed for religious institutions when they failed to acquire land legally. Very few succeeded in renting land, and so they were unable to put up a church building. Their leaders ended up buying houses or using their own houses for the services. Many AICs were located in slum areas, such as Simike, Nzovwe, Iyunga, Mama John and Ilomba, where houses were cheap and it was easy to get followers.<sup>59</sup> It should be noted that those who established independent churches came from historical churches, and it took years for them to become stable economically. Thus, they opted to build churches where it was affordable without following the procedures.

Some AICs were a challenge to the government because they opposed the efforts it made to resolve some problems. For example, the *Kanisa la Uamsho la Roho Mtakatifu*, forbade their followers from being vaccinated but to depend on prayers only. In the 1990s local leaders reported this church to the district officer in Mbeya.<sup>60</sup> Danstan Hepelwa has

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with Frank E.P. Mwaitebele, Tunduma, 25.09.2014.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Juliana Mbilinyi, Simike, 13, 09. 2014.

revealed that the founder, Nise Mwasomola, was opposed by the government due to her erroneous understanding of the need for vaccination. Followers' children, like anyone else, were likely to suffer from diseases and so they needed to be vaccinated. But this ALC church did not allow the vaccination to take place as required. With such behaviour, it is not surprising that the government disapproved of this church.<sup>61</sup>

Some AIC leaders were not even prepared to work with other religious organizations in Mbeya. They supported cooperation in their church but in real life they lived in disunity. No organisation in Mbeya guided these churches, and it was difficult even for the government to relate to these churches. For example, independent churches that emerged from protestant churches were asked by the government to register under the umbrella of the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT), which represents almost all non-Roman Catholic Christians in the country. Pentecostal AICs were asked to register their churches under the umbrella of the Pentecostal Council of Tanzania (PCT). AICs in Mbeya were neither members of CCT nor PCT until 2000.<sup>62</sup> It was difficult for the AICs to be under CCT or PCT because

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<sup>61</sup> Interview with Danstan Hapelwa, Veta, 20. 09. 2014.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Daudi Sichinga, Mbeya City, 14.09. 2014.



leaders of these organisations were not prepared to accept them as members because they were regarded as enemies.<sup>63</sup>

Different AICs in Mbeya believed more in miracles, and justified this without providing proof of what they claimed had happened. In some cases, people stopped engaging in any meaningful work but still believed that a miracle would happen to resolve their problems. Some relied on spiritual power even on issues of illness, rather than seeking medical help. Some AICs were against traditional and modern medicine, as their leaders emphasized on spiritual healing through prayers even for people who suffered from prolonged ill health. Juliana Mbilinyi, for instance, recalls that when she was pregnant and was advised to undertake a caesarean section she refused and instead she asked Nise Mwasomola, the AIC leader, to pray for her. The hospital officials were not prepared to take risks, but she continued to withhold her consent. This resulted in misunderstandings between the hospital staff and family members, but after a long delay Juliana delivered her baby normally.<sup>64</sup> The hospital administration complained bitterly about government's approval of the existence of this type of church in the region.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with Domianus. T. Kongoro, Mbeya City, 16. 09. 2014.

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Juliana Mbilinyi.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Juliana Mbilinyi.

## **6.o Opposition by the Historical Churches**

Opposition from the historical churches against the IACs was based on the fact that they took away some of their members, thereby reducing the offerings contributed by them. Hence, leaders of historical churches opposed AICs using abusive language for the purpose of retaining their members,<sup>66</sup> and tried to turn people in the community against them. Meanwhile AICs sometime behaved in ways that were difficult for members of the community to accommodate. Their families lacked unity and they created conflicts. In some families, members who joined AICs rejected their parents because they differed in their beliefs. Emmanuel Mwasile reported that there were various incidences relating to marriage associated with AICs. Some women deserted their husbands who were not prepared to follow them, as they remained members of the historical churches. Opposition to AICs developed because they were seen as the source of different problems in the family.<sup>67</sup> In other words, opposition developed due to the power that women had gained in AICs. Barrett claims that, in AICs, women were given the opportunity to recover some of their traditional status that had been undermined by the teaching

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with Lusekelo Cheyo. Iwambi, 21. 09. 2014; 05. 11. 2014.

<sup>67</sup> Emmanuel Mwasile, Interview at, Iwambi, 26. 09. 2014.

of the historical churches.<sup>68</sup> AICs were opposed by historical churches due to the problems created in the community and the power women were given in these churches.

As noted earlier, people who introduced AICs were previously members of historical churches. They gathered together in a group, understood and respected each other, and regarded all other denominations as less worthy and unspiritual. Therefore, when individuals from historical churches joined an AIC, they were criticised by historical church members, treated with suspicion, not spoken to, experienced unfriendliness, and faced lack of unity in the family. Nsaligwa Kimanga narrated that, Nise Mwasomola, founder of *Kanisa la Uamsho*, was a member of Pentecostal Assemblies of God and was given power by God to preach and deliver the sick. Her charismatic gift was not accepted by the historical churches which opposed it and she was asked to leave. As a result, in 1978 she established her own church.<sup>69</sup>

AICs have been neglected as an area of enquiry for many years. When they were first studied or assessed by Europeans, they tended to portray them as being exclusively related to superstition. Compared to the historical churches, they were often presented as the work of the devil, while

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<sup>68</sup> Barret, *Schism and Renewal* 147; J. Seeley, "We have the Healing Power: Independent Churches and Women in Urban Kenya," *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology* 9, No. 2 (1984), 58-70.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Nsaligwa Kimanga, Simike, 13.09. 2014.

other social researchers came up with mystifying terms, such as atavistic, separatists, millenialists, sects, cults, syncretistic, neo-pagan, quasi-Christian, magico-religious and heretical.<sup>70</sup> Very loose terminologies were used to describe the AICs by historical churches, such as 'kiosk and 'money monger', and they were not recognized.<sup>71</sup>

In the post-colonial period in Mbeya, when historical churches had a problem, their leaders were given the opportunity to involve CCT, TEC or PCT, but the leaders of AICs were excluded from these organisations.<sup>72</sup> The historical churches did not see the importance of working with AICs. For example, the mission of CCT was to facilitate and coordinate the united witness of member churches and church-related organisations in evangelism, by building the capacity of their members to evangelise and engage in networking, advocacy and socio-economic development for the benefit of the community. However, Hapelwa argues that what CCT observed was division between Christians, as some churches under CCT were not prepared to be grouped with AICs. Moreover, for years CCT favoured certain

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<sup>70</sup> H. Pretorius and L. Jafta, "A Branch Springs Out: African Initiated Churches," in *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History* edited by R. Elphick and R. Davenport (London: Oxford, 1977), 211.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Juliana Mbilinyi, Simike, 13. 09. 2014.

<sup>72</sup> Interviews with Mbuba Medrick, Nzovwe, 18. 09. 2014; Interview with Danstan Hapelwa; Interview with Emmanuel Mwasile.

denominations without accommodating the newly founded churches with a protestant base.<sup>73</sup> The historical churches did not involve AICs in different religious activities. For example, Emmanuel Tumwidike of the Restoration Church wanted his church to join PCT as a new member, because it was Pentecostal, but the PCT leaders refused to let that happen.<sup>74</sup> Christians preached the importance of unity, but disunity, isolation and individuality dominated their umbrella organisations.

With the emergence of AICs, the liturgy was made more African, whereby African drums, dresses, singing and dancing reflected African culture. In this sense, the gospel was contextualised and made relevant to the thought patterns of the converts. In this connection an informant remarked that historical churches were opposed to AICs because they added their own ideas to Christianity.<sup>75</sup> Medrick Mbuba argued that AICs were opposed by the historical churches because they were concerned that the AICs had combined traditional and modern forms of worship, which they disapproved.

Traditional churches also opposed the AICs because of their interpretation of the Bible. The issues of polygamy, drinking alcohol, the way of singing in the church and a much shorter period of teachings before baptism were some of the

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with Danstan Hapelwa, 26.09.2014.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Tumwidike, Esso Juu, 26.05.2015 & 05.11.2016.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Juma Jacob, Nzovwe, 18. 09. 2014.

practices which contravened established beliefs in historical churches, making their cooperation with these churches impossible. The Last Church of God and His Christ and African National Church supported polygamy, which was not allowed by the historical churches.<sup>76</sup>

During the colonial period, law and order was enforced in areas where Christianity had been established, fines were levied and church discipline was exercised, particularly against alcohol use and polygamy. This drew a sharp line between the Christian and the traditional worlds.<sup>77</sup> Members of the historical churches and those of the AICs were all Christians but followed different doctrines, such as the one on marriage where AICs allowed polygamy, which made to be seen as the enemy of historical churches.<sup>78</sup> Disagreements over doctrine was one of the reasons why Christianity split into different denominations throughout its history.

AICs were attacked by western Pentecostal churches, which blamed the AICs for bringing so-called pagan elements into

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<sup>76</sup> Interview with Patrick Mbao, Sabasaba, 15.09.2014; John Baur, 2000 *Years of Christianity in Africa: An African History* (Nairobi: Pauline's Publication, 1994), 479.

<sup>77</sup> Sundkler & Steed, *History of the Church*, 537.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Mwasile.

the church,<sup>79</sup> and regarded them as non-Christian.<sup>80</sup> Because of this opposition, the number of Pentecostal churches in Mbeya grew as the services they were running attracted followers. Therefore, the restoration of normality to AICs will take a long time, not only in Mbeya but also in the nation as a whole. To a large extent, AICs are still divided along the lines of their origin, such as ethnicity and the historical and Pentecostal churches from which their members split. For this and related reasons, AICs were slow to make an impact and address the challenges posed by a rapidly changing society. One of the weakening factors for the AICs is fact that of some of its members became rich while others remained poor.

### **7.0 Survival Strategies of AICs**

The survival of the AICs since colonial times has been attributed to several strategies which enabled them to endure various storms that came their way. In this regard, an informant has argued that the teaching of the word of God was the clear foundation of the churches' existence, enabling them to survive and be relevant to their members and society.<sup>81</sup> Thus, AICs based their teachings mostly on the

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<sup>79</sup> Wilson B. Niwagila, *From the Catacomb to A Self-Governing Church; A Case Study of African Initiative and the Participation of the Foreign Missions in the Mission History of the North-Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania 1890-1965*, 2nd Edition (Auflage: Verlag and Der Lottbek, 1991), 243; Interview with Juliana Mbilinyi, Simike, 13.09. 2014.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Juma Mwampamba, Kalobe, 19. 09. 2014.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Lusekelo Cheyo.

Old Testament, while historical protestant churches taught mostly from the New Testament.<sup>82</sup> In addition the historical churches interpreted the Bible from the western theological perspective. The ACIs prioritised on Bible teaching in the church as well as in members' homes.<sup>83</sup> This benefited church members and attracted non-members, thus making the church permanently different from the historical churches. Commenting on this, an informant noted that quoting of Bible verses was common in AICs,<sup>84</sup> and members were encouraged by their leaders to read the word of God. Gottwald concluded on progress by saying that Bible teaching enables people to understand what the Bible says about God and mankind.<sup>85</sup> This means that people would always go to where they might find “good pasture,” which is what they were getting at AICs.<sup>86</sup>

AICs eventually survived in Mbeya by changing their initial approach to government and following the required procedures. In this regard, David Sichone argued that, when

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<sup>82</sup> O. Kaiser, *Introduction to the Old Testament: A presentation of its results and problems* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), 5.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with Nathaniel Ndabila, Uyole, 19.09. 2014.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> N.K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A socio-literary introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 6.

<sup>86</sup> J. A. Gyadu, “United Over Meals Divided at the Lord’s Table: Christianity and the Unity of the Church in Africa,” *Transformation*, Vol. 27, No. 1. *Special Issue: The Global Christian Forum*, 2010, 16-17.



the conflict between Lufingo Njela and Ephraim Sichone in the Last Church of God became tense in Mbozi in 1972, the district officer advised Ephraim Sichone to come up with his own name for the church. Thus, in 1973, the Last Church of Tanzania emerged as a new church and was given permission to establish itself.<sup>87</sup> Another example was the case of the Evangelical Brotherhood AIC. Following a conflict in the Moravian church, the Evangelical Brotherhood AIC was formed, and in order to survive it decided to follow government orders. This resulted in its being registered on August 16, 1995, with registration number 8186.<sup>88</sup>

The leadership style in AICs and their strategies enabled them to survive most the challenges that emerged from inside and outside the church, because their principles of leadership were in line with those of Moses, Paul, David and Jesus Christ. AIC leaders were close to their followers at all times, and had informal means of training their leaders and future leaders.<sup>89</sup> This followed their realisation of the fact that the church had to produce its own well trained leaders who would be capable of dealing with the problems of the

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<sup>87</sup> Interview with David Sichone, Vwawa, 4.11.2014.

<sup>88</sup> Southern Highlands Mbeya Zonal Archives (SHMZA), File, The Moravian Conflict Kyela.

<sup>89</sup> Interview with Marry Kategile, TEKU, 11.09.2014; Interview with Asulumenye D. Mwahalende, 10.09.2014; Interview with Kael Mwaisumo, Simike, 14.09.2014; Interview with Lusekelo Cheyo; Interview with Kastory Msingwa, Tunduma, 25.09.2014.

modern African society.<sup>90</sup> David Nicholas has emphasised that, although AICs had leaders that attracted people, they needed to be formally educated for the survival of AICs, because the number of educated people in society had increased.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, church leaders needed to be well equipped to address the issues of hardship, disease, hunger and any other problems members faced; which meant they had to keep in close contact with them.<sup>92</sup> This was the case in Mbeya, where AICs were taken seriously, because they demonstrated that they were a community of Christians.

There is a consensus that culture has impact on faith.<sup>93</sup> The AICs in Mbeya completely subscribed to this view. Incorporating African culture in the operations of AICs has, since their inception, been a defining feature of them, so that Africans feel at home embracing Christianity. In different parts of Africa AICs gained followers as they protested against western forms of worship. They also introduced several new elements in the liturgy. In Mbeya, for example, they used local languages in preaching, such as the

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<sup>90</sup> S. Kohls, "A Look at Church Leadership in Africa", *African Journal of Evangelical Theology* 17, No. 2 (1998), 2

<sup>91</sup> Interview with David Nicholas, Simike, 14.09. 2014.

<sup>92</sup> Interview with Oyi Mwasambili, Mbeya City Centre, 12.09. 2014; Interview with Abiud Simkoko, Mlowo, 24.09.2014; Interview with Medrick Mbuba, Nzovwe, 18.09.2014.

<sup>93</sup> S. Kurgat, "The Theology of Inculturation and the African Church," *Greener Journal of Social Sciences* I (2011), 31-41.

Nyakyusa, Safwa and Nyiha languages.<sup>94</sup> Efforts were also made to introduce local African melodies and hymns, and to translate European hymns into the local languages. All these efforts to incorporate African culture in AIC services made a deep impression on their members and attracted non-members. AIC leaders believed that the purpose for the coming of Christianity to Africa was to spread the name of Jesus and salvation in accordance with the behaviour, environment and culture of African people and not to spread European culture in African churches.

It has however been noted that AICs differed in what they accepted or refused, as not all of them accommodated aspects of African culture. For example, in Zambia, Alice Lenshina of the Lumpa Church preached against witchcraft, and rejected traditional rituals, adultery, divorce, polygamy, tobacco and alcohol. These teachings were effective in attracting people from different backgrounds to the church.<sup>95</sup>

In yet another innovation, some AICs identified areas and designated them as holy. On these lands they built houses for the purpose of prayer and worship. The houses were sometimes called “houses of prayer,” and the land itself as holy ground, similar to what African religions called sacred places. This, African culture was maintained by the church

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<sup>94</sup> Interview with Hamad Mwakilundwa, Tukuyu, 22.09.2014.

<sup>95</sup> Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Asmara: African World Press, 2001), 136.

in various ways.<sup>96</sup> In such houses space was sometimes made for the purpose of prayer and counselling. This is exemplified by Nise Mwasomola, founder of *Kanisa la Uamsho la Roho Mtakatifu*.<sup>97</sup>

Operating independently was one of the strategies that enabled AICs to keep on growing. Oyi Mwasambili explained that the independent struggle by the leader or founder mattered a lot to AICs. The founder acted as the investor, and so had to design a mechanism for the church to survive, which is why some AIC leaders preached against poverty,<sup>98</sup> and worked to fight against poverty among church members through economic empowerment, because they saw that those on a low income were often powerless, weary, isolated and vulnerable, which was a spiritual issue that needed to be addressed by the church as one its primary responsibilities.<sup>99</sup> The AICs made great efforts to provide formal and informal entrepreneurial training for their members. Professionals in the areas of bookkeeping, marketing and good business practices were invited by church leaders to provide training in entrepreneurship, as a result of which churches were

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<sup>96</sup> Interview with David P. Mwashilindi, Nzovwe, 19.09.2014.

<sup>97</sup> Interview with Nsaligwa Kimanga, Simike, 13.09.2014.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with Oyi Mwasambili, Mbeya City Centre, 12.09. 2014.

<sup>99</sup> A. Mpesha, *the Role of the Church in Microcredit Financing for Business Development in Tanzania*, (Grand Rapids: Calvin College, 2004.), 5.

enabled to start microcredit schemes for church members.<sup>100</sup> Through this strategy, the church could be seen as emancipating its members not only in terms of their spiritual welfare but also their economic wellbeing. Although this developed slowly, the AICs made some progress. People were able to construct their own churches through this strategy. Some AICs established committees for the purpose of developing their churches dealing with evangelism, finance, health and information.

In AICs women occupied leadership positions, which was one of the reasons why about three-quarters of the people in the church were women, and this study found that women were ordained as church leaders. It has been argued out that the importance of ordaining women was that if the church failed to ordain them it automatically prevent them from taking on other religious roles and thus limit them on the basis of their gender.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, recognising the importance of women in the church enabled the churches to use their talents, which helped AICs to endure the storms they experienced from time to time. This survival strategy of AICs was also utilised by the new waves of Pentecostalism, Evangelism and the prosperity gospels of the 1970s and 1980s; which had far-reaching impacts.

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<sup>100</sup> Interview with Oyi Mwasambili; Interview with David Nicholas; Interview with Abiud Simkoko, Mlowo, 24.09. 2014. Interview with Medrick Mbuba. Nzovwe, 18. 09. 2014.

<sup>101</sup> K. Daniel, "The role of women in the Church in Africa", *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology* 2, no. 6 (2010), 126-139, here 131.

## **8.o Conclusion**

The AICs emerged in Mbeya and elsewhere in Tanzania due to indigenous people's dissatisfaction with the teachings of mainstream churches. As soon as they emerged, they faced opposition from both the mainstream churches and the government. These two institutions opposed the AICs because they threatened the foundation on which they were built. The opposition against the growth AICs also resulted from the fact that they threatened economic gains of the mainstream churches. Although the AICs have generally had limited social significance in Tanzania, they have played a significant historical role by attempting to impart Christian message in non-traditional ways. By using non-conventional approaches and methods they were able to provide some meaningful answers to questions that the mainstream churches had left unanswered from the point of view of the local communities. By allowing some of the cultural practices that mainstream churches had abolished and interpreting the Bible by closely associating its messages with the established African cultural principles, the AICs made the converts feel at home. It was mostly due to their successes in addressing some of the basic contradictions between the teachings of the mainstream churches and African cultures that the AICs in Mbeya survived the strong opposition they have been facing since their inception.

# **Exploitation Paradox: Sao-Hill Forest Plantation and the Indigenous Community Livelihoods in Mufindi, Tanzania, 1970s to 2010.**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper discloses the fundamental paradox of independent African states, which promised to be pro- “poor” (wanyonge), consultative, and consensual – the reality of centralised, bureaucratic and disciplinarian governance committed to communities’ livelihoods. It shows that nationalistic goals of using surrounding resources to improve peoples’ wellbeing, fronted by political elites in most independent African countries, were hardly realised. Indeed, numerous development projects launched to mitigate economic and social hurdles that faced the people aroused great expectations. Yet, the failure of the projects to improve peoples’ livelihoods resulted in great despair. The paper uses Sao-Hill Forest Plantation, which was among state development projects espoused by the Tanzanian government soon after independence, to illuminate the ways in which local communities’ expectations turned to desperation. It shows that, prior to the establishment and expansion of the plantation, the government assured the surrounding communities of social and economic benefits. However, the study reveals that the indigenous communities marginally benefitted from the yields of the plantation. Communities’ weak bargaining power and lack of political will were behind the despair. The paper integrates archival, oral, and secondary sources to contribute knowledge to studies examining resources and the wellbeing of the adjacent communities.*

**Key words:** Sao-Hill, Forest Plantation, Indigenous Communities, Livelihoods, Mufindi, Tanzania.

## 1.0 Introduction

During the post-colonial period, like many other independent African countries, Tanzania spearheaded an agenda of building the nation and bringing development to its citizens. The government endeavoured to achieve self-reliance. It stressed development in rural areas, among other attempts – places where colonial governments marginalised their socio-economic prospects. Consequently, the government was devoted to using its natural and artificial resources as a bridge to self-reliance and rural development. Furthermore, the post-colonial government instituted several development projects and schemes to reach the desired development goals for the rural communities and the nation at large.<sup>1</sup> It is against such a backdrop that the post-colonial government financed the large-scale forest

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<sup>1</sup> See Michael Jennings, “‘We Must Run While Others Walk’: Popular Participation and Development Crisis in Tanzania, 1961-1969,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 41, no. 2 (2003), 163-187; Priya Lal, “Self-Reliance and the State: The Multiple Meanings of Development in Early Post-Colonial Tanzania,” *Africa Journal of the International Institute* 82, no. 2 (2012), 212-234; Theobald Frank Theodory, “Julius Nyerere’s Perspectives on Natural Resources: A Reflection on the Desired Development Trajectory of Industrialization in Tanzania,” in *From African Peer Review Mechanisms to African Queer Review Mechanisms? Robert Mugabe, Empire and the Decolonisation of African Orifices* edited by Artwell Nhemachane and Tapiwa V. Warikandwa (Bamenda: Langaa Research and Publishing CIG, 2019).



plantation project at the Sao-Hill area in Mufindi District, currently in Iringa Region. The ambition to use the Sao-Hill Forest Plantation (SHFP) to bring development to rural dwellers of Mufindi and the country was not new. Instead, it was in place since the colonial era. The British colonial government, for instance, envisaged that the plantation project would transform the Mufindi community from a peasant to an industrial economy.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the preceding assertions enlighten that livelihood of the indigenous community were communicated during and before the establishment of the plantation by both colonial and post-colonial governments. Nevertheless, many recent studies on development projects conducted within and outside the country, in different disciplines attest that where there were resources either natural or artificial, the local communities surrounding them profited either marginally or not at all. The resources and wealth exploited were repatriated either outside the country or to towns and cities and left the local people with multiple scars connected to diseases, land-use disputes and a polluted environment.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, studies on

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<sup>2</sup> Tanzania National Archives (hereafter TNA) 24/19/21, a letter from Conservator of Forests, Morogoro to the Provincial Commissioner, Southern Highlands Province, 5.12.1949.

<sup>3</sup> Samwel J. Kabote and Elliot P. Niboye, *Socio-economic Effects of Large-scale Gold Mining on Artisanal Minerals in Tanzania: Experience from Bulyanhulu Gold Fields*, (Dar es Salaam, 2013); Willy Malinganya, Salatiel Moyo Simon and Renatus Paul, *Large Scale Mining Activities and the Livelihood of Adjacent Communities in Tanzania: A Case of Geita Gold Mine* (Dar es Salaam, 2013); Said Nuhu *et al.*, "Regulatory Framework and

state-funded development projects show that many of the funded projects failed to bring about socio-economic development in the indigenous communities. They demonstrate that states viewed the funded projects through the fiscal lens of revenue needs, discounting the fate of the surrounding communities, which were custodians of such projects.<sup>4</sup> This paper enhances the general understanding of the implications of states development projects on the socio-economic wellbeing of the indigenous communities by analysing a case of a large-scale forest plantation – a development project under the Tanzanian government.

Studies on forest plantations have generated nuanced attestations over prospects of the indigenous communities. Mike Garforth and colleagues in Australia notes that town dwellers benefited more from forest products, employment opportunities and other economic benefits compared to the rural communities surrounding forest plantations.<sup>5</sup> In

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Natural Gas Activities: A Curse or Boon to Host Communities in Southern Tanzania?”, *The Extractive Industries and Society* 5, no. 4 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2020.05.004>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Jennings, “We Must Run While Others Walk”; Lal, “Self-Reliance and the State.”

<sup>5</sup> Mike Garforth, Natasha Landell-Mills and James Mayers, “Plantations, Livelihoods and Poverty,” in *Plantations, Privatization, Poverty and Power: Changing Ownership and Management of State Forests*, edited by M. Garforth and J. Mayers (London: Earthscan, 2005).

contrast, a study conducted in India by S. Sankar and colleagues shows that local communities got benefits in economic and social services from forest plantations.<sup>6</sup> Case studies from several African countries examined the benefits accrued by people in the forestry sector, mixing up the opportunities offered by naturally occurring forests with those of forest plantations. They reached a consensus that the forestry sector offers employment opportunities and other related benefits to the entire communities.<sup>7</sup> Compatibly, the general contribution of the forestry sector to the national economy is conceivable. In Tanzania, for instance, the sector contributed 2% in 1987 and 3.3% in 1998 to the country's GDP.<sup>8</sup> The SHFP, which is the focal point of this paper, has mostly attracted researchers from biological science who investigated plant species and other scientific issues, taking little interest in examining the implications of

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<sup>6</sup> S. Sankar, P. C. Anil and M. Amruth, *Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Plantation Forestry in India*, (Bogor: Centre for International Forest Research, 2000).

<sup>7</sup> Yonika M. Ngaga, *Forest Plantation and Woodlots in Tanzania* (Nairobi: African Forest Forum, 2011); Winston Mathu, *Forest Plantations and Woodlots in Kenya* (Nairobi: African Forest Forum, 2011); Mike Garforth and James Mayers, *Plantations, Privatization, Poverty and Power: Changing Ownership and Management of State Forests* (London: Earthscan, 2005); Thaddeus Sunseri, *Wielding the Ax: State Forestry and Social Conflict in Tanzania, 1820-2000* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Goldon A. Mackenzie, *Climate Change Mitigation in Southern Africa: Tanzania Country Study* (Roskilde: UNEP, 1999), 19; FAO, *Forests and Climate Change issues into National Forest Programmes*, Background Paper for the National Workshop in Tanzania, (2010), 7.

the plantation on the livelihoods of the surrounding communities.<sup>9</sup> This paper, therefore, attempts to fill that void.

Most scholars examining communities' livelihoods leaned on the resource curse theory. The theory examines the ways in which countries rich in natural resources such as fossil fuels and minerals failed to use that wealth to boost their socio-economic development in the indigenous communities and nations at large than countries without an abundance of natural resources. Advocates of this theory generally claim that weak governance, as well as insufficient policy and legal framework guiding the natural resources, were behind the failure.<sup>10</sup> Despite its usefulness, the resource curse theory leaned its analysis on natural resources leaving artificial

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<sup>9</sup> Romanus C. Ishengoma, "Charcoal Production from Softwood Residues at Sao-Hill" (MSc. Diss., University of Dar es Salaam, 1980); Njilekiro Ringo, "Basic Density and Heartwood Content of *Pinus patula* Grown at Sao-Hill" (MSc. Diss., University of Dar es Salaam, 1977); Raphael E. L. Ole-Meiludie, "Skidding by Farm Tractors at Sao-Hill, Southern Tanzania" (MSc. Diss., University of Dar es Salaam, 1980).

<sup>10</sup> Richard Auty, *Sustaining Development in Mineral Economies: The Resource Curse Thesis* (London: Routledge, 1993); Dawda Adams et al., "Globalisation, governance, accountability and the natural resource 'curse': Implications for socio-economic growth of oil-rich developing countries," *Resources Theory* 61 (2019), 128-140; Giles Atkinson and Kirk Hamilton, "Savings, Growth and the Resource Curse Hypothesis," *World Development* 31, no. 11 (2003), 1793-1807; Vera Bekkers and Bartjan Pennink, "The Natural Resource Curse: A Country Case Study—Tanzania," *Energy, Economy, Finance and Geostrategy* (2018), 257-274.

resources, such as plantation forest, untouched. This paper uses political economy theory, which was initially coined by the classical political economists, Adam Smith and David Ricardo, to fill this theoretical gap. The political economy theory expresses the relationship between the political and economic affairs of the state. It examines the ways in which political interventions into the economy enhance or impede people's needs.<sup>11</sup> In this regard, the paper uses this theory to examine the ways in which political decisions to establish and exploit forest plantation resources in Mufindi impacted the livelihoods of the local communities.

Generally, research literature shows different views on the contribution of forest plantations to national and community development. By judging from these studies, forest plantations may or may not have considerable significance to the local communities' livelihoods. However, such a hypothesis has not yet been tested in the case of the SHFP. Therefore, it is an endeavour of this paper to contribute knowledge to studies examining resources and the wellbeing of the surrounding communities using the SHFP as its case study. The paper begins with a brief history of the SHFP, then examines the influence of the plantation

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<sup>11</sup> Neera Chandhoke, Marxian Political Economy as Method: How Political is Political Economy?" *Economic and Political Weekly* 29, no. 5 (1994), 16; Pekka Kosonen, "Contemporary Capitalism and the Critique of Political Economy: Methodological Aspects," *Acta Sociologica* 20, no. 4 (1977), 371; James A. Caporaso and David P. Levine, *Theories of Political Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 2.

to the emergence of industries in Mufindi District and how the industries responded to the wellbeing of the surrounding communities. It then discusses the issuance of timber harvesting licences and their perplexities, the implications of the SHFP in social and economic infrastructures of the surrounding communities, and the final section draws some conclusion. Data for this study were collected in different places of Tanzania from August 2014 to February 2015. Archival information was gathered in the Tanzania National Archives (TNA), the East Africana section of the library at the University of Dar es Salaam, the documentary section of the SHFP and Mbeya Record Centre (MRC), where different reports, monthly letters, national development plans, forestry policies and laws, books, journal articles, dissertations and other documents on forest plantations were consulted. Oral information was obtained from respondents in different villages surrounding the plantation.

## **2.0 Concise History of the Sao-Hill Forest Plantation**

Sao-Hill Forest Plantation is among the sixteen forest plantations owned by the government of Tanzania. It is in Mufindi District that is 100 Kilometres from Iringa Municipal and 15 Kilometres from Mafinga town. Its history dates back to the 1930s following the trial of different exotic species and the establishment of “Mufindi Afforestation Scheme” in

Mufindi District.<sup>12</sup> The decision to establish a plantation forest in Mufindi was conceived by the British administration in 1927, following the increasing environmental degradation in the district and the need of timber for export as well as for heavy constructional works such as road bridges and railway sleepers, and fuel woods for the British settlers.<sup>13</sup> Up to the 1950s, the British administration had planted more than 9,700 ha, and the post-colonial government extended the plantation into a large-scale from the mid-1960s.<sup>14</sup> Currently, SHFP is the largest forest plantation in Tanzania, covering more than half of the total area of government forest plantations. Records for the year 2014 showed that the SHFP covered a total area of 135,903 ha, whereby 52,070 ha were planted with trees, 48,200 ha were set aside for natural forests on catchment areas, 1,700 ha were used for residential houses and offices while 33,933 ha were annexed to the forest for

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<sup>12</sup> TNA 270/Y/6, a letter from Assistant Conservator of Forests, Bukoba to the Forest Department, Lushoto, 14.02.1927; Maximillian J. Chuhila and Andrea Azizi Kifyasi, "A Development Narrative of a Rural Economy: The Politics of Forest Plantations and Land Use in Mufindi and Kilimanjaro, Tanzania; 1920 to 2000s," *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research* 4, no. 3 (2016), 530.

<sup>13</sup> TNA 270/Y/6, a letter from Assistant Conservator of Forests, Bukoba to the Forest Department, Lushoto, 14.02.1927.

<sup>14</sup> TNA 336/IR/2, the Afforestation, Iringa Forest Division; Beati Ngulumbe, "Mradi wa Sao Hill Unavyosaidia Kuinua Uchumi wa Taifa," *Uhuru*, 13.02.1987.

other purposes.<sup>15</sup> SHFP spread in four divisions of Mufindi District namely; Kibengu, Ifwagi, Kasanga and Malangali. However, the plantation does not occupy all villages found in those divisions except for 58 of them. Few hectares of the SHFP are found in Kilombero District of Morogoro region covering about 1,700 ha. (Figure 1).<sup>16</sup> As a government project, the SHFP is managed by the Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS) under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT).

### **3.0 Industries and the Local Communities**

The presence of large plantation forest in Mufindi led to the establishment of several industries. The emergence of industries that consume forest products in the area was predicted since the inception of the plantation. During its founding phase, the Provincial Forest Officer informed Chief Adam Sapi Mkwawa that the plantation would inevitably attract commercial enterprises prepared to process the product either for the manufacturing of paper pulp, fibreboard or for eventual conversion into lumber. Compatible to this, the colonial government anticipated that the industries would create employment opportunities and

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<sup>15</sup> Sao-Hill Forest Plantation (hereafter SHFP) MU/9.04/B, Annual Reports Correspondence.

<sup>16</sup> SHFP MU/9.04/B, Annual Reports Correspondence.





Nevertheless, it took until the 1970s when exploitation of the plantation started where sawmills began to emerge.<sup>18</sup> More mills were installed in the 1980s and the 1990s, following the increase of matured standing trees. The mills were in three categories, that is large, medium and small-scale. Large scale mills usually install permanent machines in the preferred areas. A number of those mills were installed in Mafinga, Ihalimba, Twico, Nyororo and other places where economic infrastructures such as roads and electricity facilities were available.

The first large scale sawmill to be established in the district was the Sao-Hill Sawmill. The mill was under the Tanzania Wood Industries Corporation (TWICO) which was instituted during the country's Second Five Year Development Plan (1969-1974). Other mills under TWICO included The Arusha Fibreboard, Kilwa Sawmill, Tantimbers, Mang'ula Sawmills, Sikh Sawmills, Tabora Misitu Products, Tembo Chipboards and Wattle Extracts Limited.<sup>19</sup> Sao-Hill Sawmill was located within the SHFP area to ease the transportation of logs from the plantation site to the industry. The mill began to operate officially in the mid-1970s, consuming about 15,000 cubic metres of logs annually. In 1979, the demand for logs doubled to 30,000 cubic metres. The annual capacity was

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<sup>18</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/IV, Exploitation General Correspondence.

<sup>19</sup> United Republic of Tanzania (hereafter URT), *Third Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1976-1981*, 26.

projected to climb to 60,000 cubic metres in 1982.<sup>20</sup> Regrettably, the Sao-Hill Sawmill was privatised and its name changed to Sao-Hill Industries Limited (SHIL) during the 1990s' wave of privatisations.<sup>21</sup> However, the mill continued to depend on the raw materials from SHFP, in which, under the contract signed in 2004, the MNRT committed to supplying 150,000 cubic metres of logs per annum.<sup>22</sup> In 2009, the supply of logs to SHIL doubled to 300,000 cubic metres per year, following the increase of production activities. To warrant effective production at the SHIL, the MNRT committed to providing 300,000 cubic metres of logs per annum for twenty years period commencing from 2009 to 2029.<sup>23</sup>

From the early 1990s, more sawmills under private investors such as Sheda General Supplies, Ihembe Industries, Lesheya Industries, Mufindi Wood Poles and Timber Limited and Mena Wood Company Limited were installed in the district. Sawmills of different categories rose in the 2000s following

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<sup>20</sup> Aaron Sam Mosse Mgeni, "Yield Forecasting and Cutting Policy in *Pinus patula* Stands at Sao-Hill Forest Project" (MSc Diss., University of Dar es Salaam, 1979), 13.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Kalikenya Kivaula Chengula, Sawala, 21.01.2015.

<sup>22</sup> URT, Agreement on Logs Supply for Sao Hill Saw Mill, 9.06.2003; SHFP MU/35/01/XV, Exploitation General Correspondence.

<sup>23</sup> URT, *Agreement for the Sale of Pine and Eucalyptus Trees between Forestry and Beekeeping Division and Sao-Hill Industries Limited*, September, 2009.

the increased surplus of raw materials in SHFP.<sup>24</sup> Unlike the large scale, medium and small-scale mills used portable machines to process logs. Their mills were installed on leased land near harvesting sites to ease transportation of logs. Surely, small scale millers were many compared to the large and medium, though they consumed a low quantity of raw materials because of their limited capital. For instance, the total volume of logs sold by SHFP in 2007/2008 harvesting season was 655,800 cubic metres in which small-scale customers consumed only 230,500 cubic metres.<sup>25</sup>

The mills provided employment opportunities to the local people and others from different parts of the country. In the 1970s and the 1980s, the rate of exploitation was low, and job beneficiaries were few. In contrast, from the 1990s and 2000s, exploitation rose, and labourers were many. However, the local people were dismissed from lucrative jobs. As a result, they performed less-profitable jobs such as loading and unloading the logs, loading timber, processing logs into timber, felling standing trees, driving vehicles, and as security guards. Shabaan Adha, who was also a District Forest Officer, estimated that more than 2,000 casual labourers worked in such jobs a year from the 2000s.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/VIII, Exploitation General Correspondence; Ngaga, *Forest Plantation and Woodlots in Tanzania*, 67.

<sup>25</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/XVI, Exploitation General Correspondence.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Shabaan Adha, Mafinga, 9.01.2015.

Admittedly, these labourers did not earn enough money to afford living costs as they were lowly paid. Similarly, working and living conditions were far from satisfactory. For instance, loggers working in small scale sawmills complained of not being given enough food nor working clothes as well as health insurances from their employers. Loggers registered several complaints, including unfair treatments from their bosses when they got injuries at the workplace. I met several loggers who lost their fingers, arms and legs by being cut by machines or hit by logs, but they could not get adequate medical care. Informants mentioned that their bosses usually repatriate the victims forcibly without giving them any compensation.<sup>27</sup>

Apart from sawmills discussed above, the SHFP gave birth to the Southern Paper Mill (SPM), which was built to lessen the importation of paper and other related products from abroad.<sup>28</sup> Its establishment processes began in the mid-1960s when the government commissioned several studies to investigate the possibilities of founding pulp and paper production in the country. Subsequently, feasibility studies recommended the institution of an export-based pulp mill in

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Immanuel Kibiki and Damson Luhwago, Mwitikilwa, 20.01.2015.

<sup>28</sup> Carl Christiansson and Johan Ashuvud, "Heavy Industry in Rural Tropical Ecosystem," *Ambio* 14, no. 3. (1985), 123; Anthony Ngaiza, "Paper at a price: Southern Paper Mill, Tanzania," *Ambio* 16, no. 5 (1987), 281.

the Sao-Hill-Mufindi area.<sup>29</sup> The industrial project was backed by the World Bank, the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), the *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*, the Kuwait Fund, the Nordic Investment Bank, the European Economic Community, the Commonwealth Development Corporation and the Tanzania government itself.<sup>30</sup> The Tanzanian government formally authorized the construction of SPM in January 1977 and anticipated to commence the production by mid-1983.<sup>31</sup> Like other government-owned parastatals, the government of Tanzania sold SPM to a Kenyan-based private company, RAI GROUP, in 2004, which re-named it “Mufindi Paper Mill” (MPM). However, the MPM continued to be fed by the SHFP where it consumes more than 150,000 cubic metres per annum.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Lars Hakanson, “The History of Southern Paper Mill Project: Planning and Decision Processes,” in *Effects of Industrial Investments in Developing Countries: Planning Processes, Environment and Socio-economic Impacts* edited by Lars Hakanson (Dar es Salaam: Bralup, 1986), 48-55; “Kiwanda cha Mufindi, Mradi Mkubwa Kupita Yote,” *Uhuru*, 18.10.1985.

<sup>30</sup> Christiansson and Ashuvud, “Heavy Industry in Rural Tropical Ecosystem”, 123; Hakanson, “History of Southern Paper Mill Project”, 56.

<sup>31</sup> Lars Hakanson, “Identification and design of industrial Development Projects,” *Geografiska Annaler-series, B, Human Geography* 64, no. 2 (1982), 105.

<sup>32</sup> Simon Magava, “The Implication of Mufindi Paper Mill on Socio-Economic Development of the People of Mufindi, Tanzania” (MA Diss., University of Dar es Salaam, 2011), 3.

From its inception, the government expected that the SPM would contribute to the national economy and improve rural people's livelihoods, especially among people in the surrounding areas. A feasibility study report of 1974 showed that the mill would hire around 1,000 people.<sup>33</sup> Fortuitously, in 1987, a few years after the mill started to operate, it multiplied the government's projections, employing about 2,000 people working in the chemical-pulp-mill, bleach-plant, mechanical-pulp-mill, two paper machine rooms, steam and power generation plant, finishing, and administration departments.<sup>34</sup> Regrettably, after the mill was privatized, the number of employees declined enormously. Simon Magava noted that from 2005 to 2009, permanent employees were between 500 and 600, and casual labourers around 400 and 800, both locals and foreigners. Worse still, foreign employees worked in skilled jobs and had permanent contracts which entitled them to good salaries and satisfactory working environments. In contrast, many locals were subjected to non-skilled jobs and mainly worked as casual labourers with meagre payments and harsh working conditions.<sup>35</sup>

The SHFP further fed match industries located in Moshi and Dar es Salaam regions. Feeding match industries was consistent with the government's plans for the extension of

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<sup>33</sup> Hakanson, "The History of Southern Paper Mill Project", 62.

<sup>34</sup> Ngaiza, "Paper at a price", 284.

<sup>35</sup> Magava, "Implication of Mufindi Paper Mill", 48.

forest plantation during the post-colonial period. Research intended to test species suitable for match manufacturing started in 1963. The trial was firstly conducted in North and West Kilimanjaro Forest Plantations. A few species of pines were found suitable after manufacturing trials. However, the available quantity of raw material to feed match industries in the time did not match-up with the requirements of the industry. Subsequently, the government encouraged plantings of *Pinus patula* and *Cupressus lusitanica* to ensure an adequate supply of timber logs both in quantity and quality.<sup>36</sup>

Although abundant raw materials suitable to feed match industries were at Mufindi District, investors, for unknown reasons, built the industries in Kilimanjaro and Dar es Salaam. Yet, the two major industries, Kibo Match Group Limited and Alfa Match Industries Limited, depends on their raw materials from SHFP, which is more than 600 kilometres away from the industries.<sup>37</sup> In 2009, the Kibo Match Group Limited opened a splint making plant in Njombe Region, which is close to Mufindi, to curb transport costs.<sup>38</sup> It is untold what prompted the Kibo to found a plant in Njombe while the Mufindi District still has investment areas and is the home to SHFP. Indeed, the influences of match

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<sup>36</sup> MRC 34/30/12, Forestry Increased Productivity Plans.

<sup>37</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/XXII, Exploitation General Correspondence.

<sup>38</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/A/XX, Exploitation General Correspondence.



industries in employment opportunities are conceivable. For instance, in 2000, a Kibo Match Group Limited industry hired about 600 to 1000 permanent employees and more than 2,000 casual labourers per year in Moshi town.<sup>39</sup> Consequently, ferrying raw logs from Sao-Hill area to Moshi, Dar es Salaam, and elsewhere vanished opportunities for employment and other associated benefits to the local people, which were vital in improving the local economy.<sup>40</sup> It further exacerbates rural-urban migration and thus goes against the national goal of mitigating rural-urban migration through setting industries in the peripheries.

#### **4.0 Entanglements of Harvesting Licenses**

As hinted earlier, the exploitation of the Sao-Hill Forest Plantation started officially in the 1970s. During that time, trees planted by the British colonial government in the 1930s started to be harvested. Besides the Sao-Hill Sawmill, a few customers, most from the villages surrounding the plantation, benefited from harvesting licenses.<sup>41</sup> Consequently, throughout the 1970s, most of the customers were small scale producers who needed small quantities of raw materials since most of them processed logs into timber through pit-saws and a few owned portable sawmills.<sup>42</sup> Exploitation pressure began in the 1980s when the Southern

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<sup>39</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/A/XX, Kibo Match Group Limited-Moshi to the Principal Secretary Department of Forestry and Beekeeping, 03.12.2009.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Zakayo Kilyenyi, Mafinga, 04.02. 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Kalikenya Kivaula Chengula, Sawala, 21.01.2015.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Dominick Mpiluka, Magunguli, 26.01.2015.

Paper Mill started to operate as it demanded copious raw materials. Compatibly, demands for forest products increased and hence prompted more customers to apply for harvesting licenses. Providentially, a large number of trees reached their maturity stage; thus, annual allowable cut increased too. Findings of this study show that many local people acquired harvesting licenses when they were allowed to use pit-saws because it did not demand large capital. For instance, by September 1996, there was much pit-sawyers lumbering in the plantation, and most of them were from the local communities.<sup>43</sup> However, from 1996, following the headway in lumbering technology and the ambition to feed the global timber market, the government halted the issuance of harvesting licenses to pit-sawyers. Accordingly, from October 1996, harvesting licenses were only issued to clients with industries and portable sawmills.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, this was the initial step of estranging local people with low capital in harvesting the forest since most of them could not afford to buy portable sawmills. Thus, since the state's goal was to collect revenues and local pit-sawyers could not compete with big-capital clients, outsiders dominated harvesting logs.

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Abdalla Mdemu, Mafinga, 09.01.2015.

<sup>44</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/VII, a letter from SHFP Manager to Divisional Managers, 30.09.1996.

Worse still, in 2004, the MNRT introduced new regulations to be adhered by clients and the plantation management in applying and processing applications. Under the new regulations, the management had to consider applicants with sawmills, registration certificates of their companies and business licenses. Other qualifications included, registration certificates verifying that they were dealers in forest products and evidence of owning harvesting devices such as chain saw and transport facilities. On top of that, they had to justify their ability to hire professional workers such as sawmill operators and saw doctors.<sup>45</sup> Admittedly, the new regulations further contracted the chances for consumers with limited capital in obtaining harvesting licenses since most of them could not meet the established criteria. As a result, the position of the small-scale pit-sawyers, who were mostly from the villages surrounding the plantation, became precarious and questionable. Surely, many of them could hardly afford to purchase sophisticated harvesting devices and transport facilities. The new regulations inform about the state's move into modernism – attempts which James Scott argues impacted the socio-economic development of the many rural communities negatively.<sup>46</sup> To this end, I argue that the government, whether intentionally or unintentionally, built a favourable environment for people with substantial capital and modern

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<sup>45</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/XVI, a letter from Director of Forestry and Beekeeping to SHFP Manager, 11.06.2004.

<sup>46</sup> Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 240-242.

equipment to monopolize the timber industry and turned many local pit-sawyers into casual labour.

Nevertheless, in response to the 2004 regulations, a few local clients strived to boost their incomes to meet the qualifications. Others obtained loans from banks, while others sold their land for the same purpose. Yet, notwithstanding the SHFP policy to prioritise local customers, many of them could not get harvesting licenses.<sup>47</sup> This claim, however, conflicts with records from the SHFP which attest that in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010, more than 60% of customers who received harvesting licenses were from Mufindi District.<sup>48</sup> Findings of this study uphold that these official records are doubtful due to several reasons. Firstly, the methodology employed by the SHFP to identify local applicants is questionable. I noted that the only technique they used to recognise local applicants were through inquiring their addresses.<sup>49</sup> Under this ill method, it was probable for clients outside the Mufindi District to apply using local village addresses since the policy favouring local

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<sup>47</sup> SHFP, *Jitihada na Utaratibu Unaofuatwa na Serkali katika Kuendeleza Misitu, Uvunaji na Kugawa Mazao ya Misitu kwa Viwanda na Wajasiriamali*, 4; Interview with Mandaro Salum, Sao-Hill Headquarters, 4.02.2015; Holowa Choga, Ihalimba, 4.02.2015; Felix Alwatan Mpwaga, Mtili, 26.02.2015.

<sup>48</sup> SHFP, *Taarifa ya Shamba la Miti la Sao-Hill kwa Kamati ya Kudumu ya Bunge ya Ardhi, Maliasili na Mazingira, Tarehe* 21.10.2013.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Mandaro Salum, Sao-Hill Headquarters, 4.02.2015.

consumers was widely known. Secondly, according to the 2002 Forestry Act, a committee responsible for issuing licenses comprises the Deputy Director of Forestry and Beekeeping (Chairman), Regional Forestry Officer (Member), Plantation Manager (Secretary), Deputy Plantation Manager (Member) and a forester from the area where exploitation is proposed to be done (Member).<sup>50</sup> Consequently, there was no representative from the local communities to defend the fate of local applicants. Thirdly, oral testimonies support that the committee did not surely consider local consumers. In some villages such as Usokami and Vikula, none of the applicants obtained harvesting licenses although they applied in each harvesting season. However, other villages listed only one or two small scale customers who got harvesting licenses.<sup>51</sup> These circumstances warrant to argue that the policy of favouring the local clients was defectively executed.

This study further noted that the incomes that people accrued from the timber industry attracted politicians, members of parliament, ministers and government officials to engage directly and indirectly in the business.

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<sup>50</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/XXII, Exploitation General Correspondence.

<sup>51</sup> Interviews with Batista Vangilisasi Mhengilolo and Zakayo Kilyenyi, Usokami, 14.01.2015; Gaston Mahanga, and Rebeca Longo, Vikula, 15.01.2015; Holowa Choga and Clement Msasa, Ihalimba, 16.01.2015; Felix Alwatan Mpwaga, Mtili, 21.01.2015; Kamilius Sutta and Dominick Mpiluka, Magunguli, 26.01.2015; Anjero J. Mgimwa, Shaibu S. Lyuvala, Mwitikilwa, 20.01.2015.

Undoubtedly, political elites and government officials used their influence to win harvesting licenses cheaply. Testimonies I consulted attest that many of them wrote letters to the plantation manager coveting a favour. For instance, one official from the sub-head office of the ruling party, *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM), Dar es Salaam, wrote a letter to the manager seconding the request of Mr “X”<sup>52</sup>, the son of one of the party’s veterans, who needed 1,500 cubic metres of logs. Part of the letter read: “The above named is the son of *mzee* “Y”<sup>53</sup>, one of our party’s veterans. His father requested the retired Vice Chairman of the Ruling Party to assist his son in obtaining harvesting license [...] Please help him. This is a special request.”<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, other clients applied for licenses under the umbrella of the retired president of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT), honourable “Z”<sup>55</sup>. For instance, the personal assistant to the retired president “Z” wrote a letter to the SHFP manager to favour Mr “P”<sup>56</sup>, a relative of the retired president. Part of the letter read: “The above mentioned is a

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<sup>52</sup> The letter “X” is the pseudo name of the son of the party’s veteran.

<sup>53</sup> The letter “Y” is the pseudo the name of the party’s veteran.

<sup>54</sup> Translated from Kiswahili. See, SHFP MU/35.01/XVI, a letter from Sub-Head Office of *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM)-Dar es Salaam to SHFP Manager, 10.04.2008.

<sup>55</sup> The letter “Z” is the pseudo name of the retired president of the URT.

<sup>56</sup> Letter “P” is the pseudo name of the relative of the retired president of the URT.

relative of Hon. “Z”, the retired president of the United Republic of Tanzania. His request is to obtain harvesting license in your plantation. I request you to consider his application.”<sup>57</sup> Subsequently, the manager endorsed the requests directing the issuance of the demanded cubic metres of logs.

Additionally, other customers obtained licenses through what was so-called “Quota ya Katibu Mkuu” (Permanent Secretary’s Quota), and “Quota ya Mhe. Waziri” (Hon. Minister’s Quota). In 2007, the MNRT ordered plantation managers to allocate harvesting portions in each season for the Permanent Secretary and the Minister to issue to prominent persons where necessary.<sup>58</sup> As a result, in 2007 alone, the SHFP allocated 10,000 cubic metres, Buhindi Forest Plantation allocated 2,000 cubic metres, and Longuza Forest Plantation allocated 4,000 cubic metres.<sup>59</sup> Regrettably, such special allocations were inaccessible to the local people of Mufindi. Surely, Ministers, Members of Parliament, District Commissioners, children of government leaders and the Ruling Party officials obtained harvesting licenses promptly. Of course, as illuminated in the MNRT’s press

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<sup>57</sup> Translated from Kiswahili. See, SHFP MU/35.01/XX, a letter from Assistant of the URT Retired President “Z”, Dar es Salaam to SHFP manager, 9.02.2010.

<sup>58</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/XX, a letter from Forest and Beekeeping Division-Dar es Salaam to all government Forest Plantation Managers, 1.08.2007.

<sup>59</sup> SHFP MU/35.01/XX, a letter from Forest and Beekeeping Division-Dar es Salaam to all government Forest Plantation Managers, 1.08.2007.

release of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011, it is not restrained for political elites and government officials or their siblings to engage in timber businesses.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, applying under the umbrella of the ruling political party, retired presidents, and through Secretary's and Minister's quota, ruins fair races of the licenses. Indeed, a low income and less important person applying for the license would not compete fairly with officials and political elites. Consequently, their involvements limited the chance of small-scale customers, mostly from villages surrounding the plantation, to get harvesting licenses, despite meeting the required requisites. As a result, it exasperated protests and malice against the SHFP and the government. Some customers ended up into frustration and others engaged in illicit harvesting of the forest. Worse still, in some villages, citizens became reluctant in cooperating with SHFP in extinguishing a fire, and others burnt the forest as a means of expressing their discontents following the failure of the plantation to meet their prospects.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (hereafter JMT), *Taarifa kwa Umma: Taratibu Zinazotakiwa katika Uvunaji wa Mazao ya Misitu Kwenye Shamba la Sao-Hill*, 20.05.2011.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Holowa Choga, Ihalimba, 16.01.2015; Felix Alwatan Mpwaga, Mtili, 21.01.2015; Zakayo Kilyenyi, Mafinga, 4.02.2015; Richard Mandili Usokami, 14.01.2015; Obadia Mtokoma, Vikula, 15.01.2015.



## 5.0 Forest Plantation and the Economic and Social Infrastructures

Economic and social infrastructures such as electricity, roads, schools, water supply and health care are indispensable for sustainable development. At independence, the Tanzanian government, through various schemes, such as “self-help”, solicited concerted efforts from its citizens to establish them successfully.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, a forest plantation, and in this case, the SHFP, was an imperative agency for unfolding the mentioned infrastructures. For instance, the Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TANESCO), relied on SHFP for electric poles. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the source of electric poles being at Mufindi, electricity services from the national grid only reached the district in 1992.<sup>63</sup> Worse still, the supply of electricity services favoured industrial areas dismissing the surrounding communities. The 2012 census report delineates that Mufindi was highly populated than any other district in Iringa region. Yet, by 2011, TANESCO registered only 5,650 customers out of more than 300,000 population.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Jennings, “We Must Run While Others Walk,” 168.

<sup>63</sup> SHFP MU/35.01. IV, a letter from Manager, Wood pole Impregnation Plant-Mbeya to the Plantation Manager SHFP, 1.10.1991; SHFP MU/35.01.VII, a letter from Director of Forestry and Beekeeping Division to the Manager of Wood Pole Impregnation Plant, 3.01.1996; JMT, *Kumbukumbu ya Miaka 50 ya Uhuru wa Tanzania Bara: Mufindi, 1961-2011* (2011), 47.

<sup>64</sup> JMT, *Kumbukumbu ya Miaka 50 ya Uhuru*, 47; URT, *2012 Population and Housing Census: Population Distribution by Administrative Areas*

Furthermore, the presence of the plantation forest in Mufindi led to numerous movements of vehicles carrying timber, logs and other forest products mainly to villages surrounding the plantation. To a great extent, these vehicles have been blamed for damaging roads and making them impassable, particularly during the rainy season. The surrounding communities charged that the SHFP failed to improve road networks in their areas despite their customers contributing to road damage. The SHFP owns vehicles which are used in constructing roads within their plantation, but they were blamed for excluding roads surrounding nearby villages.<sup>65</sup> In contrast, documentary sources show that at different occasions, the SHFP repaired roads in Wami, Mfukulembe and Kitiru villages.<sup>66</sup> However, complaints disclosed by villagers from different hamlets I visited reflects that the SHFP has not done satisfactorily to reconstruct roads in villages surrounding the plantation.

Besides economic infrastructures, better health care, education, and water supply contribute profoundly to building efficient human capital capable of engaging effectively in production, which was vital in inciting

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(Dar es Salaam: NBS, 2013) 106-109. By the 2012 census report, Mafinga Town had 51,902 residents and Mufindi District had 265,829.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Gastoni Mahanga, Vikula, 15.01.2015; Kalikenya Kivaula Chengula, Sawala, 21.01.2015; Shaibu S. Lyuvala, Mwitikilwa, 20.01.2015.

<sup>66</sup> SHFP MU/12.13. IV, *Vijiji vya Ujamaa*.

development at national and community levels.<sup>67</sup> Under the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the SHFP was required to produce overall positive impacts to the surrounding communities by responding to social needs of the local communities, such as contributing to educational, health and other social programs.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, as the leading supplier of building and furnishing materials, the SHFP was anticipated to contribute dearly to improving social facilities to the surrounding communities. Contrary to the calculations, many schools in the district lacked enough desks, classrooms, tables, chairs, latrines, teachers' houses and other essential facilities. Alex Mwakasusa, who was also the District's Statistical Officer, affirmed that the mentioned facilities were enormously demanded in many schools for so long. By 2014, the district reported the shortage of about 4,269 desks for primary schools. The situation in some schools was even worse. For instance, in 2014, Igombavanu Primary School had only 70 out of 191 needed desks. As a result, students sat on the floor during class sessions (Figure

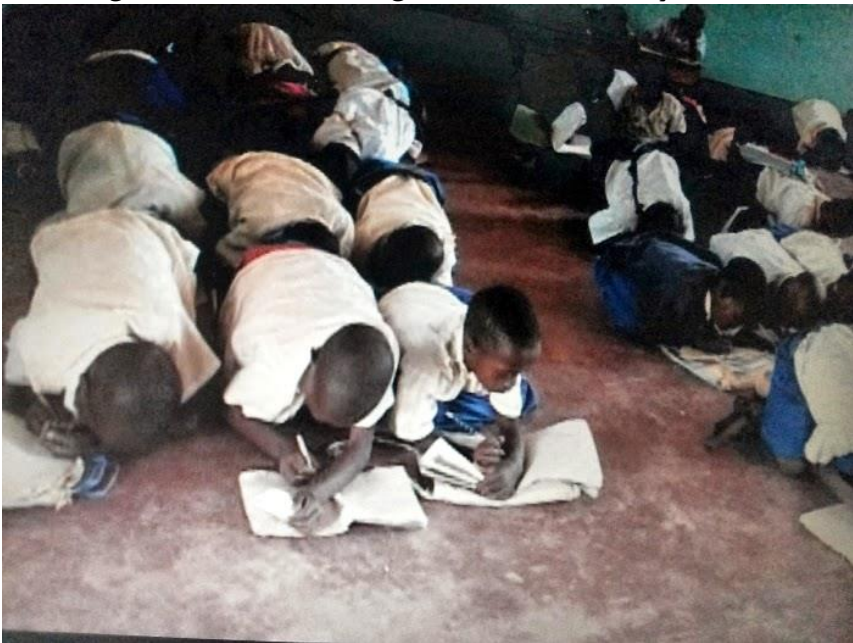
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<sup>67</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College De France, 1978-79* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 230; Quentin T. Wodon *et al.*, "Tanzania Economic Update: Human Capital – The Real Wealth of Nations (English)," *Tanzania Economic Update*, no. 12 (2019), 4.

<sup>68</sup> Mallen Baker, *Corporate Social Responsibility-what does it Mean*, (2008), 1 in <http://mallenbaker.net/article/clear-reflection/definitions-of-corporate-social-responsibility-what-is-csr/> accessed on 28.06.2022.

2).<sup>69</sup> In other primary schools, pupils made desks out of mud, locally known as *maadobe*, to address the deficit. For example, pupils at Lugodalutali primary school used *maadobe* as desks for many years. Mwakasusa linked the mentioned challenges with unsatisfactory performances of some schools in the district.<sup>70</sup>

**Figure 2: Students at Igombavanu Primary School**



Source: Courtesy of Oliver Motto in <https://olivermoto.blogspot.com/2014/09/> Accessed on 15.07.2020.

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<sup>69</sup> Oliver Motto, “Wakaa Sakafuni kwa Kukosa Madawati,” <https://olivermoto.blogspot.com/2014/09/> accessed on 15.07.2020.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Alex Mwakasusa, Mafinga, 04.02.2015.

Findings of this study show that in the late 1990s, the SHFP began to respond directly to some social challenges facing neighbouring communities. The direct assistance contrasted the indirect means where the plantation supported the surrounding villages in exchange for their labour force. The *Ujamaa* governments organized citizens to work for the plantation for some days in a month, and the money they received was directed to different economic projects such as the building of classrooms, hospitals and making of furniture.<sup>71</sup> The direct support from the SHFP included giving the village governments portions of trees to harvest and transport for building materials such as sand, stones and bricks. The local people covered expenses related to fuel, allowances to a driver and his assistant as well as loading and unloading costs. Although charges for the mentioned items seem reasonable, some villages could not afford.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, portions of trees granted to the village governments hardly solved a challenge of desks in schools. Instead, it prompted confrontations between village officials and the villagers in the course of collecting funds to cover costs related to the processing of logs into timber and allowances to carpenters.

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<sup>71</sup> SHFP MU/12.13/IV, a letter from the Plantation Manager to the District Commissioner-Mufindi, 07.04.1990; a letter from Chairman of Ihalimba *Ujamaa* Village to the Divisional Manager, Division III, 18.11.1988.

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Batista Vangilisasi Mhengilolo and Zakayo Kilyenyi, Usokami, 14.01.2015; Gaston Mahanga, Titus Ubamba and Rebeca Longo, Vikula, 15.01.2015.

As a result, most of the village governments failed to process the logs and sold the granted plots.<sup>73</sup>

Unsatisfactory remarks were also reported for health infrastructures. The surrounding communities grumbled over inadequate support of the SHFP in the health sector. Up to 2015, some villages surrounding the plantation such as Igomtwa and Mtili had never had health facilities since independence. Their people obtained health services in nearby villages. The local people of Igomtwa, for instance, went to Usokami and Ugesa dispensaries which were about twelve and six kilometres away. Thus, patients had to travel a long distance on foot, by bicycle or motorcycle seeking health services.<sup>74</sup> However, from the 2000s, following the growing complaints from the local people, the SHFP began to support the building of health service centres financially and materially. For instance, in July 2008, Kinyanambo villagers were helped with a truck to transport stones, sand and bricks for a health centre.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, in 2010, the SHFP purchased building materials worth Tshs 4,978,420/- for a house of a health worker in Itimbo village. In the same year, Ihalimba and Nyololo Njiapanda villages were helped with

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with Zakayo Kilyenyi, Usokami, 14.01.2015; Gaston Mahanga, Vikula, 15.01.2015.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Emmanuel Kihongosi, Igomutwa, 02.02.2015.

<sup>75</sup> SHFP MU/12.13/IV, a letter from SHFP Manager to VEO, Kinyanambo, 13.07.2008.

building materials for their dispensaries amounting to Tshs 4,947,150/-, and Tshs 4,976,000/- respectively.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, the positive response suggests that peoples' voices were of importance in bargaining the fate of communities living around resources.

Compatible to the above contentions, the SHFP modestly bettered water supply in the surrounding communities. Regrettably, the majority of the local people in the district depended on water from springs and streams which were not safe for their health. These water sources are found far from their households, and thus they walked long distances to fetch water for their domestic uses. This context imperilled their health and impeded communities' development. Yet, the SHFP remained silent about helping the local people with water supply. Instead, tap water was extended only around the SHFP offices and residences to save workers and for irrigating tree nurseries. The plantation's support in the availability of water to the community can at least be seen indirectly in its conservation roles. Evidently, water catchments are well conserved by the plantation, which, in turn, warrants efficient flow of water in villages surrounding the plantation.<sup>77</sup> Yet, overall, the SHFP has not brought substantive impacts on improving water supply to the local communities in Mufindi District.

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<sup>76</sup> SHFP MU/12.13/IV, *Vijiji vya Ujamaa*.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Zakayo Kilyenyi, Usokami, 14.01.2015; Gaston Mahanga, Vikula, 15.01.2015.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

This paper has shown that complaints about skimpy benefits and unfulfilled commitments registered by people living around mineral compounds, gas, oil resources, and national parks were more like those encountered by communities surrounding the Sao-Hill Forest Plantation. Such similarities stem from the fact that the plantation economy is essentially a capitalist enterprise, whether undertaken by a state agency or a private company. As such, it is premised on capital accumulation. It is, therefore, not surprising that the appeasement schemes devised to sustain the project had little impact, as the indigenous communities did not benefit much from the different opportunities provided by the plantation. Indeed, the denial of rights to exploit or benefit from the resources prompted local people to perceive their surrounding resources as a curse rather than a boon for their livelihoods. The paper has shown that the government's assurance that the plantation would boost economic and social development cultivated high livelihood expectations among the local communities, which were hardly met. To this end, the Sao-Hill Forest Plantation project joins the list of the failed post-colonial state projects undertaken to bring national development and welfare to rural communities.



## Book Review:

Amanda J. Thomas. *Cholera: The Victorian Plague*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2015. Notes. Bibliography. Indexes. 248 pp. \$39.95.  
Hard cover

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The Victorian Britain was swept by five cholera epidemics which led to evolution of sanitary culture that was punctuated by sanitary reforms and engineering. The epidemic made social, political and spatial relations to change. It also led to the emergence of a concept 'sanitary city' in the urban planning, a concept that circulated to other parts of the world. Victorian ideas were on the move. Many works on cholera epidemics and sanitary cities discuss mainly about the contributions of few actors, particularly Sir Edwin Chadwick, the main sanitation infrastructures and about a select of cholera epidemics that the swept across towns and cities during the Victorian era.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, the monograph by a historian Amanda J. Thomas sets out a novel departure by examining all five epidemics and explaining how knowledge and experience of each epidemic

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Michelle Allen-Emerson, *Sanitary Reform in Victorian Britain: Sanitary Engineering*, Vol. 3 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012); Richard J. Evans, *Death in Hamburg: Society and Politics in the Cholera Years 1830-1910* (London: Penguin Books, 1987).

drew many actors as well as a series of interventions. It weaves together the social and epidemiological histories of cholera; biographical contributions of key Victorian figures particularly Sir Joseph Bazalgette, Dr. John Snow and William Farr; social history of urban poverty; and the critical accounts that portray reactions of people in the times of epidemics.

Inspired by the local stories of the epidemic consequences in Soho, London, the book presents its account in ten (10) chapters that are arranged along the temporal and thematic lines of analysis. Chapter 1 examines one of the rarely discussed aspects of cholera, that is, history and epidemiological theories of the diseases from the pre-modern to modern era. From the reading of the Chapter, it is evident that cholera aetiology evolution is akin to the development of biomedicine. Nonetheless, cholera's theories presented in this Chapter are global in dimension which provides the reader with a broader and nuanced understanding of the plague before and during the Victorian era. An important aspect provided in the introduction and in Chapter 1 is a description of the 1817-1818 cholera pandemic, which is hardly mentioned or examined in other works. Chapter 2 presents a moment when the 1831-1832 epidemic was making people seek different therapies out of trial and error. In the course of trial and error, Brandy mysteriously came to be perceived as the cure of the plague! Giving more attention to the British cities and towns, Thomas argues that it was the low literacy levels of the people that made the plague to hit hard, and consequently leading to several

inconclusive theories on disease. Chapters 3 and 4 examine the relationship between poverty, cholera and the aura behind the poor relief laws. Thomas boldly uncovers that many people died because they lived in wretched conditions, lacked healthy food and safe water. While this is obvious, Thomas shows that poor relief houses had worse conditions as they were characterised with provision of unhealthy food and overcrowded tenement that led to more deaths of the paupers than would have been imagined.

Chapters 5 and 6 examine two issues. First is the introduction of birth, marriage and death registration in Britain by William Farr and meticulous application of its statistical information in understanding the causes of cholera and possible prevention measures. Farr's approach was disliked by Sir Edwin Chadwick because of its data that depicted poor relief was not working. Yet, the approach revolutionized the modern public health by pioneering documentation of causes of deaths, uncovering areas hit hard by particular diseases and identification of contextual conditions that exacerbate epidemics. Another issue is how the cholera epidemic transformed social relations of burials, from traditional to Victorian commercialized burial practices. The change occurred because the traditional burial practices and places were overwhelmed by epidemics. Like the application of statistics in public health, commercialized burials practices circulated to other parts of the world. Chapters 7 and 8 present the major turning points in the fight against Cholera. First is the conclusive discovery by Dr. John Snow that cholera is essentially a water-borne disease. Thomas argues that it is only recently that Dr. Snow's contribution was acknowledged by the medical world. For a

long time, Dr. Snow was in the hindsight of the names Robert Koch and Louis Pasteur. The second but connected to the first, is the introduction of drainage engineering interventions that were planned and pioneered by Sir Joseph Bazalgette. Bazalgette's drainage engineering reduced water contaminations and facilitated significantly in abating the dread of cholera in the Victorian Britain and elsewhere in the world. Dr. Snow's water-born theory of cholera helped in dispelling the power of miasmatic theory and influenced the sanitary reformers to support Bazalgette's engineering plan.

Chapter 9 examines the last Victorian Britain cholera epidemic and the fourth global pandemic of 1866. It presents the major routes of spread from far east Asia to Britain and how statistical measures helped medical and political actors to contain the plague. It also weaves in a story of *The Princess Alice* tourist line accident in the Thames in 1878 and how it raised concerns over possible cholera eruption. However, since the occurrence of the last epidemic in 1866, Victorian Britain never faced another epidemic even when the fifth cholera pandemic was affecting continental European cities like Hamburg in 1881. Chapter 10 offers conclusive statements and takes a global approach in explaining the modern theories and understanding of cholera since the Victorian era.

Thomas is, thus, implicitly arguing that the successful struggle against the cholera menace was not merely a result of medical efforts but an outcome of a complex, incremental and spontaneous amalgam of political, medical, legal,

engineering and statistical forces. However, the British nuances are amplified at the expense of the global dimension of the disease. As such, it seems the book targeted mainly the British audience. Nonetheless, the book is written in lucid and poignant language making it eligible to all audiences, lay and erudite. It can be recommended as a basic reading to students examining the social history of medicine through the prism of Victorian cholera epidemics; and the development and circulation of sanitation movement and engineering in the 19<sup>th</sup> century within and without Victorian Britain. The book employs extensively the archival and other hodgepodge sources like newspapers in building its narrative of social history of cholera epidemics which are cited and discussed well in each chapter. The way those archival materials are utilised is impressive and exemplary in exhibiting originality of the author and research.